

 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Council Communication</b> Office of the City Manager</p>	<b>Date:</b> August 29, 2011
	<b>Agenda Item No.</b> 36 <b>Roll Call No.</b> <u>11-1462</u> <b>Communication No.</b> <u>11-554</u> <b>Submitted by:</b> Terrance N. Vorbrich, Acting Economic Development Administrator

**AGENDA HEADING:**

Resolution to approve change in color scheme for exterior of Embassy Suites property (101 E. Locust Street).

**SYNOPSIS:**

John Q. Hammons, the owner of the Embassy Suites Hotel at 101 E. Locust St. is requesting to change the color scheme of the upper exterior portion of the hotel structure. Embassy Suites is located on property conveyed through urban renewal which imposed specific design contractual requirements on the building’s exterior including its colors. The building owner is in the process of updating various elements of this 21 year old building. As part of the update, the synthetic stucco portion of the exterior, located above the first floor, will be repainted.

**FISCAL IMPACT: NONE**

Amount: N/A

Funding Source: N/A

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

Embassy Suites is located on property conveyed through urban renewal which imposed specific design contractual requirements on the building’s exterior including its colors. This requirement was extremely important at that time –1989—because this development was the first commercial building located in the governmental ‘civic center’ area along the east bank of the Des Moines River. This requirement was put in place to provide assurance this building ‘fit in’ with the adjoining City Hall and Federal Courthouse Buildings. The selected colors and textures for Embassy Suites were extremely close in tone/shade and texture to the limestone cladding on those two adjoining buildings.

The new proposed color palette color scheme is intended to take the existing limestone color of the building and darken some areas to enhance the separation of parts. The new color scheme slightly darkens the main EIFS color at the faux columns and building side panels and darkens the color even more as the plane of EIFS falls back. This darkening of color will provide greater contrast and give the illusion of greater façade depth. The top inset panels will be painted with a muted terracotta color. The terracotta is designed to make the hotel more colorful while at the same time tying into the “red brick city” theme as coined by Mario Gondelsonas as he master planned Des Moines.

The proposed exterior color changes will provide some color differentiation between the civic, government buildings and the commercial Embassy Suites site while maintaining an overall compatible look and feel to the area. The riverfront has changed since Embassy Suites was constructed in 1990. The installation of the Principal Riverwalk, Brenton Skating Pavilion, Federal Court House Annex on the east bank, the red pedestrian bridge has physically altered the area's appearance. In addition, there is now a desire to activate the riverfront to attract people with activities and places; the Embassy Suites as the sole commercial building in the area, is an important component. The proposed exterior color changes provide Embassy Suites with a visible presence along the riverfront while not detracting from the adjacent civic buildings.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):**

Date: July 2, 1990

Roll Call Number: 90-2955

Action: Second Amendment to Contract for Sale of Land in Installments for Private Redevelopment and for the Lease of Land for Related Parking ("the Contract") for Disposition Parcel No. 8A and Disposition Parcel No. 8C/Capitol Center Development Urban Renewal Area [now known as Metro Center Urban Renewal Area]

Numerous previous roll calls relating to the contract for the property.

**BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):**

Board: Urban Design Review Board

Date: August 16, 2011

Action: Recommended approval of the proposal finding it appropriate and in keeping with the Civic Center historic context and highlighting the commercial nature of the property.

**ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE**

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