ITEM #: <u>22</u> DATE: 11-23-10

#### **COUNCIL ACTION FORM**

### **SUBJECT: DOWNTOWN FAÇADE GRANT FOR 132-134 MAIN STREET**

#### **BACKGROUND**:

Main Street 134 WR, LLC (Russ McCullough) has applied for a Downtown Façade Improvement grant for the building at 132-134 Main Street (see attached location map). This building has 50 feet of frontage, the equivalent of two typical commercial fronts on Main Street. Historical reports have referred to this as two buildings. Most recently the entire first floor of the building was occupied by Whiskey River bar and grill. The building owner is working with a prospective tenant to re-open that business, which involves extensive renovation of the interior of the first floor. The building owner is now requesting two \$15,000 Downtown Façade Improvement grants and two \$1,000 grants for architectural fees for renovating the entire front facades of both buildings, expected to cost \$66,998 for 132 Main and \$37,667 for 134 Main.

This building was built between 1888 and 1892, and is classified in the Intensive Survey of the Central Business District as "Compatible" for architectural significance. Historic Significance is not yet determined. These buildings are identified as "5" and "6" on the attached, illustrated, written statement. Originally, the 134 Main building had a very ornate cornice and detailing. This was removed and a new brick façade and storefront was put on both buildings in 1927, along with the building to the west. This 1927 façade is consistent with the period of significance that serves as the basis for the Downtown Design Guidelines.

Recently, extensive improvements were made to the front façade to correct serious structural deficiencies. However, this work did not improve the appearance of the front façade very much and it is still out of character with the historic image of Main Street (see attached image of existing conditions). The south wall of the building likely has structural deficiencies, which are to be repaired along with this north façade improvement. This may involve changing openings and improving entrances, in which case the owner may apply for another façade improvement grant. The upper level will be renovated at some future time, possibly as an event space or entertainment venue.

The proposal at this time is to renovate the Main Street façade with a storefront system that is consistent with the Downtown Design Guidelines, including brick kick plates, aluminum framing and insulated glazing (see attached architectural elevations). The existing steel support beam extending across the entire façade is new and will remain exposed. Each building will have a recessed entrance. On the upper level, new double-hung windows will be installed to fill the original window openings, which is also consistent with the Downtown Design Guidelines.

The transoms, the areas above the display windows and immediately below the steel

beam, no longer have intact glass, but rather solid panels. The proposal is to retain or replace the solid transoms and use them for signs. The Downtown Design Guidelines allow signs in the transom areas, but they encourage installing new glass transoms when the opportunity arises. The applicant cites the initial cost and the cost of heating as reasons for not installing glass transoms. (See transom portion of the Downtown Design Guidelines and illustrations attached.) The City Council should determine if glass transoms should be a condition for awarding the grants.

The applicant is also seeking two more grants. The terms and conditions of the City's grant program do not forbid this. One historical review stated that 132-134 could be considered as two buildings. Currently it is possible that one business will occupy both buildings as one large interior space, although no lease has been finalized yet. Three grants totaling \$23,640 have been approved for the renovation of 230-232 Main, the building with Chocolateria Stam, Lazy M Shoes, and Caleb Jamin Photography Studio, which has 75 feet of frontage. Two grants have been approved for renovation of 229 Main, the Café Diem building, with a single 25-foot frontage. **The City Council should determine if two grants should be awarded to this project.** 

Over the past few years, the City has pushed the owners of the 132-134 Main to repair structural and other serious deficiencies, and have even required that the building be vacated. The Inspection's Division approved a plan for making these repairs and the first phase was completed, making basic repairs to the front façade of the building. Phase two, repairing structural and other serious deficiencies on the south façade, was to be completed by July 1, 2009. Phase two includes:

- Engineer's evaluation and report.
- Engineer's repair drawings and details.
- Building permit application.
- Building repair inspections.
- Engineer's inspection report and approval of completed work.

Phase three, repairing serious interior deficiencies, was to be completed by October 1, 2009. Neither of these phases has been completed. **The City Council should determine if completing these repairs should be a condition for awarding the grants.** 

#### **ALTERNATIVES:**

- 1. The City Council can approve the request for a grant for \$15,000 from the Downtown Façade Grant fund for the property located at 132 Main Street, a grant for \$15,000 from the Downtown Façade Grant fund for the property located at 134 Main Street, and \$2000 for professional design fees, with the following conditions to be met:
  - a. Phase two work, as listed above, and Phase three work will be completed before any payments are made to the owner under either of the grants.
  - b. Glass transoms will be included on both facades, with final details resubmitted for staff approval prior to installation.

- 2. The City Council can approve the request for a grant for \$15,000 from the Downtown Façade Grant fund for the property located at 132 Main Street, a grant for \$15,000 from the Downtown Façade Grant fund for the property located at 134 Main Street, and \$2000 for professional design fees, without conditions.
- 3. The City Council can deny this Downtown Façade Grant request.
- 4. The City Council can refer this request back to staff or the applicant for additional information.

### **MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

There is no question that the Main Street building that most Ames residents know as Whiskey River needs major renovation. It is equally clear that the proposed façade improvements will have a vey significant impact on the east end of Main Street. As the attached images illustrate, this façade can be seen from Douglas Street and Sixth Street. The project will improve the east end of the entire Main Street Cultural District.

The decisions involved with this application are:

- Is now the right time to award the Downtown Façade Grant?
- Should two grants be awarded?
- Should glass transoms be required?

The structural and other serious deficiencies at 132-134 Main have been a serious problem for a long time, even threatening the safety of the public. Repair has been slow. The owner has stated several times that he is making progress on securing a tenant, identifying the tenant's needs, and obtaining financing for this project. Downtown Façade Grant funds would support this effort. However, the City Council has been careful to make sure that public funds are used for projects that fix code deficiencies and become successful projects.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that if grants are awarded, these serious deficiencies previously identified as phases two and three be completed before any public funds are paid. The owner has indicated that he can comply with this condition.

Although the application is for two Downtown Façade Grants for this property, the width of the overall façade is equivalent to two of the typical commercial fronts for which façade grants have been approved. The City Council should also be aware that the same applicant may well seek grants for the south façade soon. The City Council previously has awarded more than one grant for the contiguous property of one owner. The difference here is that the awards would be made at the same time. However, matching funds for both grants, and much more, will be paid by the applicant. The Downtown Façade Grant fund has about \$100,000 available that has not been awarded and staff is aware currently of two more possible applications. The end result would be the same if these improvements to the Main

Street façade are carried out in two phases, but the impact will be greater and sooner if the City Council awards two grants at the same time. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that two grants can be awarded at the same time.

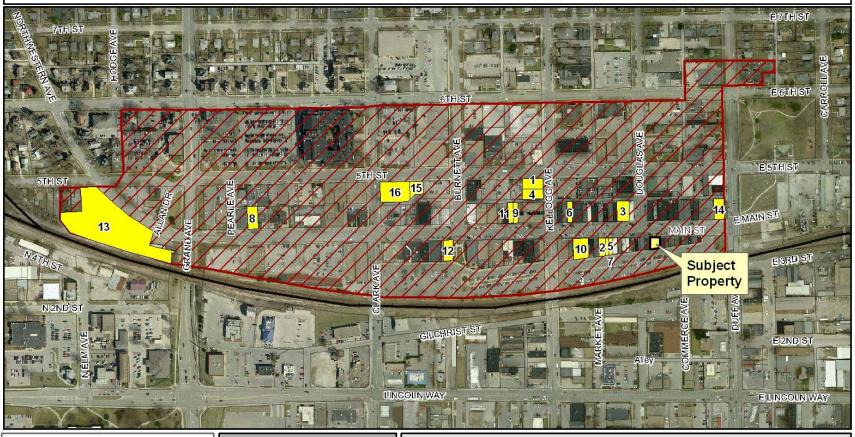
All of the proposed elements of this very prominent storefront comply with the Downtown Design Guidelines. Even the solid panel transoms are allowed by the Guidelines is some cases. However, the Guidelines encourage glass transoms because they are such an important and characteristic element in the overall storefront design (see attached storefront diagram). It is true that glass transoms cost more than solid panels and that they may, depending on design, be less energy efficient. Since that is true for any building on Main Street, then it could be argued that the glass transoms should be removed from the Design Guidelines. However, the overall objective the Downtown Façade Grant program is to help bring the character of the downtown back to a historically significant style. Now, when the façade is being renovated, is the time to install the major elements of that style, particularly since that portion of the façade is being removed and replaced under this renovation. In a similar situation at 400 Main Street (Lucullan's), the City was able to persuade the applicant to include the glass transom in the Downtown Façade Grant project (see attached illustration). Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that if grants are awarded, glass transoms be required.

This renovation project is sorely needed. When it is successful, one of the major buildings on Main Street will be vastly improved and occupied by a new business. That is the goal of the Downtown Façade Grant program.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council approve Alternative #1, approving the request for a grant for \$15,000 from the Downtown Façade Grant fund for the property located at 132 Main Street, a grant for \$15,000 from the Downtown Façade Grant fund for the property located at 134 Main Street, and \$2,000 for professional design fees, with the following conditions to be met:

- a. Phase two and phase three work, as listed above, will be completed before any payments are made to the owner under any of the grants.
- b. Glass transoms will be included on both facades, with final details resubmitted for staff approval prior to installation.

# Downtown Façade Grant Program









#### Downtown Façade Improvement Area

#### **Facade Grant Locations**

- 1. 413 Kellogg Ave (12/2004) 2. 220 Main Street (09/2005) 9. 311 Main Street (12/2007) 10. 230 Main Street (04/2008)
- 3. 203 Main Street (06/2006)
- 11. 313 Main Street (11/2008)
- 4. 411 Kellogg Ave (01/2007) 5. 216 Main Street (07/2007) 6. 229 Main Street (07/2007)
- 12. 400 Main Street (06/2009) 13. 413 Northwestern (09/2009) 14. 101 Main Street (09/2009)
- 15. 410 5th Street (in progress) 7. 218 Main Street (08/2007) 8. 547 Main Street (11/2007)
  - 16. 426 5th Street (04/2010)



Department of Planning & Housing Updated November 19, 2010

### **EXISTING CONDITION – 132-134 MAIN**



#### Historic Facades - Transoms

Transom windows are at the very top portion of the storefront opening. They are mainly a source for natural light, and also ventilation. They can also be a location for signs and advertising. This function, along with the trend to reduce windows for energy conservation, led to the covering or removal of many transom window systems. Today, transoms are one of the most common areas in need of renovation to capitalize on historic character. Over-scaled signs installed on inappropriate

siding materials have typically replaced them.

Traditional transom window designs vary widely. Some feature very basic clear glass panes. Ribbed or frosted panels are also common. Leaded prismatic tiles are also a common transom window design, especially during the World War I era. The commercial building at 417 Douglas Avenue (Ames Heritage Association Museum) is an example of this style of transom. Some transom windows incorporated decorative tile bands or even unique designs of colored glass.



Transom windows at 417 Douglas Avenue—a good historic design carefully maintained.

The uncovering and restoration of transom windows is strongly encouraged. Often the

original transoms are still intact behind the newer siding materials and signs and only need minor repairs. If the transom windows are missing, the installation of new ones should be encouraged. If the original transom design cannot be verified, a simple design should be used. The use of new, highly ornate colored glass transom should be discouraged.



Two transom treatments in Spencer, Iowa. The building at left retains its original transoms. (A flat canopy was installed at a later time.) The building at the right has masked its transoms. Which building is more appealing? Both buildings need to improve their signage. Perhaps the "Christensen Jewelry" sign technique, (see "Awnings and Canopies" below) would be a good solution for both.

The incorporation of signs into the transom area is a desirable treatment. The sign can be painted (or vinyl lettering) directly onto the glass. The transom can be illuminated from the inside, creating a highly visible, and yet historically appropriate sign treatment.

Transom windows that have been totally removed can be disguised with a sign and/or awning treatment. The sign and awning treatment should be constrained to fit within the original transom window area so that the new design reinforces the traditional storefront configuration.

#### Recommended

Uncovering transoms/removal of cladding materials strongly encouraged. Often original transoms remain extant behind newer siding materials and signs and need only minor repair.

Repair existing

Installation of new transoms encouraged, if original framing extant

Keep transom design simple if original cannot be verified

Incorporation of signs into the transom area is a desirable treatment (see "Signs" section below)

Transom can be illuminated from the inside to create a highly visible yet historically appropriate sign treatment

Transoms that have been totally removed can be disguised with a sign and/or awning.

Such a treatment should be constrained to fit within the original transom window so that the new design reinforces the traditional storefront configuration

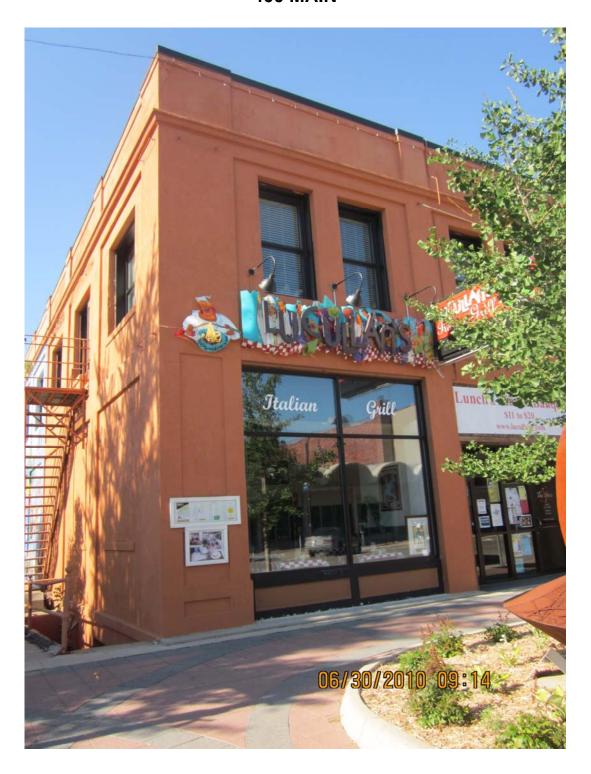
#### Not Recommended

Installation of fancy/colored glass if historically undocumented Installation of siding materials to cover transom-opening Removal of transom
Use of ornate, colored-glass transoms



Components of an Historic Commercial Facade in Ames

# **400 MAIN**





# Main Street Elevation

3/16" = 1'-0"

Roseland
Mackey
Harris
ARCHITECTS PC

1615 Golden Aspen Drive Suite 110 Ames, Iowa 50010

515 292 6075 Phone 515 292 6370 Fax

132 Main Street Ames, Iowa

Facade Improvements

10/29/10

132 Main Street Main Street Façade Remodeling Ames, Iowa

Project Cost Opinion RMH Architects 10/29/2010

Design Status: Design Development

		Units		Unit Cost	Total
A.	Building Costs				
	Division 1 - General Conditions	1	LS	10%	\$4,878
	<b>Division 2 - Sitework</b> Demolition				
	Remove Existing Storefront	1	EA	\$750.00	\$750
	Misc Demolition	1	LS	\$500.00	\$500
	Remove & Dispose of Debris	1	LS	\$1,000.00	\$1,000
	Division 3 - Concrete				
	Sidewalk Patching at Entry	20	SF	\$12	\$240
	Division 4 - Masonry				
	Brick Veneer at Knee Wall	70	SF	\$18	\$1,260
	Masonry Restoration (Completed)	1	LS	\$31,000	\$31,000
	Division 5 - Metals				
	Nothing Required				\$0
	Division 6 - Carpentry & Millwork				
	Exterior Wall Framing	165	SF	\$6	\$990
	Exterior Finish at Transom Panels	95	SF	\$3	\$285
	P Lam Window Sills	26	LF	\$34.00	\$884
	Misc Blocking & Framing	1	LS	\$350.00	\$350
	Division 7 - Thermal & Moisture Protection				
	Caulking & Sealants	1	LS	\$250.00	\$250
	Division 8 - Doors & Windows				
	Aluminum Storefront	195	SF	\$35.00	\$6,825
	New Aluminum Doors and Frames				
	Alum. Door & Frame System	1	EA	\$1,500.00	\$1,500
	Hardware	1	EA	\$500.00	\$500
	Double Hung Windows	4	EΑ	\$350.00	\$1,400

	Division 9 - Finishes				
	New Interior Finish				
	Gypsum Board - 5/8"	165	SF	\$4.50	\$743
	Wall Finish				
	Interior Painting	165	SF	\$1.00	\$165
	Exterior Painting	95	SF	\$1.50	\$143
	<b>Division 10 - Specialties</b> Nothing Required				\$0
	Division 11 - Equipment				40
	Nothing Required				\$0
	<b>Division 12 - Furnishings</b> Nothing Required				\$0
	Division 13 - Special Construction				
	Nothing Required				\$0
	<b>Division 14 - Conveying Systems</b> Nothing Required				\$0
	Division 15 - Mechanical				
	Nothing Required				
	Division 16 - Electrical				
	Nothing Required				
В.	Sub-Total of Direct Costs				\$53,662
C.	Contractors Overhead & Profit			10%	\$5,366
D.	Total Construction Cost				\$59,029
F.	Contingency	10%			\$5,903
• •		1070			40,700
G.	Design Fees	3.5%	,		\$2,066
1.1	Total Project Cost				644,000
Н.	Total Project Cost				\$66,998

134 Main Street Main Street Façade Remodeling Ames, Iowa

Project Cost Opinion RMH Architects 10/29/2010

Design Status: Design Development

A. Building Costs  Division 1 - General Conditions 1 LS 10%	\$2,743
Division 1 - General Conditions 1 LS 10%	\$2,743
Division 2 - Sitework  Demolition	
Remove Existing Storefront 1 EA \$750.00	\$750
Misc Demolition 1 LS \$500.00	\$500
Remove & Dispose of Debris 1 LS \$1,000.00	\$1,000
Division 3 - Concrete	
Sidewalk Patching at Entry 20 SF \$12	\$240
Division 4 - Masonry	
Brick Veneer at Knee Wall 30 SF \$18	\$540
Masonry Restoration (Completed) 1 LS \$15,000 \$	15,000
<b>Division 5 - Metals</b> Nothing Required	\$0
Division 6 - Carpentry & Millwork	
Exterior Wall Framing 90 SF \$6	\$540
Exterior Finish at Transom Panels 60 SF \$3	\$180
P Lam Window Sills 13 LF \$34.00	\$442
Misc Blocking & Framing 1 LS \$250.00	\$250
Division 7 - Thermal & Moisture Protection	
Caulking & Sealants 1 LS \$150.00	\$150
Division 8 - Doors & Windows	
Aluminum Storefront 120 SF \$35.00	\$4,200
New Aluminum Doors and Frames	
Alum. Door & Frame System 1 EA \$1,500.00	\$1,500
Hardware 1 EA \$500.00	\$500
Double Hung Windows 3 EA \$350.00	\$1,050

	Division 9 - Finishes				
	New Interior Finish				
	Gypsum Board - 5/8"	90	SF	\$4.50	\$405
	Wall Finish				
	Interior Painting	90	SF	\$1.00	\$90
	Exterior Painting	60	SF	\$1.50	\$90
	<b>Division 10 - Specialties</b> Nothing Required				\$0
	Division 11 - Equipment  Nothing Required				\$0
	<b>Division 12 - Furnishings</b> Nothing Required				\$0
	<b>Division 13 - Special Construction</b> Nothing Required				\$0
	<b>Division 14 - Conveying Systems</b> Nothing Required				\$0
	<b>Division 15 - Mechanical</b> Nothing Required				
	<b>Division 16 - Electrical</b> Nothing Required				
B.	Sub-Total of Direct Costs				\$30,170
C.	Contractors Overhead & Profit			10%	\$3,017
D.	Total Construction Cost				\$33,187
F.	Contingency	10%	, ,		\$3,319
G.	Design Fees	3.5%	, 0		\$1,162
H.	Total Project Cost				\$37,667



# Main Street Elevation

3/16" = 1'-0"

Roseland Mackey Harris ARCHITECTS PC

1615 Golden Aspen Drive Suite 110 Ames, Iowa 50010

515 292 6075 Phone 515 292 6370 Fax

134 Main Street Ames, Iowa

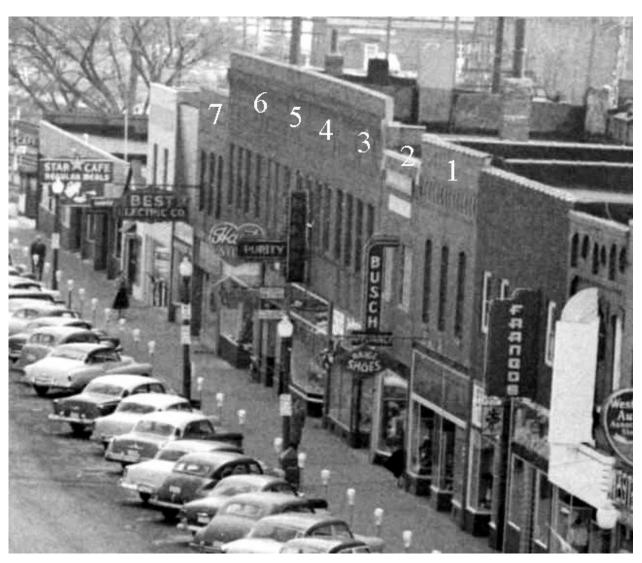
Facade Improvements

10/29/10

### Written Statement for Façade Grant

### 132 and 134 Main St.

The W. E. Sauerman Building is a located on the south side of Main Street in Ames, Iowa near the intersection of Main and Douglas. It was erected sometime between 1888 and 1892. The building is believed to be the original structure on this site, which is verified as far back as 1896 by the Sandborn Fire Insurance Map. The building is set in a line of buildings that comprise the south side of Main Street. A sidewalk, angle parking and Main Street are north of the building. The building shares a party wall with neighboring buildings directly to the east and west. A parking lot is situated south of the building. The building is a two-story commercial building. Its exterior walls are brick and its structural system is comprised of masonry load-bearing walls. The original building was face-lifted circa 1927 with a new brick facade to update its appearance.







The north elevation has been remodeled once, circa 1927, when a brick facade was placed over the storefront. The facelift also relates to the building at 136 Main, its neighbor to the west. It features a plaque and windowsills and lintels extended across the entire facade as stringcourses. The building has a cornice worked in brick. The windows at 134 Main are 1/1 double hung sashtype and appear to be original to the circa 1927 facelift. They correspond to the windows at 136 Main directly to the West. The windows at 132 Main have been in-filled but the alteration respects the original space of the facelift and appears to be reversible. The storefront area has also been altered and in-filled but these alterations have also respected the original space of the face lifted building.