

**SALT LAKE CITY HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION  
REQUEST BY TROLLEY SQUARE ASSOCIATES LLC, REPRESENTED BY  
MARK BLANCARTE FOR APPROVAL OF AN EXTERNAL STAIRCASE ON THE  
MAIN BUILDING AT TROLLEY SQUARE LOCATED AT APPROXIMATELY 602  
EAST 500 SOUTH. THE PROPERTY IS LOCATED IN THE CENTRAL CITY  
HISTORIC DISTRICT.  
CASE NO. 470-07-08  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4, 2007**

**OVERVIEW**

The owners of Trolley Square are proposing to install an external staircase and doorway on the south side of the main building on Trolley Square. The applicants intend to remove two existing external staircases on the southwest corner of the main building and replace them with a single staircase and doorway located on the southeast corner. The proposal is part of an internal remodel that includes some external changes to the main building. This petition is being reviewed by the HLC because it is highly visible and adds a new building element to a landmark site. The property is located in a CS Community Shopping Zoning District. The purpose of the CS Zoning District is to “provide an environment for efficient and attractive shopping center development at a community level scale.”



Approximate location of proposed staircase and doorway

## **BACKGROUND**

Trolley Square is deeply rooted in the history of Salt Lake City. The site was originally designated as the 10<sup>th</sup> Ward by Brigham Young in the original grid of the City. It was used as the site of the territorial and state fair until 1908, when it was converted to a trolley yard. The site was used by the Utah Light and Railway Company as the main Trolley yard for the city until 1945, when trolley service in Salt Lake City stopped. The site was used as a garage for the Utah Transit Authority buses and Utah Power's maintenance vehicles. At that time the site was littered with junk vehicles, old tires, etc (source: Utah State Historical Society). In 1972, the site was rehabilitated into a shopping center.

## **PROPOSAL**

The applicants are proposing to install a new external staircase in conjunction with an interior remodel of the main building on Trolley Square. The staircase will provide an employee entrance to the second level of the main building. There are currently two external staircases on the south side of the main building that the applicants are proposing to remove. The staircases were added at some point after Trolley Square was converted to a shopping center.

The proposed staircase and doorway will be located near the southeast corner of the main building. The staircase will be masonry that matches the existing brick on the buildings at Trolley Square. The door will be a black metal. The staircase landing will be approximately twelve (12) feet above grade. The railing will extend 3-4 feet above the landing for a total height of fifteen (15) to sixteen (16) feet above grade. The grade slopes from the east to the west. The doorway will be a single door approximately three and one half (3 ½) feet wide. The structure will extend approximately four (4) feet from the building. The property line is approximately seven and one-half (7 ½) feet from the building. The existing staircases are approximately three and one-half (3 ½) feet from the property line.

The proposed staircase encroaches on the required corner side yard setback of thirty (30) feet. The south wall of the building encroaches within the setback as well. The applicants have submitted a Planned Development petition requesting that the Planning Commission consider reducing the corner side yard setback to allow construction of the staircase.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **MASTER PLAN & ZONING CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **Central Community Master Plan**

The subject property is located in the area covered by the Central Community Master Plan. The Future Land Use Map in the Plan designates the property as Community Commercial.

The plan places some emphasis on historic preservation. The following Master Plan policies are relevant to his request:

*HP 1.4 Encourage new development, redevelopment, and subdivision of lots that are compatible with the character of existing development of historic districts or individual landmarks.*

*HP-3.1 Enforce regulations pertaining to historic districts and landmark sites.*

*HP-3.2 Ensure building construction is compatible with existing historic structures.*

### **Zoning Considerations**

The existing buildings on Trolley Square currently do not meet the minimum front yard or corner side yard setbacks in the CS Zoning District. The owners have submitted a redevelopment plan for the entire block that includes relocating existing structures, new construction and external alterations to the site. The applicants have submitted a Planned Development application to facilitate a site design that preserves the existing structures and allows for the construction of new retail buildings. This review is the first phase of the overall Planned Development process.

### **STAFF ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**

The standards for altering the exterior of a landmark site are outlined in Section 21A.34.020(G) – Standards for Certificate of Appropriateness For Alteration of a Landmark Site or Contributing Structure – of the Salt Lake City Zoning Ordinance. The ordinance requires that the proposed project substantially complies with the following standards:

**1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be used for a purpose that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment**

**Analysis:** The commercial use of Trolley Square was established in the early 1970's. The proposed external staircase and doorway is a minimal change that does not alter the defining characteristics of the building, the site, or the environment. Two (2) existing staircases located on the south side of the building will be removed.

**Finding:** The proposed external staircase and doorway are minimal changes to the defining characteristics of the main building on Trolley Square.

**2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.**

**Analysis:** The proposed staircase and door are minor changes to the main building. The staircase and door will require cutting a new doorway in the second level of the southern wall but no character defining features of the building will be obscured or removed. The south elevation shows the proposed doorway located below the detailing of the recessed segment of the wall. There are other existing doorways on the southern wall that do not have a discernable pattern and appear to be randomly placed. The proposal will not have an adverse impact on the features or spaces that characterize Trolley Square. The materials and color will not adversely impact the landmark site.

**Finding:** The proposed alteration will not have a negative impact on the features and spaces that characterize Trolley Square.

**3. All sites, structures and objects shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create a false sense of history or architecture are not allowed;**

**Analysis:** The proposed staircase and door will be used as an employee access for the internal retail spaces in the southeast corner of the second level. The other external staircases on the south wall that the applicants are proposing to remove are simply designed and colored to be non intrusive. The proposed staircase will be made of masonry that matches the masonry used on the main building.

**Design Standards for Additions**

**8.4 Design a new addition to be recognized as a product of its own time.** An addition shall be made distinguishable from the historic building, while also remaining visually compatible with these earlier features. A change in setbacks of the addition from the historic building, a subtle change in material, or a differentiation between historic and more current styles are all techniques that may be considered to help define a change from old to new construction.

**Central City Design Guidelines**

**13.30 Use primary building materials that will appear similar to those used historically.** Appropriate building materials include: brick, stucco, and painted wood. Substitute materials may be considered under some circumstances. See Sections 2.0 and 6.0 and page 126.

**Finding:** The proposed staircase and door use similar materials that are consistent with the rest of the building on the block. The proposed design does not create a false sense of history or architecture.

**4. Alterations or additions that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved;**

**Analysis:** The proposed staircase and door will not alter the historic significance of previous alterations or additions.

**Finding:** The proposed staircase and door will not alter any alterations or additions that have acquired historic significance in their own right.

**5. Distinctive features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved;**

**Analysis:** The proposed staircase and door will require cutting a new doorway in the south wall of the main building. This will remove some of the brick work done by the original builders of the structure. The changes will be minor and will slightly alter the south wall. If any damage is done to the mortar or brick, it must be repaired in a method that matches the original materials and craftsmanship. The applicants have not provided information about what they plan to fill the space of the two doorways that they plan to remove. The brick removed from the area of the proposed staircase and door may be used to fill in the voids where the current doors are.

**Design Standards for Primary Materials**

**2.6 When repointing masonry, preserve original mortar characteristics, including its composition, profile, and color.** In some cases, matching the composition of the historic mortar mix may be essential to the preservation of the brick itself.

**2.10 Match the size, proportions, finish, and color of the original masonry unit, if a portion of a historic masonry wall must be replaced.**

**Finding:** The proposed staircase and doorway will not alter the distinctive features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize the site. If the original materials are damaged as part of the construction process, the damaged materials must be replaced using compatible materials and construction techniques.

**6. Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced wherever feasible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, texture and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historic, physical or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other structures or objects;**

**Analysis:** This standard is not applicable to this request.

**Finding:** The proposal does not include the replacement of any architectural features.

**7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible;**

**Analysis:** The structures on Trolley Square were sandblasted in the early 1970's to remove paint. If any surface cleaning is required as part of this proposal, it shall comply with today's standard.

### **Design Standards for Primary Materials**

**2.1 Preserve the historic appearance of original materials.** Preservation includes proper maintenance of the material to prevent deterioration.

**2.7 Use the gentlest means possible to clean the surface of a structure.** Perform a test patch to determine that the cleaning method will cause no damage to the material surface. Many procedures can actually have an unanticipated negative effect upon building materials and result in accelerated deterioration or a loss of character. Harsh cleaning methods, such as sandblasting, damage the weather-protective glaze on brick and change its historic appearance. Such procedures are prohibited. If cleaning is appropriate, a low pressure water wash is preferred. Chemical cleaning may be considered if a test patch is first reviewed.

**Finding:** All surface cleaning of the structure shall utilize the gentlest means possible.

**8. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant cultural, historical, architectural or archaeological material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property, neighborhood or environment;**

**Analysis:** The proposed staircase and doorway are simply designed and will not destroy significant cultural, historical, architectural or archeological material because the materials and colors are similar to what has been used in the past when the site was rehabilitated to a shopping center.

**Finding:** The proposed staircase and doorway will not destroy the significant cultural, historical, architectural or archaeological material and the design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property, neighborhood and environment.

**9. Additions or alterations to structures and objects shall be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible in massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment;**

**Analysis:** The staircase and doorway would not impact the essential form and integrity of the structure if they are unobtrusive and consistent with other external features added after the site was converted to a shopping center. The proposal includes the use of brick that matches the brick of the main building and a black metal doorway.

### **General Design Standards**

**12.1 Keep color schemes simple.** Using one base color for the building is preferred. Muted colors are appropriate for the base color. Using only one or two accent colors is also encouraged, except where precedent exists for using more than two colors with some architectural styles. See also the discussion of specific architectural styles.

**12.2 Coordinating the entire building in one color scheme is usually more successful than working with a variety of palettes.** Using the color scheme to establish a sense of overall composition for the building is strongly encouraged.

**12.9 The use of traditional site structures is encouraged.** Constructing retaining walls and fences that are similar in scale, texture and finish to those used historically is appropriate. See also Section 1.0.

**Finding:** The staircase should be constructed out of materials that are compatible with the materials used for alterations after the site was converted to a shopping center in order to protect the essential form and integrity of the structure.

### **10. Certain building materials are prohibited including the following:**

- a. Vinyl or aluminum cladding when applied directly to an original or historic material, and**
- b. Any other imitation siding material designed to look like wood siding but fabricated from an imitation material or materials;**

**Analysis:** The proposed staircase and door do not use vinyl or aluminum cladding applied directly to the structure or historic material. The staircase and door will be black metal that matches the color and materials of other elements on the structures.

**Finding:** The proposal does not include the use of prohibited materials.

**11. Any new sign and any change in the appearance of any existing sign located on a landmark site or within the H historic preservation overlay district, which is visible from any public way or open space shall be consistent with the historic character of the landmark site or H historic preservation overlay district and shall comply with the standards outlined in part IV, [chapter 21A.46](#) of this title;**

**Analysis:** There are no new signs proposed in association with the staircase and doorway.

**Finding:** No new signs are proposed with the addition of the staircase and doorway.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff finds that the proposed development meets the standards specified in the ordinance, and recommends approval of this project, subject to following conditions:

- 1) This approval is for design only; all other City requirements must be met prior to obtaining a building permit.
- 2) That the staircase and doorway are designed to be consistent with other external staircases and doorways located on the site.
- 3) That the Planning Commission grants a reduction in the required setbacks through the Planned Development process.
- 4) If the Planning Commission proposes alterations that deviate substantially from the proposal reviewed by the Historic Landmark Commission, staff recommends that the proposed project return to the Historic Landmark Commission for their review.

If the Historic Landmarks Commission determines that other design features are required, staff recommends that the Commission include those features as conditions of approval.

Nick Norris, AICP  
Principal Planner  
March 29, 2007

Attachments: Exhibit A: Site Plan  
Exhibit B: Details of external staircase and doorway.



**Exhibit A**  
**Site Plan**

**Exhibit B**  
**Details of External Staircase**