

REQUEST FOR CORNBRED SIGN ON THE FORMER DEPOT BUILDING

May 14, 2019

BACKGROUND:

City Council received a letter from Brian Torresi requesting City Council consideration of staff's application of development agreement language to the denial of request for new sign on the roof of the Depot building. City Council referred this letter to staff at its April 16th meeting.

The City of Ames and the current owner of the property at 500 Main Street have an agreement for use of parking on the site and preserving certain design qualities of the property. The current agreement is a restated agreement approved on November 14, 2017, replacing the original development agreement and amendments that preceded the restated agreement. **Of interest at this time is the language regarding alterations and additions to the Depot building on the site as it relates to a proposed sign for the new Cornbred barbeque restaurant.**

Section 3 of the Agreement reads as follows (emphasis added):

*3. DESIGN QUALITIES. Owner agrees that the former railroad depot building on the Property (the "Depot"), as it exists as of the Effective Date, shall be preserved and reused. **Alterations or additions to the Depot shall be compatible with the exterior historic qualities thereof.** To preserve the view of the Depot from Main Street, Owner hereby agrees that Owner shall not construct any structure (excluding light poles, landscaping, traffic signage, directional signage, parking signage, project signage, and banner poles) more than thirty-six (36) inches in height in the area that lies twenty-five (25) feet on either side of a line perpendicular to the center of the Depot extended North to the South line of Main Street, without the prior approval of the City. Commercial buildings existing on the Property as of the Effective Date shall maintain a functional entrance or exit to an abutting public street for each tenant space, except that tenant spaces solely facing the Parking Area 4 are exempt from this standard. The entrance at the corner of Main Street and Clark Avenue shall remain as a functional entrance for the public.*

The proposed sign would replace an existing sign panel on the roof above the entrance to the restaurant. The sign panel is the only existing sign on the roof of the building and is located slightly above the eave of the roof. The proposed sign would replace the sign panel with individually illuminated letters that are greater in height than the current sign panel by approximately 18-24 inches. Graphics of the signage are attached. **The Planning and Housing Director informed the applicant that the proposed sign was not compatible with the historic qualities of the Depot due to the style of the sign and the increased height of the sign as it is proposed on the roof of the building. The roof slope and materials are an important elements of the historic aesthetic quality of the building. Staff recommended sizing the sign to be no greater in height than that of the current sign support assembly for the panel sign, regardless of the style of the signage.**

The applicant disagrees with the interpretation of the Planning and Housing Director and is requesting that the City Council determine that their suggested sign is compatible with the historic qualities of the Depot. If City Council concurs with their request, staff will proceed with issuing sign permit.

Proposed Signage with Individual Letters



Existing Sign Panel

