

ITEM # 24
DATE 09/09/08

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR DOWNTOWN GRANT FUND ASSISTANCE FOR FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS AT 400 MAIN STREET

BACKGROUND:

Lucullan's Italian Grill, a tenant in the building at 400 Main Street, is applying for a Downtown Façade Improvement Grant for the renovation of the lower façade storefront and main entrance to Lucullan's on the east façade, with the consent of the owner of the building, Dorothy A. Schnormeier. Replacement of the display window, restoration of the kick plate, entrance, signs, lights, and related work are expected to cost \$20,000, resulting in a grant request for the \$10,000. In addition to this amount, the applicants are also requesting reimbursement of design fees of \$1,000. Lucullan's will be paying for the project.

This building was built in 1911 and 1912 and was the first fire-proofed building on Main Street, having been made of poured concrete. It was built by noted florist F. J. Olsan. An Iowa State college student, W.A. Jennings, worked on the construction. He later founded Economy Forms Company in Des Moines. The *Intensive Survey of the Central Business District* by Public Historian Will Page identified this building as contributing to both the historical and the architectural significance of the district. The building brings attention to an important new engineering technology and still retains a high degree of integrity. The retention of the original cavities of the display windows helps make the façade restoration possible. (See historical image attached)

The proposal is to remove the wood siding and cavity infill on the east bay of the front façade and from the Lucullan's entrance. At this entrance, the concrete behind the wood will be repaired and painted, the entrance door replaced, and sconce lights added. The existing canopy will remain. On the front façade, a new window will once again fill the cavity. It will be a six-light window with mullions separating the lights that are heavier than the grids of the original windows. This window will be very similar to the original window. The framed recessed detail in the kick plate will be restored. A new sign will be mounted on the building face between the lower and upper windows and a sign will be painted on the upper lights of the display window. Jo Myers-Walker, a local artist designed the project, including the signs and lights. (See existing and proposed images attached)

The City of Ames established the Downtown Design Guidelines in 2001, to ensure that façade improvements supported by the grant are consistent with the historical character of downtown. The design and proposed improvements meet these Guidelines in the following aspects:

- Retains all of the recommended streetscape elements
- Retains the individual "store" unit at the street level
- Replaces inappropriate front window with window that fits within original opening
- Removes Wild West false fronts
- Reveals and restores original concrete around the Lucullan's entrance

- Restores kick plate panels
- Sign painted on glass of window
- New sign above window that
 - is flush mounted to facade no higher than bottom of second floor windows,
 - creatively expresses the business character, and
 - fits the horizontal proportions of the building.

The grant program also provides for “reimbursement of design fees to reimburse the grant recipient for the documented fees of design professional” up to a maximum of \$1,000. The Council’s policy is to provide this reimbursement only for fees for projects that are awarded facade grants.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. The City Council can approve the request for a grant for \$10,000 from the Downtown Grant Fund for façade improvements at 400 Main Street and approve reimbursement of design fees up to maximum of \$1,000.
2. The City Council can deny the request for Downtown Grant Fund Assistance for façade improvements at 400 Main Street and associated design fees.
3. The City Council can refer this issue back to staff for additional information.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The improvements originally proposed for this façade grant had less visual impact than the current proposal. However, Mark Kassis and his designer were willing to work with staff and propose a more significant and more expensive project. That led to removal of the front window and surrounding wood infill and a new display window with more historic consistency. The new signs and lights add a contemporary, creative aspect that reflects the business. Although the signs are more contemporary, their placement fits the historic style and, like most business signs, can be expected to change over the years. **Therefore, the City Manager recommends that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, thereby approving a grant for \$10,000 from the Downtown Grant Fund for the property located at 400 Main Street and approve reimbursement of design fees up to maximum of \$1,000.**

If the grant is approved, the work will proceed. Once the work under the grant is completed, staff will confirm that it followed the approved proposal. The applicant then will submit invoices for the project and the City will reimburse the applicant for 50% of the cost up to a maximum of \$10,000. The applicant will also submit invoices for design fees and the City will reimburse the applicant up to \$1,000.

This is the 12th project funded from the Downtown Façade Grant program.

**Facade Grant Statement for Lucullan's Italian Grill.
400 Main Street**

Description of Project;

We are proposing to renovate the Front façade of 400 Main Street and the Side entrance in the Tom Evans Park. It is our intention to bring these design elements back to the original intent of the building.

The wood façade will be removed from both the Main Street façade and Tom Evans entrance and replaced with the original concrete of the building.

Main Street Facade

1. On the Main street façade we propose to remove the old wood and bring back the original Concrete Kickplate, remove the existing window and install the window back to the original size.
2. A new sign will be installed above the window transom.
3. New lighting will be installed
4. Paint will be applied.
5. Materials will be Concrete for surfaces, Brass for the sign with plastic, Glass and aluminum window frames.

Tom Evans Park

1. The old wood will be removed and replaced with the original concrete of the building.
2. Remove old door and install a new glass door with side lights
3. Remove the old carpet on the steps and replace.
4. Paint the concrete.
5. Install new lighting
6. Materials will be concrete for surfaces, glass and aluminum door frames

Applicants Financial Contribution

1. Cash

Project budget

1. See addendum

Project Schedule

1. Start October 1 , to be completed by November 15, 2008

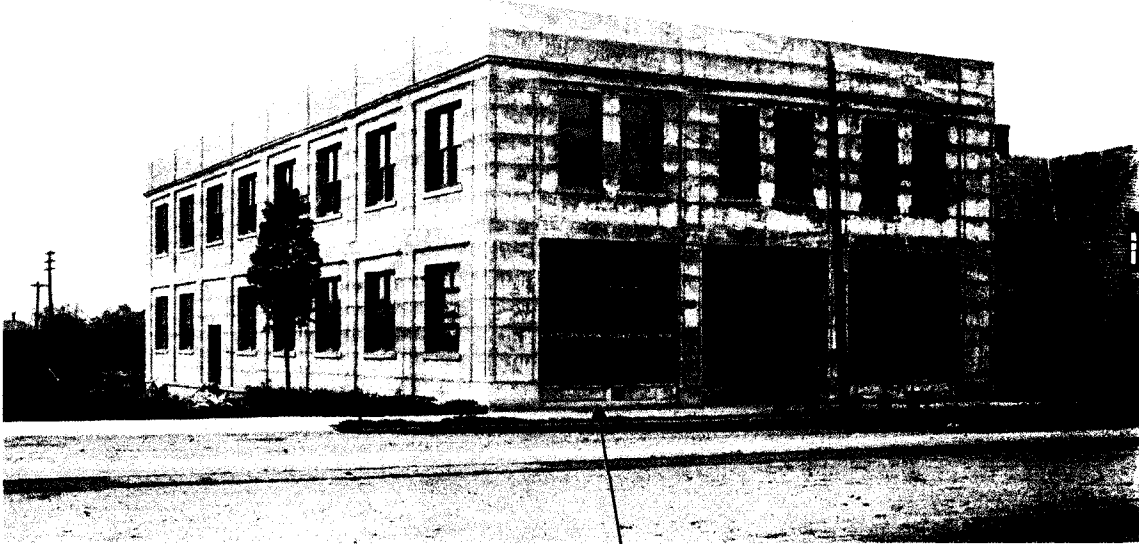
Color photographs of existing building

1. Attached

Architectural design service

1. \$1000 is requested for Jo Myer Walker design services.

400 Main Street

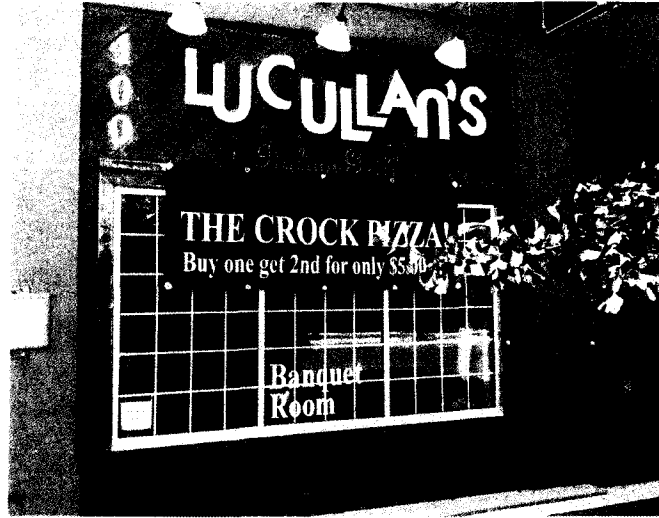


1912 Image

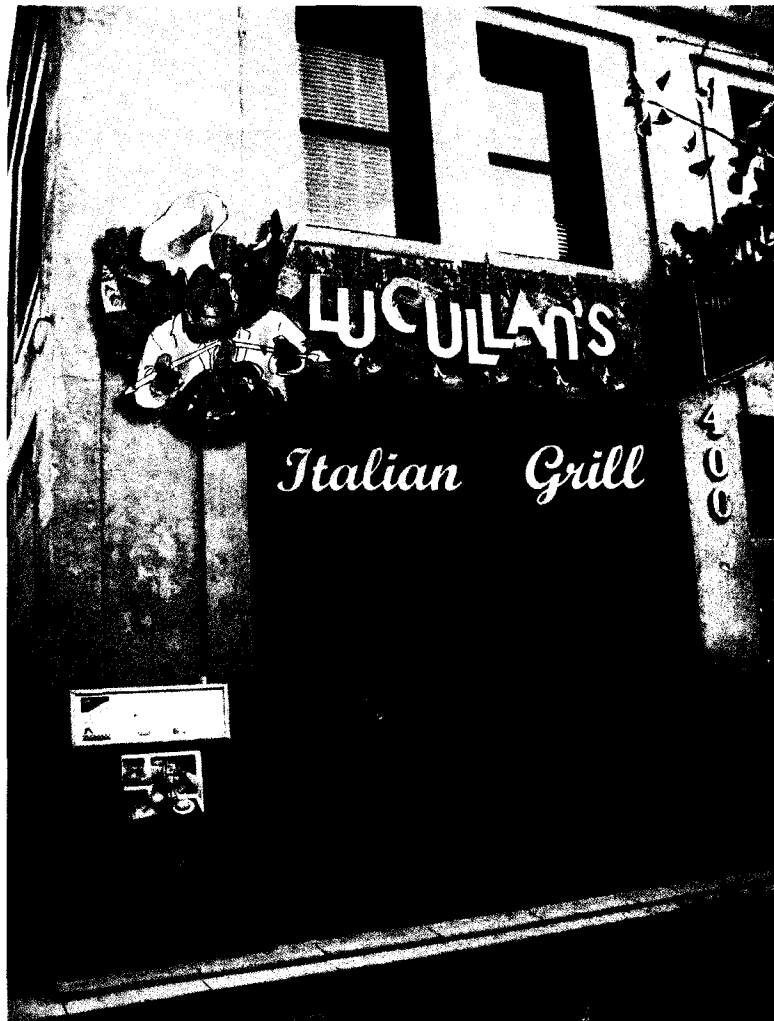
Note detail at kick plate

Courtesy of Farwell Brown Photographic Archive/Ames Historical Society

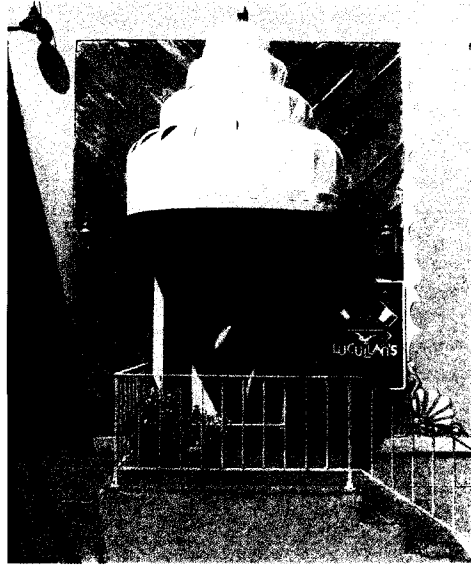




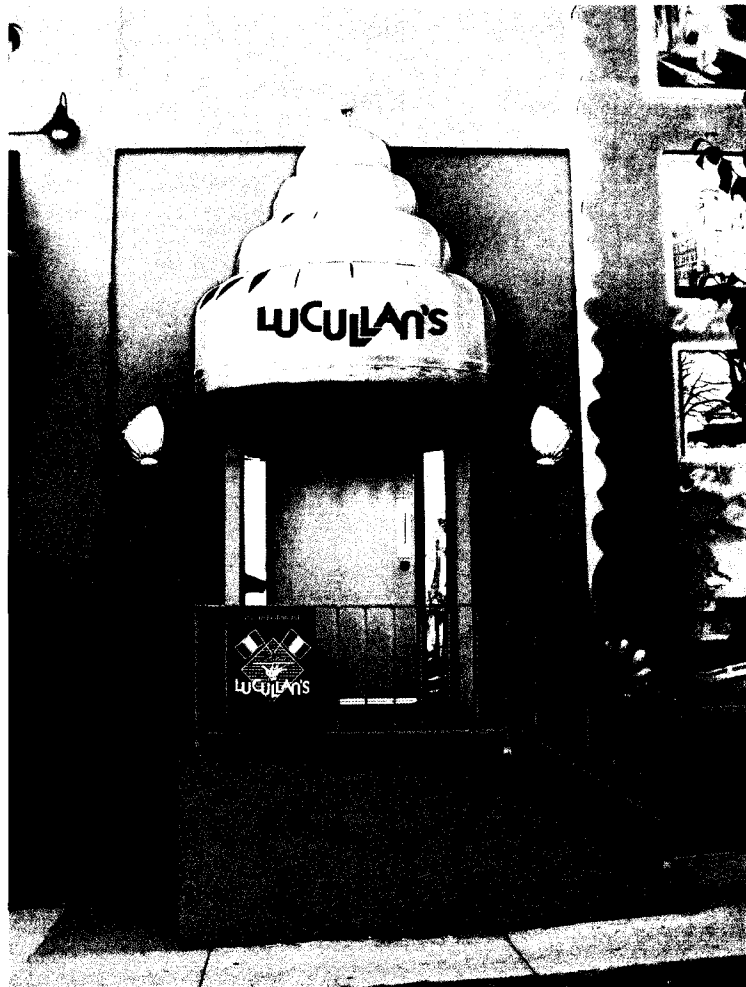
Existing Main Street Facade



Proposed Main Street Facade



Existing entrance at Tom Evans Park



Proposed entrance at Tom Evans Park

BUDGET FOR FAÇADE RENOVATION

Lucullan's 400 Main Street, Downtown Ames
Prepared by Jo Myers Walker, Mark Kassis and suppliers

PROJECT ELEMENT	BUDGET
Removal of old material	\$ 750
Concrete work on front	\$1,200
Concrete work on side	\$1,500
Main Street window	\$2,820
Tom Evans Park door	\$2,600
Painting of areas	\$1,000
Signage	\$6,000
Electrical and fixtures	\$2,500
Remove and replace carpet	\$ 800
Contingency	<u>\$ 830</u>
Total Budget	\$20,000
Design Services	\$1,000