

VISIONS OF BELEN

May 24, 2018

Vision of Belen is a monthly feature in our newsletter which provides illustrations of how buildings and vacant lots in our MainStreet District might look. Sketches of existing buildings show how they might be improved to make them more attractive to businesses and potential customers. We might also provide sketches of buildings on vacant lots that people are looking at to purchase and illustrate some of their ideas about how they are thinking of utilizing the property. These Visions of Belen could have a significant impact on our district, adjacent businesses and our community in general.

This month we are featuring an existing building that is for sale on the northwest corner of First and Becker.



The elevation sketch below illustrates how the appearance of this building might be improved and its all in the details!



1. First of all, the columns should be replaced with larger, 8" x 8" wood columns which should be set at least 8" above the sidewalk on concrete piers so they don't sit in rain water and rot prematurely. The current 4" x 4" columns are proportionately too small and look very flimsy.
2. Remove all the aluminum siding from the building. This siding does not reflect the original history and character of Belen. It was probably a 1960's addition.
3. Replace the sidewalk cover structure and provide a more significant exposed wood framed structure with a old style corrugated metal.
4. Add a historic, appropriate cornice to the top of the parapet wall. This would make the building look very much like Paul Fiel's original 1913 building. Pictures of that building are available at the Library.
5. Replace the doors and windows and use a more turn of century (1900's) style clad wood window.

6. Since the brick is in unknown condition, I suggest covering the brick with stucco. The brick does not appear to be a highly desirable red brick so I would consider this change which is similar to early territorial style buildings found in the Belen area.
7. I would also suggest a more vibrant color scheme to liven up the area and give it a more up-scale look.
8. Provide new light fixtures. I would suggest wrought iron style fixtures of a turn of the century style.
9. And last but not least, add some LANDSCAPE PLANTING! The existing street scape is way to harsh to expect people to walk around this area in the summer time. As you know though, this harshness will be dealt with in our Great Blocks Project to talked about last month at our Breakfast Briefs at Rita's restaurant.

For our Visions of Belen we try to look at the best case scenario because we want the best for the people of Belen and if that is what we show that is what people will start expecting. If you have any comments you want to share you can contact us at the Chamber of Commerce offices on Dailies Ave. or come to our Biz Brief Breakfast every last Thursday morning of the month at Rita's Restaurant at 7:30 am. We would love to see you there.