



Architectural Review Board Minutes

February 7, 2024 – 3:00 P.M.

ADMINISTRATIVE

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Catarina Echols, at 3:10 pm.

1. Roll Call

Christine Dawson, Historic Development staff, called the roll as follows:

Members Present: Cartledge Blackwell, Abby Davis, Catarina Echols, Cameron Pfeiffer-Traylor, and Jennifer Roselius

Members Absent: Stephen Howle, Karrie Maurin, Stephen McNair, and Barja Wilson

Staff Members Present: Annie Allen, Christine Dawson, Kimberly Branch-Thomas, Marion McElroy, Bruce McGowin, John Sledge, and Meredith Wilson

2. Approval of Minutes from January 17, 2024

Ms. Davis moved to approve the minutes from the January 17, 2024 meeting.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Blackwell and approved unanimously.

3. Approval of Mid-Month COAs granted by Staff

Mr. Blackwell moved to approve the mid-month COAs granted by Staff.

Ms. Davis seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

MID-MONTH APPROVALS - APPROVED

- Applicant:** Dobson Sheet Metal & Roofing & Specialties, Inc.
Property Address: 50 S. Ann Street
Issue Date: 01/09/2024
Project: Reroof in-kind flat roof on east side of building using modified bitumen.
Color: White
- Applicant:** Melvin Koger
Property Address: 268 S. Lawrence Street
Issue Date: 01/09/2024
Project: Construct a pergola off the rear elevation of the structure.

- a. The pergola will measure 16'-0" by 16'-0" and approximately 9'-0" tall.
- b. Pergola will be constructed of wood painted white.
- c. The pergola will be supported by two 5" square posts anchored to the ground and located 15'-0" from the rear elevation of the dwelling, with the option for a third post in the center.

- 3. **Applicant:** CS Painting, LLC
Property Address: 1461 Brown Street
Issue Date: 01/11/2024
Project:
 - 1. Repaint in-kind. Color: White
 - 2. In-kind repairs to wood siding where needed.

- 4. **Applicant:** White-Spinner Construction LLC
Property Address: 200 S. Claiborne Street
Issue Date: 01/11/2024
Project: Place a temporary construction trailer for the construction of the Mobile Civic Center parking facility. Trailer to be located to the west of the garage site, per submitted site plan.

- 5. **Applicant:** Building and Maintenance Company
Property Address: 1132 Montauk Avenue
Issue Date: 01/12/2024
Project: In-kind repair, replacement, and repainting of damaged siding, fascia boards, trim boards, and broken windows.

- 6. **Applicant:** Satya Acquisition Management, Inc. dba SAM, Inc.
Property Address: 202 Government Street
Issue Date: 01/22/2024
Project: Replace existing antennae attached to non-historic balcony roof, per submitted plans.

- 7. **Applicant:** Satya Acquisition Management, Inc. dba SAM, Inc.
Property Address: ROW E & S of 201 Church, N of I-10
Issue Date: 01/22/2024
Project: Replace existing 27'-6" small cell pole with 34'-6" pole in same location, per submitted plans.

- 8. **Applicant:** Jay Roberds
Property Address: 918 Conti Street
Issue Date: 01/24/2024
Project: Install 8'-tall wooden privacy fence at east and north property lines.

- 9. **Applicant:** Jay Roberds
Property Address: 920 Conti Street
Issue Date: 01/24/2024

Project: Install 8'-tall wooden privacy fence at northern property line.

10. **Applicant:** All Weather Roofing & Construction LLC
Property Address: 14 S. Ann Street
Issue Date: 01/24/2024
Project: Reroof in kind with shingles. Color: Charcoal

APPLICATIONS

1. 2024-05-CA

Address: 351 Flint Street
Historic District: Leinkauf
Applicant / Agent: Demetrius Hendrix
Project: After-the-fact: Demolish existing chimney, non-historic shed, and rear addition; fenestration changes

APPROVED

-

CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED

2. 2024-06-CA

Address: 113 Parker Street
Historic District: Old Dauphin Way
Applicant / Agent: Darren Walters
Project: Porch design changes

TABLED

-

CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED

OTHER BUSINESS

The next ARB meeting is scheduled for February 21, 2024.



Agenda Item #1

Application 2024-05-CA

CERTIFIED RECORD

Location:

351 Flint Street

Summary of Request:

After-the-Fact: Demolish accessory structure; remove exterior brick chimney; create new window opening at former chimney location; demolish deteriorated rear addition.

Remove framing and install siding to match existing at two extant window openings.

Applicant (as applicable):

Demetrius Hendrix

Property Owner:

Same

Historic District:

Leinkauf

Classification:

Contributing

Summary of Analysis:

- The demolished garage dated to sometime between 1956 and 2002. Photographs show it was in poor condition and lacked significant architectural detailing that could help narrow down the period of construction.
- The demolished chimney was in an advanced state of deterioration and posed a legitimate safety concern.
- The addition of a new window opening at the location of the demolished chimney will present a change to the façade rhythm. Use of a salvaged wood window identical to existing windows minimizes visual disruption of the façade.
- The demolished rear addition was not historic, and photographs show was in an advanced state of deterioration.
- The window openings the applicant proposes removing and siding over are both located on tertiary elevations (south and east) but are partially visible from Flint and Alabama Streets, respectively.

Report Contents:

Property and Application History 2
 Scope of Work 2
 Applicable Standards 2
 Staff Analysis 3
 Attachments 5

PROPERTY AND APPLICATION HISTORY

The Leinkauf Historic District was initially listed in the National Register in 1987 under Criteria A and C for significant architecture and community planning; the district was expanded in 2009. The neighborhood was settled in the early 20th century as a streetcar suburb adjacent to Government Street and surrounding Leinkauf School (1904). Housing forms and styles in the district reflect the range of styles and forms popular from 1900 through 1955.

The property at 351 Flint Street is a frame one-story minimal traditional dwelling with a side gable roof and a simple brick front porch under a shed roof. The dwelling was likely constructed in 1934. The building does not appear on the 1924 Sanborn map but is found on the 1956 overlay. Mobile City Directories first list the address in 1935. The address does not appear in the 1933 directory. The 1956 Sanborn overlay shows a small structure with a footprint that is roughly square with no accessory structures. The cross-gable rear addition on the east side of the building was therefore constructed after 1956 and before 1967, when it first appears on an aerial photograph of the area. Google Earth images show that the smaller shed-roofed rear addition and the wood frame garage structure were constructed prior to 2002. Both the shed-roofed addition and the garage were stylistically quite plain and could have been constructed at any time in the second half of the 20th Century.

This property has never appeared before the Architectural Review Board.

SCOPE OF WORK

1. Demolish detached garage structure at rear (east end) of property.
2. Demolish non-historic rear addition.
3. Demolish external brick chimney on north elevation.
4. Create new window opening at chimney location on north elevation; install salvaged 3-over-1 wood window.

APPLICABLE STANDARDS (*Design Review Guidelines for Mobile's Historic Districts*)

1. **5.3** Preserve the key historic walls of a building.
 - Maintain significant historic façades in their original form.
 - Maintain historic façade elements.
 - Pay special attention to maintaining the historic appearance of building walls of corner buildings.
2. **5.10** Preserve the original form of a historic roof.
 - Maintain the original pitch.
 - Preserve decorative elements, including crests and chimneys.
3. **12.0** Guidelines for Demolition
 - Consider the current significance of a structure previously determined to be historic.
 - Consider the condition of the structure in question. Demolition may be more appropriate when a building is deteriorated or in poor condition.
 - Consider whether the building is one of the last remaining positive examples of its kind in the neighborhood, county, or region.

- Consider the impact that demolition will have on surrounding structures, including neighboring properties, properties on the same block or across the street, or properties throughout the individual historic district.
- Consider whether the building is part of an ensemble of historic buildings that create a neighborhood.
- Consider the future utilization of the site

STAFF ANALYSIS

The subject property is a contributing resource within the Leinkauf Historic District. The application under review seeks after-the-fact approval to demolish an accessory garage structure; demolish a shed-roofed rear addition; remove an external brick chimney on the north elevation; and create a new window opening at the location of the former chimney. The application also asks for approval to remove framing at two existing window openings and install siding to match existing.

Demolition of Rear Addition and Accessory Structure

The *Guidelines* require that the following be considered when a demolition is proposed: the architectural significance of the building, the impact the demolition will have on the streetscape, and the nature of future utilization of the site. (12.0)

The existing National Register nomination identifies the period of significance for Leinkauf as extending from 1896 to 1955. The nomination lists structures constructed after this date as non-contributing. If the district were resurveyed today, structures built prior to 1974 would be re-evaluated in keeping with the National Park Service's requirement that structures must be 50 years old or older before they can be considered eligible for the National Register. The exact dates of construction of the rear addition and garage are not known, but both were certainly constructed after 1956 since they do not appear on the Sanborn map overlay for that year. They are, therefore, non-contributing according to the current National Register nomination. The Google map street view from 2002 is the first known documentation of the rear addition and garage. While it is possible the structures were completed prior to 1974, there is no historic documentation to confirm this. Both structures were also devoid of any decorative architectural details that could help narrow down the date of construction.

Demolition of the garage and rear addition had minimal impact on the streetscape. They were not especially fine examples of a specific architectural style, and neither was one of the last examples of a common architectural form within the district. The garage especially was not typical of the district as a whole. While the dwelling fronts on Flint Street, the garage fronts on Alabama Street. Historically, neither residences nor accessory structures fronted Alabama. In 1956, a single garage structure is shown in the rear yard of 400 Michigan Avenue with a frontage on Alabama. This structure is extant today and is far more architecturally distinctive than the demolished garage at 351 Flint Street. It features a clipped gable roof, a 6-lite wood window, and decorative eave brackets.

The *Guidelines* also state that "demolition may be more appropriate when a building is deteriorated or in poor condition." Both the rear addition and the garage had been neglected and allowed to deteriorate for many years. The rear addition was in particularly poor condition. Google maps images

from 2011 and 2013 show both structures with peeling paint and encroaching vegetation. The rear addition appears to have a partially tarped roofed in both 2011 and 2013. Vines and other vegetation completely covered the east side of the garage in 2013. The applicant has provided more recent photographs showing that the addition's northwest corner and a portion of its roof had collapsed. There was also visible rot and deterioration of the wood cladding. The applicant's photos also show a hole in the southeast corner of the garage roof.

Demolition of External Chimney

The *Guidelines* instruct property owners to maintain historic roof elements, including chimneys, wherever possible. (5.10) The applicant has provided documentation that the existing brick chimney was structurally unstable and that attempts to stabilize it were unsuccessful. Daniel Franklin, a Certified Field Inspector for AFS Foundation Repair, performed a site inspection and found the chimney to be more than 5 inches out of plumb with horizontal cracking approximately 1/3 of the way up the chimney. An attempt was made to install helical piers to bring the chimney back into alignment, but the job foreman determined that the chimney did not have a proper footing that would support the piers. The inspector concluded that the only structure preventing the chimney from toppling over was a rotten roofing truss. The chimney was determined to be a legitimate safety concern and was taken down.

New Window Opening

Following removal of the chimney, the applicant began making repairs to the deteriorated siding in that location. The applicant made the decision at this time to frame out a new window opening in this location. The window opening has the same dimensions as the existing full-sized window openings. The applicant proposes installing a salvaged 3-over-1 wood window to match the existing windows.

The *Guidelines* instructs property owners to "maintain significant historic façades in their original form" and specifically to "pay special attention to maintaining the historic appearance of building walls of corner buildings." (5.3) 351 Flint Street is a corner building, and the new window opening is on the north elevation, which fronts Alabama Street. The *Guidelines* also identify window "location and configuration" as significant character defining features. The proposed new window opening will introduce a change to the original fenestration pattern of the north elevation of 351 Flint Street. However, addition of the new window will also fill blank wall space left by the demolition of the chimney. The use of a salvaged 3-over-1 wood window at this location identical to the existing windows will further minimize disruption to the "rhythm" of the north elevation.

Infill Existing Window Openings

Since being in touch with Historic Development Department staff, the applicant has requested permission to remove and infill and side over two existing window openings: one on the east elevation and one on the south. As discussed above, the *Guidelines* instruct property owners to retain original fenestration patterns, especially on corner buildings. (5.03) Both window openings the applicant proposes covering are located on tertiary elevations, that is, they do not front either Flint or Alabama Streets. The window opening on the east elevation was uncovered during the removal of the shed-roofed addition and does not retain original window sash. The opening is currently infilled with a wood panel and is easily visible from Alabama Street. The south window opening retains its original sash, which is in poor but salvageable condition. The applicant has indicated to staff that he would like to remove this window as there will be an interior bathroom at this location. The window is located toward the rear of the south elevation behind an existing fence that partially obscures view of the window from Flint Street.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Mr. Demetrius Hendrix was present to discuss the application. He apologized for the after-the-fact application, stating that when he began clearing the lot of vegetation, he discovered the rear addition and garage structure in an advanced state of deterioration. He added that the detachment of the chimney from the main structure was creating a significant safety hazard. He told the Board that his intent is to rehabilitate the dwelling in a manner compliant with the Guidelines and sensitive to the historic character of the district.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Mr. Blackwell thanked Mr. Hendrix for his initiatives at the property and asked him to confirm the location of the chimney.

Mr. Hendrix stated that the chimney had been located along the side wall.

Mr. Blackwell asked if the fenestration alterations referred to in the application are located on side and rear elevations.

Mr. Hendrix replied that they are.

Mr. Blackwell inquired of staff whether the garage and rear addition had been contributing elements. Ms. Allen stated they were not.

Ms. Davis asked the applicant if he intends to reuse a historic window at the new window opening on the north elevation.

Mr. Hendrix replied that he intends to reuse a reclaimed wood window that matches the existing wood windows.

Ms. Pfeiffer-Traylor inquired as to the purpose of the intended window in-fill on the rear elevation.

Mr. Hendrix responded that the in-fill would respond to a rearrangement of the interior kitchen space, which is quite small.

Ms. Pfeiffer-Traylor asked the applicant if he had considered any alternatives to in-fill for the smaller rear window opening which is presently boarded up, as the elevation is visible from Alabama Street.

Mr. Hendrix responded that he had not but was amenable to any suggestions.

Ms. Wilson added that, based on site visits to the property, it is apparent that the rear elevation has been highly altered, and it is difficult to ascertain any original or historic fenestration pattern.

FINDING FACTS

Ms. Roselius moved that, based on the evidence presented in the application, the Board finds the facts in the Staff's report of the application as written.

Mr. Blackwell seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Mr. Blackwell moved that, based on the facts approved by the Board, the application would not impair the architectural or historic character of the district and should be granted a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Ms. Pfeiffer-Traylor seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.



Agenda Item #2

Application 2024-06-CA

CERTIFIED RECORD

Location:

113 Parker Street

Summary of Request:

Remove existing knee wall around porch.
Replace existing columns.

Applicant (as applicable):

Darren Walters

Property Owner:

Same

Historic District:

Old Dauphin Way

Classification:

Contributing

Summary of Analysis:

- Porch is defined by a frame knee wall.
- Tuscan Free Classic columns support the porch roof.
- The application proposes removing the knee wall and not replacing, removing and replacing columns with boxed columns.

Report Contents:

Property and Application History 2

Scope of Work 2

Applicable Standards 2

Staff Analysis 3

Attachments 4

PROPERTY AND APPLICATION HISTORY

Old Dauphin Way Historic District was initially listed in the National Register in 1984 under Criterion C for significant architecture and community planning. The district includes most nineteenth-century architectural styles and shows adaptations of middle-class domestic designs of the nineteenth century to the regional, Gulf Coast climate. It includes “fine examples of commercial, institutional, and religious structures as well as 20th-century apartments.”

The property at 113 Parker Street is a frame one-story Craftsman style bungalow with a hip roof and a recessed front porch with clapboard knee wall (it was originally shingled) and paired and tripled (at outside corners) Tuscan free classic columns. The house is clapboarded with a shingled skirt below windowsill level and rests on brick piers. It features a central entrance with transom and flanking 1/1 windows. Although the exact construction date is unknown, maps and architectural details allow for a reasonable approximation. The extant house is represented on the 1925 Sanborn map. Considering this evidence and the style of the building, it can be reasonably deduced to have been built c. 1915. The form on the Sanborn map depicts the same footprint. Historic Development Department 1984 file photo shows the shingled knee wall, but the 2016 Google Street View indicates the clapboard replacements.

This property has never appeared before the Architectural Review Board (ARB).

SCOPE OF WORK

1. Remove knee wall at porch.
2. Replace rotten porch columns with 6"x6" boxed columns with bases and capitals.

APPLICABLE STANDARDS (*Design Review Guidelines for Mobile's Historic Districts*)

1. **5.4** Preserve original building materials.
 - Repair deteriorated building materials by patching, piecing-in, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing the material.
 - Remove only those materials which are deteriorated, and beyond reasonable repair.
 - Do not remove original materials that are in good condition.
2. **5.6** Use original materials to replace damaged materials on primary surfaces where possible.
 - Use original materials to replace damaged building materials on a primary façade if possible. If the original material is wood clapboard, for example, then the replacement material should be a material that matches the original in finish, size and the amount of exposed lap. If the original material is not available from the site, use a replacement material that is visually comparable with the original material.
 - Replace only the amount of material required. If a few boards are damaged beyond repair, for example, then only they should be replaced, rather than the entire wall.
 - Do not replace building materials on the primary façade, such as wood siding and masonry, with alternative or imitation materials unless it cannot be avoided.
 - Wholesale replacement of exterior finishes is generally not allowed.

3. **6.5** Repair a porch in a way that maintains the original character.
4. **6.6** If replacement is required, design it to reflect the time period of the historic structure.
 - Replace a historic porch element to match the original.
 - Use replacement materials and elements that are appropriate to the style, texture, finish, composition and proportion of the historic structure.
 - Where an original porch is missing entirely, base a replacement porch on physical or photographic evidence. If no evidence exists, draw from similar structures in the neighborhood.
 - Match the balustrade of a historic porch to the design and materials of the porch.
 - When reconstructing a porch, pay particular attention to matching the handrails, lower rails, balusters, decking, posts/columns, proportions and decorative details.
 - Do not completely replace an entire porch or element unless absolutely necessary. Only replace the element or portion of an element that requires replacement.
 - Do not use cast-iron columns or railing where no evidence exists that these elements were used historically.
 - Do not use a brick base for a wood column (exception is Craftsman styles).
 - Do not use a railing that is too elaborate for the building (of a different style).
 - Do not relocate an original front stairway or steps.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The subject property is a contributing resource within the Old Dauphin Way Historic District. The application under review seeks approval to remove the frame knee wall at the porch, remove the existing columns, and replace them with boxed columns.

The clapboard knee wall was originally shingled to match the shingled skirt around the house. At some later date, the shingles at the knee wall were replaced by clapboards. The *Guidelines* recommend that original building materials be preserved. Any deterioration should be removed only when beyond reasonable repair, and replacement materials should match in material, profile, and dimension. (5.4, 5.6) The *Guidelines* further recommend that porch repairs maintain the original character, calling for historic elements to match the original. (6.5, 6.6) The knee wall appears to be an original feature of the porch, and is a common element seen on Craftsman style bungalows. The same porch design with a knee wall is present at both 105 and 108 Parker Street. Although the existing knee wall is damaged and deteriorated in places, it does not appear to be beyond reasonable repair.

Like the knee wall, the style and placement of a structure's porch columns further define its character. The existing columns are rotten in places, and some have shifted or have come detached from their base. Although the grouped Tuscan Free Classic columns currently supporting the porch do not seem to be beyond repair, if replacement is undertaken, grouped battered columns may be considered as a more suitable alternative than the proposed simple, boxed columns. Grouping the columns would better preserve the historic design patterns of the porch. Installing a single box column in the place of existing paired columns would weaken the established aesthetic, both at this property and on the street. Likewise, pairs of boxed columns would not as efficiently visually communicate the intended expression. In addition to the precedent set at the subject property for grouped columns, this feature can be observed at 108 Parker. (6.5, 6.6)

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Diana and Darren Walters were present to discuss the application. Mrs. Walters explained that the rot to the front porch knee wall and columns had created an unsafe condition. She added that their contractor was unable to find columns that match the existing for replacement.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Ms. Echols asked the applicant if they had drawings to demonstrate how they intend to alter the front porch.

Ms. Walters replied that the intent is to replace the existing columns with square wood posts encased in a simulated boxed column that would run the height of the porch from under the roof to the decking.

Mr. Blackwell asked Staff if there was any photographic evidence of what may have existed prior to the current knee wall and grouped column arrangement.

Ms. Allen responded that the only photo available was the survey photo in the file which is from the 1980s. This photo shows a shingled knee wall which has now been changed to clapboard, the current condition.

Ms. Walters stated that they are planning to remove the knee wall and create a base for the proposed box columns. She added that their contractor has said that the existing columns would not support the roof.

Mr. Blackwell stated that he would encourage the applicant to retain the knee wall as it is a character defining feature of the porch and structure. He also recommended that the applicant create some visual renderings of proposed design options that they would like for the porch which may even simulate the visual effect of the knee wall without going back exactly as is. He added that he would be open to reviewing different options with visual aids.

Ms. Walters commented that their contractor gave a quote for rebuilding the knee wall which was cost prohibitive.

Ms. Davis stated that she agrees with Mr. Blackwell, that a rendering was needed that provides a design that at least gives an enclosed porch feel. She added that her inclination would be to go back with a knee wall as it should be preserved. The work may have to be completed over time, as funds become available.

Ms. Pfeiffer-Traylor also agreed that the knee wall and column grouping are unique features, and that changing the rhythm of these two elements would be problematic. She also supported the need for options with renderings and offered that Staff may have ideas for designs that would emulate the look of a knee wall without the cost. She added that the project could be done in steps for cost effectiveness and that the option of salvaged columns should be explored.

Ms. Roselius agreed with her fellow board members and suggested that the applicant confer with Staff and to determine if their contractor may be open to other methods of construction that include modifications which may be more economic but still prioritize the visual integrity of the house and district.

Ms. Pfeiffer-Traylor added that it is important that they are getting help from those who have experience with historic homes.

Mr. Blackwell stated that there are ways to preserve the look of the porch without the cost. He suggested the applicants take a hard look at the existing columns to determine if any can be repaired and reused and reemphasized the importance of the knee wall.

Ms. Davis made the suggestion that a hollow column could be threaded with a metal rod for support.

Ms. Walters inquired as to the next step in the application process.

Mr. Sledge informed the applicant that if the porch needed to be temporarily braced, that the Historic Development office can issue a COA for that work.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Mr. Blackwell made a motion to table the application.

Ms. Roselius seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:43 p.m.

These minutes were approved by the Architectural Review Board at their February 21, 2024 meeting.