

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD AGENDA
September 7, 2011 – 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: Lyndsay Burkett

- a. Property Address: 15 South Lafayette Street
- b. Date of Approval: 8/10/11
- c. Project: Repaint house. The body will be Grandma's Linen and the trim will be Montpelier Madison White.

2. Applicant: Paul Howen

- a. Property Address: 28 McPhillips Street
- b. Date of Approval: 8/11/11
- c. Project: Paint per the house per the submitted BLP color scheme. The body will be DeTonti Gray Beige and the trim will be white.

3. Applicant: Sally Berry

- a. Property Address: 205 Congress Street
- b. Date of Approval: 8/11/11
- c. Project: Paint exterior with white and door and trim with charcoal gray.

4. Applicant: Todd Drummond

- a. Property Address: 260 North Joachim Street
- b. Date of Approval: 8/11/11
- c. Project: Paint exterior. The siding will be Downing Sand - SW2827 and trim will be semi-gloss white. Repair woodwork where necessary. Install tongue-and-groove porch decking if the later decking cover is unable to be repaired.

5. Applicant: E. A. Andrews for St. Francis Street Properties

- a. Property Address: 503 Saint Francis Street Properties
- b. Date of Approval: 8/10/11
- c. Project: Reroof the building with architectural shingles.

6. Applicant: George Woodall

- a. Property Address: 508 George Street
- b. Date of Approval: 8/11/11
- c. Project: Remove asbestos roof and reroof with asphalt shingles, charcoal gray in color.

7. Applicant: Diversified Roofing Services for McGill Toolen Catholic High School

- a. Property Address: 1501 Old Shell Road
- b. Date of Approval: 8/11/11
- c. Project: Reroof breezeways and overhangs.

8. Applicant: Robin Strickland

- a. Property Address: 303 South Ann Street
- b. Date of Approval: 8/11/11
- c. Project: Repair and when necessary replace windows to match the existing in composition and configuration. Repair deteriorated woodwork. Touch up paint per the existing color scheme as necessary.

- 9. Applicant: Caldwell Whistler**
- a. Property Address: 12 South Ann Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/12/11
 - c. Project: Remove a deteriorated deck at rear of house.
- 10. Applicant: Paul Hoffmeyer**
- a. Property Address: 207 South Georgia Avenue
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/15/11
 - c. Project: Install new concrete steps between the existing antipodia.
- 11. Applicant: Clint Doolittle for St. Mary's Church**
- a. Property Address: 1413 Old Shell Road
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/15/11
 - c. Project: Replace a door on the rear elevation with one matching the existing design.
- 12. Applicant: John Thomas**
- a. Property Address: 26 South Reed Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/16/11
 - c. Project: Repair and replace deteriorated woodwork where necessary. Touch up per the existing color scheme.
- 13. Applicant: Skip Shirah**
- a. Property Address: 1126 Palmetto Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/16/11
 - c. Project: Install a bracketed awning over the rear entrance. Repair deteriorated woodwork where necessary. Touch up per the existing color scheme.
- 14. Applicant: Presley Roofing**
- a. Property Address: 1012 Dauphin Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/16/11
 - c. Project: Repair portions of the roof. The shingles will match the existing.
- 15. Applicant: Wrico Signs for Boteler, Finley & Wolfe**
- a. Property Address: 1252 Dauphin Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/17/11
 - c. Project: Install new signage within the existing monument sign. A new wooden sign featuring the firm's principals will be installed.
- 16. Applicant: Sandy Whistler**
- a. Property Address: 8 South Ann Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/22/11
 - c. Project: Repair and replace deteriorated wooden siding to match the existing. Repair and replace deteriorated wooden detailing to match the existing. Replace roof shingles where necessary. Replace sections of wooden lattice where necessary.
- 17. Applicant: Sandy Whistler**
- a. Property Address: 12 South Ann Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/22/11
 - c. Project: Repair and replace deteriorated wooden siding, eaves, and detailing to match the existing profile and dimension. Touch up the paint.
- 18. Applicant: Jane Farley**
- a. Property Address: 255 Dexter Avenue
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/19/11
 - c. Project: Repair and/or replace rotten wood in second story porch ceiling to match original bead board. Repair and/or replace any other rotten wood as necessary to match original in profile and dimension, repaint to match.

- 19. Applicant: Avery Fick**
- Property Address: 1317 Old Shell Road
 - Date of Approval: 8/19/11
 - Project: Remove a chain link fence, replace with six foot wood privacy fence, rebuild back deck as before, extend rear roof overhead, shingle and screen, and repair rot at windows.
- 20. Applicant: American Roofing and Construction LLC**
- Property Address: 1108 Oak Street
 - Date of Approval: 8/22/11
 - Project: Reroof fire-damaged portions of the roof to match the existing.
- 21. Applicant: Johnna, Dick, & Tara Rogers**
- Property Address: 204 Roper Street
 - Date of Approval: 8/22/11
 - Project: Repair the front porch steps. Repair any deteriorated woodwork to match the existing in profile and dimension. Touch up the paint in the affected areas per the existing color scheme.
- 22. Applicant: William Johnston**
- Property Address: 1223 Selma Street
 - Date of Approval: 8/23/11
 - Project: Install a canvas awning off the rear sun porch. Touch up paint per the existing color scheme.
- 23. Applicant: Mary Geary**
- Property Address: 1060 Augusta Street
 - Date of Approval: 8/24/11
 - Project: Install a 4' aluminum fence around the side yard's air-conditioning and electric meter units.
- 24. Applicant: Floyd Morris Roofing Incorporated**
- Property Address: 1650 Government Street
 - Date of Approval: 8/25/11
 - Project: Reroof the building with Timberline shingles.
- 25. Applicant: Alicia Farmer**
- Property Address: 1259 Elmira Street
 - Date of Approval: 8/25/11
 - Project: Paint the house per the submitted Benjamin Moore color scheme. The body will be Rockport Grey. The window trim will be Icicle. The window sashes will be Deep Spice. The doors and detailing will be Black Forest Green.
- 26. Applicant: Rogers and Willard**
- Property Address: 351 George Street
 - Date of Approval: 8/26/11
 - Project: Construct a wooden screen wall around the existing mechanical units. The work will not be visible from the street.
- 27. Applicant: Melissa Horton with JESCO for the Battle House**
- Property Address: 26 North Royal Street
 - Date of Approval: 8/26/11
 - Project: Install slate-stamped concrete between the Royal Street Oak trees.
- 28. Applicant: Lynn Manz-Walters**
- Property Address: 1152 Texas Street
 - Date of Approval: 8/26/11
 - Project: Repair and replace siding to match the existing. Patch the roof to match the existing.

C. APPLICATIONS

1. 2011--CA: 1407 Brown Street

- a. Applicant: Stephen Teel
- b. Project: New Construction – Construct a single family residence.

2. 2011- -CA: 1501 and 1503 Government Street

- a. Applicant: Andrew Cronin with Boos Development Group for L. C. & Lynn Fowler
- b. Project: Demolition and New Construction – Demolish two vacant non-contributing commercial buildings. Redevelop the property through the construction of a new commercial building, the planting of landscaping, the installation of hardscaping, and the installation of signage.

D. OTHER BUSINESS

- 1. Discussion

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
STAFF REPORT

2011-00-CA: 1407 Brown Street
Applicant: Stephen Teel
Received: 8/15/11
Meeting: 9/7/11

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Old Dauphin Way
Classification: Non-Contributing
Zoning: R-1
Project: New Construction – Construct a single family residence.

BUILDING HISTORY

This section of Brown Street is not depicted in the 1925 Sanborn Map. A vacant lot is shown in the 1955 Sanborn Map.

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. The owner applicant proposes the construction of single family residence on the vacant lot.
- B. The Design Review Guidelines for New Residential Construction in Mobile’s Historic Districts state, in pertinent part:
 1. With regard to placement and orientation, “placement has two components: setback, the distance between the street and a building; and spacing, the distance between its property lines and adjacent structures. New construction should be placed on the lot so that setback and spacing approximate those of nearby historic buildings. New buildings should not be placed too far forward or behind the traditional “facade line”, a visual line created by the fronts of buildings along a street. An inappropriate setback disrupts the facade line and diminishes the visual character of the streetscape. Current setback requirements of the City of Mobile Zoning Ordinance may not allow the building to be placed as close to the street as the majority of existing buildings. If the traditional facade line or “average” setback is considerably less than allowed under the Zoning Ordinance, the Review Boards will support an application for a Variance from the Board of Adjustment to allow for new construction closer to the street and more in character with the surrounding historic buildings.”
 2. With regard to massing and scale “MASS: Building mass is established by the arrangement and proportion of its basic geometric components - the main building, wings and porches, the roof and the foundation. Similarity of massing helps create a rhythm along a street, which is one of the appealing aspects of historic districts. Therefore, new construction should reference the massing of forms of nearby historic buildings.

FOUNDATIONS: The foundation, the platform upon which a building rests, is a massing component of a building. Since diminished foundation proportions have a negative effect on massing and visual character, new buildings should have foundations similar in height to those of nearby historic buildings. In most historic residential areas, buildings are usually elevated above a crawl space on a pier foundation. Pier foundations are encouraged for new residential construction. When raised slab foundations are constructed, it is important that the height of the foundation relate to that of nearby historic buildings. For this reason, slab-on-grade foundations are not allowed for single family residences. For multi-family, where slab-on-grade is most practical, other design elements such as water tables and exaggerated bases can be effective in creating the visual appearance of a raised foundation.

MAIN BODY AND WINGS: Although roofs and foundations reinforce massing, the main body and wings are the most significant components. A building's form or shape can be simple (a box) or complex (a combination of many boxes or projections and indentations). The main body of a building may be one or two stories. Secondary elements, usually porches or wings extend from the main building. These elements create the massing of a building. Interior floor and ceiling heights are reflected on the exterior of a building and should be compatible with nearby historic buildings.

ROOFS: A building's roof contributes significantly to its massing and to the character of the surrounding area. New construction may consider, where appropriate, roof shapes, pitches and complexity similar to or compatible with those of adjacent historic buildings. Additionally roof designs of new residential buildings may incorporate eave overhang and trim details such as exposed rafters, soffits, cornice, fascia, frieze board, moulding, etc. as those of nearby buildings.

SCALE: The size of a building is determined by its dimensions - height, width, and depth - which also dictate the building's square footage. SCALE refers to a building's size in relationship to other buildings - large, medium, small. Buildings which are similar in massing may be very different in scale. To preserve the continuity of a historic district, new construction should be in scale with nearby historic buildings.

3. With regard to façade elements "Façade elements such as porches, entrances, and windows make up the "face" or facade of a building. New construction should reflect the use of facade elements of nearby historic buildings. The porch is an important regional characteristic of Mobile architecture. In order to coexist in harmony with adjacent structures in the historic districts, porches are strongly encouraged. Porches often create a visual cadence along the street. Designs for new porches should also reference historic porch location, proportion, rhythm, roof form, supports, steps, rails and ornamentation. Porches of new buildings should also be similar in height and width to porches of nearby historic buildings. Proper care should be taken in the detailing of new porches. Scale, proportion and character of elements such as porch columns, corner brackets, railings, pickets, etc. should be compatible with adjacent historic structures. Wood or a suitable substitute material should be used. In addition, elements such as balconies, cupolas, chimneys, dormers, and other elements can help integrate a new structure with the neighborhood when used at the proper scale. Some architectural styles, such as those dating from the Victorian period, featured decorative elements in gables like barge boards and louvered vents. Later styles such as bungalows used decorative cornice brackets or show rafters as design elements. Depending on the character and style of new construction and its relation to surrounding historic structures, similar gable elements should be used. The number and proportion of openings - windows and entrances - within the facade of a building creates a solid-to-void ratio (wall-to-opening). New buildings should use windows and entrances that approximate the placement and solid-to-void ratio of nearby historic buildings. In

addition, designs for new construction should incorporate the traditional use of window casements and door surrounds. Where a side elevation is clearly visible from the street, proportion and placement of their elements will have an impact upon the visual character of the neighborhood and must be addressed in the design.”

4. With regard to materials and ornamentation, “The goal of new construction should be to blend into the historic district but to avoid creating a false sense of history by merely copying historic examples. The choice of materials and ornamentation for new construction is a good way for a new building to exert its own identity. By using historic examples as a point of departure, it is possible for new construction to use new materials and ornamentation and still fit into the historic district. Historic buildings feature the use of a variety of materials for roofs, foundations, wall cladding and architectural details. In new buildings, exterior materials – both traditional and modern - should closely resemble surrounding historic examples. Buildings in Mobile’s historic districts vary in age and architectural styles, dictating the materials to be used for new construction. Traditional building materials which are not present on nearby historic buildings or buildings in the area that contains only Victorian-era frame houses, a brick ranch-style house would be conspicuous and disrupt the area’s visual continuity. Modern materials which have the same textural qualities and character as materials of nearby historic buildings may be acceptable. The degree of ornamentation used in new construction should be compatible with the degree of ornamentation found upon nearby historic buildings. Although new buildings should use decorative trim, window casings, and other building materials similar to nearby historic buildings, the degree of ornamentation should not exceed that characteristic of the area. Profile and dimensions of new material should be consistent with examples in the district.”
5. “Modern paving materials are acceptable in the historic districts. However, it is important that the design, location and materials be compatible with the property.”
6. “The appearance of parking areas should be minimized through good site planning and design. New materials such as grasscrete, which provides solid parking while still allowing grass to grow giving the appearance of a continuance of a front lawn, may be a feasible alternative.”

C. Scope of Work (per submitted site plan):

1. New Construction - Construct a single family residence.
 - a. The single story house will measure 32’ 10” in width and 60’ 1” in depth.
 - b. The house will rest atop a continuous brick foundation. The façade’s foundation will feature a water table like stringcourse of headers.
 - c. The house’s façade and the area about the rear porch will be faced with wooden siding. The side and rear elevations will feature a brick veneer
 - d. The house will feature three over one windows.
 - e. The house will be surmounted by a front-facing gable roof.
 - f. The house will feature exposed rafter tails.
 - g. The roof will be sheathed in asphalt shingles.
 - h. The three bay façade (North Elevation) will be fronted by centrally located, hipped roof porch. The porch will feature four square section wooden posts. The porch’s rafter treatment will match that of the body of the house. A wooden railing will enclose the porch.
 - i. The façade’s glazed and paneled door will be flanked by three-over-one windows.
 - j. Paired six light windows will be located above the porch within the apex of the façade’s forward-facing gable.

- k. The East Elevation will feature two pairs of three-over-one windows, a glazed door, and a transom window. A brick stoop and steps will allow ingress into and out of the door. Wooden railings matching those employed on the façade will be employed on the steps.
- l. The Rear (South) Elevation will feature an 8’ wide by 3’ deep southeast corner porch. The rear porch will feature a single post matching those employed on the front porch. A railing matching those employed elsewhere on the porch will be used. A glazed door will access the porch.
- m. Two three-over-one wooden windows and a single light window will be located to the west of the porch.
- n. The West Elevation will feature a single three-over-one window.
- o. Install a concrete driveway.
- p. A concrete walkway will provide access from the driveway to the front porch
- q. A concrete walkway will provide access from the driveway to the side door.

Clarifications

- 1. What are the dimensions of the driveway/parking pad?
- 2. What type paving will be used on the porch?
- 3. What is the design of the railing?
- 4. What are the compositions of the doors and windows?

STAFF ANALYSIS

This application involves the construction of a single family residence on vacant lot. Design review of new residential construction in Mobile’s historic districts takes into account the following: placement and orientation; mass; scale; façade elements; and modern materials.

Building placement and orientation should take into consideration setback and orientation. Setback is the distance from the front plane of a building to the street. The Guidelines for New Residential Construction in Mobile’s Historic Districts state setbacks should approximate those of nearby historic structures so not disrupt the “façade line” that characterizes traditional streetscapes. Similarly the spacing and/or orientation of new construction, that is the distance between buildings, should be comparable to spacing of nearby historic buildings. The proposed new construction should step closer to the street so to be commiserated with traditional setback lines that typify Brown Street, a street whose houses rarely exceed a twenty foot setback. While this property is located within a slight curve, the house could be positioned closer the street in such a manner as to provide continuity of setback.

Building mass concerns the arrangement and proportion of the parts that comprise a building. The Design Review Guidelines for New Construction in Mobile’s Historic District state that building masses should be comparable to those of nearby historic buildings. Elevated atop a raised slab foundation, fronted by a full centrally located porch, and surmounted by a forwarding facing gable, the proposed building takes queue from traditional residential massing and distribution of components.

Scale involves the comparison of a building’s height, width, and length to those of other buildings. The Design Review Guidelines for New Construction in Mobile’s Historic Districts state new construction should be commiserate with the scale of nearby historic structures. The proposed residence’s scale is in keeping with other single story houses in the vicinity.

A façade is a building’s principle elevation. Traditionally most Mobile residences featured some sort of porch umbrage. Fronted hipped roof, single story porch, the proposed façade is symmetrical in composition and simple in detail.

The Design Review Guidelines for New Construction in Mobile's Historic Districts state that materials should blend with the existing built landscape. The proposed façade would feature wooden siding while the side and rear walls would be brick. Dual wall facings are not characteristic of Mobile's historic residential fabric. Staff believes an all brick or an all sided structure would be more appropriate for the historic districts. If the walls are faced in brick, Staff recommends the continuation of the watertable around the whole of the building.

With regard to parking areas, The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile's Historic Districts take the following into consideration: composition, design, and location. Modern paving materials such as concrete approved for use in the historic districts, but parking pads located in the front plan of the house are not allowed as they adversely affect the historic character of the historic district. The Guidelines state that parking areas should be minimized by good site planning and landscaping. Staff recommends that the driveway/parking pad be positioned to the side of the residence. The side placement of the drive can be achieved by moving the house 2' to the west. Setback requirements will still be maintained along with parking and paving being moved to the side of the residence.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on B (2, 4, 5, & 6), Staff believes this application impairs the architectural or the historical character of the district. As currently proposed the 25' façade setback, varying walls facings, and parking placement are in violation of the New Construction Guidelines. As proposed, Staff cannot recommend approval of this application. Staff recommends that the applicant address the clarifications listed above, move 2' to the west and closer to the street, use of either continuous wood or brick wall facings, and relocate the parking area. If these alterations are made, Staff would recommend approval of the application.

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
STAFF REPORT

2011-00-CA: 1501 and 1503 Government Street
Applicant: Andrew Cronin with Boos Development Group for L. C. & Lynn Fowler
Received: 8/19/11
Meeting: 9/7/11

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Leinkauf
Classification: Non-Contributing
Zoning: B-2
Project: Demolition and New Construction – Demolish two vacant Non-Contributing commercial buildings. Redevelop the property through the construction of a new commercial building, the installation of landscaping, installation of hardscaping, and the installation of signage.

BUILDING HISTORY

These two non-contributing commercial buildings appear as overlays in the 1955 Sanborn Maps. 1501 Government Street likely dates from the 1960s. The building features walls laid in St. Joe brick and a façade featuring geometric decoration. 1503 Government Street was constructed in 1971.

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. These properties have never appeared before the Architectural Review Board. The applicants propose the demolition of the two existing non-contributing commercial buildings and the redevelopment of the property. Redevelopment would include the construction of new commercial building, the installation of hardscaping, the planting of landscaping, and the installation of signage.
- B. The 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;
The buildings located at 1501 and 1503 Government Street appear as overlays in the 1955 Sanborn Maps. The overlay for 1503 Government Street notes that the building was constructed in 1971. Both buildings are non-contributing

commercial buildings. Of the two, 1503 Government Street is the one that exhibits a note of stylistic awareness. The building's St. Joe brick faced walls and geometrically informed façade decoration were design components employed on a number of more sophisticated local commercial buildings constructed during the 1960s. The building at 1503 Government Street is surmounted by truncated roof, a more popular constructional pattern and design motif of the 1960s – 1980s.

- 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 section of western Government Street was drastically altered during the last half of the 20th Century. While the buildings 1501 and 1503 Government Street maintain traditional residential setback lines, the demolition of the two buildings would not impair the architectural or the historical integrity of the Leinkauf Historic District, the adjacent Old Dauphin Way historic districts, or the Government Street Corridor.
- 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. Single story second half of the 20th-century brick commercial structures are found across the United States. Buildings similar to 1501 are located areas west and north of the City center.
- 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 would demolish the two non-contributing buildings and redevelop the site. Redevelopment would entail the construction of new single story commercial building, the installation of new hardscaping, the planting of landscaping, and the installation of signage.
- vi. The date the owner acquired the property, purchase price, and condition on date of acquisition;
 1. The sale of the property is under negotiation.
- vii. The number and types of adaptive uses of the property considered by the owner;
 1. The property owners listed the property for a sale for a number of years ago. The potential purchasers do not want to utilize the deteriorated buildings.
- viii. Whether the property has been listed for sale, prices asked and offers received, if any;
 1. The property has been listed for sale. The sale of the property is pending Architectural Review Board approval of the redevelopment proposal.
- 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. See submitted materials.
- x. Replacement construction plans for the property in question and amounts expended upon such plans, and the dates of such expenditures;
 1. See submitted materials.

- 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. Application submitted.
 - 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. The Mobile Historic District Guidelines for New Commercial Construction state, in pertinent part:
 1. **“Placement and Orientation:** Placement has two components: setback, the distance between the street and a building; and spacing, the distance between its property lines and adjacent structures. New construction should be placed on the lot so that setback and spacing approximate those of nearby historic buildings. New buildings should not be placed too far forward or behind the traditional “facade line”, a visual line created by the fronts of buildings along a street. An inappropriate setback disrupts the facade line and diminishes the visual character of the streetscape. Current setback requirements of the City of Mobile Zoning Ordinance may not allow the building to be placed as close to the street as the majority of existing buildings. If the traditional facade line or “average” setback is considerably less than allowed under the Zoning Ordinance, the Review Boards will support an application for a Variance from the Board of Adjustment to allow for new construction closer to the street and more in character with the surrounding historic buildings.
 2. **MASS:** Building mass is established by the arrangement and proportion of its basic geometric components - the main building, wings and porches, the roof and the foundation. Similarity of massing helps create a rhythm along a street, which is one of the appealing aspects of historic districts. Therefore, new construction should reference the massing of forms of nearby historic buildings.
 - a. **FOUNDATIONS:** The foundation, the platform upon which a building rests, is a massing component of a building. Since diminished foundation proportions have a negative effect on massing and visual character, new buildings should have foundations similar in height to those of nearby historic buildings.
 - b. **MAIN BODY AND WINGS:** Although roofs and foundations reinforce massing, the main body and wings are the most significant components. A building’s form or shape can be simple (a box) or complex (a combination of many boxes or projections and indentations). The main body of a building may be one or two stories. Interior floor and ceiling heights are reflected on the exterior of a building and should be compatible with nearby historic buildings.
 - c. **ROOFS:** A building’s roof contributes significantly to its massing and to the character of the surrounding area. New construction may consider, where appropriate, roof shapes, pitches and complexity similar to or compatible with those of adjacent historic buildings.
 3. **SCALE:** The size of a building is determined by its dimensions - height, width, and depth - which also dictate the building’s square footage. Scale refers to building’s size in relationship to other buildings - large, medium, and small. Buildings which are

4. **FAÇADE ELEMENTS:** Facade elements such as porches, entrances, and windows make up the “face” or facade of a building. New construction should reflect the use of facade elements of nearby historic buildings. The number and proportion of openings - windows and entrances - within the facade of a building creates a solid-to-void ratio (wall-to-opening). New buildings should use windows and entrances that approximate the placement and solid-to-void ratio of nearby historic buildings. In addition, designs for new construction should incorporate the traditional use of window casements and door surrounds. Where a side elevation is clearly visible from the street, proportion and placement of their elements will have an impact upon the visual character of the neighborhood and must be addressed in the design.
 5. **MATERIALS AND ORNAMENTATION:** The goal of new construction should be to blend into the historic district but to avoid creating a false sense of history by merely copying historic examples. The choice of materials and ornamentation for new construction is a good way for a new building to exert its own identity. By using historic examples as a point of departure, it is possible for new construction to use new materials and ornamentation and still fit into the historic district. Historic buildings feature the use of a variety of materials for roofs, foundations, wall cladding, and architectural details. In new buildings, exterior materials – both traditional and modern - should closely resemble surrounding historic examples.
- D. The Sign Design Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts and Government Street state, in Pertinent part:
1. “The size of the sign shall be in proportion to the building and the neighboring structures and signs.”
 2. “The total maximum sign area for all signs is one and one half square feet per linear foot of the principal building, not to exceed 64 square feet.”
 3. “The maximum allowable square footage for the display area of a monument sign is (50) fifty square feet.”
 4. The size of the sign shall be determined by measuring the area within each face of the geometric shape enclosing all elements of informational or representational matter including blank masking. Structural supports not bearing information shall not be included in the computation of display area. For double faced signs, each side shall be counted toward the maximum allowable square footage.”
 5. “Plastic, vinyl, or similar materials are prohibited.”
 6. “Internally light signs are prohibited. Signs shall use focused, low intensity illumination. Such lighting shall not shine into or create glare at pedestrian or vehicular traffic, nor shall it shine into adjacent areas. Light fixtures mounted on the ground shall be screened by landscaping.”
 7. “The height of free-standing signage shall not be higher than six feet.”
- E. **Scope of Work (per submitted plans):**
1. **Demolish the two non-contributing commercial building.**
 2. **Level the lot.**
 3. **Construct a single story brick-veneered commercial building.**
 - a. The building will be located 25’ setback from the Government Street
 - b. The building’s total square footage amounts to 8,568 square feet.
 - c. The rectangular building’s elevations will be differentiated vertically by way of a

pavilion-like massing, advanced pilaster strips, slightly telescoped bays, and raked & stepped parapets.

- d. Beltcourses, stringcourse, and copings will provide horizontal differentiation.
- e. A pre-finished metal coping will surmount the buildings variously shaped parapet.
- f. A dado-like zone created by beltcourses will extend around the building.
- g. At its highest point, the building will not exceed 23' in height (the peak of the West Elevation's truncated pediment). Intervening wall expanses will measure roughly 17' in height.
- h. The building will utilize aluminum framed spandrel glass storefront fenestration
- i. The five part West Elevation will be comprised a larger central and flanking pavilions connected by intervening hyphens. The slightly advanced end pavilions will feature tripartite window groupings. Black canvas awnings will extend over the windows. Raked and stepped parapets will surmount the end pavilions. The intervening hyphens connecting the end pavilions to the central pavilion will not feature fenestration. The central pavilion will feature three banks of fenestration. A double door with interconnected unit glazed bays will be flanked by tripartite window groupings. A Black metal canopy will extend across the central pavilion. The central pavilion will be surmounted by a truncated raked and stepped parapet wall. Signage will be located within the parapet
- j. The three part South Elevation will feature slightly advanced end pavilions located to either side of a central pavilion. The westernmost end pavilion feature a metal door surmounted by an overhanging metal canopy. The easternmost end pavilion will be fronted by a 6' brick wall. Said wall will enclose mechanical units. The South Elevation's larger central pavilion will feature two groupings of double windows. Black Canvas awnings will surmount the windows.
- k. The five part East Elevation will be comprised of a larger central pavilion and flanking end pavilions connected by intervening hyphens. The slightly advanced end pavilions will feature tripartite window groupings. Black canvas awnings will extend over the windows. Raked and stepped parapets will surmount the end pavilions. The intervening hyphens will not feature fenestration. The central pavilion will feature two fenestration groups, a pair of windows & a door and a window. Black canvas awnings will extend over both of the central pavilion's fenestration groupings.
- l. The three part North Elevation will feature slightly advanced end pavilions located to either side a central pavilion. The end pavilions will feature tripartite window groups. Black canvas awnings will extend over the window groupings. The larger central pavilion will feature two groupings of double windows. Both window groupings will be surmounted by black canvas awnings. Signage will be located within the central pavilions truncated raked and stepped parapet.

4. Install hardscaping.

- a. The development will feature two curbcuts. The existing Government Street curbcut will be retained and repaired. A new curbcut will be installed off of Dexter Avenue. The Dexter Avenue curbcut will measure 36' at its inner edge. The two existing drives of off Dexter Avenue will be closed.
- b. A new parking lot will be installed to the south and west of the building.
- c. A ten foot concrete sidewalk will be located to the west of the building. A five foot concrete sidewalk will be located to the south of the building.
- d. A small concrete walk will extend between the Dexter Avenue sidewalk and the East Elevation's entrance.

5. Install landscaping.

- a. Plant four Live Oaks, two Sycamores, and one Redbud.
- b. Plant sod (Tiff 419).

- c. Remove one 4" Oak off of Dexter Avenue.
- 6. Install interior lot fencing.**
 - a. Existing interior lot line privacy fencing will be repaired, extended, and/or replaced. The 8' western lot fence will be retained. Repair and replacement of components of said fence will be entailed. The front plan of the body of the house at 1507 Government Street will constitute the northern termination of the western lot line fence. The existing sections of 6' fence located along the southern lot line will be repaired, where necessary replaced, and one instance extended. All fencing will be shadow-boxed.
 - b. A brick enclosure matching the building will enclose the mechanical units. See E (3) i.
 - c. A 6' tall brick fence will surround the trash dumpster and compacter. The detailing will match that of the mechanical enclosure.
- 7. Install miscellaneous mechanical devices.**
 - a. A generator will be installed to the south of the Dexter Avenue vehicular entrance.
- 8. Install a wall sign and a monument sign.**
 - a. The wall sign will be located above the metal awning of the West Elevation's central pavilion.
 - b. The painted aluminum wall sign will feature the name and logo of the establishment.
 - c. The total square footage of the wall sign will be 32.5 square feet.
 - d. A brick-veneered monument sign will be located in northeast corner of the lot.
 - e. The monument sign's posts will measure 8' in height.
 - f. The sign faces will be painted aluminum in composition.
 - g. Each face of the double-faced sign will measure 15 square feet for a total of 30 square feet of signage.
 - h. The sign will be illuminated by ground mounted spotlights.

STAFF ANALYSIS

This two part application involves the demolition of two vacant non-contributing commercial buildings and the redevelopment of the site. The redevelopment will entail the construction a new commercial building, the installation of hardscaping, the planting of landscaping, and the installation of signage.

Demolition applications entail the review of the following: the architectural significance of the building or buildings; the existing condition of the building or buildings; the impact of the demolition(s) on the streetscape; and the nature of any proposed redevelopment. The buildings located at 1501 and 1503 Government Street are non-contributing commercial buildings within the Leinkauf Historic District. Both of the vacant properties appear as overlays in the 1955 Sanborn Maps. Though both buildings maintain the Government Street "façade line," neither building is of architectural significance. The demolition of the two derelict commercial buildings would not impair the architectural or the historical significance of the Leinkauf Historic District or the Government Street corridor.

The Guidelines for New Commercial Construction in Mobile's Historic District address five primary areas of concern: placement and orientation; mass; scale; façade elements; and materials and ornamentation. Additional concerns include landscaping and hardscaping.

Placement involves consideration of building setbacks and building spacing/orientation. Building setback is defined as the distance from the street to the front plane of the building. Building spacing is the distance between buildings. The Guidelines for New Construction in Mobile's Historic District state that new construction should observe the setback and spacing rhythms of nearby historic structures. Traditionally commercial buildings were oriented close to, if not on, the property line. This site is located

at the southwest corner of Government Street and Dexter Avenue. Government Street west of Broad was primarily a residential artery. All the historic commercial building on this portion of the street have been demolished. Government Street's residential buildings were setback thirty or more feet from the street amid landscaped lots. The existing buildings are positioned at roughly a 19' setback. The proposed 25 foot setback from Government Street is compatible to the setbacks that characterize nearby historic residential structures. Dexter Avenue was and remains a residential street. Narrower and more intimate than Government Street, the private residences located off this street are located much closer to the street. The proposed building's Dexter Avenue setback will like the existing setback be located within several feet of the street. The proposed building's close proximity to the sidewalk, a characteristic feature of traditional commercial, would require a variance from the Board of Zoning.

Building orientation concerns the relationship of the building to the street. The proposed building would like the western existing building feature a west main entrance. That said the pavilion like massing characterizing each of the elevations and close proximity to the street would counterbalance the entrance orientation. It should be noted that several historic commercial concerns on Government Street feature an inner lot orientation. Spacing takes into the distance between buildings. Here again the close proximity to the street in the case of the east elevation is in keeping with historical commercial development patterns.

Building mass is defined as the relationship of individual building parts to the larger built whole. Foundation treatment, horizontal division, bays system, and roof treatments come under review. The proposed building features a block-like massing characteristic of traditional commercial structures. The Design Review Guidelines for New Commercial Construction in Mobile's Historic Districts state that building mass should be comparable to that other nearby structures. The proposed building is rectilinear in form as was typical of commercial and residential construction. The building's pavilion type massing is derived from several local examples of early 20th-Century commercial construction. Like most commercial structures, past and present, the proposed building is located on ground level. The use of dado-like zone would not only bestow upon the building a sense of solidity, but also balance the verticality of the pilaster strips and parapet. Said pilasters and parapets provide a measured sequence that informs all four of the building's symmetrically informed elevations.

Scale is defined as a building's height, width, and depth in comparison to other nearby buildings, ergo the proportional relationship between buildings. The buildings scale is not out of keeping with several examples contributing commercial construction located on the western section of Government Street.

Building materials and facing should be historically appropriate to Mobile's historic districts. Brick is a material long employed on Mobile's commercial buildings. Material samples should be provided for Staff inspection and Board Review.

Landscaping is a key concern. Though the proposal would leave a significant amount of the property undeveloped, the amount of internal landscaping provided may be insufficient for the prominent Government Street location. Staff recommends the use of understory and shrubbery plantings as a softening device allowing transition from the built mass to the right of way and the street.

In addition to landscaping, hardscaping and fencing are requisite components for new commercial developments. The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile's Historic Districts allow the use of modern paving materials. The composition, design, and location of parking should be taken into consideration. Modern paving materials such as concrete and asphalt are acceptable for use on commercial properties located within Mobile's historic districts. Staff recommends that all of the interior lot fencing be a uniform eight feet in height so provide privacy for the neighboring residential properties.

CLARIFICATIONS AND REQUESTS

1. What is the distance of the proposed building's East Elevation from the Right of Way?
2. What is the outer width of the Dexter Avenue curbcut?
3. What is the total square footage of the proposed hardscaping?
4. Provide material samples (brick, metal coping, and medallions).
5. Indicate the location of the entrance to the utility enclosure.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on C (1-5) and D (1-6), Staff does not believe this application will impair the architectural or the historical character of the Leinkauf district and the Government Street Corridor. Pending the answer of the above clarifications, the lowering of the canopies to expose the beltcourse, and the provision of understory & shrubbery plantings, Staff recommends approval of this application.