

Staff Report # PB2004-0083h

Description: Historic District & Landmark Advisory Review of a proposal to replace the second story rear windows at the River Street Café in the local historic district. Project location is 429 River Street, at Jacob. Applicant is George Schroeter, 429 River Street, Troy, NY 12180.

Analysis: The submitted site plan and information, in the staff's opinion meets or exceeds the minimum standard for Site Plan Review for **Minor** projects and is recommended for review on the **Consent** agenda.

Copies of the site plan have been circulated to other city staff for review. The following comments have been raised: None.

Planning Staff comments:

Proposal for replacement of 2nd story rear elevation windows prepared by owner and contractor. (3) alternative proposals for existing window replacement are presented. Owner proposes selecting the \$12,600 lowest cost alternative consisting of (3) triple windows with a transom.

Issue:

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (SISR) No. 2 – the historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property shall be avoided.

Discussion:

1. Economic hardship argument is presented: The revised detailed estimate of energy cost payback was provided by NYSERDA indicates that an investment of \$9,320 in replacement windows will have a payback period of 17 years and is eligible for the NYSERDA Program loan fund program. Primary reason for window replacements is customer comfort and secondarily the cost of energy. If the replacement windows are coupled with a range of other energy savings improvements, the pay back period can be significantly lowered to 5.5 years. The lowest cost proposal received by the owner provides a window that does not match the existing windows. The cost proposal that would approximately match the existing windows is \$16,850. This energy cost payback period is estimated to be over 30 years.
2. Other notes:
 - a. Replacement of windows on the 2nd story rear of the building does not address the need for minor repairs and repainting work on the 2 sets of doors, the 1st story windows and the steel stairs and rear access.
 - b. Owner is proposing to use balance of 50/50 grant program funding to complete this work.

Staff Recommendation:

The New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has submitted a letter stating that in their opinion the project will have No Adverse Effect upon cultural resources in or eligible for inclusion in the National Registers of Historic Places. Staff recommends approval of the proposal as recommended by SHPO.

Zoning Board of Appeals action: Pursuant to the Permit Denial Form issued by the Bureau of Code Enforcement, action by the Zoning Board of Appeals of the City of Troy is not required.

S.E.Q.R.A.: Pursuant to 6 N.Y.C.R.R. Part 617, the described proposal is subject to the State Environmental Quality Review Act and is classified as an UNLISTED action. The applicant has completed an Environmental Assessment Form (E.A.F.), which indicates that no significant impact to the environment is likely to occur as a result of the proposed action. Based upon this information, staff recommends that the Commission make the following determination:

The Commission finds this proposal to be subject to the S.E.Q.R.A.; no Federal agencies are involved, no other agencies are known to be involved, it is considered to be an UNLISTED action per 6 N.Y.C.R.R. Part 617; and based upon the submission of an Environmental Assessment Form, adequate information is available to determine that no significant impacts are likely to occur as a result of this proposal.

Conclusion: Planning Staff recommends the site plan proposal be reviewed on the **Consent** agenda at the December 9th, 2004 Planning Board meeting.

Prepared for the scheduled public hearing: 12/09/04

Prepared by: VZ/AP

PB04-083