

AGENDA ITEM

TO: Planning and Zoning Commission

THROUGH: Brandon Opiela, Planning Manager

FROM: Eleana Galicia, Planner I

SUBJECT: Conduct a Public Hearing to Consider/Discuss/Act on a Meritorious Exception for Holiday Inn Express, Located Approximately 1,865 Feet East of Alma Road and on the South Side of Henneman Way

APPROVAL PROCESS: The Planning and Zoning Commission is the final approval authority for the proposed Meritorious Exception.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends denial of the proposed meritorious exception request due to the lack of masonry exterior finishing materials used in the construction of the building.

APPLICATION SUBMITTAL DATE: January 26, 2015 (Original Application)
February 9, 2015 (Revised Submittal)

ITEM SUMMARY: The applicant is requesting a meritorious exception to the Architectural Standard and Site Standards section of the Zoning Ordinance for a hotel (Holiday Inn Express). The applicant has indicated in the letter of intent that the design and exterior finishing materials are dictated by the franchisor, InterContinental Hotel Group, and the look and feel of the structure promotes a national brand that enhances the ability to attract hotel guests. The applicant is proposing to utilize primarily stucco as an exterior finishing material, with cultured stone in limited areas as shown on the attached elevations.

The meritorious exception is being requested because the proposed architectural elevations:

1. Do not meet the required minimum 50 percent masonry cover each exterior wall.

The applicant has submitted an associated site plan (15-022SP) currently under review by Staff.

COMPLIANCE WITH ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS: The purpose of the architectural standards is to set minimum standards for the appearance of non-residential buildings and corresponding site elements, which are recognized as enhancing property values and are in the interest of the general welfare of the City of McKinney. The proposed stucco material is not permitted as a primary exterior finishing material, and as such, the respective elevations are not in compliance with the architectural standards of the Zoning Ordinance.

The provisions within the Architectural and Site Standards of the Zoning Ordinance regarding meritorious exceptions state that “it is not the intent of this ordinance to discourage innovation. An architectural and site design that does not conform with the specific requirements of this ordinance, but which has merit by marking a positive contribution to the visual environment and which is appropriate to the site and use, may be submitted for consideration as a meritorious exception.”

The Architectural and Site Standards section of the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to granting a meritorious exception states that the Planning and Zoning Commission shall consider the following factors in determining the extent of any exception to be granted:

1. The extent to which the application meets other specific standards of this ordinance;
2. The extent to which the application meets the spirit and intent of this ordinance through the use of building materials, colors, and façade design to create a building of exceptional quality and appearance;
3. The positive or negative impact of the proposed project on surrounding property use and property values, in comparison to the expected impact of a project which could be built in conformance with the standards of this ordinance; and
4. The extent to which the proposed project accomplishes City goals.

MINIMUM MASONRY PERCENTAGE: Section 146-139 (Architectural and Site Standards) of the Zoning Ordinance states that for all non-residential uses in non-industrial districts, at least 50 percent of each wall shall be covered with a masonry finishing material. Acceptable masonry finishing materials are brick, stone, or synthetic stone, including, but not limited to, slate, flagstone, granite, and limestone and marble. The applicant is proposing to utilize 100 percent stucco on several walls featured on each elevation. As such, the applicant does not comply with the minimum 50 percent masonry requirement for each wall of the building, and has only provided 11% masonry per elevation on the north and south sides and 27% masonry per elevation on the east and west sides.

MERITORIOUS DESIGN: The intent of the Architectural Standards Ordinance is to set standards for the appearance of non-residential and multiple family buildings and corresponding site elements, which are recognized as enhancing property values and are in the interest of the general welfare of the City. Staff believes that the design and character of the proposed building could still be attained utilizing exterior finishing materials allowed by the Architectural and Site Standards of the Zoning Ordinance including, but not limited to brick, stone, or synthetic stone. Staff is of the opinion that the same design, as presented, can be accomplished through the use of additional approved finishing materials (meeting the minimum masonry percentages per wall), and therefore recommends denial of the request. In addition, Staff does not feel that the use of stucco as an exterior finishing material constitutes a project of exceptional quality or innovative design and, as such, recommends denial of the proposed meritorious exception.

IMPACT ON EXISTING DEVELOPMENT: Staff is of the opinion that the proposed exterior finishing materials on the building is inconsistent with the existing (Advantage Self Storage, 2nd Family Dog's, La Quinta, and Boston's The Gourmet Pizza Restaurant) surrounding developments which utilize a larger percentage of masonry (stone) materials in compliance with the Architectural and Site Standards of the Zoning Ordinance. Staff feels the applicant should provide additional masonry finishing materials to ensure a positive contribution is made to the surrounding visual environment.

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION: A meritorious exception shall not be granted to serve as a convenience to the applicant or for reasons related to economic hardship.

OPPOSITION TO OR SUPPORT OF REQUEST: Staff has not received any comments either in opposition to or in support of this request.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Location Map and Aerial Exhibit
- Letter of Intent
- Proposed Architectural Elevations
- Renderings (Informational Only)
- PowerPoint Presentation