

# SALT LAKE CITY HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION

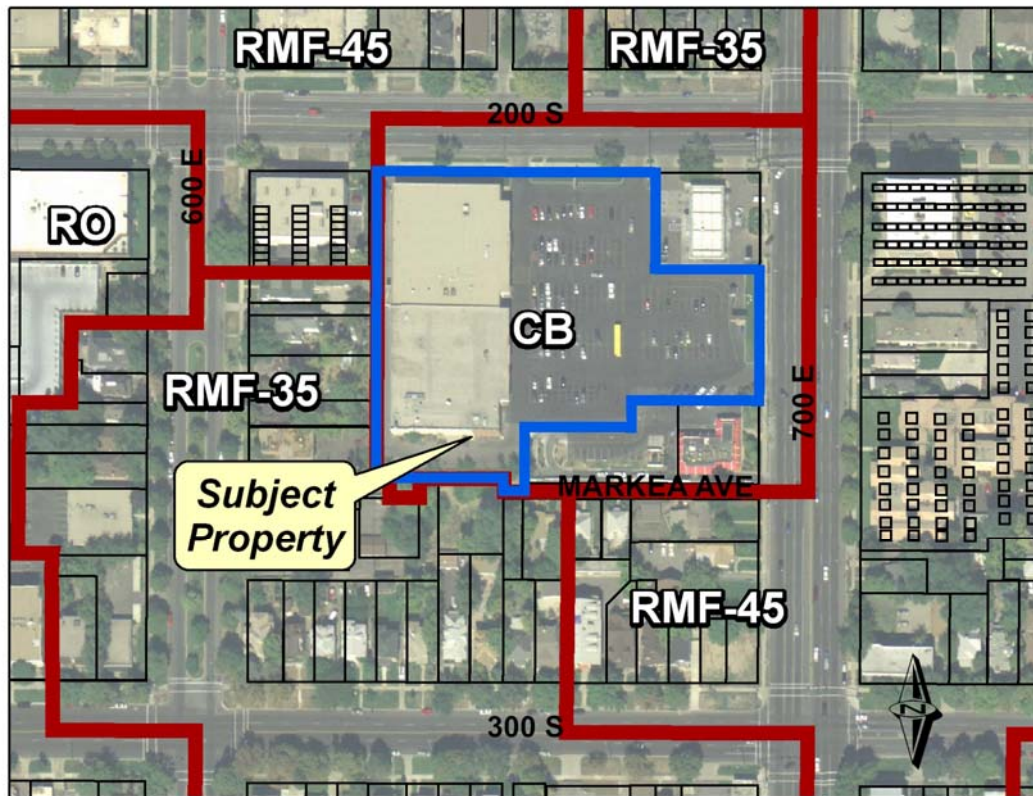
REQUEST TO ALTER THE FRONT FAÇADE OF THE BIG LOTS/RITE  
AID BUILDING AND CONSTRUCT AN ADDITIONAL BUILDING ON  
THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 220 SOUTH 700 EAST,  
IN THE CENTRAL CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT

CASE 470-07-12

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, 2007

## OVERVIEW

Nick Shubin, of the Bolo Corporation, owner of the subject property, represented by Russ Naylor of Nichols-Naylor Architects, is requesting approval for an exterior remodel of the front façade of the Big Lots/Rite Aid building, as well as a new building on the same parcel located adjacent to and fronting 700 East. This retail complex is zoned CB (Community Business District). The purpose of the CB District is *“intended to provide for the close integration of moderately sized commercial areas with adjacent residential neighborhoods.”*



## BACKGROUND

The subject site is currently occupied by the Big Lot/Rite Aid building which is approximately 53,636 square feet in size. The building permit for the existing structure was originally issued in February 1968. The actual construction of the building occurred sometime shortly after this date, and is therefore a non-contributing structure in the District.

### **Commercial Area Features in the Central City Historic District**

Commercial areas in Central City are specifically addressed in the “Design Guidelines for Residential Historic Districts in Salt Lake City”. This section is relevant to the proposed commercial remodel and new construction, and reads:

*While most of the district retains a traditional residential character, some major commercial streets bisect the neighborhood in an east-west direction. These have redeveloped recently with commercial uses in auto-oriented designs and as a result, no historic context exists there.*

*Franchise facilities appear frequently along the cross streets. Most of these are set back substantially from the street, with large parking areas located in front. Large signs are often mounted on tall poles and landscaping is used sparsely. Curb cuts appear frequently and extensive portions of most sites are paved with hard surfaces. The result is that these areas offer little to the pedestrian-friendly character of the historic residential streets in the district. When viewed from within the more intact residential portions of the district, these commercial zones are visually disruptive.*

*The design goal for these commercial areas is to enhance the pedestrian environment and to minimize negative visual impacts as seen from the historic residential portions of the district. It is not the intent to create a “historical” image for buildings in these areas, but simply to apply principles of good urban design that will enhance the visual quality while accepting the “contemporary” character that exists there.*

## PROPOSAL

The applicant is requesting approval to remodel the front façade of the Big Lots/Rite Aid building. The existing concrete arching features that support that portion of the roof that extends over the entrances and front walkway will be removed. The applicant proposes that the building will remain with a flat roof and five (5) parapet features rising over the building entrances and windows. The applicant proposes fabric awnings over the front entrance ways and windows. The remodel materials consist primarily of brick with stucco accents. The windows are aluminum framed. Wall mounted light fixtures are proposed.

The applicant is also proposing a new building of 6,833 square feet to be located on the same property yet fronting on 700 East functioning as a pad site. The new construction will mirror the remodel of the Big Lots/Rite Aid building in terms of design features and

building materials. The new building will have an entrance door fronting 700 East, in addition to doorways along the south side of the building. A pedestrian walkway extending from the proposed building will provide a pedestrian connection with the sidewalk on 700 East.

## ANALYSIS

### Requirements of the Zoning Ordinance

All proposed work must comply with all applicable development standards of the CB Zoning District. The design guidelines for the zoning districts are intended to facilitate retail that is pedestrian in its orientation and scale, while also acknowledging the importance of transit and automobile access to the site and include the following:

- **Maximum Setback**

A maximum setback is required for at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the building façade. The maximum setback is fifteen feet (15').

- **Maximum Height**

Thirty feet (30') or two (2) stories, whichever is less.

- **Minimum First Floor Glass**

The first floor elevations facing a street of all new buildings or buildings in which the property owner is modifying the size of windows on the front façade, shall not have less than forty percent (40%) glass surfaces. All first floor glass shall be non-reflective.

- **Facades**

Provide at least one operable building entrance per elevation that faces a public street. Buildings that face multiple streets are only required to have one door on any street, if the facades for all streets meet the forty percent (40%) glass requirement.

- **Maximum Length**

The maximum length of any blank wall uninterrupted by windows, doors, art or architectural detailing at the first floor level shall be fifteen feet (15').

**Discussion:** The setback for the new building facing 700 East exceeds the fifteen foot maximum. This is due to the fact that there is an easement for ingress and egress to the Chevron station that runs parallel to 700 East along this front lot line. This document was recorded with the Salt Lake Clerk and Recorder's Office on April 16, 1968, book 2649, page 382. The applicant has proposed to construct the new building as close to 700 East as possible without encroaching on the easement. This distance is forty-five feet (45') from the property line fronting 700 East. The applicant indicated that discussions took place regarding the easement, however the beneficiary of the easement was unwilling to renegotiate the easement agreement.

The elevation plans show that the maximum building height of thirty feet (30') will not be exceeded. The measurement from grade to the top of the tallest parapet is thirty feet (30') on both the existing and proposed buildings.

The elevation drawings for the new building also show that the intent of the minimum first floor glass requirement has been met. The entrance door and sidewalk link facing 700 East facilitate pedestrian movement. The service side of the building (north elevation) has been designed in such a manner such that doors and architectural details break up the monotony of this utilitarian façade, meeting the intent of the Ordinance.

**Findings:** The remodel of the Big Lots/Rite Aid building meets the intent of the criteria for building height and minimum glass requirements. The proposed new construction meets the intent of the Zoning Ordinance in terms of building setback, building height, minimum glass, design of facades, and maximum length of any blank wall.

### **Zoning Ordinance Requirements for the Historic Preservation Overlay District**

The Historic Landmark Commission has design review authority with respect to this request. In order to make its decision, the Commission must use the following standards.

#### *21A.34.020 H Historic Preservation Overlay District:*

Staff has evaluated this proposal in terms of Section 21A.34.020(H), *Standards for Certificate of Appropriateness Involving New Construction or Alteration of a Noncontributing Structure*, which states: *In considering an application for a certificate of appropriateness involving new construction, or alterations of noncontributing structures, the historic landmark commission, or planning director when the application involves the alteration of a noncontributing structure, shall determine whether the project substantially complies with all of the following standards that pertain to the application, is visually compatible with surrounding structures and streetscape as illustrated in any design standards adopted by the historic landmark commission and city council and is in the best interest of the city.*

#### *1. Scale and Form.*

*a. Height and Width. The proposed height and width shall be visually compatible with surrounding structures and streetscape;*

*b. Proportion of Principal Facades. The relationship of the width to the height of the principal elevations shall be in scale with surrounding structures and streetscape;*

*c. Roof Shape. The roof shape of a structure shall be visually compatible with the surrounding structures and streetscape; and*

*d. Scale of a Structure. The size and mass of the structures shall be visually compatible with the size and mass of surrounding structures and streetscape.*

**Findings:** The remodel proposal for the Big Lots/Rite Aid building will not alter the scale and form of this structure; only the façade materials, therefore these criteria are not applicable.

The proposed new construction will be compatible with surrounding development in terms of scale and form, and will somewhat mirror the existing Big Lots/Rite Aid structure should it receive approval for the exterior remodel as proposed. The roof shape for the new structure is consistent with other buildings on the same site and the adjacent properties, and therefore is visually compatible. The height of the new building will be less than the existing Big Lots/Rite Aid building. The proposed new structure will not be out of character with adjacent buildings such as the McDonalds to the south nor the Chevron to the north. The width, proportion of facades, roof form, scale and mass will be in keeping with the surrounding development, and will not be out of character for this commercial area.

## *2. Composition of Principal Facades.*

*a. Proportion of Openings. The relationship of the width to the height of windows and doors of the structure shall be visually compatible with surrounding structures and streetscape;*

*b. Rhythm of Solids to Voids in Facades. The relationship of solids to voids in the facade of the structure shall be visually compatible with surrounding structures and streetscape;*

*c. Rhythm of Entrance Porch and Other Projections. The relationship of entrances and other projections to sidewalks shall be visually compatible with surrounding structures and streetscape; and*

*d. Relationship of Materials. The relationship of the color and texture of materials (other than paint color) of the facade shall be visually compatible with the predominant materials used in surrounding structures and streetscape.*

**Findings:** The solid-to-void ratio, and the proportion of openings for the proposed façade remodel and the new building are consistent with that of other commercial strip mall type structures in the area, particularly the new development along 400 South that is also in this same Historic District. These ratios will be essentially the same on both of the subject buildings as well, creating a more cohesive shopping center in terms of visual compatibility. The relationship of the materials proposed for the Big Lots/Rite Aid and the new structure are the same and therefore will be visually compatible.

## *3. Relationship to Street.*

*a. Walls of Continuity. Facades and site structures, such as walls, fences and landscape masses shall, when it is characteristic of the area, form continuity along a street to ensure visual compatibility with the structures, public ways and places to which such elements are visually related;*

*b. Rhythm of Spacing and Structures on Streets. The relationship of a structure or object to the open space between it and adjoining structures or objects shall be visually compatible with the structures, objects, public ways and places to which it is visually related;*

*c. Directional Expression of Principal Elevation. A structure shall be visually compatible with the structures, public ways and places to which it is visually related in its orientation toward the street; and*

*d. Streetscape-Pedestrian Improvements. Streetscape and pedestrian improvements and any change in its appearance shall be compatible to the historic character of the landmark site or H historic preservation overlay district.*

**Findings:** The proposed façade remodel of the Big Lots/Rite Aid building will not alter the building’s relationship to the street and therefore these criteria are not applicable.

The proposed new structure will be an addition in the streetscape that will provide some “visual infill” in terms of creating a wall of continuity on the block. It will also fill a gap in terms of the rhythm and spacing between existing structures on the block face. Most importantly, the new building along the 700 East frontage will add to the pedestrian orientation and feel on the block, by creating more of a wall of building continuity, and providing a buffer to the existing sea of asphalt in front of the Big Lots/Rite Aid building.

*4. Subdivision of Lots. The planning director shall review subdivision plats proposed for property within an H historic preservation overlay district or of a landmark site and may require changes to ensure the proposed subdivision will be compatible with the historic character of the district and/or site(s).*

**Finding:** This criteria is not applicable in this case as no subdivision is proposed.

## **Design Guidelines for Commercial Areas in the Central City Historic District**

**13.31 Minimize the visual impacts of automobiles as seen from the sidewalk by pedestrians.** Provide landscaped buffer areas to screen and separate the sidewalk from parking and drive lanes within individual commercial sites.

**13.32 Screen service areas from the residential portions of the historic district.** Use fences, walls and planting materials to screen service areas. When feasible, locate service areas away from residential portions of the historic district.

**13.33 Minimize the visual impacts of signs.** This is particularly important as seen from within the residential portions of the historic district. Smaller signs are preferred. Monument signs and low pole-mounted signs are appropriate.

**13.34 Shield all site lighting such that it does not spill over into residential portions of the historic district.**

**Discussion:** The proposed new structure will minimize the visual impact of automobiles in the Big Lots/Rite Aid parking lot as observed from 700 East. The building and landscaping itself will break up this view corridor as well. New signage for both the Big Lots/Rite Aid building and the new structure will require separate applications and subsequent review by Historic Landmark Commission Staff.

**Finding:** To the extent that the design guidelines for commercial areas in the Central City Historic District are applicable, the proposed remodel and new construction adhere to these guidelines.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the discussion and findings of fact as noted in this staff report, as well as the attached documentation showing the proposed remodel of the façade of the Big Lots/Rite Aid building and the proposed construction of a new building on the site, Planning Staff recommends that the Historic Landmark Commission grant approval for the proposed development as presented, with the following conditions:

1. Approval of the final details of the design of the proposed project shall be delegated to the Planning Staff based upon direction given during the hearing from the Historic Landmark Commission.
2. The project must meet all other applicable City requirements, unless otherwise modified within the authority of the Historic Landmark Commission.

Lex Traughber  
Principal Planner  
Salt Lake City Planning Division

Attachments:  
Site Plans/Elevations