

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD MINUTES

June 21, 2023 – 3:00 P.M.

Auditorium, Government Plaza
205 Government Street

A. CALL TO ORDER

1. The acting Chair, Mr. Jim Wagoner, called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm. Annie Allen, Historic Development staff, called the roll as follows.

Members Present: Bob Allen, Cart Blackwell (alternate), Andre Rathle, Craig Roberts, Gypsie Van Antwerp, and Jim Wagoner

Members Absent: Janelle Adams (alternate), Abby Davis, Catarina Echols, Kimberly Harden, Kathleen Huffman (alternate), Karrie Maurin, and Joseph Rodrigues

Staff Members Present: Annie Allen, Chris Kern, John Sledge, Kim Thomas, and Meredith Wilson

2. Mr. Roberts moved to approve the minutes from the June 7, 2023 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Blackwell and approved unanimously.
3. Mr. Blackwell moved to approve the Mid-Month COAs granted by Staff. The motion was seconded by Mr. Roberts and approved unanimously.

B. MID-MONTH APPROVALS - APPROVED

1. Applicant: Powe & Associates LLC

- a. Property Address: 1713 Conti Street
- b. Date of Approval: 05/31/2023
- c. Project: 1) Reroof in kind with architectural shingles in black.
2) Repaint and reroof porch in kind.
3) Replace existing vinyl windows with aluminum sashes.
4) Repaint existing siding and trim gray and navy blue.

2. Applicant: All Weather Roofing & Construction LLC

- a. Property Address: 1563 West Ave
- b. Date of Approval: 05/31/2023
- c. Project: Reroof in-kind with shingles in Charcoal color

3. Applicant: FASTSIGNS of Mobile

- a. Property Address: 1757 Government Street
- b. Date of Approval: 06/01/23
- c. Project: Install new (replacement) MDO yard blade sign measuring 2'x2' with no illumination. "Pillars Mobile"

4. Applicant: David T. McConnell General Contractor

- a. Property Address: 202 South Catherine Street
- b. Date of Approval: 06/02/2023
- c. Project: Rebuild two wood windows (4 sash) to match existing historic two-over-two wood windows. Install in existing frames - one on east elevation second floor, one on west elevation first floor.

5. Applicant: Manuel Masonry Contractors

- a. Property Address: 465 Dexter Avenue

- b. Date of Approval: 06/05/2023
- c. Project: Replace existing shingle roof with black shingle. Remove and replace rotten fascia boards and paint to match existing.

6. Applicant: Michael Ulrich

- a. Property Address: 69 South Ann Street
- b. Date of Approval: 06/07/2023
- c. Project: Construct one-story pool house northeast of existing house. Structure will measure 29'-5"x36'-8" and be finished with materials as existing non-historic residence on property, to include black architectural shingles, white 2 over 2 aluminum-clad windows, and smooth lap Hardie painted with Sherwin Williams Cityscape SW7067.

7. Applicant: Sign Medics LLC

- a. Property Address: 1500 Government Street Unit A
- b. Date of Approval: 06/07/2023
- c. Project: Install a double-sided tenant panel on monument sign. Graphics will include surface applied digitally printed opaque vinyl in the following colors: Matthews White, PMS 309 C Dk Teal, and PMS 7716 C Teal. The sign will read "Sage Health" and will measure 5.88 square feet.

8. Applicant: Roof Doctor of Alabama Inc

- a. Property Address: 18 N. Monterey
- b. Date of Approval: 06/07/2023
- c. Project: Reroof with shingles to match the existing.

9. Applicant: Eugene Morgan

- a. Property Address: 158 South Warren Street
- b. Date of Approval: 06/09/2023
- c. Project: Repair and replace rotten siding where needed. Repair and replace rotten boards on front porch.

10. Applicant: Russell Goode

- a. Property Address: 1105 Dauphin Street
- b. Date of Approval: 06/09/2023
- c. Project: Paint and caulk outside walls, columns, windows using existing paint colors. Repaint iron gate to match existing. Remove pea gravel walkway and replace with concrete to match existing footprint.

11. Applicant: John Ricketts

- a. Property Address: 11 Lee Street
- b. Date of Approval: 06/09/2023
- c. Project: Repaint body of home to match existing color. Repaint shutters, door, and porch approved in blue color.

12. Applicant: Cooner Construction Inc.

- a. Property Address: 100 Espejo Street
- b. Date of Approval: 06/12/2023
- c. Project: Re-roof with architectural shingles in Moire Black

C. APPLICATIONS

1. 2023-29-CA: 154 S. Monterey Street

- a. Applicant: Tyler Pham
- b. Project: Demolish garage

APPROVED

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CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED

2. 2023-31-CA: 1500 Government Street

- a. Applicant: Sign Medics LLC on behalf of Sage Health
 - b. Project: Install signage in excess of 64 sf
- DENIED - CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED**

D. OTHER BUSINESS

1. The next ARB meeting is scheduled for July 5, 2023.

Public comment regarding items on this agenda will be accepted via e-mail (mhdc@cityofmobile.org) or USPS (Mobile Historic Development Commission, P.O. Box 1827, Mobile, AL 36633) until 5PM on Tuesday, June 20, 2023. Please include your name, home address, and the item number about which you are writing.

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

ADDRESS	154 S. Monterey Street	APPLICATION NO.	2023-29-CA
SUMMARY OF REQUEST	Demolish garage structure at rear of property		
APPLICANT	Tyler Pham	OWNER, IF OTHER	

HISTORIC DISTRICT	Old Dauphin Way	MEETING DATE	06/07/2023
CLASSIFICATION	Contributing	REVIEWER	Annie Allen

DISTRICT/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 154 S. Monterey is a frame one-story Craftsman Bungalow with a gable roof and an enclosed brick front porch spanning the two northern bays of the façade. Although an exact construction date is unknown, probate records show that the area was surveyed for subdivision in 1907. The present house represented on the 1925 map. Considering this evidence and the style of the building, it can be reasonably deduced to have been built c.1925. A garage structure sits at the southwest corner of the lot which consists of a rectangular portion with gable ends to the east and west, and an ell addition projecting from the west end of the north elevation. On the 1925 Sanborn map, the larger rectangular portion is present and is accompanied by an adjacent open carport area of similar length and depth on its north elevation. At some point, the open area was removed, and the ell addition appears to have been added at a later date.

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

SCOPE OF WORK (per submitted application and communication)

1. Demolish garage located at rear of property.

STAFF REPORT

A. Applicable standards from the *Design Review Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts (Guidelines)*:

Demolition Guidelines (12.0)

1. Consider the current significance of a structure previously determined to be historic
2. Consider the condition of the structure in question. Demolition may be more appropriate when a building is deteriorated or in poor condition

Impact on the street

3. Consider whether the building is one of the last remaining positive examples of its kind in the neighborhood, county, or region.

4. 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.
5. Consider whether the building is part of an ensemble of historic buildings that create a neighborhood.

Nature of Proposed Development

6. Consider the future utilization of the site.

B. Staff Analysis

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.

The wood frame garage structure proposed for demolition at 154 S. Monterey sits to the rear of the main residence on the southwest corner of the lot. Its form consists of a rectangular portion with gable ends to the east and west, and an ell addition projecting from the west end of the north elevation. On the 1925 Sanborn map, the larger rectangular portion is present and is accompanied by an adjacent open carport area of similar length and depth on its north elevation. At some point, the open area was removed, and the ell addition appears to have been added at a later date. Presently, the entire structure is in a state of disrepair and rot. The roof is caving in, and the building appears to be unusable. The subject property is an inner block lot. Therefore, the accessory structure located at the rear of the lot is not clearly visible from the street, lessening the impact of its demolition on the surrounding district. (A.1-5)

The applicant has not provided plans for further development of this part of the property. (A.6)

C. Summary of Analysis

- The garage structure proposed for demolition has been altered from its original form and is in a state of disrepair.
- The demolition of the subject structure at the rear of the lot would have no visual impact on the surrounding historic district.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Mr. Tyler Pham was present to discuss the application. He stated that he had nothing further to add.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Mr. Wagoner asked Mr. Pham if he had plans for the portion of the property occupied by the subject structure.

Mr. Pham replied that he planned to plant grass and create a lawn.

FINDING FACTS

Mr. Roberts moved that, based on the evidence presented in the application, the Board finds the facts in the Staff's report.

Mr. Allen seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Mr. Roberts moved that, based on the facts approved by the Board, the application does not impair the architectural or historic character of the Old Dauphin Way Historic District and should be granted a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Ms. Van Antwerp seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

ADDRESS	1500 Government Street	APPLICATION NO.	2023-31-CA
SUMMARY OF REQUEST	Install signage in excess of 64 square feet		
APPLICANT	Sign Medics LLC on behalf of Sage Health	OWNER, IF OTHER	
HISTORIC DISTRICT	Old Dauphin Way	MEETING DATE	06/21/2023
CLASSIFICATION	Non-Contributing	REVIEWER	Annie Allen

DISTRICT/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 1500 Government is a contemporary masonry shopping center which was constructed in 2004. Historically this property was multiple residential lots. The 1878 Hopkins maps shows what is now the subject property made up of lots owned by J.H. Allen, The C.R. Richards Estate, Mary A. Brown, and Dorman. A domestic complex is represented on the Allen lot, along with a residence on the Richard and Brown lots. The Dorman lot is vacant. By the time of the 1925 Sanborn map, the western portion of the current property which fronts Catherine Street is represented as five lots consisting of 207, 211, 213, 217, and 219 Catherine Street. Each property denotes a small single-family residence in a cottage form with one or multiple accessory structures. Aerial photos convey that the structures at 207 and 211 Catherine were removed or demolished between 1955 and 1967. During this same time period, a brick veneer motel was constructed on the east side of the current property, which fronted Government Street. According to MHDC records, the motel was demolished in 2004 in anticipation of the current structure. Records also show that two frame single-family residences on Catherine Street were relocated to Etheridge Street, and a third brick veneer single-family residence was demolished. It appears that these three residence were the remaining 213, 217, and 219 Catherine Street properties.

According to MHDC files, this property has appeared before the Architectural Review Board (ARB) three times. In February 2004, an application to demolish three structures and relocate two structures on the property was granted a COA. A Signage COA was granted in September 2004, which allowed for an increased allowance for signage on the property. In 2009, a COA was granted for two wall signs for two different tenants at the property.

SCOPE OF WORK (per submitted application and communication)

1. Install a wall sign on the south facing façade of the building.
 - a. The proposed sign would consist of the company’s logo and the name “Sage Health” which would consist of ten (10) channel letters. The logo portion would measure 4’-8” wide by 7’-0” high. The title portion would measure 21’-11 3/8” wide by 2’-11 1/4” high. Total square footage would total 97 square feet.
 - b. The sign would be centered on the oversized panel above the storefront on the façade.

- c. The proposed material for the sign would be vinyl on acrylic faces.
- d. The sign would be mounted by toggles and/or fasteners.
- e. Both the logo and the letters of the sign would be back-lit by white LED.

STAFF REPORT

A. Applicable standards from the *Design Review Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts (Guidelines)*:

- 1. **11.3** Design a new sign to be compatible with the character of a building and the district
- 2. **11.5** New signs are restricted to a maximum of 64 square feet.

SIGN PLACEMENT

- 3. **11.6** Place a sign to be compatible with those in the district.
 - When placing a new sign on a historic building, locate a sign to emphasize design elements of the historic building façade.
 - Mount a sign to fit within existing architectural features.

SIGN MATERIALS AND CHARACTER

- 4. **11.7** Use a sign material that is compatible with the materials of the building on which it is placed and the district. New materials that achieve the effect of traditional materials and lighting solutions will be considered on a case by case basis.
 - Do not use highly reflective materials for a sign. All plastic faced box signs are not allowed.
 - Design a sign to be subordinate to the building façade.

SIGN ILLUMINATION

- 5. **11.8** Where necessary, use a compatible, shielded light source to illuminate a sign.
 - Consider direct lighting toward a sign from an external, shielded lamp when possible.
 - Use a warm colored light to illuminate a sign when possible.
 - If halo lighting is used to accentuate a sign or building, locate the light source so that it is not visible.
 - If a back-lit sign is used, illuminate each individual letter or element separately.

B. Staff Analysis

This application involves the installation of a wall sign with an area of approximately 97 square feet on a non-contributing property located on Government Street in the Old Dauphin Way District.

The area of the proposed sign would not be in conformance with the *Guidelines*, as it would bring the total signage square footage to 102.88 square feet (including a double faced monument sign totaling 5.88 square feet), which is larger than the area allowed under the *Guidelines* by approximately 39 square feet (103.88 versus 64 square feet) (A.2). However, it should be noted that in 2004, a Certificate of Appropriateness was issued, which approved an increase in signage allowance at this property. The certified record states that a total of 64 square feet was approved for the wall sign alone, with an additional 25 square feet allowed for monument signage. A plan for a wall sign of 78 square feet and a monument sign of 16.66 square feet for the subject location were submitted to the MHDC for approval. Although a COA for these plans cannot be found, photos of the previous ‘Office Depot’ wall sign reveal signage apparently larger than 64 square feet. In addition, the wall sign of neighboring tenant, Dollar Tree, (who was approved for the same increase in square footage in 2004) is visibly larger than 64 square feet as well.

The proposed signage would be constructed of a material compatible with the non-historic building, and the intended placement on the sign band above the storefront is also appropriate to the character of the building as instructed by the *Guidelines* (A.3,4). Further, both the logo and lettering portions of the sign would be individually back-lit, which is permitted under the *Guidelines* (A.5).

The *Guidelines* instruct that signage should be designed “to be compatible with the character of a building and the district.”(A.1) Although the size of the proposed signage is in excess of that allowed by the *Guidelines*, a few factors regarding location and compatibility should be kept in mind. First, the building to which the signage would be attached is a non-historic, non-contributing property which sits back significantly from the ROW on Government Street. As stated, the proposed sign would be attached to an oversized panel above the building’s storefront. The size of the wall sign would be proportional to its location. Given that the subject building’s storefront is significantly wider than traditional storefronts, where a 64 square feet limit is definitely appropriate, a larger sign may be more suitable in this case. The scale of the sign is not only proportional to its intended location but is also in proportion with the sign on the adjacent storefront in the strip, which is visibly larger than the allotted 64 square feet. Besides proportionality, the large setback of the subject building affects the visibility of signage from the street. Therefore, a larger scale sign on one of the more significant retail spaces of this property is appropriate to the scale, location and design of the non-historic strip shopping center building.

C. Summary of Analysis

- The proposed sign at a larger tenant space at 1500 Government Street would be 97 square feet, bringing the total signage square footage out of compliance with the *Guidelines*. However, MHDC records and photos of past signage demonstrate that larger signage was previously used at this location. In addition, the neighboring tenant’s wall sign is visibly larger than 64 square feet.
- The proposed sign is in compliance with the *Guidelines* regarding materials and compatibility with the associated building and the district.
- The building sits back significantly from the ROW, affecting the visibility of signage one of the larger spaces of this non-historic strip shopping center.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Ms. Shanna Miller from Sign Medics, LLC was present to discuss the application. She stated that due to factors which include the building’s deep setback from the road, the business’s target clients being part of the senior population, and the adjacent business’s sign being so large, a larger sign is needed on the building for visibility purposes.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Ms. Van Antwerp stated that she wished to clarify two key points in reference to this application: the Board which approved the signage overage in 2004 is not the same Board hearing the application today; and the sign request is 39 square feet over the square footage allowed under the *Guidelines*. She continued that she does not agree with Ms. Allen’s (Staff member) analysis and regardless of the setback, she recommends denial of the application.

Mr. Allen asked for clarification on the signs that had been previously approved. He asked if the Dollar Tree and Office Depot signs were over 64 sf and were approved in 2004. Ms. Allen responded that in 2004 an allotment of 64 square feet was approved by the Board for each location, which pertained to the wall sign only, and although the files contain designs which were submitted for each location which appear to be the wall signs which were installed at each location, no copy of a COA could be found approving said designs.

Mr. Allen asked the applicant if the activity that would take place in the building was health care. Ms. Miller responded that the business is a center for lower income seniors, which is a clientele that would benefit from larger signage.

Mr. Allen stated that if it would be by appointment. Ms. Miller replied that the clientele would mainly visit by appointment, that a walk-in option may develop. Mr. Allen stated that consumer stores like Dollar Tree and Office Depot may need more visibility than a facility where an appointment is made for an intentional visit.

Ms. Miller stated that the aesthetics of the subject building's oversized storefront needed to be considered as well, that the large sign band will dwarf the smaller sign. Ms. Van Antwerp stated that it is not a question of how it looks, but that the submitted design is not in compliance with the *Guidelines*. She continued that, regardless of the nature or purpose of the business, there are still *Guidelines* that must be considered. She recommended that the applicant return with a plan that does not exceed the allowed square footage.

Mr. Roberts stated the Architectural Review Board is appointed by City Council and represents the neighbors of the subject building. He continued that there is an appeal process in place.

Ms. Miller asked if there is a possibility that the square footage allowed by the *Guidelines* may be increased in the future.

Mr. Wagoner stated that there is about to be turnover on the Board that may or may not bring changes, but at this time, the current Board is required to abide by the *Guidelines*.

Mr. Blackwell thanked the applicant and commented that the applicant presented very compelling reasons and concerns for those larger and more contemporary buildings in historic districts and the diversity in the architecture.

FINDING FACTS

Mr. Roberts moved that, based on the evidence presented in the application, the Board finds the facts in the Staff's report.

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

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Mr. Roberts moved that, based on the facts approved by the Board, the application would impair the architectural and historic character of the Old Dauphin Way Historic District and should not be granted a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Ms. Van Antwerp seconded the motion, and it was approved by a 5:1 vote, with Mr. Blackwell voting against the motion.

D. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Recommendations to the Mayor for Seats on the Mobile Historic Development Commission

The Board made the following recommendations for seats on the Mobile Historic Development Commission:

Mr. Harris Oswald, Jr.

Mr. John Ruzic

Ms. Jean Dodge

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:41 pm.

These minutes were approved by the Architectural Review Board on July 5, 2023.