

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD AGENDA
December 15, 2010 – 3:00 P.M.
Pre-Council Chambers, Mobile Government Plaza, 205 Government Street

A. CALL TO ORDER

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of Minutes
3. Approval of Mid Month COAs Granted by Staff

B. MID MONTH APPROVALS

1. Applicant: RBC Bank

- a. Property Address: 115 Dauphin Street.
- b. Date of Approval: 11/24/10
- c. Project: Place a three foot by 12 inch sand blasted wood shingle sign on a wrought iron bracket.

2. Applicant: Sarah Hoeb

- a. Property Address: 251 Dexter Avenue
- b. Date of Approval: 11/24/10
- c. Project: Paint the house in the following BLP paint scheme: Body: Last Light 8231; trim white; accent and porch deck – matte black. Paint the shed to match. Repair rotten wood as needed matching the existing in profile, dimension, and material.

3. Applicant: Thad and Bonnie Phillips

- a. Property Address: 200 South Georgia Avenue
- b. Date of Approval: 11/29/10
- c. Project: Install storm windows. The storm windows will match the existing window configuration and paint color.

4. Applicant: Copy Shop

- a. Property Address: 809 Government Street.
- b. Date of Approval: 11/24/10
- c. Project: Place two painted wooden signs on the façade and at west elevation. Total square footage is 24 square feet.

5. Applicant: John King

- a. Property Address: 8 South Hallet Street
- b. Date of Approval: 11/29/10
- c. Project: Replace the front porch's tongue-and-groove decking to match the existing. Repair and replace rails and pickets on the front porch to match. Replace the latticed foundation skirting to match. Repaint to match the existing color scheme.

6. Applicant: Orin Robinson with Victor Signs for the Bank of the Ozarks

- a. Property Address: 200 Dauphin Street
- b. Date of Approval: 11/29/10
- c. Project: Install a single-faced aluminum sign measuring 1 ½' in height and 12' 10" in length on the building's faced. The sign will not feature lighting. The sign will feature the name of the tenant (per submitted plans).

7. Applicant: Matthew Lemond

- a. Property Address: 564 Dauphin Street
- b. Date of Approval: 12/1/10
- c. Project: Install a green canvas bubble awning at façade and paint sign on awning.

8. Applicant: Pete's Foundation and Home

- a. Property Address: 1563 Blair Avenue
- b. Date of Approval: 12/1/10

- c. Project: Level and reconstruct the foundation piers reusing the old brick. Where bricks are too damaged to be reused, bricks closely matching the existing will be employed.

9. Applicant: Fred South for Ed Massey

- a. Property Address: 509 Church Street
- b. Date of Approval: 12/2/10
- c. Project: Repair and replace any rotten woodwork to match the existing in profile, dimension, and material. Repaint the building per the submitted color scheme.

10. Applicant: Beverley Hayes and Thomas Stout

- a. Property Address: 215 South Warren Street
- b. Date of Approval: 12/3/10
- c. Project: Replace asphalt roof with 5 v crimp tin. Remove chimney in accordance with previous ARB approval.

C. APPLICATIONS

- 1. 2010-91-CA: 263 South Cedar Street
 - a. Applicant: Robbie Stevens with Home Depot for David Thomas
 - b. Project: Install vinyl windows.
- 2. 2010-92-CA: 61 South Hallet Street
 - a. Applicant: Greg Eastburn, Jr.
 - b. Project: Demolish a garage. Construct a carport. Install interior lot fencing.
- 3. 2010-93-CA: 960 Conti Street
 - a. Applicant: Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind
 - b. Project: Demolish a house.

D. OTHER BUSINESS

- 1. Discussion

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
STAFF COMMENTS

2010-91-CA: 263 South Cedar Street
Applicant: Robbie Stevens with Home Depot for David Thomas
Received: 11/22/09
Meeting: 12/16/09

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Church Street East
Classification: Non-Contributing
Zoning: R-1
Project: Install vinyl windows

BUILDING HISTORY

This 2000 house constitutes recent infill construction in the Church Street East Historic District.

STANDARD OF REVIEW

Section 9 of the Preservation Ordinance states “the Board shall not approve any application proposing a Material Change in Appearance unless it finds the change...will not materially impair the architectural or historic value of the building, the buildings on adjacent sites or in the immediate vicinity, or the general visual character of the district...”

STAFF REPORT

- A. This property last appeared before the Architectural Review Board on May 5, 2010. At that time, the Board approved the replacement of the façade’s wooden columns with fiberglass substitutions of the same design. With this submission, the applicant proposes replacing the façade’s four first story wooden windows with vinyl windows.
- B. The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts state, in pertinent part:
 - 1. “The type, size and dividing light of windows and their location and configuration (rhythm) on the building help establish the historic character of a building. Original window openings should be retained as well as original window sashes and glazing”
 - 2. “Where windows cannot be replaced, new windows must be compatible to the existing. The size and placement of new windows for additions and alterations should be compatible with the general character of the building.”
- C. Scope of Work:
 - 1. Replace the façade’s four first story wooden windows with vinyl windows.
 - a. The windows will feature the same one-over-one configuration as the existing.
 - b. The windows will not feature applied muntins.
 - c. The windows will have a white finish.

STAFF ANALYSIS

With regards to windows, the Design Review Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts are directed toward historic and/or contributing structures, not new construction. The installation of vinyl windows is not allowed on historic buildings. This house constitutes traditional infill construction in the Church

Street East Historic District. Taking into account the house's recent date of construction (2000), the Guidelines for New Residential Construction Mobile's Historic Districts must be consulted.

The Guidelines for New Construction allow the use of vinyl clad windows, but do not specifically forbid the use of vinyl windows. Mill finished metal windows, along with windows featuring snap-in muntins are deemed inappropriate. Vinyl windows have been discouraged. On September 2, 2009, the Board approved, on a test case basis, the installation of vinyl windows for a new house located at 1562 Blair Avenue. As proposed and installed, those windows utilized stool extensions. The extensions and framing of the windows provide the sense of depth and stability afforded by traditional true-divided-light wooden windows. Staff deems the results successful.

Generally, the Board is looking for a certain dimensionality to the windows. Since this is a brick house and Blair Avenue is a wood house, that dimensionality must come from the window itself.

As per this application, only the façade's four first story wooden windows would be replaced with vinyl windows. The applicant has made no provision for installing a stool extension or additional frame. That said, the proposed vinyl replacement windows would feature the same one-over-one configuration and occupy the same position as the existing.

As submitted, Staff cannot recommend approval of this application. Staff requests that the applicant's representative provide a sample section of the proposed window. Staff asks that Board members inspect the test case windows at 1562 Blair Avenue. Upon examination of the windows proposed for 263 Cedar Street and discussion of the windows installed at 1562 Blair Avenue, Staff believes that the Board will be better able to review this application.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff defers from recommending approval of this application as it is currently proposed. Staff defers to Board's inspection of the approved test case window installation and examination of the proposed window replacements for adequate dimensionality.

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
STAFF COMMENTS

2010-92-CA: 61 South Hallet Street
Applicant: Greg Eastburn, Jr.
Received: 12/1/10
Meeting: 12/15/10

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Old Dauphin Way
Classification: Contributing
Zoning: R-1
Project: Demolish an existing garage. Construct a carport. Install interior lot fencing.

BUILDING HISTORY

This bungalow was constructed sometime between 1925 and 1935.

STANDARD OF REVIEW

Section 9 of the Preservation Ordinance states “the Board shall not approve any application proposing a Material Change in Appearance unless it finds the change...will not materially impair the architectural or historic value of the building, the buildings on adjacent sites or in the immediate vicinity, or the general visual character of the district...”

STAFF REPORT

- A. This property appeared before the Old Dauphin Way Review Board on February 15, 1996. At that time, the Old Dauphin Way Board approved the installation of shutters over the siding facing the infilled front porch. The current owner/applicant appears before the Board with a proposal entailing the demolition of the existing garage, the construction of carport, and the installation of interior lot fencing.
- B. The Design Guidelines for Mobile’s downtown commercial buildings, state, in pertinent part:
 - 1. “An ancillary structure is any construction other than the main building on the property. It includes but is not limited to garages, carports, pergolas, decks, pool covers, sheds and the like. The appropriateness of accessory structures shall be measured by the guidelines applicable to new construction. The structure should complement the design and scale of the main building.”
 - 2. Fences “should complement the building not detract from it. Design, scale, placement and materials should be considered along with their relationship to the Historic District. The height of solid fences in historic districts is generally restricted to six feet, however, if a commercial property or multi-family housing adjoins the subject property an eight foot fence may be considered. The finished side of the fence should face the public view. All variances required by the Board of Zoning Adjustment must be obtained prior to issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.”
- C. Scope of Work: (per submitted plans):
 - 1. Demolish the existing Garage.
 - 2. Construct a Carport on the site of the demolished garage.

- a. The carport will be constructed atop the garage's 20' square concrete slab.
 - b. Six square section wooden posts will support the carport's west-facing gable roof.
 - c. The concrete slab will be repaired if and where necessary.
 - d. The posts will feature capitals whose moldings will match those found on the main house.
 - e. The open rafter tail treatment will match that of the main house.
 - f. The gable will be faced with wooden siding and will feature louvered vents.
 - g. The gable will have a 4-12 pitch.
 - h. The roof shingles will match those found on the main house.
 - i. The carport will be painted to match the color scheme of the main house.
3. Install an interior lot privacy fence.
- a. The 6' high wooden privacy fence will be located just north and east of the existing and proposed vehicular covers.
 - b. The fence will feature a boxed top.

STAFF ANALYSIS

This house was constructed sometime between 1925 and 1930. The garage was constructed contemporaneously. The garage's overall design and detailing have been extensively altered (An open portion to the north has been enclosed and inappropriate doors have been installed). Additionally, the building exhibits major structural issues arising from on the on slab construction and deferral of maintenance.

The applicant proposes the demolition of the garage. While the main house is listed as a contributing structure, the garage does not exhibit the same attention to design sensibilities and constructional quality as the house. Staff does not believe the demolition of the altered and unsound garage will impair the architectural or the historical integrity of the building or the district.

The proposed carport meets the design and material standards set forth in the Design Review Guidelines for Mobile's historic districts. The proposed carport will occupy the footprint of the garage and will feature the same front-facing gable format. The decorative moldings, the eave treatment, and the roofing material will match those found on the main house. Secondary structures on neighboring lots are located on the lot line. The proposed new construction therefore conforms to historic district overlay's setback requirements. Staff believes that neither the proposed carport nor the interior lot fencing impair the historical integrity of the property or the historic district.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on B (1-3), Staff does not believe this application impairs the architectural or the historical character of the building or the district. Staff recommends approval of this application.

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
STAFF COMMENTS

2010-93-CA: 960 Conti Street
Applicant: Michelle Jones for the Alabama Institute of Deaf and Blind
Received: 12/1/10
Meeting: 12/15/10

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Old Dauphin Way
Classification: Non-Contributing
Zoning: R-1
Project: Demolish a House.

BUILDING HISTORY

This shotgun house was constructed in three different stages. The older center portion dates from circa 1910. The front room & porch and rear portion were added .

STANDARD OF REVIEW

Section 9 of the Preservation Ordinance states “the Board shall not approve any application proposing a Material Change in Appearance unless it finds the change...will not materially impair the architectural or historic value of the building, the buildings on adjacent sites or in the immediate vicinity, or the general visual character of the district...”

STAFF REPORT

- A. This property has never appeared before the Architectural Review Board. With this submission, the applicants propose the demolition of the structure and the installation of landscaping.
- B. In regards to demolition, the Guidelines read as follows: “Proposed demolition of a building must be brought before the Board for consideration. The Board may deny a demolition request if the building’s loss will impair the historic integrity of the district.” However, our ordinance mirrors the Mobile City Code, see §44-79, which sets forth the following standard of review and required findings for the demolition of historic structures:
 - 1. *Required findings; demolition/relocation.* The board shall not grant certificates of appropriateness for the demolition or relocation of any property within a historic district unless the board finds that the removal or relocation of such building will not be detrimental to the historical or architectural character of the district. In making this determination, the board shall consider:
 - i. The historic or architectural significance of the structure;
This shotgun is a non-contributing structure located within the Old Dauphin Way Historic District. Front and rear additions bracket the circa 1910 original two room dwelling.
 - ii. The importance of the structures to the integrity of the historic district, the immediate vicinity, an area, or relationship to other structures;
 - 1. This house is located westernmost block of that section of Conti Street west of Broad Street. The built density and historical character of the street have changed dramatically over the course of the 20th Century. Both sides of the street have witnessed extensive demolition. The property to the west is a vacant lot. The parking lot and playground of

- iii. The difficulty or the impossibility of reproducing the structure because of its design, texture, material, detail or unique location;
 - 1. The building materials are capable of being reproduced.
- iv. Whether the structure is one of the last remaining examples of its kind in the neighborhood, the county, or the region or is a good example of its type, or is part of an ensemble of historic buildings creating a neighborhood;
 - 1. Shotgun houses are found across the City and County of Mobile. This regional house type is ubiquitous to the American South. There is a large concentration of shotguns of better design, construction, and condition located in the immediate vicinity of the structure (particularly on Caroline Avenue).
- v. Whether there are definite plans for reuse of the property if the proposed demolition is carried out, and what effect such plans will have on the architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological, social, aesthetic, or environmental character of the surrounding area.
 - 1. If granted demolition approval, the applicants will salvage the few remaining materials from the house, level the site, and plant grass on the lot. Native and traditional plantings including azaleas will be planted along the east (side) and rear (north side of the lot) sides of the lot. The landscaping that would be located along the rear perimeter of the lot will extend along the rear and western sides of the adjacent lot to the west, which is also owned the Institute.
- vi. The date the owner acquired the property, purchase price, and condition on date of acquisition;
 - 1. The Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind is in the process of acquiring the property.
- vii. The number and types of adaptive uses of the property considered by the owner;
 - 1. After examining their purposes and mission, the Institute cannot find an alternative use for the building.
- viii. Whether the property has been listed for sale, prices asked and offers received, if any;
 - 1. The Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind is in the process of purchasing the property. The house is listed at \$20,000.
- ix. Description of the options currently held for the purchase of such property, including the price received for such option, the conditions placed upon such option and the date of expiration of such option;
 - 1. Not applicable.
- x. Replacement construction plans for the property in question and amounts expended upon such plans, and the dates of such expenditures;
 - 1. Not given
- xi. Financial proof of the ability to complete the replacement project, which may include but not be limited to a performance bond, a letter of credit, a trust for completion of improvements, or a letter of commitment from a financial institution; and
 - 1. Not applicable.
- xii. Such other information as may reasonably be required by the board.
 - 1. See submitted materials.

3. *Post demolition or relocation plans required.* In no event shall the board entertain any application for the demolition or relocation of any historic property unless the applicant also presents at the same time the post-demolition or post-relocation plans for the site.”
- C. Scope of Work:
1. Demolish the house.
 2. Level the lot.
 3. Remove encroaching underbrush and debris from the northern and eastern sides of the lot, as well as the northern and western sides of the adjoining lot to the west.
 4. Install perimeter plantings comprised of natural and traditional shrubbery (azaleas in particular) along the eastern and northern sides of the lot, as well as the northern and western sides of the adjoining lot to the west.
 5. Plant grass on the lot.

STAFF ANALYSIS

When reviewing applications entailing the demolition of a property’s principal building, four primary areas of concern are taken into account: the architectural significance of the building; the condition of the building; the effect of the demolition on the streetscape; and the nature of the proposed redevelopment.

With regards to the architectural significance of the building, this house is one of many shotguns located in and around the City of Mobile. This house is located on an extremely narrow lot. The original two room house has received front and rear additions. The earlier front addition and porch are surmounted a curious asymmetrical roof structure. The rear addition continues the plane of the house to a point close to the rear property line. While the addition straddled house demonstrates the expansion and evolution of a shotgun dwelling, the house is not architecturally significant.

Though the house is in need of extensive repair stemming from deferred maintenance and shoddy construction, the building is salvageable.

The two block section of Conti Street located west of Broad Street has changed dramatically over the course of the twentieth century. Numerous smaller dwellings were located on the northern side of the two blocks. They faced the rear entrances to large houses facing Government Street located on the southern side of the street. The altered streetscape features densely built up pockets interspersed between large unmaintained lots, parking lots, and non-contributing buildings. Since this portion of Conti Street is bound by Broad Street and Blacksher Hall, there is little through traffic on this dead end stretch of this often interrupted street. An undeveloped lot owned by the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind is located to the west of the building. A second undeveloped lot is located to the east of the house. The parking lot and playground the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind occupy the extensive lot located on the opposite side of Conti Street.

If granted demolition approval, the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind plans to unify this lot with the adjoining lot to the west via a unified landscaping plan. The two lots will be cleared and leveled prior to the laying of sod. The eastern and northern sides of the subject property along with the northern and western sides of the adjoining property will be planted with native and traditional plantings.

While Staff laments the demolition of any building located within the historic districts, this building’s lack of significance, poor condition, and paradoxical location abet the applicant’s proposed demolition of the dwelling. Staff does not believe this application will impair the architectural or the historical integrity of the larger Old Dauphin Way Historic District.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff does not believe this application will impair the architectural or the historical character of the historic district. Staff recommends approval of this application.