

**STAFF REPORT
HISTORIC AND CULTURAL LANDMARKS COMMISSION
CITY OF FORT WORTH, TEXAS**

DATE: November 14, 2022

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 2

GENERAL INFORMATION

REQUEST	Certificate of Appropriateness
APPLICANT/AGENT	Bennett Partners
LOCATION	2513 Rodeo Plaza
ZONING/ USE (S)	SY-HSH-40
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION	Stockyards

REQUEST

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Applicant requests a COA to install a sculpture within Rodeo Plaza to the north of the Exhibits Building.

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS:

APPLICABLE FORT WORTH STOCKYARDS FORM-BASED CODE & DESIGN GUIDELINES

Introduction (p.0-21) – View Opportunities

Many noteworthy views exist throughout the Stockyards area that enrich the experience of visitors, residents and employees.

Station Points

Station points are found along Exchange Avenue and Main Street and also along lines within the stockyards that once were defined by cattle runs and other walkways.

View Corridors

View corridors are the sight lines from station points to specific view targets.

Section 2.2.1 SHOPFRONT (SY-HSH)

The Historic Shopfront District (SY-HSH) is defined by a context of historic commercial buildings. An objective of the SY-HSH District is to maintain the historic development patterns of the traditional commercial storefront structures by allowing buildings that will be compatible with the historic context, while doing so in ways that express their own time. This includes locating new building fronts to align at the sidewalk edge with a high percentage of display windows that permit views of activities inside and that enhance the area as a visually interesting place for pedestrians.

Section 2.4.3 – Standards and Guidelines for Contributing Structures

- J) **New Additions**. A new addition that is compatible with the historic building and its surrounding historic context may be permitted when it remains visually subordinate and minimizes loss of historic building material. It is important to consider its design and placement, as well as its relationship to the surrounding historic context.
- 1) Design an addition to be compatible with the historic structure.
 - b) Use materials that are of a similar color, texture and scale to materials in the surrounding historic context.
 - c) Design an addition to be compatible with the scale, massing and rhythm of the surrounding historic context.
 - 2) Design an addition to be subordinate to the historic building.
 - a) Place an addition to the side or the rear of the historic structure.
 - b) Do not locate an addition where it would negatively affect key character-defining features.
 - 3) Differentiate an addition from the historic structure.
 - a) Distinguish the addition as new, albeit in a subtle way.

Section 2.4.4 – Standards and Guidelines for Non-Contributing Structures and New Construction

It is important that any new construction or the alteration of non-contributing properties contribute to a consistent sense of character and respect the historic context, while also conveying the evolution of the historic district. It is not the intent that new buildings imitate older styles, but that they draw upon basic elements seen historically while doing so in ways that express their own time.

Compatibility with the historic context is a key principle for the design of new construction or to the alterations of noncontributing properties. This typically focuses on buildings on the same block, on both sides of the street, and also across an alley. In some cases, a structure that is not historic may also be found in the immediate vicinity, but this does not influence considerations of compatibility.

Section 2.4.4 – Standards and Guidelines for Site Design

It is important that landscapes and site features contribute to a sense of continuity and that they respect the historic context. Landscapes and site features also should convey the differences in distinctly different sub-areas of the historic district.

Compatibility with the historic context is a key principle for the design of landscapes and site features.

HSH-40, HSH-68

- 1) This area reflects a traditional “Main Street” character with painted, ornamental metal street light poles and benches that are urban in character.

- B) Open Space. Surviving significant historic open spaces are essential elements in the Stockyards context and should be considered primary features for preservation. New open space designs should reinforce development patterns while providing compatible connections to the historic district.
- 2) Preserve historically significant open spaces.
- a) Historically significant open spaces include the plaza in front of the Coliseum, the lawn in front of the Stock Exchange, Mule Alley, Rodeo Plaza and the Swift/Armour Stairs.
- E) Paving, Plazas, and Seating Areas. Paving, plazas and seating areas play a vital role and should be thoughtfully designed while complementing historic precedent through materials, form and placement. New designs should appear of their own time while contributing to a sense of continuity for the Historic District.
- a) In HSH-40 and HSH-68, use painted, ornamental features to compliment the urban character.

APPLICABLE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR’S STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Site

Recommended

- Identifying, retaining, and preserving buildings and their features as well as features of the site that are important in defining its overall historic character.
- Retaining the historic relationship between buildings and the landscape.
- Designing new exterior additions to historic buildings or adjacent new construction which is compatible with the historic character of the site and which preserves the historic relationship between the building or buildings and the landscape.

Not Recommended

- Removing or radically changing buildings and their features or site features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the property so that, as a result, the character is diminished.
- Locating any new construction on the building site where important landscape features will be damaged or destroyed.
- Introducing new construction onto the building site which is visually incompatible in terms of size, scale, design, materials, color, and texture; which destroys historic relationships on the site; or which damages or destroys important landscape features.

Setting

Recommended

- Identifying, retaining, and preserving building and landscape features which are important in defining the historic character of the setting.
- Retaining the historic relationship between buildings and landscape features of the setting. For example, preserving the relationship between a town common and its adjacent historic houses, municipal buildings, historic roads, and landscape features.
- Designing and constructing a new feature of the building or landscape when the historic feature is completely missing, such as row house steps, a porch, a streetlight, or a terrace. It may be a restoration based on documentary or physical evidence; or be a new design that is compatible with the historic character of the setting.

Not Recommended

- Removing or radically changing those features of the setting which are important in defining the historic character.
- Introducing a new building or landscape feature that is out of scale or otherwise inappropriate to the setting's historic character.
- Introducing new construction into historic districts that is visually incompatible or that destroys historic relationships within the setting.

FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS

It is important that site features contribute to a sense of continuity and that they respect the historic context. Site features also should convey the differences in distinctly different sub-areas of the historic district.

Historic Conditions

The area known today as Rodeo Plaza has historically been used as a transitional open space between industrial areas of the Stockyards and the more established historic core. The area where the proposed statuary is intended to be located was actually part of the Exhibits Building until 1963, when that portion of the building was demolished and turned into a parking lot. Rodeo Plaza, as we know it today, was a much smaller corridor that facilitated movement between the stock pens and feed lots to the north of the Coliseum, prior to the construction of the Billy Bob's complex. To the south of Rodeo Plaza is the Exhibits Building, Coliseum, and historic core the Stockyards which was a much more densely constructed environment than the historic stock pens. This transitional space was historically used for community events, such as

festivals and fairs. Rodeo Plaza has been traditionally used as open space, with little to no intrusion of physical structures.

Two contributing properties play a significant role in defining the edges of Rodeo Plaza – the Exhibits Building and the Coliseum to the south and east. Both of these buildings are low-scale, particularly the Exhibits buildings which is 32' tall. This height is generally consistent with traditional building heights within the historic core of the Stockyards, with only the Coliseum being higher than 40' in height.

Existing Conditions

The current setting of Rodeo Plaza is much different than its traditional setting of a transitional corridor. Rodeo Plaza functions as a defined open space between the historic core of the Stockyards and the Billy Bob's complex. Its open plaza provides ample room for pedestrian activity and circulation, in the same manner that the space has traditionally facilitated pedestrian and livestock circulation through the Stockyards throughout its history.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties

As mentioned previously, the setting of Rodeo Plaza has traditionally been characterized by an unadorned open space between the livestock pens to the north and the core of the Stockyards to the south. This openness is a character-defining feature of the plaza.

The proposal to install a large statue within Rodeo Plaza has a significant adverse impact on the character-defining openness of Rodeo Plaza. It changes the open nature of the setting, introduces a site feature that is out of scale for the setting, and introduces a new feature that destroys the historic spatial relationship between Rodeo Plaza and the contributing structures that define its southern and eastern boundaries. The proposed statue is inconsistent with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties – Setting* and Standard 9, because the work would not protect the integrity Rodeo Plaza and its environment. It is acknowledged that the proposed statue would meet Standard 10, because it would be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential open form and integrity of the Mule Alley and its environment would be unimpaired.

The proposed statue is also inconsistent with the Guidelines for Setting, which do not recommend introducing a new building or landscape feature that is out of scale or otherwise inappropriate to the setting's historic character. The mass, scale, and both proposed heights of the statue overwhelm the open setting of Rodeo Plaza. The scale of the statue is insubordinate to the Exhibits Building, towering over the contributing structure and producing an adverse visual effect on its character and integrity.

Stockyards Form-Based Code & Design Guidelines

It is important to consider the statue's design and placement, as well as its relationship to the surrounding historic context. The proposed statue does not meet Section 2.4.4 of the Stockyards Form-Based Code, because it does not complement the open character of the streetscape in the historic context. The proposed statue also does not meet Section 2.4.3 (J) of the Code. The proposed statue is incompatible with the historic openness of Rodeo Plaza and surrounding contributing structures. It is also inconsistent with the surrounding historic context because it is not visually subordinate to historic structures within the setting.

Summary

The proposed statue is generally inconsistent with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* and the Stockyards Form-Based Code & Design

Guidelines, primarily due to its size and scale in relation to its surrounding context. Any proposed statuary within the historically open Rodeo Plaza should be subordinate in scale to not only the plaza, but also surrounding historic structures. The scale, height, and mass of the proposed statue should be reconsidered so that it is more consistent with the historic character of Rodeo Plaza's setting.

Having regard to the foregoing, Staff offers the following recommendation:

That the Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for improvements to Mule Alley be denied without prejudice, so that the applicant can consider adjusting the size, scale, and location of the proposed statue so that it is in alignment with the principles found in the Stockyards Form-Based Code & Design Guidelines and the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

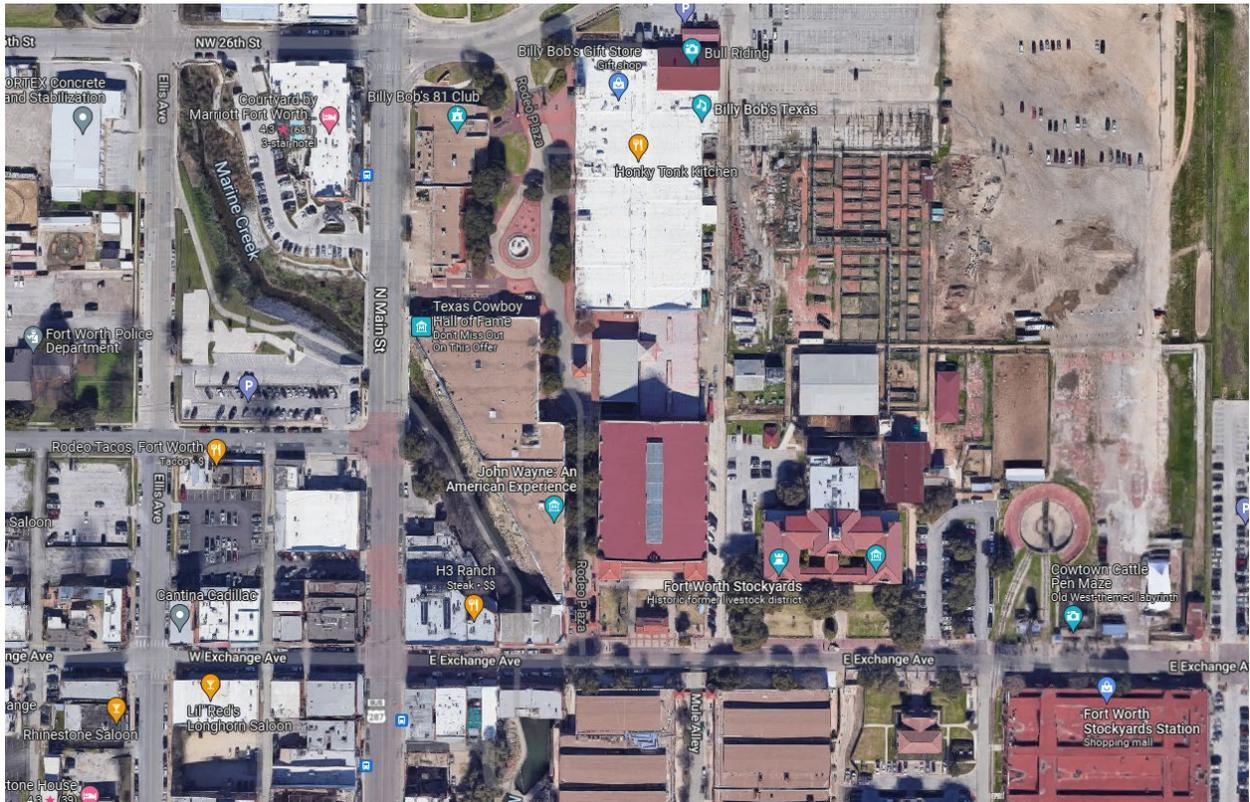


Fig. 1 - Aerial View of subject property.

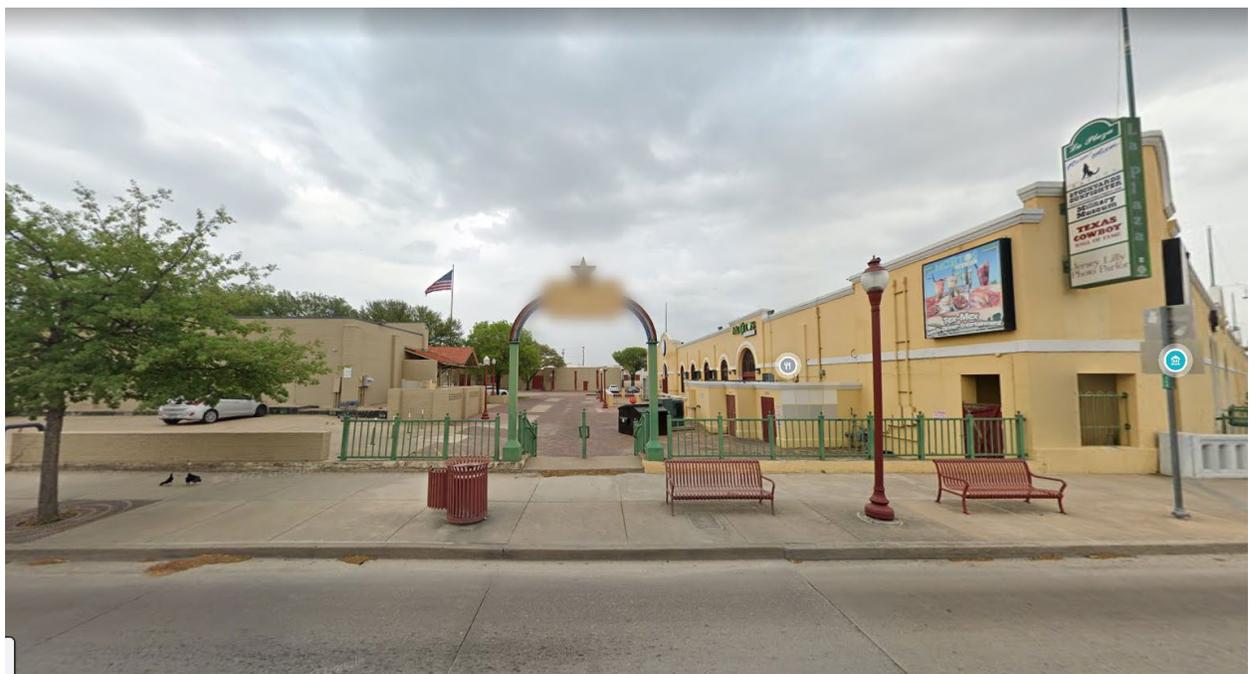


Fig. 2 – Looking into Rodeo Plaza from N. Main Street.



Fig. 3 – Looking south into Rodeo Plaza. Billy Bob's is to the left.