

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
PERMITS IN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICTS
SEPTEMBER 24, 2012
NRD-2012-0089
901 Congress Avenue
Congress Avenue

PROPOSAL

Construct a new 5-story building.

PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

The applicant proposes the construction of a new 4- and 5-story masonry building. The 4-story section of the building will face Congress Avenue and will have a 5-bay façade with a symmetrical composition. The first two floors of the building will have rusticated stone and highlighted by a smooth stone-surrounded central vault, which is repeated in the center of the 4-story section of the 9th Street side of the building. The ground floor will contain large windows with transoms above which will appear like a storefront. Windows on the second and upper floors outside of the central vault will have a 3:1 configuration. Windows in and above the central vault will be tri-partite with a larger central pane flanked by narrower panes on each side. The upper stories of the building will be constructed of smooth stone. At the top of the Congress Avenue elevation will be a gable-pedimented section, corresponding to a 5th floor, but set back from the Congress Avenue façade.

The 9th Street elevation of the building will have a 5-story presence and will be clad in smooth stone. The two existing masonry buildings on the 9th Street elevation will be retained as part of the composition of the building, and will be set off from the new building by means of recessing the connection between the new and the existing, and constructing a new cornice to set the existing buildings off from the new construction, in an effort to make it appear that the 5-story section of the building along 9th Street is an addition to the existing 2-story masonry buildings at street level. The entire building will have a new metal wraparound canopy, similar to that at the Stephen F. Austin Hotel at 7th Street and Congress Avenue.

STAFF COMMENTS

The applicants have presented their design to the Certificates of Appropriateness Review Committee and received mixed comments; the negative comments were related to erecting a historic-looking building in the place of a historic-looking building that will be demolished for the construction of this building. Later meetings with staff worked out some staff concerns about the definition and articulation of the existing buildings on 9th Street.

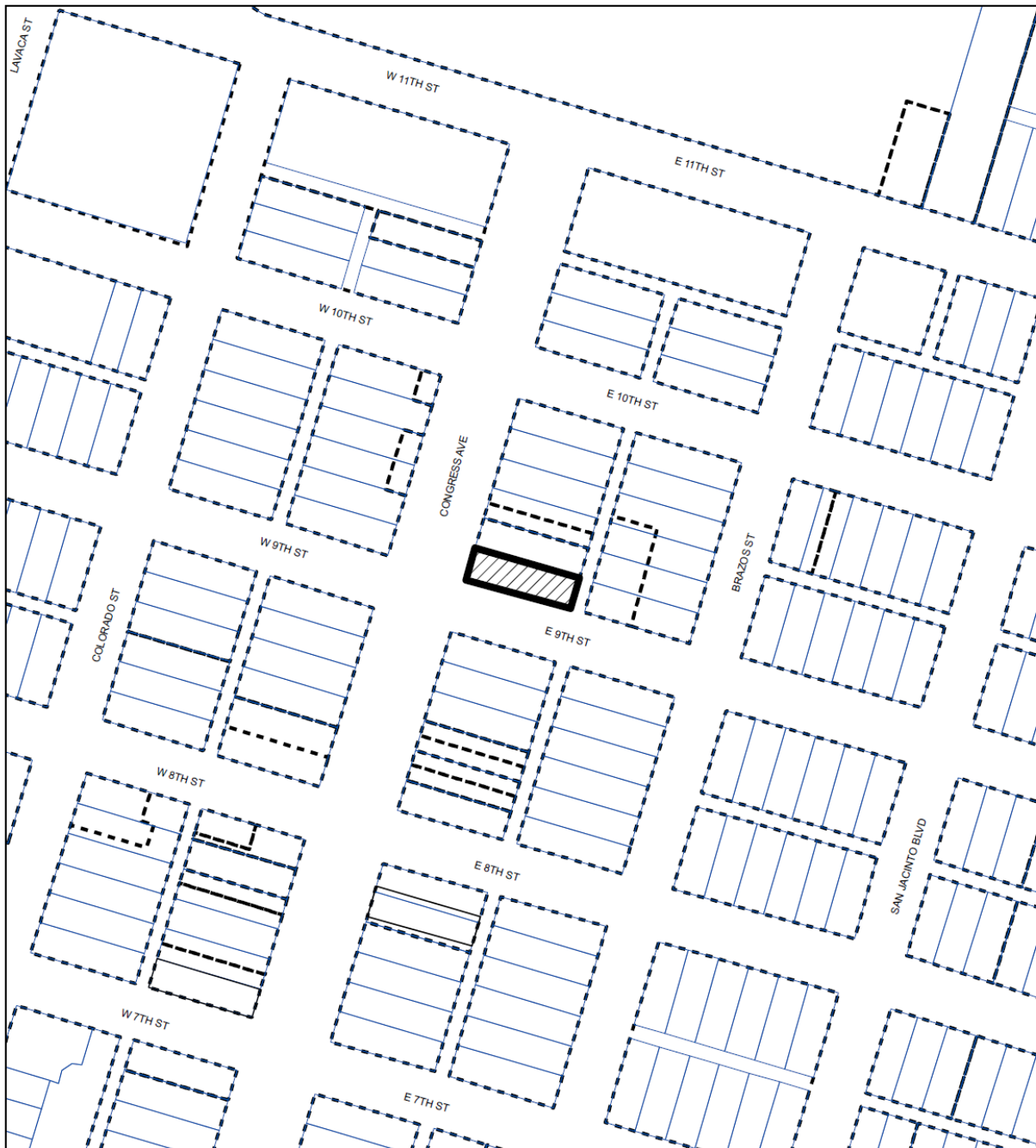
COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The applicant presented the case to the Certificate of Appropriateness Review Committee on September 10, 2012 to get a preliminary opinion on the proposed new construction. The comments of the committee members were mixed, with comments favorable to the design, scale, and use of quality materials on the building, and negative comments questioning the design of a historic-looking building instead of a more modern design. The applicants have consistently stressed that they favor a traditional looking building. Staff comments addressed the need for greater definition of the existing 9th Street buildings; the applicant has modified the plans for the new building giving the existing buildings greater identity.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Release the building permit. The applicants have responded to many comments and concerns about the original design of the building. The building does have a very traditional look to it, the existing 9th Street buildings have a greater definition than

originally proposed, and the building is in scale with the historic buildings and character of the Congress Avenue National Register Historic District.



SUBJECT TRACT



ZONING BOUNDARY

CASE#: NRD-2012-0089
LOCATION: 901 Congress Avenue



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The existing building at 901 Congress Avenue



These buildings facing E. 9th Street will be incorporated into the new building.