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## EXHIBIT 2 - STAFF REPORT

DATE: June 24, 2021  
TO: Historic Landmark Committee Members  
FROM: Chuck Darnell, Senior Planner  
SUBJECT: DDR 1-21 (Downtown Design Review for New Construction) – 631 NE 1<sup>st</sup> Street

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY & GOAL:



### GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

Guide growth & development strategically, responsively & responsibly to enhance our unique character.

**OBJECTIVE/S:** Define the unique character through a community process that articulates our core principles

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### Report in Brief:

This is a quasi-judicial review of a Downtown Design Review land-use application for a proposed new building on the property at 631 NE 1<sup>st</sup> Street (Tax Lot 11300, Section 21BC, T. 4 S., R. 4 W., W.M). All new construction in the Downtown Design Overlay District needs to be reviewed and receive approval for how their design complies with McMinnville's downtown design review standards. Per the McMinnville Municipal Code (MMC), the McMinnville Historic Landmarks Committee serves as the decision-making body for the design review of all new construction. The applicant, Amy & Silas Halloran-Steiner, is requesting the approval of the exterior design of the proposed new building, including a request for an exception to the typical zero foot setback requirement to allow for a plaza/courtyard area in front of the building.

The Downtown Design Review request is subject to the review process described in Section 17.59.030(C) of the MMC. The Historic Landmarks Committee will make a final decision on the application, subject to appeal as described in Section 17.59.030(E) of the MMC.

### Background:

The subject property is located at 631 NE 1<sup>st</sup> Street. The property is identified as Tax Lot 11300, Section 21BC, T. 4 S., R. 4 W., W.M. **See Vicinity Map (Figure 1) below.**

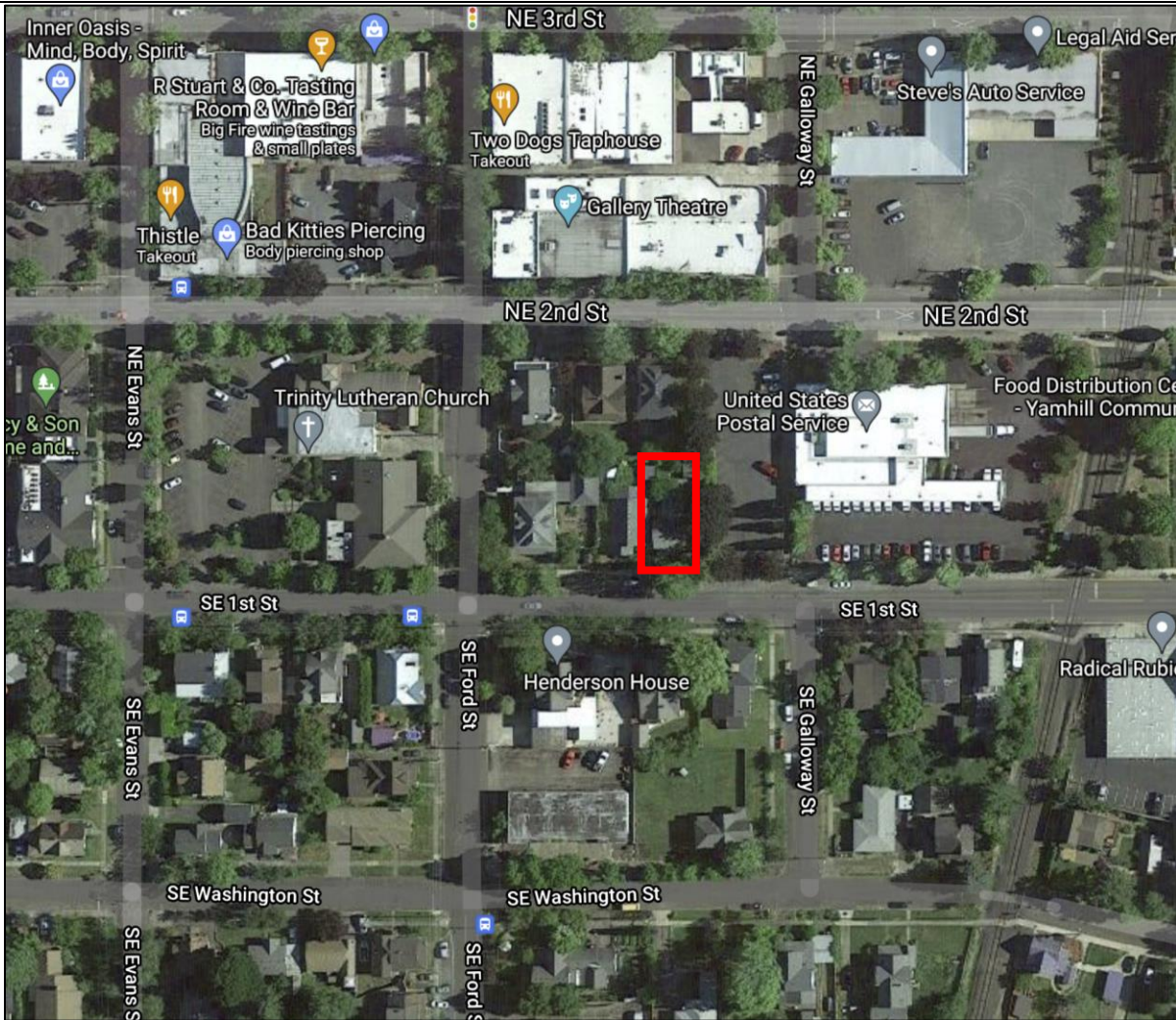
### Figure 1. Vicinity Map (Property Lines Approximate)

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#### Attachments:

Attachment A: Decision, Conditions, Findings of Fact and Conclusionary Findings for the Approval of DDR 5-19

Attachment B: DDR 5-19 Application Materials



The property is currently vacant. A historic resource (resource number D878) previously existed on the property, but was approved to be demolished as reviewed under docket number HL 1-18. The historic resource was demolished in 2018. A proposal for a new building was reviewed and approved in 2018 as well, which was approved under docket number DDR 7-18. However, the construction of the previously proposed building never moved forward. The property has since changed ownership, and the current owners are requesting Downtown Design Review for a different new building on the subject property.

The applicant provided an overview of their proposal and project in the application narrative, which is as follows:

“The project is a new 2700 square foot mixed use office building with two (2) upper story dwellings above the office space. The building will be stucco exterior finish with a flat roof system with a roof deck on top of the building, and partial roof deck on the third level. The lot is zoned C-3.”

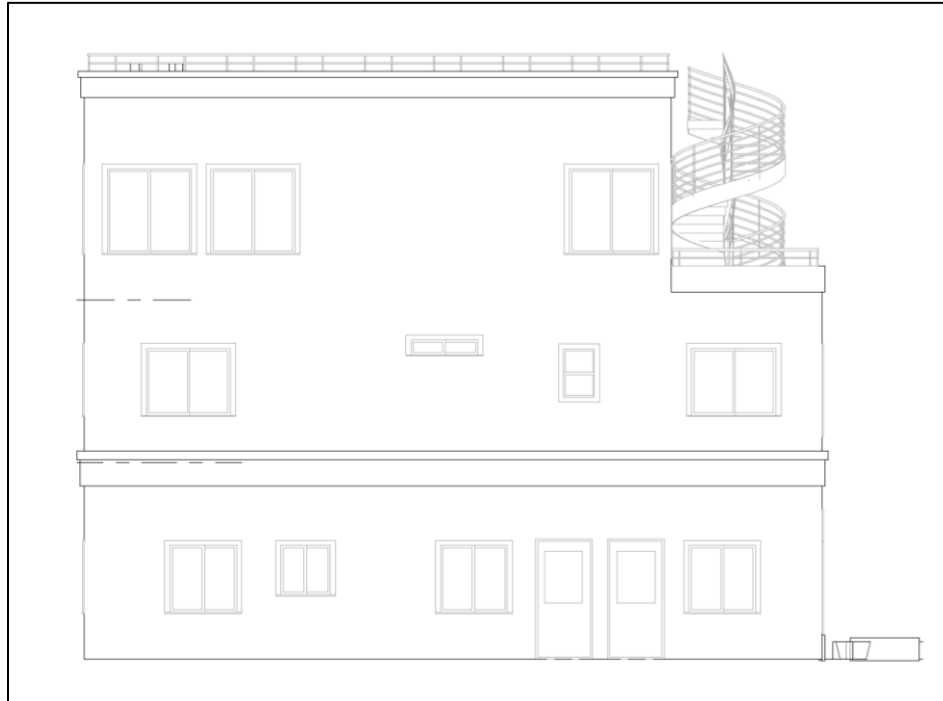
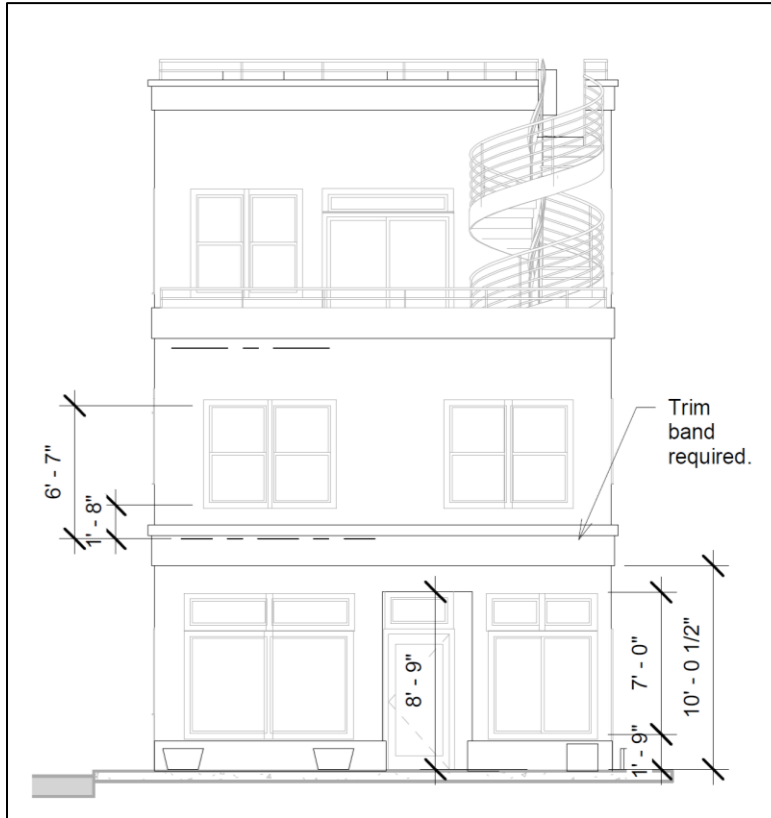
Elevations and renderings of the proposed new building are provided below. Full elevations and additional renderings are provided in the application materials (Attachment 1). **See South and West Facing Elevations (Figure 2) and Building Rendering (Figure 3) below.**

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**Figure 2. South and West Facing Elevations**



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**Figure 3. Building Rendering****Discussion:**

Decisions and/or recommendations for approval of the land use application is dependent upon whether or not the application meets state regulations, the McMinnville Comprehensive Plan and the McMinnville Municipal Code. The application can either meet these criteria as proposed, or a condition of approval can be provided that either outlines what needs to occur to meet the criteria or when something needs to occur to meet the criteria.

The specific review criteria for Downtown Design Review for New Construction in Section 17.59.040 of the MMC require the proposal to be consistent with the applicable Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines in Chapter 17.59 of the MMC, as well as the following review criteria:

1. The City's historic preservation policies set forth in the Comprehensive Plan;
2. If a structure is designated as a historic landmark on the City's Historic Resources Inventory or is listed on the National Register for Historic Places, the City's historic preservation regulations in Chapter 17.65, and in particular, the standards and guidelines contained in Section 17.65.060(2);

In addition, any request for a waiver from a Downtown Design Standard is subject to the specific review criteria in Section 17.59.040(A)(3) of the MMC as follows:

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- a. There is a demonstrable difficulty in meeting the specific requirements of this Chapter due to a unique or unusual aspect of the site, an existing structure, or proposed use of the site;
- b. There is demonstrable evidence that the alternative design accomplishes the purpose of this Chapter in a manner that is equal or superior to a project designed consistent with the standards contained herein; and
- c. The waiver requested is the minimum necessary to alleviate the difficulty of meeting the requirements of this Chapter.

### **Summary of Applicant Findings**

The applicant has provided a written narrative and findings to support their requests. The narrative and findings are provided in the application materials, and are also reiterated and expanded upon in the Decision Documents for each land use application. The Decision Documents include the specific findings of fact for each of the applicable review criteria, but an overview of the findings in those Decision Documents is provided below.

Overall, staff concurs with most of the applicant's narrative and findings. Staff believes that much of the project design does meet the applicable Downtown Design Standards. The building is proposed to include a small setback to allow for a plaza space on the front of the building, which is allowed as an exception within the code and will be discussed in more detail below. The building includes a recessed primary entry on the front façade, all of the storefront façade features (glazing, belt course, decorative cap at roofline, etc.) required for the front elevation, and is proposed to be finished with smooth stucco which is an allowable exterior building material. Some of the architectural features, including the belt course (horizontal trim band between the first and second stories) and the decorative cornice/cap feature are proposed to extend along all four building elevations which provides for more visual interest in those side and rear façades.

There is no awning proposed for the building, so those standards are not applicable. Signage is also not proposed at this time. However, any future building signage will be reviewed against the applicable Downtown Design Standards during the sign permit review process.

Some minor clarifications and amendments to some design components are suggested by staff as conditions of approval where necessary to achieve the Downtown Design Standards, which will also be discussed in more detail below.

### **Analysis of Review Criteria/Design Standards**

One of the few areas where the proposal deviates from the typical Downtown Design Standards is on the front building setback, which is typically required to be zero feet from the property line. However, MMC Section 17.59.050(A)(2) specifically allows the following: "Exceptions to the setback requirements may be granted to allow plazas, courtyards, dining space, or rear access for public pedestrian walkways." The applicant has identified a plaza space on their site plan in the front of the building, between the building wall and the adjacent sidewalk along 1<sup>st</sup> Street. The applicant also provided reasoning for this plaza to help with some aspects of site design and functionality, given that the property in question is a somewhat small lot (about 4,000 square feet). This reasoning was provided partly in the form of findings for the plaza and slight setback as a waiver from the typical zero setback requirement. However, the setback is the only Downtown Design Standard that is listed in the code as being able to be provided as an exception (see Section 17.59.050(A)(2) language above), so a waiver is not specifically required. Staff believes that the setback exception could be granted in this case to allow for this plaza space to exist, given the applicant's reasoning and the unique characteristics of the lot. Some of those unique characteristics

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include that the lot is small in size, and the lot is surrounded by other existing development that does not have zero foot setbacks.

A couple of other Downtown Design Standards that are unique in this proposal are the standard in MMC Section 17.59.050(B)(1) related to buildings having “massing and configuration similar to adjacent or nearby historic buildings on the same block”, and also the standard in MMC Section 17.59.050(B)(4) related to the orientation of rooflines of new construction being “similar to those of adjacent buildings”. MMC Section 17.59.050(B)(4) goes on to state that “Gable roof shapes, or other residential roof forms, are discouraged unless visually screened from the right-of-way by a false front or parapet.”. The applicant has proposed a building design that is intended to meet all of the applicable Downtown Design Standards. In doing so, the applicant notes that the visual appearance is not similar to adjacent nearby historic buildings on the same block. Staff would concur with this, and would note that the Downtown Design Standards are not written in such a way as to encourage a typical residential building form, but more of a commercial storefront type of building form. That being said, staff believes that the proposed “massing and configuration” of the proposed building can be found to be similar to adjacent and nearby historic buildings on the same block. These adjacent historic buildings are larger scale single family dwellings, most being 2.5 stories in height and of a larger building footprint. The proposed new building has a similar building footprint and configuration of placement on the lot, and the massing and building height overall is not substantially different from these larger adjacent historic residential homes, even though the new building will be different in visual appearance and style. In regards to the roofline orientation, the applicant has proposed a flat roofline and referenced the fact that the adjacent post office building has a flat roofline. In addition, the standard for roofline orientation specifically discourages gable or other residential roof forms. For these reasons, staff believes this roofline orientation standard is also being achieved.

One other component of the proposed building design that is not specifically referenced in the decision document is the balcony and rooftop deck, and exterior staircase providing access to the rooftop deck. These features are included on the building design, with the balcony on the third story in the area where the building wall steps back. On the balcony is an exterior staircase providing access to the proposed rooftop deck. Staff does not believe that there are any specific Downtown Design Standards that prohibit these types of features from being included on the building. Staff actually believes that they are beneficial features to have included in the mixed-use building design as they provide for some more usable open spaces for the future residents of the two dwelling units on the lot that is somewhat small and lacks other forms of usable open space after lot area is utilized for vehicle parking spaces and drive aisles. The primary components of these features that will be visible will be the railings along the balcony and rooftop deck and the staircase, but staff believes they are well incorporated into the building design by using the same coloring as the windows and building trim.

### **Suggested Conditions of Approval**

Staff is suggesting some conditions of approval to ensure that all of the applicable Downtown Design Standards are being achieved by the proposal. The first condition of approval is related to the future building permit submittal process, and ensuring that the construction plans eventually submitted for building permit review are consistent with the plans submitted for Downtown Design Review.

The second condition of approval is related to the proposed plaza space, and requires that the plaza be a different material or finish (such as concrete scoring) to provide a visual identification of the space as a plaza and provide differentiation between the drive aisle and public sidewalk that will be immediately adjacent to the plaza space.

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The third condition of approval is related to the windows and ensuring that they are all recessed. The applicant had described the windows as all being recessed, but some of the floor plans showed some windows being set flush to the outer building wall. The proposed condition of approval requires that all of the windows be set flush to the interior building wall so that the windows retain the appearance of being recessed from the exterior.

Finally, the applicant did provide renderings that identify the colors of the building and described in their narrative that the colors applied to the building would be subtle, neutral, or earth tone. The colors shown in the rendering consist of shades of grey, which are generally all subtle, neutral, and earth tones. To ensure that the final colors applied to the building are subtle, neutral, and earth tone in color, a condition of approval is included to require that the applicant provide samples or examples of the exterior building colors to the Planning Department for review and approval by the Planning Director prior to application on the building.

### **Commission Options:**

- 1) Close the public meeting and **APPROVE** the application, per the decision document provided which includes the findings of fact.
- 2) **CONTINUE** the public meeting to a specific date and time.
- 3) Close the public meeting and **DENY** the application, providing findings of fact for the denial in the motion to deny.

### **Recommendation:**

Based on the information and plans provided, staff believes that most of the Downtown Design Standards are being achieved by the proposed building design, and that the suggested conditions of approval would allow for the proposed design to achieve those standards that were not explicitly satisfied in the application materials.

Staff is recommending approval of the application, subject to the following suggested conditions of approval:

1. That the applicant shall submit building permit applications prior to completing any work. The construction plans submitted with the building permit applications will be reviewed by the Planning Director for consistency with the written narrative, exhibits, drawings, and renderings submitted for review by the Historic Landmarks Committee, along with any revisions to respond to other conditions of approval.
2. That the plaza space be of a different material or finish (concrete scoring, etc.) to provide visual identification of the plaza space and differentiation between the plaza and the adjacent sidewalk and drive aisle spaces.
3. That on the building permit construction plans submitted for the proposed building, all windows on the building shall be set flush to the inside face of the building so that they are recessed and not flush against the surface of the outer wall.
4. That the applicant shall provide samples or examples of the exterior building colors to the Planning Department for review and approval by the Planning Director prior to application on the building.

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**MOTION FOR DDR 1-21:**

**BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT, THE CONCLUSIONARY FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL, AND THE MATERIALS SUBMITTED BY THE APPLICANT, THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMITTEE APPROVES DDR 1-21, SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL PROVIDED IN THE DECISION DOCUMENT.**

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