



Architectural Review Board Minutes

January 17, 2024 – 3:00 P.M.

ADMINISTRATIVE

The meeting was called to order by the Chair Catarina Echols at 3:01 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Meredith Wilson, Historic Development staff, called the roll as follows:

Members Present: Cartledge Blackwell, Catarina Echols, Stephen Howle, Karrie Maurin, Stephen McNair, Cameron Pfeiffer-Traylor, and Jennifer Roselius

Members Absent: Abby Davis and Barja Wilson

Staff Members Present: Kimberly Branch-Thomas, Hannon Falls, Dana Foster, Bruce McGowin, John Sledge, and Meredith Wilson

2. Approval of Minutes from December 20, 2023

Mr. Blackwell moved to approve the minutes from the January 3, 2024 meeting.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Roselius and approved unanimously.

3. Approval of Mid-Month COAs granted by Staff

Ms. Roselius moved to approve the mid-month COAs granted by Staff.

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

MID-MONTH APPROVALS

- 1. Applicant:** Louis and Carol F. Olgetree
Property Address: 1418 Old Shell Road
Issue Date: 12/22/2023
Project: Construct 8'x12' side-gabled shed in northwest corner of rear yard standing approximately 8'-8" high, per submitted plans. Materials as follows.
Roof: fiberglass dimensional shingles; walls: OSB; windows: wood; doors: wood
- 2. Applicant:** Suntek Global
Property Address: 1507 Government Street
Issue Date: 12/27/2023
Project: Construct a 4-foot-high iron fence and gates with brick posts enclosing the front (north) yard of property. Pedestrian gate to be centered in north section with metal

light fixtures mounted on top of brick gateposts on either side. Automatic vehicle gate will cross the driveway to the east of the property.

- 3. Applicant:** Bernhart Roofing & General Construction LLC
Property Address: 1410 Dauphin Street
Issue Date: 12/28/2023
Project: Reroof in-kind with shingles in Driftwood color.
- 4. Applicant:** Demetrius Hendrix
Property Address: 351 Flint Street
Issue Date: 12/28/2023
Project: In-kind repairs to all windows.
- 5. Applicant:** Robert Dueitt
Property Address: 450 Charles Street
Issue Date: 12/28/2023
Project:

 1. Repair rot on exterior by replacing wood elements in-kind (matching materials, dimensions, etc.).
 2. Install gutters.
 3. Remove non-historic door on north (Elmira Street side) elevation. Close opening with wood lap siding to match existing in material, dimensions, and reveal.
 4. Remove non-historic windows across rear (west) elevation. Replace with reused wood windows.
 5. Repaint house. Body: white; windows: white; doors & front/side porch posts: aqua.
- 6. Applicant:** Robert Dueitt
Property Address: 1215 Elmira Street
Issue Date: 12/28/2023
Project: Repair damage to carport due to tree fall. All work will be performed in-kind (matching materials, dimensions, etc.). Reroof in-kind.
- 7. Applicant:** Emile & Virginia Naman
Property Address: 216 Dauphin Street
Issue Date: 01/03/2024
Project: Repaint as follows. Body- Web Gray (Sherwin Williams); Trim- Tricorn Black (Sherwin Williams)
- 8. Applicant:** March + May Design LLC
Property Address: 1216 Government Street
Issue Date: 01/04/2024
Project:

 1. Replace and repaint rear first-story porch tongue and groove decking in-kind.
 2. Remove existing lattice on rear first-story porch. On the western end of porch, replace lattice with louvered shutters to match existing shutters on second story porch. The remainder of the porch will be screened with fine screen mounted on wood painted to match existing columns. One screen entry door will be centered on the elevation.

3. Install porch railing on first-story porch to match existing railing on second-story porch.
4. Remove existing porch steps on western end of rear elevation. Construct new wood central steps to porch on rear elevation which will access the screen entry door and will appear as follows:
 - Three steps will lead to a landing even with porch floor. Landing will measure 5'-9" wide by 3'-4" deep.
 - Steps will be flanked with railing to match existing.
 - Lattice will be installed under stairs to match existing lattice foundation infill.
5. All paint colors and details will match existing.

9. Applicant: All Weather Roofing & Construction LLC
Property Address: 6 LeMoyne Place
Issue Date: 01/04/2024
Project: Reroof in-kind with shingles in Charcoal Black color.

10. Applicant: Reliance Restoration
Property Address: 300 South Ann Street
Issue Date: 01/05/2024
Project: In-kind termite repairs to include the following:

1. Remove and replace wood trim board, repair and replace in-kind wood tongue and groove siding, and paint wood siding and trim on all four elevations.
2. Detach and reset gutter/downspouts on east, north, and west elevations.
3. Detach and reset wood shutters on east, north, and south elevations.
4. Paint crown molding on east and west elevations.
5. Paint galley rail trim on east elevation.
6. Detach and reset wood fence on north and south elevations.
7. Remove and replace crown molding on west elevation.
8. Remove and replace trim board, remove and replace beam, paint ceiling, paint trim, and paint galley rail trim on front porch.
9. Reroof in-kind with shingles to match existing

11. Applicant: Keisha Burks
Property Address: 962 Government Street
Issue Date: 01/05/2024
Project: Replace in-kind rotten wood on façade to secure the front of the building.

12. Applicant: All Weather Roofing Construction LLC
Property Address: 68 North Monterey
Issue Date: 01/05/2024
Project: Reroof in-kind with shingles. Color: Pewter

APPLICATIONS

1. 2024-03-CA

Address: 916 Church Street
Historic District: Oakleigh Garden
Applicant / Agent: Corte Development, Inc.
Project: New Construction: seven two-story single-family residences

2. 2024-04-CA

Address: North side Adams Street between Joachim and Jackson streets
Historic District: DeTonti Square
Applicant / Agent: HDA on behalf of Gulf Distributing Co.
Project: New Construction: one-story vehicle maintenance facility; site improvements

OTHER BUSINESS

The next ARB meeting is scheduled for February 7, 2024.



Agenda Item #1

Application 2024-03-CA

DETAILS

Location:

916 Church Street

Summary of Request:

New Construction: seven two-story single-family residences

Applicant (as applicable):

Corte Development, Inc.

Property Owner:

RGH Oakleigh LLC

Historic District:

Oakleigh Garden

Classification:

Vacant

Summary of Analysis:

- In regard to placement, mass, and size, the proposed new construction is compatible with the existing patterns and conventions seen in the immediate vicinity.
- The form of the proposed buildings is more akin to those seen in other cities and historic districts. However, other proposed building elements are compatible with those seen on nearby historic buildings and further afield.
- The proposed building materials are compatible with the historic character of the district.
- Some details of the proposed plan and submitted application are not complete (e.g., materials not specified for shutters; plans for integrating garages into St. Francis and Royale models; height and materials of fencing).

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PROPERTY AND APPLICATION HISTORY

Oakleigh Garden Historic District was initially listed in the National Register in 1972 under Criteria A (historic significance) and C (architectural significance) for its local significance in the areas of architecture, landscape architecture, and planning and development. The district is significant for its high concentration of 19th- and 20th-century architectural types and styles and significant in the area of landscape architecture for its canopies of live oaks planted from 1850 to 1910. The district is significant in the area of planning and development as the location of Washington Square, one of only two antebellum public parks remaining in Mobile. The district was expanded in 1984, and an updated nomination was approved in 2016.

The lot at 916 Church Street is currently vacant. The large lot was created by the combination of four previously residential lots. The 1878 Hopkins map shows three structures on three lots, one being a large center lot, spread across the site. The large center lot belonged to "Dr. Carter." The southwest corner lot was occupied by a large west-facing building with two rear wings. By the time of the 1891 Sanborn map, the southwest corner had been redeveloped with a frame house facing Church Street, and a smaller frame house had been constructed between the corner house and Dr. Carter's property. The 1904 Sanborn shows the two houses on either side of Dr. Carter's property had been expanded to the north; the footprints of the buildings on all four lots remained the same through the 1956 Sanborn map. However, two of the four houses had been demolished by the 1980 aerial photograph.

According to MHDC files, this property appeared three times before the Architectural Review Board (ARB). In August 1985, the ARB approved the creation of a parking lot on the site. In January 2021, approval in concept was granted for the first phase of a 14-unit, multi-family residential development. In February 2023, a COA was granted for the construction of nine two-story single-family residences.

SCOPE OF WORK

1. Construct seven two-story frame single family dwellings, ranging from approximately 4352 to 4464 square feet.
 - a. The property would be divided into seven lots running north to south, all fronting Church Street.
 - b. Four house plans are proposed: Royale, St. Francis, Oakleigh 4, and Oakleigh 5. All four plans would consist of rectangular, hip-roofed structures sheathed in fiber cement lap siding.
 - c. All units would face Church Street (south). With the exception of Lot 7 (easternmost), each structure would sit close to the east lot line. The front yard setbacks would measure 25'-2 ½", with a side yard setback on the west side of approximately 10'-0".
 - d. All windows would be Anderson 400 series double-hung vinyl clad wood.
 - e. The front entry doors would be fiberglass. Door surrounds would be fiber cement board.
 - f. All trim, including corner boards, soffits, fascia boards, etc. would be of fiber cement board.
 - g. Brackets supporting the shed roof stoops would be of pressure treated wood.
 - h. Front porch steps would be either of cement or brick.
 - i. Side stoop steps would be of pressure treated wood.
 - j. The houses would rest upon continuous brick foundations approximately 2'-8" above grade.
 - k. The roofs would be clad in metal.
2. The proposed Royale model would simulate a shotgun type house with a camelback.
 - a. The footprint would measure approximately 18'-0" wide by 52'-8" deep, and the building would be approximately 30'-5" tall. The first floor would have a 10'-0" ceiling height, and the second floor would have a 9'-0" ceiling height.
 - b. The front elevation would consist of a one-story forward block with a two-story camelback located approximately 16' behind.
 - 1) A front porch would span the width of the one-story forward block. The porch would be sheltered by a shed roof surmounted by a gable. The porch roof

- would appear to be supported by four (4) 10"x10" boxed columns of fiber cement board.
- 2) The front porch would rest upon a continuous brick foundation and be accessed via three cement steps.
 - 3) The front porch would be lit by a single 21"x12" Faubourg hanging copper gas lantern.
 - 4) The fenestration on the first floor would be as follows, from left to right: two (2) full-height two-over-two windows flanked by louvered shutters; one paneled door with transom.
- c. The "right" side elevation would consist of the one-story block at its left end and the two-story rear block at its center and right end.
 - 1) The first floor would appear as follows, from left to right: the "right" side of the front porch; stoop with pane-and-panel door sheltered by shed roof sheathed in standing-seam metal; two two-over-two windows; a single round, fixed window with four (4) lites; a pair of two-over-two windows; and a bump-out storage room advancing 4', sheltered by a shed roof covered with standing-seam metal, and accessed by a paneled door.
 - 2) Fenestration on the second floor would consist of three (3) two-over-two windows clustered towards the front of the house.
 - d. The rear of the house would include no fenestration on the first floor. The second floor would have a pair of two-over-two windows at the center of the elevation,
 - e. The "left" side elevation would have four upper wall, single-lite windows on the second floor and no fenestration on the first floor.
3. The St. Francis model would emulate a side-hall townhouse.
 - a. The footprint would measure approximately 18' wide by 52'-8" deep, and the building would be approximately 30'-5" tall. The first floor would have a 10' ceiling height, and the second floor would have a 9' ceiling height.
 - b. The front elevation would consist of a double gallery, full-width porch beneath an integral roof. Both levels of the porch would be supported by four (4) 6"x6" boxed columns of fiber cement board.
 - 1) The front porch would rest upon a continuous brick foundation and be accessed via three cement steps.
 - 2) The fenestration on the first floor would be as follows, from left to right: two (2) full-height two-over-two windows flanked by louvered shutters, one paneled door.
 - 3) The front porch would be lit by a single 21"x12" Faubourg hanging copper gas lantern.
 - 4) The fenestration on the second floor would match the first floor.
 - c. "Right" side elevation:
 - 1) The first floor would appear as follows, from left to right: the "right" side of the front porch; stoop with pane-and-panel door sheltered by shed roof sheathed in standing-seam metal; two (2) two-over-two windows; a single round, fixed window with four (4) lights; a pair of two-over-two windows, and a bump-out storage room advancing 4', sheltered by a shed roof covered with standing-seam metal, and accessed by a paneled door.
 - 2) Fenestration on the second floor would consist of three (3) two-over-two windows centered on the elevation.
 - d. The rear of the house would include no fenestration on the first floor. The second floor would have a pair of two-over-two windows at the center of the elevation
 - e. The "left" side elevation would have five upper wall, single-light windows dispersed across the elevation on the second floor and no fenestration on the first floor.
 4. The Oakleigh 4 model would emulate a side-hall townhouse.
 - f. The footprint would measure approximately 18'-0' wide by 88'-0" deep (including the garage), and the building would be approximately 30'-5" tall. The first floor would have a 10'-0" ceiling height, and the second floor would have a 9'-0" ceiling height.
 - a. An optional attached garage measuring 22'-8" wide by 24'-3" deep would project from the rear.
 - b. A side porch measuring 4'-8" wide by 29'-9" deep would project from the "left" side elevation, which would begin 33'-0" back from the front plane of the building and extend to the north end of the

- dwelling elevation. The porch would be topped by a hip roof and supported by four turned columns, each with capital and base.
- c. The front elevation would consist of a double gallery, full-width porch beneath an integral roof. Both levels of the porch would be supported by four (4) 6" x 6" boxed columns of fiber cement board.
 - 1) The front porch would rest upon a continuous brick foundation and be accessed via three brick steps.
 - 2) The fenestration on the first floor would be as follows, from left to right, inclusive of optional garage: two (2) paneled doors; two (2) full height fixed eight-lite windows flanked by louvered shutters (material not specified).
 - 3) The fenestration on the second floor would be as follows, from left to right: one (1) paneled door; two (2) full height four-over-four windows flanked by louvered shutters.
 - d. The "right" side elevation, from left to right, would consist of the "right" side of the front porch; five upper wall, single-lite windows dispersed across the elevation on the second floor, with no fenestration on the first floor; the blank right side wall of the garage.
 - e. The rear elevation would consist of a fiberglass overhead garage door centered on the elevation.
 - f. The "left" side elevation would appear as follows:
 - 1) The first floor from left to right: the blank left side wall of the garage; porch column; a pair of two-over-two windows; a porch column; one two-lite fixed window; a porch column; a pane-and-panel door; a porch column; two pairs of two-over-two windows; "left" side of the front porch.
 - 2) The second floor from left to right: a pair of two-over-two windows; a single two-over-two window; two pairs of two-over-two windows; the "left" side of the front porch.
5. The Oakleigh 5 model would emulate a shotgun type house with camelback.
- a. The footprint would measure approximately 18'-0" wide by 88'-0" deep (including the garage), and the building would be approximately 30'-5" tall. The first floor would have a 10'-0" ceiling height, and the second floor would have a 9'-0" ceiling height.
 - b. An optional attached garage measuring 22'-8" wide by 24'-3" deep would project from the rear.
 - c. A side porch measuring 4'-8" wide by 29'-9" deep would project from the "left" side elevation, which would begin 33'-0" back from the front plane of the building and extend to the north end of the dwelling elevation. The porch would be topped by a hip roof and supported by four turned posts, each with capital and base.
 - d. The front elevation would consist of a one-story forward block with a two-story camelback located approximately 16' behind.
 - 1) A front porch would span the width of the one-story forward block. The porch would be sheltered by a hipped roof which would appear to be supported by four (4) boxed columns of fiber cement board.
 - 2) The front porch would rest upon a continuous brick foundation and be accessed via three brick steps.
 - 3) The fenestration on the first floor would be as follows, from left to right, inclusive of optional garage: one paneled door; one paneled door with transom; two (2) full-height eight-light fixed windows flanked by louvered shutters (material not specified).
 - 4) There is no fenestration proposed for the front elevation of the second floor.
 - e. The "right" side elevation would consist of the one-story block at its left end, the two-story rear block at its center, and the attached garage on the right end. The elevation would appear as follows:
 - 1) The first floor, from left to right: the "right" side of the front porch; no fenestration proposed for this elevation.
 - 2) Fenestration on the second floor would consist of four upper-wall, single-lite windows regularly spaced across the 'camelback' portion of the elevation.
 - f. The rear elevation would consist of a fiberglass overhead garage door centered on the elevation.
 - g. The "left" side elevation would consist of the attached garage at its left end, the two-story rear block at its center, and the one-story block at its right end. The elevation would appear as follows:

- 1) The first floor from left to right: the blank left side wall of the garage; porch post; a pair of two-over-two windows; a porch post; one two-lite fixed window; a porch post ; a pane-and-panel door; a porch post; two pairs of two-over-two windows; the “left” side of the front porch.
 - 2) The second floor from left to right: a pair of two-over-two windows; a single two-over-two window; a blind window simulating a pair of shuttered windows; a pair of two-over-two windows.
6. Optional rear garage
 - a. An optional rear attached two-car garage is proposed for all house models but would not be available for lot 7 due to space constraints.
 - b. The attached garage would measure 22’-8” wide by 24’-0” deep.
 7. Site Improvements
 - a. A 10’-0” driveway is proposed which would access Marine Street and provide access to the rear of the dwellings.
 - b. A white picket fence is proposed to run in between each home.

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

1. **6.34** Maintain the visual line created by the fronts of buildings along a street.
 - Where front yard setbacks are uniform, place a new structure in general alignment with its neighbors.
 - Where front yard setbacks vary, place a new structure within the established range of front yard setbacks on a block.
2. **6.35** Maintain the side yard spacing pattern on the block.
 - Locate a structure to preserve the side yard spacing pattern on the block as seen from the street.
 - Provide sufficient side setbacks for property maintenance.
 - Provide sufficient side setbacks to allow needed parking to occur behind the front wall of the house.
3. **6.36** Design the massing of new construction to appear similar to that of historic buildings in the district.
 - Choose the massing and shape of the new structure to maintain a rhythm of massing along the street.
 - Match the proportions of the front elevations of a new structure with those in the surrounding district.
4. **6.37** Design the scale of new construction to appear similar to that of historic buildings in the district.
 - Use a building height in front that is compatible with adjacent contributing properties.
 - Size foundation and floor heights to appear similar to those of nearby historic buildings
 - Match the scale of a porch to the main building and reflect the scale of porches of nearby historic buildings.
5. **6.38** Design exterior building walls to reflect traditional development patterns of nearby historic buildings.
 - Use a ratio of solid to void that is similar in proportion to those of nearby historic buildings.
 - Reflect the rhythm of windows and doors in a similar fashion on all exterior building walls. The ARB will consider all building walls; however, building walls facing streets may face increased scrutiny.
 - Use steps and balustrades in a similar fashion as nearby historic structures.
 - Design building elements on exterior building walls to be compatible with those on nearby historic buildings. These elements include, but are not limited to: • Balconies • Chimneys • Dormers
6. **6.39** Use exterior materials and finishes that complement the character of the surrounding district.
 - Use material, ornamentation or a color scheme that blends with the historic district rather than making the building stand out.

- If an alternative material is used that represents an evolution of a traditional material, suggest the finish of the original historic material from which it evolved.
- Use a material with proven durability in the Mobile climate and that is similar in scale, character, and finish to those used on nearby historic buildings.

ACCEPTABLE MATERIALS

Materials that are compatible in character, scale and finish to those used on nearby historic buildings are acceptable. These often include:

- Stucco
- Brick
- Stone
- Wood (lap siding, shingles, board and batten)
- Concrete siding
- Cement fiber board siding
- Skim stucco coat

UNACCEPTABLE MATERIALS

Materials that are incompatible in character, scale and finish to those used on nearby historic buildings are unacceptable. These often include:

- Metal siding
- Vinyl siding
- Unfinished concrete block
- Plywood
- Masonite
- Vinyl coatings
- Ceramic coatings
- Exterior insulation and finishing system (EIFS) wall systems

7. **6.40** Design a roof on new construction to be compatible with those on adjacent historic buildings.
- Design the roof shape, height, pitch and overall complexity to be similar to those on nearby historic buildings.
 - Use materials that appear similar in character, scale, texture and color range to those on nearby historic buildings.
 - New materials that have proven durability may be used.

ACCEPTABLE ROOF MATERIALS

Materials that are similar in character, scale, texture, and color range to those used on nearby historic buildings are acceptable. These often include:

- Asphalt dimensional or multi-tab shingles
- Wood shake or shingle
- Standing seam metal
- Metal shingles
- 5-V crimp metal
- Clay tile
- Imitation clay tile or slate

8. **6.41** Design a new door and doorway on new construction to be compatible with the historic district.
- Place and size a door to establish a solid-to-void ratio similar to that of nearby historic buildings.
 - Place a door in a fashion that contributes to the traditional rhythm of the district as seen in nearby historic buildings.
 - Incorporate a door casement and trim similar to those seen on nearby historic buildings.
 - Place and size a special feature, including a transom, sidelight or decorative framing element, to complement those seen in nearby historic buildings.
 - Use a door material that blends well with surrounding historic buildings. Wood is preferred. Paneled doors with or without glass are generally appropriate.
9. **6.42** Design a porch to be compatible with the neighborhood.

- Include a front porch as part of new construction if it is contextual and feasible.
 - When designing a porch, consider porch location, proportion, rhythm, roof form, supports, steps, balustrades and ornamentation relative to the main building and porches in the district.
 - Design the elements of a porch to be at a scale proportional to the main building.
 - Where a rhythm of porches exists on a street or block, design a porch that continues this historic rhythm.
 - Design a rear or side porch that is visible from the public right-of-way to be subordinate in character to the front porch.
10. **6.43** Design piers, a foundation and foundation infill to be compatible with those of nearby historic properties.
- Use raised, pier foundations.
 - If raised foundations are not feasible, use a simulated raised foundation.
 - Do not use slab-on-grade construction. This is not appropriate for Mobile's historic neighborhoods. If a raised slab is required, use water tables, exaggerated bases, faux piers or other methods to simulate a raised foundation.
 - Do not use raw concrete block or exposed slabs.
 - If foundation infill must be used, ensure that it is compatible with the neighborhood.
 - If solid infill is used, recess it and screen it with landscaping.
 - If lattice is used, hang it below the floor framing and between the piers. Finish it with trim.
 - Do not secure lattice to the face of the building or foundation.
 - Do not use landscaping to disguise inappropriate foundation design.

ACCEPTABLE FOUNDATION MATERIALS

Materials that are similar in character, texture and durability to those used on nearby historic buildings are acceptable. These often include:

- Brick piers
- Brick infill
- Wood (vertical pickets)
- Framed lattice infill

UNACCEPTABLE FOUNDATION MATERIALS

Materials that are not similar in character, texture and durability to those used on nearby historic buildings are unacceptable. These often include:

- Mineral board panels
- Concrete block infill
- Metal infill
- Plywood panel infill
- Plastic sheeting infill
- Vinyl sheeting infill

11. **6.44** Use details and ornamentation that help new construction integrate with the historic buildings in the district.
- Use a decorative detail in a manner similar to those on nearby historic buildings. A modern interpretation of a historic detail or decoration is encouraged.
 - Do not use a decorative detail that overpowers or negatively impacts nearby historic buildings.
12. **6.45** Locate and design windows to be compatible with those in the district.
- Locate and size a window to create a solid-to-void ratio similar to the ratios seen on nearby historic buildings.
 - Locate a window to create a traditional rhythm and a proportion of openings similar to that seen in nearby historic buildings.
 - Use a traditional window casement and trim similar to those seen in nearby historic buildings.
 - Place a window to match the height of the front doorway.
 - Place a window so that there is proportionate space between the window and the floor level.
 - Do not place a window to directly abut the fascia of a building.

- Use a window material that is compatible with other building materials.
- Do not use a reflective or tinted glass window.
- Use a 1/1 window instead of window with false muntins. A double paned window may be acceptable if the interior dividers and dimensional muntins are used on multi-light windows. A double paned 1/1 window is acceptable.
- Do not use false, interior muntins except as stated above.
- Recess window openings on masonry buildings.
- Use a window opening with a raised surround on a wood frame building.

ACCEPTABLE WINDOW MATERIALS

Materials that are similar in character, profile, finish and durability to those used on nearby historic buildings are acceptable. These often include:

- Wood
- Vinyl-clad wood
- Aluminum-clad customized wood
- Extruded Aluminum

UNACCEPTABLE WINDOW MATERIALS

Materials that are not similar in character, profile, finish and durability to those used on nearby historic buildings are unacceptable. These often include:

- Mill finish metal windows
- Snap-in or artificial muntins
- Vinyl

13. **10.2** Design a fence to be compatible with the architectural style of the house and existing fences in the neighborhood.

- Install a painted wood picket fence.
- Install a simple wood or wire fence. Heights of wooden picket fences are ordinarily restricted to 36". Consideration for up to 48," depending on the location of the fence, shall be given. A variance might be required. Staff can advise and assist applicants with regard to a variance. If combined with a wall, the total vertical dimension of the wall and fence collectively should not exceed 36," or in some cases 48".
- For surface parking areas associated with commercial uses, size a perimeter parking area fence to not exceed 48" in height.
- Install a cast-iron or other metal fence not exceeding 48" in height if located in the front yard.
- Install a fence that uses alternative materials that have a very similar look and feel to wood, proven durability, matte finish and an accurate scale and proportion of components.
- Face the finished side of a fence toward the public right-of-way.
- Based on the chosen fence material, use proportions, heights, elements and levels of opacity similar to those of similar material and style seen in the historic district.

REAR AND NON-CORNER SIDE FENCES (LOCATED BEHIND THE FRONT BUILDING PLANE)

- Design a fence located behind the front building plane to not exceed 72" in height. If the subject property abuts a multi-family residential or commercial property, a fence up to 96" will be considered.
- An alternative fence material with proven durability, matte finish and an accurate scale and proportion of components is acceptable. A simple wood-and-wire fence is acceptable provided it is appropriate to the style of the house.

14. **10.5** Visually connect the street and building.

- Maintain or install a walkway leading directly from the sidewalk to the main building entry.

15. **10.7** Minimize the visual impact of parking.

- Locate a parking area at the rear or to the side of a site whenever possible.
- Use landscaping to screen a parking area.
- Minimize the widths of a paved area or a curb cut.
- If a curb cut is no longer in use, repair the curb. In some areas, granite curbs may be required.

- Do not use paving in the front yard for a parking area. Paving stones might be acceptable in certain instances.
- Do not create a new driveway or garage that opens onto a primary street.

ACCEPTABLE WALK AND PAVING MATERIALS

Materials that have a similar character, durability and level of detail to walks and paved areas associated with historic properties in the district are acceptable. These often include:

- Gravel or crushed stone
- Shell
- Brick
- Cobblestone
- Grasspave or grasscrete (mix of grass and hard surface paving material that provides a solid surface)

16. 10.10 Provide a landscaped front yard for a residential property in a historic district.

- Maintain a predominant appearance of a planted front yard/lawn.
- Minimize paved areas in a front yard.
- Consider using decorative modular pavers, grass and cellular paving systems in order to minimize the impact of hard surface paving where grass or other plant materials are not used.
- In commercial areas, consider using landscaping to screen and soften the appearance of surface parking areas. Use an internal and perimeter landscaping treatment to screen a fenced or walled parking area.
- Do not use landscaping to hide a design feature that is inconsistent with these Design Review Guidelines.

STAFF ANALYSIS

This application concerns the new construction of seven (7) single-family residences at 916 Church Street, located on the northeast corner of Church Street and Marine Street. Several items are taken into account for new construction residences including placement, mass, scale, and building components.

With regard to placement, two components are taken into account – setback from the street and distance between buildings. The *“Design Review Guidelines for New Residential Construction in Mobile’s Historic Districts”* state that new buildings should be responsive to and maintain the alignment of traditional façade lines, as well as the rhythm of side and rear setbacks. (6.34, 6.35) The property under review, a corner lot, is in the vicinity of contributing buildings. In accordance with *Design Guidelines*, the setbacks reflect the historical character of the contributing aspects of the built landscape. The proposed placement of front planes approximately 25’-0” from the Church Street right-of-way (ROW) negotiates the placement of the buildings located within 150’ of the site, which are located between 0’ and 35’ from the ROW. The driveway and interior parking would be respectful of traditional placement patterns.

The *Design Review Guidelines* state that mass - the relationship of the parts of the larger whole comprising a building - for new construction should be in keeping with arrangement and proportion of surrounding historic residences. (6.36) The proposed residences adopt the massing of shotguns and townhouses in a neighborhood that includes one- and two-story single-family residences and apartment buildings and single-story commercial buildings. Hipped roofs would top the buildings. The outward massing of the buildings, rectangular blocks, is similar to massing found in the neighborhood. (6.40) The height of the foundations is similar to the foundation heights of nearby historic structures. The massing of the structures, the first floors being approximately 10’ ceilings below a 9’ second story height, is compatible with the architectural context of the contributing landscape in which they would be situated. (6.37)

Scale refers to a building’s size in relationship to other buildings. The *“Design Review Guidelines for New Residential Construction”* state that new construction should be in scale with nearby historic buildings. (6.37) The residence across the street to the south facing Church Street is one and one-half stories high on a raised

foundation. It sits adjacent to a larger two and one-half dwelling. The house adjacent to the east of the subject property, facing Church Street, is one-story in height with a full-width front porch and side projection, also with a front porch. As mentioned in the preceding paragraph addressing massing, the height of the ceilings and pitches of the roofs combine to form a whole that would be compatible with surrounding architectural landscape.

With regard to building components, the *Guidelines* call for responsiveness to traditional design patterns. (6.44) The camelback shotgun house is more familiar to residents of New Orleans than Oakleigh Garden in Mobile, and the narrow townhouse is similarly referential of that city. The simple paneled doors employed for the front entrances reflect doors seen on residences in the district. The use of two-over-two sashes is compatible with the district and are typical for both the shotgun and townhouse form. (6.41, 6.45) The wall treatments are visually compatible with the surrounding architectural and historical context. (6.38, 6.39) The proposed window spacing on the façades (fronts) mimic traditional solid-to-void ratios; however, the fenestration patterns on some of the sides and rear elevations of all four models are atypical. (6.45) The use of a raised, continuous brick foundation is also a convention prevalent on surrounding historic buildings. (6.43). The design of the full-width front porch also contributes to the new construction's responsiveness to the surrounding historic construction practices. (6.42)

The building materials appear to blend with those employed in the past and in immediate surroundings (6.39, 6.41, 6.45) It is unclear what material is proposed for the louvered shutters.

The application states that white picket fences are to be installed between the dwellings. However, no drawings, measurements or material descriptions of the proposed fencing were submitted with the application. (10.2)

The *Guidelines* instruct that the new buildings should be visually connected to the street via a walkway leading directly from the sidewalk to the main building entry. Likewise, a landscaped front yard must be installed which associates with the character of that seen in the district. (10.5, 10.10) The application proposes no connecting element between the buildings and street, nor does it provide a landscaping plan.

The application states that a 10'-0" wide driveway accessing Marine Street will provide access to the rear of the homes, and that, in addition to the two-car garage option, there would be a minimum of two (2) parking spaces to the rear of the structures. Therefore, parking for the houses would be at the interior of the property, in accordance with the *Guidelines*, which state, "*Minimize the visual impact of parking. Locate a parking area to the rear or to the side of a site whenever possible.*" (10.7) However, no drawings or material description of the driveway or parking spaces were submitted with the application.

A single elevation and façade drawing intended for Lot 1 (on the corner of Marine Street and Church Street) were submitted with the application. However, this plan was incomplete, and the two drawings make it difficult to decipher specific design plans.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Mr. Howle recused himself from discussion of this agenda item due to a conflict of interest. Mr. Howle left the dais for the duration of the public testimony, Board discussion, and roll-call votes.

Mr. Trae Corte of Corte Development was present to discuss the application and offered an overview of the project. Mr. Corte stated that the proposed development shared several characteristics – including building types, sizes, massing, and architectural style – with Corte Development's recently completed project at Jackson and State Streets in the DeTonti Square Historic District. Mr. Corte highlighted some differences between the two developments. First, all dwellings on the lot at 916 Church Street would face the same direction (i.e., toward Church Street). Second, deeper lots would allow for larger footprints for the dwellings as well as the option for an enclosed garage at the rear of each property.

Mr. Corte stated that the new development would make use of the two floor plan options used at the Jackson Street Development: the Royale, a shotgun type dwelling with a partial second story reminiscent of a camel-back addition, and the St. Francis, a two-story townhouse with a two-story front porch. The new development would also include two new floor plan options called Oakleigh 4 and Oakleigh 5, which would essentially be elongated version of the St. Francis and Royale, respectively. Mr. Corte stated that since the individual owners would be able to choose their floorplan, he could not specify for the Board which models would be on which lots at the present moment. He could say that Lot 7 is not as deep as the other lots and therefore cannot accommodate the Oakleigh models.

Mr. Corte stated that the individual property owners could opt for either an attached garage or paved surface parking at the rear of the property. He also noted that the desired roofing is classic ribbed metal roofing in galvalume.

Mr. Corte also explained the inclusion of two hand-drawn elevations labeled “Lot 1 – Marine St. Elevation” and “OPTIONAL Elevation.” Mr. Corte indicated a possibility his company would require the purchaser of Lot 1 to construct either the St. Francis or Oakleigh 4 plans with the modifications shown on the drawing labeled “Lot 1 – Marine St. Elevation.” This drawing includes a wrap around porch, which Mr. Corte stated would engage the Marine Street frontage in a way that is more appropriate to the neighborhood than the standard flat façade. Mr. Corte further explained that the hand-drawn elevations give examples of the types of optional details property owners could choose to include. Specifically, he referred to the Roman lattice panels and large eave brackets on “Lot 1 – Marine St. Elevation” and the similar geometric porch railing on “OPTIONAL Elevation” as examples of the more “coastal” details that would distinguish this Church Street development from the completed De Tonti Street development.

Mr. Corte closed his comments with a question to the Board about whether or not they would approve ribbed metal roofing in a galvalume color. Mr. Corte specified that he was not considering standing seam metal roofing.

Following Mr. Corte’s remarks, Ms. Echols asked if any members of the public wished to speak for or against the proposed development. Ms. Sydney Betbeze, a resident of the Oakleigh Garden Historic District, expressed her support for the project but did ask if the applicant could clarify what the view of the rear of the property would be from Government Street and whether the plan would include any type of screening along the rear (north) property line. Ms. Roselius indicated that she had similar questions she would address during the Board discussion.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Mr. Blackwell opened the discussion by congratulating Mr. Corte on the success of the development on Jackson Street in the De Tonti Square Historic District. He stated that while he did not have an issue with individual property owners being allowed to choose different design details without returning to the Board, he would expect all of these changes be submitted to the Historic Development Department for staff-level approvals prior to construction. Mr. Blackwell also expressed concern that there was no fenestration proposed on the garage elevations. Mr. Blackwell recommended including fenestration on side elevations of the garage structure, especially at Lot 1 on the west elevation facing Marine Street. Mr. Blackwell added that faux windows could be used in this context to maintain the established rhythm of solid-to-void, as seen in the district. Mr. Corte was amenable to that suggestion.

Ms. Maurin expressed her agreement with Mr. Blackwell’s suggestion that any details chosen by property owners go to the Historic Development Department for administrative approval. She expressed appreciation for the proposed 3-foot white picket fence between residences in lieu of the privacy fences used in the De Tonti project. She also expressed approbation for the proposed west elevation for Lot 1 that would better address the corner and Marine Street, stating this treatment would be necessary for COA approval. Mr. Corte added that a white wood picket fence would wrap the corner and continue along Marine Street along the west property line.

Ms. Roselius asked if the applicant intended to subdivide the existing lot or to sell the individual residences as condominiums. Ms. Roselius also asked if applicant anticipated constructing dwellings all at once or at intervals. Mr. Corte stated that the lot would be subdivided into the 7 lots shown on the site plan. He also stated that this was allowed under the existing zoning and would not require a variance. Mr. Corte then described a 15-foot-deep easement along the north property line that become a common drive allowing access to either garages or surface parking at the rear of each lot. Mr. Corte stated that the Jackson Street properties sold out in 2 days, and he anticipates the Church Street development will sell out within a week. He plans to construct all dwellings at the same time.

Ms. Roselius stated that the Board would need to see a more detailed perimeter fencing and screening plan for the entire site. Mr. Corte directed the Board's attention to an existing fence along a portion of the north property line that belongs to the lot just north of the subject property. Mr. Corte stated that the existing fence crosses over onto his property and that he plans to continue the same type of fence along the rest of the north property line rather than dispute the boundary line with the neighboring property owner. He also noted that his company is under contract to purchase the lot at Government and Marine, currently owned by the Government Street United Methodist Church and used for parking. They are unsure as yet how they will use the property, but perhaps a small mixed-use development.

Ms. Roselius asked for clarification as to the type of fence. Mr. Corte responded that he intends to install a simple 6-foot wood privacy fence to match the existing fence.

Ms. Roselius reiterated that she would like to see a more specific perimeter screening and landscaping plans before issuing approval. Ms. Roselius then expressed concern that the current plan includes no process for ensuring that the individual property owners do not all select the same plan. Ms. Roselius expressed a desire for "anti-monotony" measures, such as requiring variations in architectural details or color schemes between the individual dwellings. Ms. Roselius asked Mr. McGowin if it would be considered proper procedure to leave final approval of anti-monotony details to the Historic Development Department staff.

Mr. McGowin stated that it would be appropriate to delegate final approval of specific architectural details to Historic Development Department staff but that more conceptual details, such as building placement and the overall site plan, would require approval from the Board. Mr. McGowin elaborated that the developer needs to provide plans that are as complete as possible in terms of the site plan, building type, massing, and orientation for the Board's approval. The Board could then delegate approval of smaller details to staff.

Ms. Traylor expressed a concern that the existing plans were incomplete. She stated that she found it difficult to issue approval without knowing certain details, specifically the materials for shutters, landscaping plans, and parking details. She also requested the applicant to clarify whether he was proposing a mix of metal and asphalt roofs. Ms. Traylor reiterated concerns that there was no mechanism in place to ensure the developer did not construct 7 identical houses. She also stated that the blank elevations on the east side of each property were inappropriate in the context of the surrounding neighborhood. She noted that "coastal" can mean different things. Ms. Traylor concluded that the application was not ready for a determination. Ms. Roselius concurred.

Mr. McGowin suggested the applicant could present the Board with the full range of design options he intended to provide future property owners and that the Board could approve the range prior to occupant selection.

Mr. Corte clarified that all houses would have the same roof material. If the Board did not approve the metal roofing proposed, all houses would have asphalt shingle roofs. Mr. Corte then asked how he could know which details he needed to submit to the board for approval. Ms. Traylor recommended the application go to a Design Review Committee.

Mr. Corte stated that he considered the large brackets shown on “Lot 1 – Marine St. Elevation” were more coastal than the “Victorian swirly things” seen elsewhere in the neighborhood. He asked for clarification from Ms. Traylor about what information she required.

Ms. Echols interjected that the plan for the De Tonti Square development had been much more complete when presented to the Board. Ms. Echols stated that she believed the applicant did not need to come before the Board again but that any approval be issued with the condition that a Design Review Committee must give final approval of the project.

Mr. Corte said that he would like to secure conditional approval for the project.

Ms. Echols stated her belief that the Board could issue conceptual approval that would be contingent on final approval from a Design Review Committee.

Ms. Roselius expressed her disagreement with this proposal, as did Ms. Traylor. Ms. Roselius stated she would be much more comfortable requiring the options packages to come before the Board instead of staff for approval. Ms. Traylor expressed her belief that had similar plans been submitted to the board for construction of a single residence, they would be considered too vague to approve. Ms. Traylor suggested that the applicant work with staff to prepare a more detailed application to come before the Board at a later date.

Mr. McNair encouraged the Board to approve the plan in concept, i.e., massing, scale, and location of the buildings on the lots.

Mr. Corte stated that his biggest concern was ensuring that the proposed subdivision and building spacing was allowed within the zoning district. Mr. Corte then requested a correction be made to the staff report. The staff report states that the dwellings would have a square footage between 4200 and 4500 square feet. Mr. Corte stated that this was the square footage range for the lots. Dwellings would range between 1600 and 2200 square feet.

Ms. Maurin asked if the spacing between the dwellings would be the same in the new development as it was in the DeTonti development. Mr. Corte stated that the houses would be 11’ apart (1’ on one side of houses and 10’ on the other side, adding up to 11’ total) in the new development, while houses in the De Tonti development were 12’ apart.

Ms. Maurin stated her opinion that the narrow lot spacing in De Tonti meant that the blank sidewalls are not experienced as blank walls by the passersby in the public right-of-way. She expressed her belief that the blank sidewalls would not detract from the new development for the same reasons.

Ms. Roselius disagreed, stating that she did find the lack of windows on side elevations in the De Tonti development to be distracting.

Mr. Corte stated that placing windows along the blank wall would require changes to the spacing between buildings. He explained that the blank wall must function as a fire wall, since it is only one foot from the property line. Introduction of windows on this wall would require centering the houses on their respective lots, which would eliminate the private courtyard space on the side of each residence, making them more difficult to sell.

Ms. Traylor stated that a Design Review Committee could advise on other details that could ease blank space on these side walls. Mr. Corte gave an example of hanging lights used to this effect at the De Tonti development. Ms. Traylor responded that the applicant would need to submit these details formally for review. Mr. Corte reiterated that his intent was to duplicate DeTonti but with slightly different architectural details.

Mr. Blackwell interjected that the Board could issue concept approval of development with the caveat that details be decided in a Design Review Committee. Ms. Roselius questioned whether this was considered appropriate procedure. Mr. McGowin stated that the Board could issue concept approval with the caveat that a COA will not be issued until a Design Review Committee reviews and approves required details. Ms. Traylor interjected that the Board would need to be very specific about what they were and were not approving. Mr. McGowin reiterated that the Board could approve the type of development including number and spacing of buildings, setbacks, scale, and massing without issuing final approval of details.

Mr. Blackwell and Ms. Roselius both volunteered to participate in a Design Review Committee in the coming week.

FINDING FACTS

Mr. Blackwell moved that, based on the evidence presented in the application, the Board finds the facts in the Staff's report of the application, amended to reflect the correction to that the dwellings will range from 1600 and 2200 square feet instead of 4200 to 4500 square feet.

Ms. Maurin 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 proposed concept would not impair the architectural or historic character of the district and that the concept – specifically type and placement of buildings - should be granted conceptual approval with the caveat that a Design Review Committee to work with the applicant to finalize details lacking in the current application. The applicant will then present these more detailed plans to the Board for final approval and issuance of a COA.

Ms. Maurin seconded the motion. The motion passed on a four to two basis, with Ms. Traylor and Ms. Roselius opposed.



Agenda Item #2

Application 2024-04-CA

DETAILS

Location:

North side Adams Street between Joachim and Jackson streets (Parcel No. R022906120003001)

Summary of Request:

New Construction: one-story vehicle maintenance facility; site improvements

Applicant (as applicable):

HDA

Property Owner:

Gulf Distributing Co./Adams Street Property, LLC

Historic District:

DeTonti Square

Classification:

Vacant (paved parking)

Summary of Analysis:

- The proposed new construction is a one-story, brick-veneered vehicle maintenance facility.
- Though the massing and scale of the building are not compatible with the nearby historic residential properties, certain site features avoid the disruption of the established patterns and rhythm of the historic environment.
- The proposed building materials are compatible with other buildings in the district.
- The existing wall and landscape assist in diminishing the visual impact of the building and parking.

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PROPERTY AND APPLICATION HISTORY

DeTonti Square Historic District was initially listed in the National Register in 1972 under Criterion A for social and urban planning significance and Criterion C for significant architecture. The district was one of two historic districts created by a municipal ordinance in 1962 in an effort to halt the rapid demolition of historic buildings near the city's central business district. The district, named for the French explorer Henri DeTonti, contains a few structures surviving from the 1830s, but the majority were built in the 1850s as residences of the wealthy and influential cotton factors, merchants, and planters.

The subject parcel is currently devoid of structures; it is paved for parking with a grassy area toward Adams Street. The 1878 Hopkins ward map of Mobile shows the western half of the property as four vacant lots owned by S.B. Quigley. Five lots on the eastern end (two facing Adams and three facing North Joachim) were occupied by small, scattered buildings. Based on later maps of the area, it appears one house faced Adams, a store occupied the northwest corner of Adams and Joachim streets, and two houses faced Joachim Street to the north of the store. The northern two-thirds of the city block was mostly developed. The 1885 and 1891 Sanborn maps did not include this block, but the 1904 Sanborn map shows every lot except the southwestern corner (Adams and Jackson streets) was occupied by at least one structure. Five one-story frame residences with front porches faced Adams Street. Four of the five houses had one-story frame sheds to the rear. The one-story, frame store was extant on the southeast corner of the block, and two one-story frame residences faced North Joachim Street to the north, occupying the same parcel as the store. The city block had gained additional development with another corner store at the southwest corner of Lipscomb and North Joachim streets and a newer residence facing Jackson Street about mid-block between Lipscomb and Adams streets. The 1924 and 1955 Sanborn maps shows the entire Adams streetfront between Jackson and Joachim streets developed with residences; a two-story frame house with full-width front porch had been constructed at the southwest corner, and two cinder-block residences had been constructed at the east end of the block, replacing the corner store. The two small houses north of the store also had been replaced by a single on-story, frame house. A 1967 aerial photo shows no change in development of the block.

By 1980, though, an aerial photo reveals that only four houses at the center of the streetfront along Adams remain along with a house at 357 Joachim Street. The rest of the city block had been cleared. In 1985, three of the four residences along Adams Street and the one residence on North Joachim Street were extant. A 1997 aerial photograph revealed only one house remaining on the entire block, 258 Adams Street, and by the time of a 2004 aerial photograph, the subject property had been completely cleared and paved for parking.

According to Historic Development files, this property has never before appeared before the Architectural Review Board.

SCOPE OF WORK

1. Construct a one-story vehicle maintenance facility (VMF).
 - a. The structure would be located at the northwest corner of the subject property and only partially inside the parcel. A corner of the 64'-0" x 81'-4" building (measuring approximately 34'-9"x31'-4") would be located within the historic district.
 - b. The structure would stand approximately 24'-0" high and have a flat roof.
 - c. The structure would be veneered with brick and metal coping at the parapet wall, both matching the existing warehouse on the site to the northeast.
 - d. Doors and windows would be hollow metal painted to match the brick veneer.
 - e. Prefinished metal scuppers and downspouts matching those on the existing warehouse/office building would be installed on the west elevation.
 - f. Fenestration would appear as follows.

- 1) South elevation (from left to right): one single-lite fixed window measuring 3'-9" wide by 5'-0" high; one pedestrian door measuring 11'-9" wide by 15'-0" high, both located on the west end of the elevation.
 - 2) East elevation: no fenestration is proposed for this elevation.
 - 3) North elevation (from left to right): Two garage doors measuring 11'-9" wide by 15'-0" high spaced across the first two-thirds of the elevation; one pedestrian door measuring 2'-6" wide by 6'-4" high.
 - 4) West elevation (from left to right): two single-lite fixed windows measuring 3'-9" wide by 5'-0" high spaced roughly on the two ends of the second half of the elevation.
2. The existing metal fence and brick wall which currently enclose the property on the west and south would remain. The metal fence along the west property line would be repaired where needed using matching fence salvaged from other areas on the site.

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

Where applicable, design guidelines relevant to the "Commercial Corridor Context" were used.

1. **7.30** Orient a new commercial building to be similar to that of nearby historic structures.
 - Place buildings in line with adjacent historic buildings in terms of relationship to the street. If a project is flanked by non-historic structures, refer to nearby historic structures.
 - Design side setbacks to be similar to those in adjacent historic buildings. If a project is flanked by non-historic structures refer to nearby historic structures.
 - Orient façades of new commercial buildings similarly to adjacent historic structures. In most cases, new commercial structures should be oriented to directly face the street.
 - Face primary building entries toward the public street.
 - Screen ancillary buildings or place them behind the primary building.
2. **7.32** Place and orient new commercial construction on commercial corridors to be compatible with that of adjacent historic residential structures and the district.
 - Establish front setbacks similar to those in adjacent historic residential development or historic residential development on the same block.
 - Orient façades to be parallel with the street or in the orientation of historic residential structures that are adjacent or on the same block. In some cases, the orientation should be north-south depending on the historic context.
 - For corner lots, align a sidewall with historic residential structures located to the rear of project. Offset sidewalls built close to the street edge to be in line with historic residential structures at the rear of the project.
3. **7.34** Design a building to be compatible with massing and scale with historic structures in the district.
 - Design building massing to reflect massing of nearby historic structures.
 - Where the volume of new construction is larger than historic structures in the district, break down the massing into smaller components to increase compatibility.
 - Limit the height or the perceived height of buildings to be similar to heights of nearby historic structures.
 - Use vertical and horizontal articulation design techniques to reduce the apparent scale of a larger building mass.
 - Incorporate changes in color, texture and materials.
 - Use architectural details to create visual interest. » Use materials that help to convey scale in their proportion, detail and form.
4. **7.35** Design building massing and scale to maintain the visual continuity of the district.
 - Incorporate floor-to-floor heights that appear similar to those of traditional commercial buildings in Mobile.
 - Design a new structure to incorporate a traditional base, middle and cap.
5. **7.36** Maintain traditional spacing patterns created by the repetition of building widths along the street.

- Proportion a new façade to reflect the established range of traditional building widths seen in Mobile.
 - Where a structure must exceed a traditional building width, use changes in building configuration, articulation or design features such as materials, window design, façade height or decorative details to break the façade into modules that suggest traditional building widths.
6. **7.38** Design the massing and scale of new commercial construction to be compatible with historic residential structures in the district.
 - Break down building massing to create separate volumes that are similar to the massing of adjacent and nearby historic residential structures.
 - Limit the height of a building to be similar to those of adjacent and nearby historic residential structures.
 - Where the lot lines of a commercial structure and residential structure meet, step down the height of the commercial building to match that of the adjacent residential structure.
 7. **7.47** Where new commercial construction is located adjacent to historic residential structures, use building materials that are compatible with those materials used in nearby historic buildings.
 - Use a material that is reflective of nearby historic residential structures, including wood siding.
 8. **10.5** Visually connect the street and building.
 - Maintain or install a walkway leading directly from the sidewalk to the main building entry.
 9. **10.7** Minimize the visual impact of parking.
 - Locate a parking area at the rear or to the side of a site whenever possible.
 - Use landscaping to screen a parking area.
 - Minimize the widths of a paved area or a curb cut.
 - If a curb cut is no longer in use, repair the curb. In some areas, granite curbs may be required.
 - Do not use paving in the front yard for a parking area. Paving stones might be acceptable in certain instances. Do not create a new driveway or garage that opens onto a primary street.
 - Do not create a new driveway or garage that opens onto a primary street.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The application under review proposes the construction of a one-story Vehicle Maintenance Facility. In review of this application for compliance, the “*Commercial Corridor Context*” guidelines were found to be most aligned with the nature of the subject project and were used where applicable. It should be noted, however, that this project does not perfectly fit into any of the three contexts included under the *Design Guidelines for New Commercial Construction*.

The subject parcel is currently a paved parking area with a grassy area towards the south end near Adams Street. The *Guidelines* direct that new commercial buildings be oriented similarly to adjacent historic buildings, with similar side setbacks. There are no adjacent historic structures to the subject site, and the proposed building would sit behind an existing brick wall which runs along Adams Street. The closest historic structures are residential properties located across the street and are oriented towards the south side of Adams Street. The proposed building consists of a pedestrian entry door on the south elevation, which simulates a facade which faces Adams Street. (7.30, 7.32)

The *Guidelines* state that the massing and scale of new commercial buildings should reflect those of nearby historic structures and retain the visual continuity of the district. The massing and scale of the proposed structure is incongruent with the nearby historic residential properties. In proportion, however, it is significantly smaller than the expansive modern commercial building extant on the same site. The placement of the subject building visually connects it to this much larger building which would sit to its north, rather than to the historic residential environment on the south side of Adams Street. In addition, the proposed building would sit well behind an existing brick wall and would be further shielded by extant landscaping just behind the wall. These existing

features already serve to visually protect against the disruption of the traditional rhythms and patterns of the historic residential context that are established on the south side of Adams Street. (7.34, 7.35, 7.36, 7.38)

Although the proposed building would have a pedestrian entry door on the south elevation, which is oriented towards Adams Street, it does not provide the elements which are called for in the *Guidelines* to retain traditional entry patterns in the district. (7.43) Though there are no historic residential properties adjacent to the subject building, proposed building materials such as brick and metal are those which are seen on nearby historic residential properties and are commonly used throughout the DeTonti Square district. (7.47)

The *Guidelines* further direct that a newly constructed building be connected to the street by a walkway and that the visual impact of parking be minimized. As stated above, in the case of the subject project, the placement of the building on a paved parking area, along with the extant brick wall along Adams Street eliminate the need for a connective element to the street. Likewise, the wall and the established landscaping to the immediate north of the wall currently serve to reduce the visibility of parking. (10.5, 10.7)

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Mr. Brice Zickuhr (HDA) was present to discuss the application and presented an overview of the project.

Mr. Zickuhr began by describing the overall contextual plan of proposed vehicle maintenance facility (VMF). Mr. Zickuhr stated that while many of the nearby structures are residential there is precedent for commercial structures in the area, citing an existing commercial building on the north side of Adams. Mr. Zickuhr stated that the VMF would sit back from property line about 80 feet. He also pointed out several site elements that would screen the VMF from view, including a storm water detention pond, ornamental metal fencing, a brick screen wall, and several trees. Mr. Zickuhr further explained that the height of the structure was necessary since it would be used for servicing large semi-trucks.

Mr. Zickuhr identified design elements, including masonry walls and sheet-metal roofing, intended to make the VMF building blend with the existing Press Register building. Specifically, he noted that the structural split-face concrete block would match the brick Press Register building in color. Mr. Zickuhr drew the Board's attention to renderings showing the proposed building on the current site. He reiterated that the large setback, brick screen walls, and landscaping would mitigate the building's visual impact on the surrounding district.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Ms. Maurin asked the applicant to verify the exact location and height of the existing fence. Mr. Zickuhr explained that the curved lines on the drawing represented the metal portions of the existing fence while the straight lines represented the brick wall. He stated that he believed the wall to be between 5 and 6 feet tall.

Ms. Maurin asked if the split-face block used on the proposed building was used on other buildings on the same campus. Mr. Zickuhr responded that all other buildings on the campus were brick. He elaborated that the decision to use split-face block had been made to lessen construction costs for the property owner (Gulf Distributing). Ms. Maurin stated that she did not have an issue with the scale and massing, given the presence of other large commercial structures in that area. Ms. Maurin did take issue with the split-face block and asked if the owner would consider using brick instead, given the proposed facility's location immediately adjacent to a residential neighborhood. Mr. Zickuhr stated they were open to that change.

Ms. Echols stated that it was unclear in the drawings how much of the proposed parking was existing and how much would be new. Mr. Zickuhr responded that the proposed storm water retention pond would replace a significant amount of existing parking. He stated that the new parking areas would therefore be farther back from Adams Street than the existing. Mr. Zickuhr explained that several existing cypress trees have grown into the drainage system, which led to the redesign of the stormwater detention pond.

Ms. Maurin asked if the black metal fencing continued along the west property line. Mr. Zickuhr stated that it does before transitioning back to brick along Beauregard Street.

Ms. Traylor asked what staff's thoughts were on the pedestrian door on the south elevation facing Adams Street. Due to an emergency family situation the staff member who had prepared the report was not present, and Ms. Wilson did not have additional information to add to the report. Mr. Zickuhr interjected that he had read that portion of the report. Ms. Traylor asked him to share his thoughts. Mr. Zickuhr stated that he believed that the staff report had concluded that providing a walkway from Adams Street to the pedestrian door on the south elevation would not be appropriate in light of the proposed retention pond and existing brick wall, which would provide much of the desirable screening. Ms. Roselius interjected that since the building is more of an accessory structure it would be appropriate to disregard the front entry requirements in this instance.

Mr. McNair asked for confirmation that the applicant was willing to change the exterior to brick veneer on the two elevations seen from the historic district. Mr. Zickuhr replied in the affirmative. Ms. Maurin interjected that three elevations (south, east, and west) were visible from the historic district instead of two. Mr. Zickuhr stated that three sides would be acceptable. He added that they would likely go ahead and clad the fourth side as well.

Ms. Echols asked if any residents of De Tonti had communicated any opposition to staff. Ms. Wilson responded that she was not aware of any. Ms. Echols asked if signs had been placed at the project site prior to the hearing. Mr. Sledge confirmed that signs had been placed.

Ms. Maurin recommended approval of the application with the caveat that the applicant would provide brick cladding on the three elevations (south, east, and west) visible from Adams Street.

FINDING FACTS

Mr. McNair moved that, based on the evidence presented in the application, the Board find the facts in the Staff's report of the application, amended to reflect the addition of brick cladding on the south, east, and west elevations of the proposed structure.

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 proposed application, as amended, would not impair the architectural or historic character of the district and should be granted a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Ms. Traylor seconded the motion. The motion passed on a six to one basis, with Ms. Echols opposed.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:16 p.m.