

Legislation Details (With Text)

File #: 18-257 **Name:**
Type: Report **Status:** Individual Item Ready
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On agenda: 5/14/2018 **Final action:**
Title: Discuss and consider an appeal of the Non-Residential and Multifamily Design Standards and Articulation Requirements for the proposed Comal County Jail addressed at 3000 IH 35.

Sponsors:

Indexes:

Code sections:

Attachments: 1. Aerial Map, 2. Application, 3. Site Plan, 4. Approved Building Elevation, 5. Sec. 5.22-3(C)(2)

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
5/14/2018	1	City Council		

Presenter

*Christopher J. Looney, Planning and Community Development Director
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SUBJECT:

Discuss and consider an appeal of the Non-Residential and Multifamily Design Standards and Articulation Requirements for the proposed Comal County Jail addressed at 3000 IH 35.

BACKGROUND / RATIONALE:

Case No.: CS-18-009

Council District: 1

Owner/Applicant: Comal County / Tom Hornseth, County Engineer
100 Main Plaza
New Braunfels, TX 78130

Staff Contact: Matt Greene, Planner
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The subject property comprises 11.65 acres on the northwest corner of the intersection of the IH 35 access road and Water Lane, at a visual gateway to the city from the south. The property is zoned M-1 Light Industrial District and is the site of the new Comal County jail facility, which is permitted and currently under construction.

New Braunfels Code of Ordinances includes minimum design standards for the exterior of non-residential and multifamily buildings to ensure said buildings positively contribute to the overall appearance of the community. Included as part of the design standards is the requirement to

incorporate minimum vertical and horizontal articulation elements on buildings of specified length and height so that structures facing the public have a variety of offsets, relief, and insets (see Attachments).

Vertical Articulation (Attachment 4, Chapter 144, Section 5.22-3(c)(2)):

The vertical articulation requirements for the proposed building only apply to the building facades facing the IH 35 access road and Water Lane. Related to the roofline, the minimum vertical elevation change required is a minimum of 15% of the average building height with the elevation change extending laterally for a minimum distance of at least 10% of the entire façade and no wall shall extend horizontally for a distance greater than 3 times its average height without a change in elevation. The building elevation plans submitted and approved (attached) comply with the vertical articulation requirements, however, the vertical articulation requirements do not require the design be as proposed.

Proposal:

The construction plans submitted for this project comply with the adopted design standards, including vertical articulation. The applicant's architect designed the side facing Water Lane with differing wall elevations; and designed vertical articulation on the side facing IH-35 with slanted metal features extending outward from the building. The plans were approved and a permit to construct was issued.

The applicant has since identified safety and security concerns associated with the vertical articulation they are proposing on the approved plans for the IH-35 facing façade. The applicant indicated the designed supports attaching the vertical articulations could be used to descend or access the roof, hide paraphernalia or people, and diminish clear viewable sight lines for security cameras. The applicant also states the construction of the approved features, or any vertical building articulation features, poses a security concern for the secure operation of the jail and is requesting City Council approve the new facility to be constructed without any vertical articulation requirements on this facade. The applicant indicated they have not yet explored other options or alternatives with their architect to meet the adopted ordinance requirements, but plan to do so.

Lot Size:

11.65 acres

Surrounding Zoning & Land Use:

North - M-1 / Current Comal County Jail and Sheriff's office

South - Across IH 35, C-3 / Office building buildings and undeveloped

East - Across Water Lane, M-1 / City of New Braunfels Solid Waste

West - M-2/ Office, warehouse

ADDRESSES A NEED/ISSUE IN A CITY PLAN OR COUNCIL PRIORITY:

X	No	City Plan/Council Priority Comprehensive Plan	Pros: None Cons: Objective 9A: Consider establishing architectural standards and building material standards for nonresidential structures. Goal 12: Protect and enhance the visual environment of the City.
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FISCAL IMPACT:

N/A

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

N/A

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The design standards were adopted by City Council to improve the visual appeal and structural integrity of commercial buildings within New Braunfels. The applicant submitted plans meeting the requirements, but is seeking relief from the design standards due to security concerns. Options City Council could consider include:

- Approval as requested;
- Denial;
- Partial approval;
- Approval of an alternative; or
- As avenues for alternatives have not yet been thoroughly explored by the applicant, a continuance (postponement) of the request could provide the applicant time to research and review alternatives with their architect in the hopes of arriving at a design that meets the adopted ordinance criteria while satisfying the unique use's needs regarding safety and security.

Attachments:

- Aerial Map
- Application
- Site Plans
- Approved Building Elevation Plan
- Section 5.22-3(c)(2) Vertical (or Height) Articulation