

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD MINUTES

April 1, 2009 – 3:00 P.M.

Pre-Council Chambers, Mobile Government Plaza, 205 Government Street

A. CALL TO ORDER

1. The Chair, Bunky Ralph, called the meeting to order at 3:00. Tom Karwinski, Harris Oswalt, Craig Roberts, and Jim Wagoner were in attendance.
2. Tom Karwinski moved to approve the minutes of the March 18, 2009 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Jim Wagoner moved to approve the mid month COAs granted by Staff. The motion passed unanimously.

B. MID MONTH APPROVALS

1. **Applicant: City of Mobile**
 - a. Property Address: 200 Government St.
 - b. Date of Approval: 03/12/09
 - c. Project: Paint dado zone and window frames Sherwin Williams' "Natchez Moss;" Paint window sills, belt courses, canopy, gutters, and wall panels Sherwin Williams' "Gazebo White."
2. **Applicant: Tommie C. Majors**
 - a. Property Address: 1101 Savannah St.
 - b. Date of Approval: 03/20/09
 - c. Project: Install Pewter Grey Timberline roof.
3. **Applicant: Monty Gilbert**
 - a. Property Address: 56 Semmes Ave.
 - b. Date of Approval: 3/20/09
 - c. Project: Paint body of house Olympic's "Smoky Slate;" paint trim Olympic's "Lotus Flower."

C. APPLICATIONS

1. 028-09: 400 Chatham St.
 - a. Applicant: Cheryl Shifflet
 - b. Project: Fencing Approval; painting; replace front door.
APPROVED AS AMENDED; DENIED IN PART. CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED.
2. 029-09: 1626 Spring Hill Ave.
 - a. Applicant: Freeman Russell
 - b. Project: Rear Addition.
APPROVED. CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED.
3. 030-09: 501 Monroe St.
 - a. Applicant: Karlos Finley
 - b. Project: Fencing.
DENIED. CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED.
4. 031-09: 210 South Washington Avenue.
 - a. Applicant: Angie Odom
 - b. Project: Window replacement; add a new entry door; cover metal panels with stucco.
APPROVED. CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED.

D. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Finalize Architectural Review Board Application
2. Discussion

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

028-09-CA: 400 Chatham Street
Applicant: Cheryl Shifflet
Received: 03/13/09
Meeting: 04/01/09

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Oakleigh
Classification: Contributing Property
Zoning: R-1
Project: Fencing; painting; replacement of doors.

BUILDING HISTORY

This side hall cottage with recessed side wing was constructed in 1903.

STANDARD OF REVIEW

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

STAFF REPORT

- A. The applicant is a new resident in the Oakleigh Garden District having just purchased this home in October, 2008. The applicant seeks to enhance the historical integrity of the house while allowing for certain security measures and addressing many issues stemming from deferred maintenance.
- B. The Design Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts and Government Street, state, in pertinent part:
 - 1. “Original doors and openings should be retained along with any moldings, transoms or sidelights. Replacements should respect the age and style of the building.
 - 2. Metal storm and metal screen door are not allowed on front doors. Wood screen and wood storm doors are acceptable.
 - 3. Fencing “should complement the building and not detract from it. Design, scale, placement and materials should be considered along with their relationship the Historic District.
 - 4. The height of solid fences in historic districts is generally restricted to six feet, however, if a commercial property or multi-family housing adjoins the subject property, an eight foot fence may be considered.
 - 5. All variances required by the Board of Zoning Adjustment must be obtained prior to issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.”
- C. Scope of Work:
 - 1. Paint house per submitted colors:
 - a. Body, “La Fonda Copper;”
 - b. Trim, “Hubbell House Golden Maize;”
 - c. Shutters, “La Fonda Deep Olive.”
 - 2. Repair the existing front door in kind;
 - 3. Replace existing front security door with comparable example;
 - 4. Repair and install new fencing along perimeter per submitted plan:
 - a. Repair and paint the existing 3½’ paling picket fence along Chatham & Selma

- b. Replace existing chain link fence along Selma Street
 - 1. Install a four foot box top fence with 2' lattice
 - 2. See submitted photographs;
 - 3. Proposed fence violates setback requirements
- c. Replace existing chain link along west and south property line
 - 1. Install 6' box top fence from front porch to rear of property
 - 2. Continue 6' box top fence across rear to street;
 - 3. Install 3½' paling picket fence on South side from front to 6' fence.
 - 4. Rear fence encroaches on set back
 - 5. New paling picket is ½' too tall

D. Clarifications Needed:

- 1. Photograph of metal security door to be submitted.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The colors submitted by the applicant do not detract from architectural and historical integrity of the property or the district and Staff recommends approval of C(1).

Staff has discussed the original request for a replacement front door with the applicant. Staff believes the existing front door to be the original door and the applicant has agreed to repair the existing front door. The applicant intends to retain the existing burglary bars on the home. The homeowner seeks security at her front entrance but finds the current metal door unacceptable. Since a current security door exists, staff believes allowing a new security door while retaining the historic door is an acceptable compromise. Also, the security door can be removed in the future without harming the building. Therefore, Staff recommends approval of C(2)-(3).

Under the Guidelines, the applicant may repair and paint the existing front yard fence as necessary. The proposed replacement of the existing chain link fence with a 4' box top fence, topped with 2' of lattice violates city ordinance regarding setback as does the rear fence. Staff does not recommend approval of C(4)-b, but does recommend approval of C(4)-a and C(4)-c1. C(4)c2 would be acceptable with the correct setback and C(4)c3 would be acceptable at the lower height.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Cheryl Shifflet was present to discuss the application. The applicant explained to the Board that the existing front door is a modern laminate replacement of the lost original door. Ms. Shifflet asked to remove the laminate door. She plans to replace the door with one more appropriate to the style of the house and the character of the district. When she finds a door, Ms. Shifflet will submit it to the Board for approval. The applicant also told the Board that she has been unable to locate an in-kind metal security door to replace the existing one. She asked to repair the existing security door. Ms. Shifflet said the combination of the security door and perimeter fencing increased her sense of safety. She added that her fencing proposals also served to keep her two dogs within the property. The applicant then inquired about regulations concerning the staggering of fence heights.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The board discussion took place concurrently with the public testimony. Board members explained to the applicant that fencing should decrease in height if it extends to the property line. The Board informed the applicant that her request to replace the chain link fence with a 4' box top topped with 2' of lattice violates the city ordinance regulating setbacks from the street.

Staff discussed setbacks and the zoning ordinance. Mr. Wagoner explained that the present application violated the zoning ordinance. Mrs. Ralph explained that the new guidelines would not allow a privacy fence along a streetside property line. The applicant was told to consult zoning and traffic engineering, but that she could proceed with the repairs to and construction of the front yard fence, as well as the rear lot line fence.

FINDING OF FACT

Jim Wagoner moved that, based upon the evidence presented in the application and during the public testimony, the Board finds the facts in the Staff report, deleting fact C(2) amending fact C(4)(a) to remove paint and deleting C(4)(b) and C(4)(c)(5).

The motion received a second and was unanimously approved.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Jim Wagoner moved that, based upon the facts as amended by the Board, the application does impair the historic integrity of the district or the building and that a Certificate of Appropriateness be issued, in part, to repaint the house, repair the existing front yard picket fence, install a new front-side yard picket fence, rear privacy fence along the west and south property lines. The other fence proposals violated zoning ordinances.

APPROVED IN PART; DENIED IN PART.

Certificate of Appropriateness Expiration Date: 4/01/10

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

029-09-CA: 1626 Spring Hill Avenue
Applicant: Freeman Russell
Received: 03/16/09
Meeting: 04/01/09

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Old Dauphin Way
Classification: Contributing
Zoning: B-1
Project: The Ronald McDonald House Charities of Mobile proposes a substantial expansion to previous rear addition off their Spring Hill Avenue facility.

BUILDING HISTORY

This two story Colonial Revival House was constructed in 1937.

STANDARD OF REVIEW

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

STAFF REPORT

- A. On July 15, 1998, the Board approved a previous rear expansion which extended approximately 158 feet beyond the rear of the historic building. Due to an ever increasing number of patients, the Ronald McDonald House Charities submit this proposal for another addition, which will extend to the north beyond the rear wall of the existing addition.
- B. The Secretary of the Interior standards state:
 - 1. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
 - 2. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.”
- C. Scope of Work:
 - 1. Construct a 15,701 square foot, two-story addition
 - a. Proposed addition will attach to an existing 14,897 square foot, two-story, Ronald McDonald House facility;
 - 1. the original house measured 41 feet and the earlier addition measured 158.29 feet;
 - b. the current, proposed expansion measures 172.71 feet; thus, making the total length of the side elevation measure 372 feet.
 - 2. Construct a brick pavilion on west elevation to replicate the existing brick end pavilion.
 - 3. Addition will feature
 - a. cedar lap siding to match existing siding on earlier addition

1. the siding will be used between the 1998 end pavilion and the proposed new end pavilion;
2. the same siding would continue on the north and south elevations.
3. the historic home was masonry
- b. Blind arches mimic those in the existing addition
- c. Cornice to match the existing cornice moulding
- d. Windows to match the windows on the existing addition
- e. Windows are vinyl-clad, single-light casement windows
- f. Match the existing roofing material: class A, asphalt shingles
4. East and south elevation to feature wooden deck and porch with details per submitted plan
5. Deck and porch details match those on existing addition
6. Install two entryways along the west elevation with detailing to mimic existing entryways
7. Paint per submitted Benjamin Moore colors:
 - a. brick, "Alexandria beige;"
 - b. siding and trim, "Shaker Beige;"
 - c. fascia, soffits, columns, and railings, "Brilliant White;"
 - d. exterior doors, "Heritage Red."

STAFF ANALYSIS

The proposed expansion would more than double the total square footage of the existing building. The architect of the 1998 expansion is responsible for this proposal. His design takes a visual queue from the previous addition in design, scale, and material. The brick pavilion terminating the existing west elevation would be replicated in the addition. The intervening expanse of wall between the two pavilions would employ the same lap siding used on the previous addition. The north or rear elevation replicates in wood the blind arch motif found on the existing end pavilion. The roof forms and lines continue the rhythm established by the 1998 addition. Because the proposed addition is similar, if not identical, in style to the existing addition, Staff finds the proposed design appropriate.

Though scale is a significant consideration when determining the appropriateness of an addition, site considerations allow for deviation from the Guidelines. The lack of visibility of the east elevation largely obscures the scale of the building. Unlike the west elevation facing Walshwood Avenue, the east elevation does not extend along a side street. Fencing, trees, and a drainage ditch provide a screen for pedestrian and vehicular traveling on Spring Hill Avenue. The previous expansion obscures the addition's south elevation. By taking into account his earlier addition, the architect downplays the increased size and scale of the proposed expansion. Staff recommends approval.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Lanny Russell and was present to discuss the application. Mr. Russell elaborated on the facilities need for the proposed expansion.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The board discussion took place concurrently with the public testimony. Mr. Karwinski questioned the scale of the building in relationship to the historic structure. The ARB members examined the 24" x 36" set of scaled drawings. The scale of the first addition, the location of the property within an institutional setting, and the lack of visibility from Spring Hill Avenue were noted. The Board discussed that the proposed addition was removed from the house and the previous addition was differentiated from the

original building by a visual and physical break. It was also pointed out that the proposed addition was in context with the previous addition and in effect visually created two buildings: the original house facing Springhill Avenue and the combined additions facing the hospital's drive.

FINDING OF FACT

Harris Oswald moved that, based upon the evidence presented in the application and during the public testimony, the Board finds the facts in the Staff report as written.

The motion received a second and was unanimously approved.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Harris Oswald moved that, based upon the facts, the application does not impair the historic integrity of the district or the building and that a Certificate of Appropriateness be issued.

Certificate of Appropriateness Expiration Date: 4/01/10

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

030-09-CA: 501 Monroe Street
Applicant: Karlos Finley
Received: 03/29/09
Meeting: 04/01/09

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Church Street East
Classification: Non-Contributing
Zoning: R-1
Project: Fencing.

BUILDING HISTORY

This late twentieth-century Colonial Revival residence at the corner of Monroe and Lawrence Streets was constructed in 1979.

STANDARD OF REVIEW

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

STAFF REPORT

- A. The applicant proposes removing a portion of a four foot aluminum fence which extends around three sides of his property. He seeks to replace the south and southeast sections of aluminum fencing with a six foot wooden privacy fence and electronic gate at driveway.
- B. The Design Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts and Government Street, state, in pertinent part:
 - 1. Fencing “should complement the building and not detract from it. Design, scale, placement and materials should be considered along with their relationship the Historic District.
 - 2. The height of solid fences in historic districts is generally restricted to six feet, however, if a commercial property or multi-family housing adjoins the subject property, an eight foot fence may be considered.”
 - 3. All variances required by the Board of Zoning Adjustment must be obtained prior to issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.”
- C. Scope of Work:
 - 1. Remove an existing, 3’ aluminum fence and gate
 - 2. Install a 6’ wooden privacy fence, per submitted plan:
 - a. Proposed fence to begin at east elevation at rear corner of house; fence angles from the southeast corner of the house to the Lawrence Street driveway. The drive provides access to the backyard.
 - b. Proposed fence continue along east property line to southeast corner of property
 - c. Proposed fence continues along south property line.
 - 3. Install a double gate extending across the drive
 - a. Gate will have an iron frame fronted by wooden palings that matched the proposed fencing.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The fence as presented violates city setback requirements. The Board cannot approve a non-conforming fence. Additionally, the Board has expressed concern about boxing in the neighborhood. Staff recommends that the Board not grant the applicant approval.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Karlos Finley was present to discuss the application. Mr. Finley explained that there was an existing 2-1/2' iron fence along the property line and that he needed a 6' privacy fence for privacy and security. Mr. Finley discussed the fact that he lived across the street from the Civic Center and there was a significant amount of foot traffic. Mr. Finley also presented photographs of 26 corner lot properties around the districts which have privacy fences along their street-side, side yard.

Mr. Finley questioned why the Board could not approve the fence. Mr. Wagoner responded that Mr. Finley needed a variance.

Mr. Finley questioned whether the Board would approve the fence contingent on approval from zoning. Mr. Roberts explained that there was a problem with it being a corner lot. Mr. Bemis explained that the Board was in the process of rewriting the guidelines and the Board had determined that corner fences were interfering with the streetscape. He also noted that the new guidelines had not been adopted but probably would be by the time a variance could be gotten. The new guidelines would require the fence to be in line with the house. Mr. Finley discussed that he would then lose a 12' strip of yard, or approximately 25% of his backyard. Mr. Finley discussed the presence of similar fences in the districts, his right to enjoy his property and need for safety and security for his 4 year old son.

Ms. Ralph closed the public hearing and indicated that Mr. Finley had two options: 1) apply for a variance and 2) appeal the decision.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The board discussion took place concurrently with the public testimony.

FINDING OF FACT

Tom Karwinski moved that, based upon the evidence presented in the application and during the public testimony, the Board finds the facts in the Staff report as written.

The motion received a second and was unanimously approved.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Tom Karwinski moved that, based upon the facts as amended by the Board, the application does impair the historic integrity of the district or the building and that a Certificate of Appropriateness not be issued.

DENIED.

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

031-15-CA: 210 South Washington Avenue
Applicant: Angie Odom for Zito Russell Architects
Received: 03/18/09
Meeting: 04/01/09

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Church Street East
Classification: Non-contributing
Zoning: B-1
Project: Replace windows; add new entry; cover metal panels with stucco

BUILDING HISTORY

This mid twentieth-century industrial building originally housed the Washington Street Welding Company. In 2005, Hargrove and Associates completed a major renovation of the non-contributing building.

STANDARD OF REVIEW

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

STAFF REPORT

- A. Hargrove and Associates remodeled this abandoned building in 2005. The new owners propose to make cosmetic changes to east, north, and south elevations.
- B. The Secretary of the Interior standards and general principles of historic preservation hold that alterations to, and rehabilitation of, non-contributing buildings within historic districts district should either be compatible with the style and character of each building, or cause the building to become more compatible with the district.
- C. Scope of Work:
 - 1. East Elevation
 - a. Add a new entrance to the east elevation
 - b. Insert a pair of fixed French doors within the frame of the existing entrance
 - c. Place a lanterns to either side of the new entrance door
 - d. Replace all windows with fixed French doors
 - e. Flank French doors (except new entrance) with fixed shutters
 - f. Stucco metal panels
 - g. Paint doors and panels per submitted colors
 - 2. North Elevation
 - a. Paint concrete walls per submitted color
 - 3. South Elevation
 - a. Install black fabric canopy over door per photographs
 - b. Insert French Doors into far right window units
 - c. Flank all fenestration with fixed shutters
 - d. Stucco metal wall expanse.

4. Paint in the following BLP colors
 - a. French doors: Oakleigh Place Ivory
 - b. Stucco panels and garage doors: Springhill Brown
- D. Clarification Needed:
1. How are the shutters to be mounted?

STAFF ANALYSIS

Based on lack of impairment to the building and district, Staff recommends approval of the applicant's proposal, excepting the shutters which need further clarification.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Angie Odom and Cecil Gardner were present to discuss the application. Mr. Karwinski questioned the use of traditional shutters on a contemporary building. He and Craig Roberts pointed out that the proposal was for a traditional treatment on a modern building. They suggested the applicant might want to consider a treatment more in keeping with the building. Ms. Ralph pointed out that the building was non-contributing to the district and directed the Board to consider whether the proposed shutters impaired the building or the district.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The board discussion took place concurrently with the public testimony.

FINDING OF FACT

Jim Wagoner moved that, based upon the evidence presented in the application and during the public testimony, the Board finds the facts in the Staff report as written.

The motion received a second and was unanimously approved.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Tom Karwinski moved that, based upon the facts, the application does not impair the historic integrity of the district or the building and that a Certificate of Appropriateness be issued.

Certificate of Appropriateness Expiration Date: 4/01/10