



Community & Economic Development Department
3900 Main Street, Riverside, CA 92522 | Phone: (951) 826-5371 | RiversideCA.gov

Planning Division

CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD MEETING DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2024
AGENDA ITEM NO.: 5

PROPOSED PROJECT

Case Numbers	DP-2024-00613 (Certificate of Appropriateness)	
Request	Certificate of Appropriateness request for the removal of approximately 2,821 square feet (including 385 square feet of canopy space) from the rear of an existing 8,716 square foot (including 4,356 square feet canopy space) former Helgeson Buick showroom building	
Applicant	Mike Khoury of Riverside Hyundai	
Project Location	8001 Auto Drive, situated on the west corner of Auto and Detroit Drives	
APN	231-240-002	
Ward	5	
Neighborhood	Presidential Park	
Historic District	Not Applicable	
Historic Designation	Not Applicable	
Staff Planner	Scott Watson, Historic Preservation Officer 951-826-5507 swatson@riversideca.gov	

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Cultural Heritage Board:

- DETERMINE** that the project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review pursuant to Sections 15301 (Existing Facilities) and 15331 (Historic Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation), as it constitutes as modifications to an existing eligible historic resource that is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties; and,
- APPROVE** Planning Case DP-2024-00613 (Certificate of Appropriateness), based on the facts for findings outlined and summarized in the staff report, and subject to the recommended conditions of approval (Exhibit 1).

BACKGROUND

The 2.96-acre project site (Exhibit 2) was developed in 1965 with single-story International Style showroom and office building at the corner of Auto and Detroit Drives, a small 400 square foot building to west of the showroom, and a utilitarian vehicle service building at the rear of the site. The showroom building was designed for Helgeson Buick by architect William Ficker. The site was developed as part of the development of the Riverside Auto Center, which was created when seven dealerships relocated their downtown operations to the area along SR-91 and Adams Street. The Riverside Auto Center was jointly owned by the seven dealerships and was one of the first centers of its type in the United States. In 2006, the small 400 square foot structure was demolished, and the new showroom and office building was constructed at the southwest side of the property, fronting onto Auto Drive.

The property was evaluated as part of the 2009 Modernism Context Statement (Exhibit 3), in 2013 as part of the Modernism Citywide survey (Exhibit 4), and in 2023 by completed by Shannon Lopez of Cogstone (Exhibit 5), a consultant meeting the Secretary of the Interior Professional Qualifications. The evaluations found the showroom building was eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resource (CRHR) and designation as a City Landmark.

In 2012, the Cultural Heritage Board approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for the removal of an approximately 2,825 square foot concrete block structure at the rear of the building, which included storage and two offices, to facilitate additional parking on the site (Exhibit 4 & 5).

Based on the architectural descriptions included in previous evaluation, the character defining features of the building are:

- (Building Orientation) Diagonal orientation fronting onto the corner of the parcel
- (Building Footprint) Rectangular plan
- (Roof Style) Flat roofs with exposed recessed beams and cornice-like roof details
- (Roof Overhang) Four rectangular canopies projecting from the central showroom
- (Framing) Steel frame construction with thin steel support beams on the canopies.
- (Windows) Floor-to-ceiling storefront windows on three sides and metal framed door as the primary entrance
- (Interior) Centrally location pop-up space

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project proposes to demolish the rear 2,436 square foot block portion of the building, remove a 385 square feet portion from the rear of the northeast (Detroit Drive facing) canopy, and remove the rear of the canopy from the pop-up central volume (Exhibit 8). The rear wall of the structure will be infilled with a block wall to match the existing. The edges of the canopy that are proposed to be altered will be finished with metal fascia to match the existing. The demolished portion of the building will be replaced with asphalt surface parking.

The applicant has submitted a compatibility assessment completed by Shannon Lopez of Cogstone (Exhibit 9). The report states, "Based on a review of the Project plans and the precedent set by previous removal of the resource's original materials, Cogstone finds that the building reduction will not disqualify the Helgeson Buick Showroom from its previous recommendations as eligible for listing in the CRHR or at the local level. The International Style Showroom and its character defining features will remain extant."

PROJECT ANALYSIS

FACTS FOR FINDINGS

Pursuant to Chapter 20.25.050 of Title 20 (Cultural Resources) of the Riverside Municipal Code (RMC), the Cultural Heritage Board and Historic Preservation Officer must make applicable findings of specific Principles and Standards when approving or denying a Certificate of Appropriateness. For proposed projects involving individually significant Cultural Resources (i.e. City Landmarks, Structures of Merit, eligible Landmarks, etc.), the project should demonstrate:

Chapter 20.25.050.A – Principles and Standards of Site Development and Design Review for Individually Significant Resources			
Consistency or compatibility with the architectural period and the character-defining elements of the historic building, such as colors, textures, materials, fenestration, decorative features, details, height, scale, massing, and method of construction.	N/A	Consistent	Inconsistent
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed project retains the character-defining features of the building, as previously listed. The block constructed rear portion of the building is not identified as a character-defining features of the building and the rear wall will be infilled with concrete block matching the existing. The altered portions of the canopies will be finished with metal fascia to match existing. 			
The proposed project does not destroy or pose a substantial adverse change to an important architectural, historical, cultural or archaeological feature or features of the Cultural Resource.	N/A	Consistent	Inconsistent
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rear portion of the structure is not identified as being a character-defining feature of the building. The removal of a portion of the metal canopies, will be minimal and located at the rear of the structure with limited visibility from Auto Drive (the primary street). Additionally, the exposed portions of the canopy edges will be finished to match the existing, as previously stated. 			

**Chapter 20.25.050.A – Principles and Standards of Site Development and Design
Review for Individually Significant Resources**

- Therefore, the removal of the rear of the building will not destroy or pose an adverse change to important architectural features.

Compatibility with context considering the following factors: grading; site development; orientation of buildings; off-street parking; landscaping; signs; street furniture; public areas; relationship of the project to its surroundings.	N/A	Consistent	Inconsistent
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Facts:**
- The proposed project will not alter the building orientation and its relationship to the surrounding area. The building will remain diagonally oriented and fronting onto the corner of the site.
 - The proposed asphalt parking area is consistent with existing surface parking.
 - There is no proposed grading as part of the project.

Consistency with the principles of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.	N/A	Consistent	Inconsistent
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Facts:** The project is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standard for Rehabilitation as follows:
- The project constitutes as minimal changes to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships to facilitate continued use of the property.
 - The historic character of a property, specifically a steel and glass International Style building fronting onto the corner of the parcel, will be retained and preserved.
 - The rear block constructed portion of the building is not a considered a character-defining feature of the building. Additionally, the rear portion of the canopies to be altered, have limited visibility from the public right of way. Therefore, the removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property have been avoided.
 - The distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property have been preserved, including but not limited to a floor-to-ceiling glass central volume with an overhanging metal flat roof and project metal canopies supported by thin posts.
 - Exterior alterations will not destroy character-defining historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property, as previously stated.
 - The new proposed infill wall at the rear will be compatible with the historic materials as it will be similar to the existing block found at the rear of the building yet will be differentiated through the use of modern material.

Chapter 20.25.050.A – Principles and Standards of Site Development and Design Review for Individually Significant Resources			
As applicable, consistency with other federal, state, and/or local guidelines.	N/A	Consistent	Inconsistent
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facts:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No additional federal, state, and/or local guidelines apply to this project. 			

AUTHORIZATION AND COMPLIANCE SUMMARY

Regulatory Codes	Consistent	Inconsistent
<p>Historic Preservation Code Consistency (Title 20)</p> <p>The proposed project is consistent with Section 20.25.050 of the City of Riverside Municipal Code. The proposed project is compatible with the massing, size, scale, materials, and use of architectural features of former Helgeson Buick showroom building.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The block portion of the building is not identified as a character-defining element of the historic structure; therefore, the proposed project will have less than significant impact to the historical significance of the building. The alterations to the canopies will be minimal and located at the rear, with limited visibility from the public right-of-way. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed project has been found consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and therefore is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to Sections 15301 (Existing Facilities) and 15331 (Historic Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation), as it constitutes as modifications to an existing eligible historic resource that is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

PUBLIC NOTICE, COMMUNITY MEETINGS, AND COMMENTS

Public notices were mailed to property owners within 300-feet of the site. As of the writing this report, no comments have been received by Staff.

APPEAL INFORMATION

Actions by the CHB, including any environmental finding, may be appealed to City Council within ten calendar days after the decision. Appeal filing and processing information may be obtained from the Planning Division by calling 951-826-5371.

STRATEGIC PLAN

This item contributes to the Envision Riverside 2025 City Council Strategic Priority 5 – High Performing Government (Goal 5.3 – Enhance communication and collaboration with community members to improve transparency, build public trust, and encourage shared decision-making).

This item aligns with the following Cross-Cutting Threads:

1. Community Trust: The application for a Certificate of Appropriateness is being reviewed at a public meeting of the CHB and notices were sent to property owners within a 300-foot radius of the property, providing an opportunity to comment on the project.
2. Equity: The application for a Certificate of Appropriateness will be discussed at a CHB meeting which is available to all residents and can be viewed both in person and virtually.
3. Fiscal Responsibility: The application for a Certificate of Appropriateness has no impact on City General Funds.
4. Innovation: The application for a Certificate of Appropriateness makes use of historic design principle with new construction to eliminate potential impacts to the historic resource.
5. Sustainability and Resiliency: The application for a Certificate of Appropriateness provides an opportunity for continued economic viability of the existing dealership.

EXHIBITS LIST

1. Staff Recommended Conditions of Approval
2. Aerial Photo/Location
3. 2009 DPR Form
4. 2013 DPR Form
5. 2023 Historic Built Environment Assessment by Cogstone
6. P11-0711 - CHB Staff Report 2-15-2012
7. CHB Minutes 2-15-2012
8. Project Plans (Site Plan, Demo Plan, Floor Plan, Demo Roof Plan, Roof Plan, Elevations)
9. Compatibility Assessment by Cogstone
10. Site Photos

Prepared by: Scott Watson, Historic Preservation Officer
Approved by: Maribeth Tinio, City Planner



CITY OF
RIVERSIDE

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT PLANNING DIVISION

EXHIBIT 1 – CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

PLANNING CASE: DP-2024-00613

MEETING DATE: September 18, 2024

CASE SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

1. The masonry block infill material on the west elevation shall be the same style, block size, and painted to match the existing block building.
2. Original address lettering shall be preserved and maintained in its present location.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

3. There is a one-year time limit in which to secure the necessary building permits required by this Certificate of Appropriateness. If unable to obtain necessary permits, a time extension request letter stating the reasons for the extension of time shall be submitted to the Planning Division. HP staff may administratively extend the term of a Certificate of Appropriateness for one year, no more than twice.

PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT THE APPLICANT WILL NOT BE NOTIFIED BY THE PLANNING DIVISION ABOUT THE PENDING EXPIRATION OF THE CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS.

4. The project must be completed in accordance with the Cultural Heritage Board's (CHB) Certificate of Appropriateness approval, including all conditions listed. Any subsequent changes to the project must be approved by the CHB or HP staff.
5. This approval for the Certificate of Appropriateness is for design concept only and does not indicate the project has been thoroughly checked for compliance with all requirements of law. As such, it is not a substitute for the formal building permit plan check process, and other changes may be required during the plan check process.
6. Granting this Certificate of Appropriateness shall in no way exclude or excuse compliance with all other applicable rules and regulations in effect at the time this permit is exercised.