

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

June 18, 2025

HDRC CASE NO: 2025-138
ADDRESS: 3903 N ST MARYS ST
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB A49 PART OF A-2, A-4, A-52 (208 AC)
ZONING: R-5, H
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 2
APPLICANT: Clifton Austin/Sunland Group
OWNER: Ben Barton/CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
TYPE OF WORK: Construction of a 1-story structure for coral conservation efforts
APPLICATION RECEIVED: May 21, 2025
60-DAY REVIEW: July 20, 2025
CASE MANAGER: Edward Hall

REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to construct a single-story structure to house coral conservation efforts at the San Antonio Zoo. The proposed structure will feature approximately 940 square feet and will be located to the north of the existing Monkey House, to the south of the existing Aquarium, and to the east of the Flamingo Habitat. Only the east façade will be visible to the public.

The applicant has noted that all existing ornamental façade elements at the historic Aquarium building will remain.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Unified Development Code Section. 35-642. New Construction of Buildings and Facilities.

In considering whether to recommend approval or disapproval of a certificate, the historic and design review commission shall be guided by the following design considerations. These are not intended to restrict imagination, innovation or variety, but rather to assist in focusing on design principles, which can result in creative solutions that will enhance the city and its neighborhoods. Good and original design solutions that meet the individual requirements of a specific site or neighborhood are encouraged and welcomed.

(a) Site and Setting.

(1) Building sites should be planned to take into consideration existing natural climatic and topographical features. The intrusive leveling of the site should be avoided. Climatic factors such as sun, wind, and temperature should become an integral part of the design to encourage design of site-specific facilities which reinforces the individual identity of a neighborhood and promotes energy efficient facilities.

(2) Special consideration should be given to maintain existing urban design characteristics, such as setbacks, building heights, streetscapes, pedestrian movement, and traffic flow. Building placement should enhance or create focal points and views. Continuity of scale and orientation shall be emphasized.

(3) Accessibility from streets should be designed to accommodate safe pedestrian movement as well as vehicular traffic. Where possible, parking areas should be screened from view from the public right-of-way by attractive fences, beams, plantings or other means.

(4) Historically significant aspects of the site shall be identified and if possible incorporated into the site design. Historic relationships between buildings, such as plazas or open spaces, boulevards or axial relationships should be maintained.

(b) Building Design.

(1) Buildings for the public should maintain the highest quality standards of design integrity. They should elicit a pride of ownership for all citizens. Public buildings should reflect the unique and diverse character of San Antonio and should be responsive to the time and place in which they were constructed.

- (2) Buildings shall be in scale with their adjoining surroundings and shall be in conformance to the identifying quality and characteristics of the neighborhood. They shall be compatible in design, style and materials. Reproductions of styles and designs from a different time period are not encouraged, consistent with the secretary of the interior's standards. Major horizontal and vertical elements in adjoining sites should be respected.
- (3) Materials shall be suitable to the type of building and design in which they are used. They shall be durable and easily maintained. Materials and designs at pedestrian level shall be at human scale, that is they shall be designed to be understood and appreciated by someone on foot. Materials should be selected that respect the historic character of the surrounding area in texture, size and color.
- (4) Building components such as doors, windows, overhangs, awnings, roof shapes and decorative elements shall all be designed to contribute to the proportions and scale of their surrounding context. Established mass/void relationships shall be maintained. Patterns and rhythms in the streetscape shall be continued.
- (5) Colors shall be harmonious with the surrounding environment, but should not be dull. Choice of color should reflect the local and regional character. Nearby historic colors shall be respected.
- (6) Mechanical equipment or other utility hardware should be screened from public view with materials compatible with the building design. Where possible, rooftop mechanical equipment should be screened, even from above. Where feasible, overhead utilities should also be underground or attractively screened. Exterior lighting shall be an integral part of the design. Interior lighting shall be controlled so that the spillover lighting onto public walkways is not annoying to pedestrians.
- (7) Signs which are out of keeping with the character of the environment in question should not be used. Excessive size and inappropriate placement on buildings results in visual clutter. Signs should be designed to relate harmoniously to exterior building materials and colors. Signs should express a simple clear message with wording kept to a minimum.
- (8) Auxiliary design. The site should take into account the compatibility of landscaping, parking facilities, utility and service areas, walkways and appurtenances. These should be designed with the overall environment in mind and should be in visual keeping with related buildings, structures and places.

FINDINGS:

- a. The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to construct a single-story structure to house coral conservation efforts at the San Antonio Zoo. The proposed structure will feature approximately 940 square feet and will be located to the north of the existing Monkey House, to the south of the existing Aquarium, and to the east of the Flamingo Habitat. Only the east façade will be visible to the public.
- b. EXISTING SITE – As noted in finding a, the site proposed for new construction is bordered by the Monkey House to the north, the Aquarium to the south and the Flamingo Habitat to the east. This site is currently occupied by an enclosed landscaping area with a low wall and a portable storage building.
- c. NEW CONSTRUCTION – The applicant has proposed to construct a single-story structure to feature a footprint of approximately 940 square feet. The proposed new construction an overall height of approximately seventeen (17) feet, similar to the adjacent historic structure, and will feature a setback that matches that of the adjacent historic structure. Staff finds the proposed new construction to be appropriate and consistent with the UDC.
- d. NEW CONSTRUCTION – The applicant has proposed a stucco façade, tile roofing, decorative façade tiles, and black metal windows to match those on the adjacent. Staff finds the proposed materials to be appropriate and consistent with the UDC. Staff finds that the structure's stucco finish should match that of the adjacent Aquarium.
- e. ARCHAEOLOGY – The project shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations regarding archaeology, as applicable.

RECOMMENDATION:

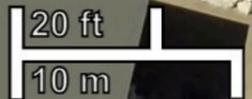
Staff recommends approval based on findings a through e with the following stipulations:

- i. That the proposed new construction's stucco match that of the Aquarium.
- ii. That final window product specifications be submitted to OHP staff for review and approval. Windows should feature true divided lites with true muntins.

- iii. ARCHAEOLOGY – The project shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations regarding archaeology, as applicable.



EagleViewImage
Captured: Mar 20, 2025



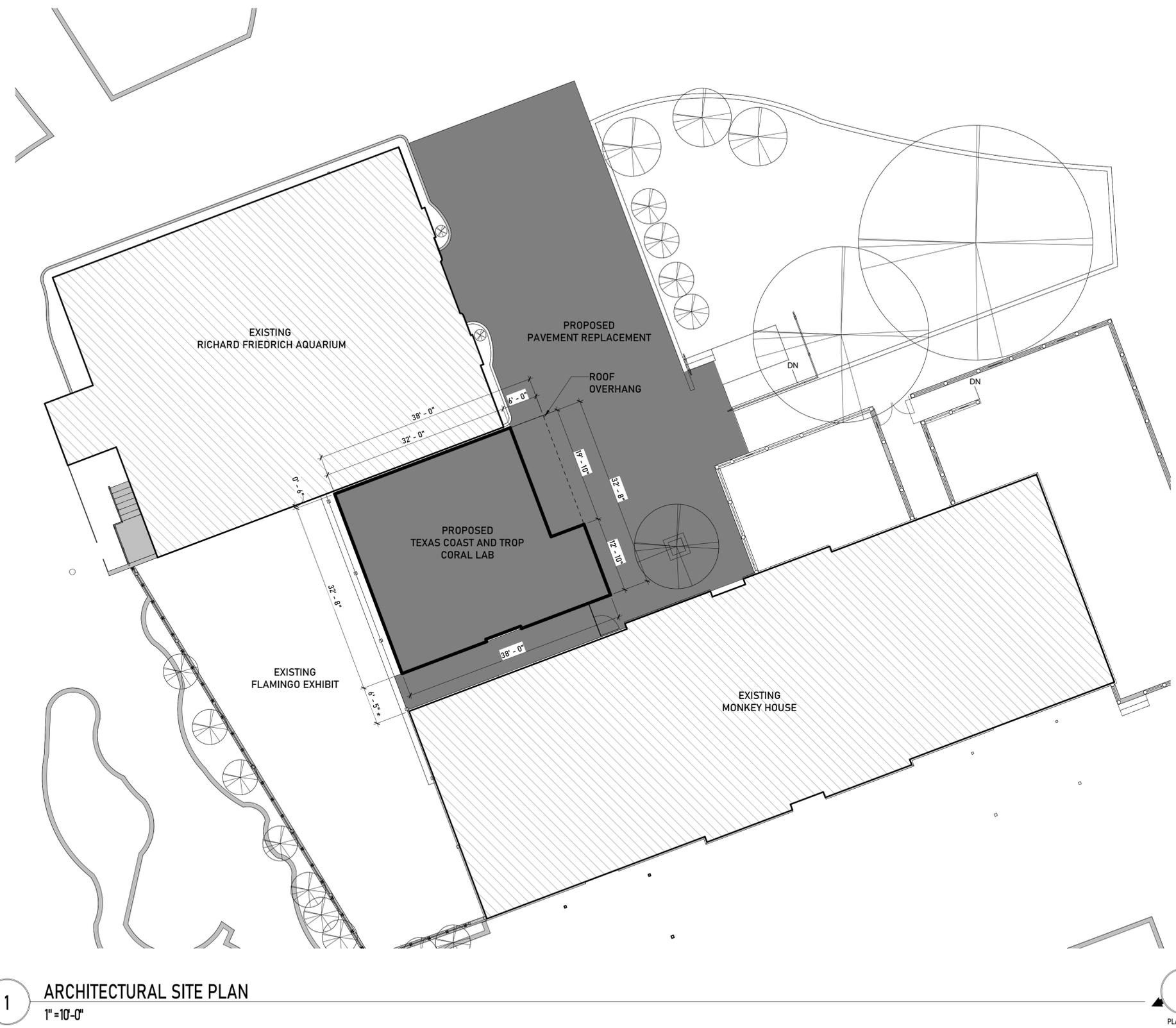
Existing
Monkey House

Existing
Aquarium

Proposed Coral Lab
Site between the
existing Monkey
House, and
Aquarium



0' 1/2" = 1'-0"
 0' 3/8" = 1'-0"
 0' 1/4" = 1'-0"
 0' 1/8" = 1'-0"
 0' 3/16" = 1'-0"
 0' 1/16" = 1'-0"
 0' 1/32" = 1'-0"
 0' 1/64" = 1'-0"
 0' 1/128" = 1'-0"
 0' 1/256" = 1'-0"
 0' 1/512" = 1'-0"
 0' 1/1024" = 1'-0"
 0' 1/2048" = 1'-0"
 0' 1/4096" = 1'-0"
 0' 1/8192" = 1'-0"

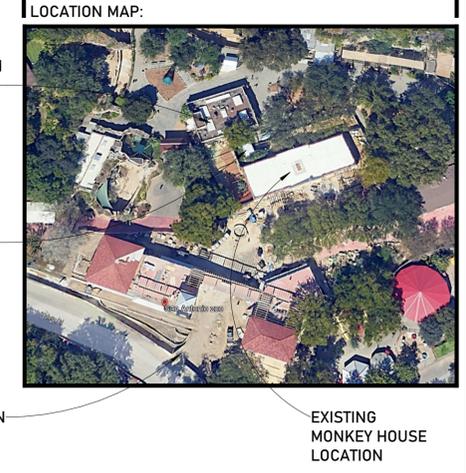


1 ARCHITECTURAL SITE PLAN
 1" = 10'-0"

- GENERAL SHEET NOTES**
- ALL SITE INFORMATION INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, PROPERTY LINES, METES & BOUNDS, CONTOURS, EXISTING BUILDINGS, EASEMENTS, TREES, WALKS, DRIVES, FENCES, ETC., TAKEN FROM SURVEY BY:
 - IF THE CONTRACTOR FINDS ANY DISCREPANCY BETWEEN EXISTING CONDITIONS AND THOSE WHICH ARE SHOWN ON THE PLANS, HE SHALL IMMEDIATELY CONTACT THE ARCHITECT.
 - THE CONTRACTOR SHALL MAKE ARRANGEMENTS WITH ALL UTILITY ENTITIES TO LOCATE AND MARK ALL UNDERGROUND UTILITIES PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION.
 - THE CONTRACTOR SHALL VISIT THE SITE AND BECOME FAMILIAR WITH ALL EXISTING CONDITIONS.
 - REFER TO THE CIVIL PLANS FOR DETAILED SITE GRADING INFORMATION. ENSURE THAT ALL GRADES SLOPE UNIFORMLY AWAY FROM THE BUILDING. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD ANY SITE DRAINAGE FLOW TOWARDS THE BUILDING.
 - MAKE ALL SLOPES OF WALKS AND DRIVES COMPLY WITH FINISH ELEVATION SHOWN ON CIVIL DRAWINGS. THE LINE OF SLOPE SHALL FORM STRAIGHT LINES BETWEEN FINISH ELEVATIONS WHEN POSSIBLE AND GRADING CONTOURS WHEN STRAIGHT LINES ARE NOT POSSIBLE. VERIFY ALL ELEVATIONS AND DIMENSIONS WITH DESIGNER ON JOB. REF. CIVIL.
 - ALL WALKS AND PLAZAS SHALL BE REINFORCED CONCRETE -REF. CIVIL FOR DETAILS. PROVIDE 1/2" EXPANSION JOINT AS SHOWN BY CIVIL OR AT 25'-0" O.C. MAX. AND AT ALL INSIDE CORNERS. PROVIDE TOOLED CONTROL JOINTS AT 5'-0" O.C.B.W. MAX OR AS SHOWN. SEE CIVIL FOR TYPICAL WALK AND JOINT DETAILS.
 - PROVIDE 1/2" EXPANSION JOINT ALONG BUILDING FOUNDATION OR BRICK WHERE CONCRETE WALK IS PRESENT. REF. CIVIL DRAWINGS FOR TYPICAL DETAIL.
 - PROVIDE 1/2" EXPANSION JOINT ALONG BACK OF CONCRETE CURB WHERE WALK IS PRESENT. REFER TO CIVIL DRAWINGS FOR CURB DETAILS.
 - CONTRACTOR SHALL REMOVE ALL EXISTING OBSTRUCTIONS TO NEW CONSTRUCTION, PAVING, WALKS, AND ALL OTHER SITE IMPROVEMENTS INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO EXISTING TREES, FENCES, CONCRETE, ROCKS, DEBRIS, POSTS, VEGETATION, UTILITIES (AS NOTED), AND OTHER ITEMS AS NOTED FOR CONSTRUCTION.
 - REFER TO ELECTRICAL DRAWINGS FOR OUTDOOR LIGHTING REQUIREMENTS.
 - REFER TO CIVIL DRAWINGS FOR SITE GRADING PLAN, SITE UTILITY PLAN (INCLUDING FIRE HYDRANT LOCATIONS), EROSION CONTROL PLANS, AND CURB AND PAVING REQUIREMENTS AND DETAILS.
 - REFER TO CIVIL SHEETS FOR SITE GRADING CONTOURS. CONTRACTOR SHALL MAKE ALL CUTS AND FILLS REQUIRED TO ACCOMPLISH WORK SHOWN.
 - REFER TO CIVIL DRAWINGS FOR THICKNESS AND LOCATIONS OF ALL TYPES OF PAVING.
 - FIRE LANE STRIPING SHALL COMPLY WITH AHJ REQUIREMENTS AND NFPA.
 - PROVIDE DEDICATED STRUCTURAL 3000 PSI CONCRETE FOUNDATION PAD FOR ALL ON-SITE ELECTRICAL TRANSFORMERS OR EQUIPMENT. IF THE SERVICE PROVIDER HAS SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS AND/OR SPECIFICATIONS, THEY MUST BE FOLLOWED.
 - PROVIDE DEDICATED STRUCTURAL 3000 PSI CONCRETE FOUNDATION PAD FOR ALL ON-SITE GENERATORS INCLUDING ASSOCIATED ENCLOSURES. ALSO PROVIDE FOR ANY OTHER MEP OR MISC. EQUIPMENT.

GRAPHIC LEGEND - SITE PLAN

	IN SCOPE
	NOT IN SCOPE
	EXISTING BUILDING - NOT IN SCOPE



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INTERIM REVIEW
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Owner Project No.:2024-060

SAN ANTONIO ZOO CORAL LAB

SAN ANTONIO ZOO
 3903 NORTH SAINT MARY'S STREET, SAN ANTONIO, TX 78212

NO:	DATE:	ISSUE DESCRIPTION:

ARCHITECTURAL SITE PLAN		
DESIGNED DA	DRAWN DMJ	CHECKED DA
ORIGINAL SHEET SIZE ANSID22X34	ISSUED DATE 06/12/2025	REVISION NO.
PROJECT STATUS DESIGN PHASE		
2024-060	AS-101	
PROJECT NUMBER	SHEET NUMBER	

