

**ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD MINUTES**  
**November 2, 2022 – 3:00 P.M.**  
**Multi-Purpose Room, Government Plaza**  
**205 Government Street**

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

1. The Chair, Ms. Catarina Echols, called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm. Christine Dawson, Historic Development staff, called the roll as follows.

**Members Present:** Janelle Adams (alternate), Bob Allen, Cart Blackwell (alternate), Abby Davis, Catarina Echols, Kathleen Huffman (alternate), Craig Roberts, Joseph Rodrigues, and Jim Wagoner,

**Members Absent:** Kimberly Harden, Karrie Maurin, Andre Rathle, and Gypsie Van Antwerp

**Staff Members Present:** Annie Allen, Shayla Beaco, Christine Dawson, Chris Kern, Marion McElroy, Jay Minus, and John Sledge

2. Mr. Roberts moved to approve the minutes from October 19, 2022 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rodrigues and approved unanimously.
3. Mr. Roberts moved to approve the Mid-Month COAs granted by Staff. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rodrigues and approved unanimously.

**MID-MONTH APPROVALS - APPROVED**

**1. Applicant: Atac Development, LLC**

- a. Property Address: 1008 Government Street
- b. Date of Approval: 10/11/2022
- c. Project: Repair and replace rotten or damaged siding with lap siding to match the original material.  
Repaint house in approved historical color (Mobile Paints).  
Reglaze windows on first and second floor.  
Repair, replace, and repaint shutters in-kind on first floor.  
Replace damaged decking on front porch with material to match the original. Repaint in historical color (Mobile Paints)  
Repaint, replace, and/or repair foundation bricks in-kind.

**2. Applicant: Mobile Bay Roofing LLC**

- a. Property Address: 154 S. Monterey Street
- b. Date of Approval: 10/12/2022
- c. Project: Reroof dwelling with architectural shingles in Moire Black color.

**3. Applicant: Dream Builders of Mobile LLC**

- a. Property Address: 155 Houston Street
- b. Date of Approval: 10/12/2022
- c. Project: Reroof with architectural shingles. Color: Black  
Replace deck in-kind with pressure-treated decking material.  
Temporarily remove pieces of existing vinyl siding to repair and replace in-kind damaged areas of wood siding located underneath vinyl siding. Only existing vinyl siding will be re-placed on the dwelling. No new vinyl siding is

permitted.

**4. Applicant: City of Mobile**

- a. Property Address: 401 Government Street (Spanish Plaza)
- b. Date of Approval: 10/13/2022
- c. Project: Paving per submitted plans

**5. Applicant: The Carpet and Tile Store**

- a. Property Address: 60 N. Ann Street
- b. Date of Approval: 10/14/2022
- c. Project: Erect 6' wood privacy fence with 2' wood lattice top along 120' feet at east end of south property line, per submitted plan.

**6. Applicant: Signcorp, Inc.**

- a. Property Address: 2 S. Water Street
- b. Date of Approval: 10/17/2022
- c. Project: Install two (2) 3.34'x1.35' aluminum panels in existing monument sign. No lighting. "Morgan & Morgan"

**7. Applicant: Signcorp, Inc.**

- a. Property Address: 2 S. Water Street
- b. Date of Approval: 10/17/2022 (revision of COA initially issued 9/7/22)
- c. Project: Install 2.35'x23.54' aluminum sign with channel-lit letters, installed vertically on Water Street side of building. "Morgan & Morgan"

**8. Applicant: Signcorp, Inc.**

- a. Property Address: 3 Dauphin Street
- b. Date of Approval: 10/17/2022 (revision of COA initially issued 9/7/22)
- c. Project: Install 3'x18.99' aluminum sign with channel-lit letters horizontally at top of west end of building. "Morgan & Morgan"

**9. Applicant: Douglas Kearley**

- a. Property Address: 950 Government Street
- b. Date of Approval: 10/17/2022 (reissue of COA originally issued 7/22/21)
- c. Project: 1. Construct an addition for a laundry/larder.
  - a. The addition would measure 14' by 13.5'.
  - b. The addition would be topped with a combination pyramidal and hipped roof covered in dimensional shingles to match the existing; its cornice line would match the rear porch's existing cornice line.
  - c. The addition would be sheathed in wood beveled clapboards to match the existing.
  - d. The addition would rest upon a foundation of brick piers.
  - e. The window in the addition would be a 3' by 5' two-over-two single-hung window.
- 2. The hyphen connecting the addition to the house would be located to the east of the wall section in which a window currently exists, thus enclosing the west half of the contemporary rear porch.
- 3. The elevations of the addition would appear as follows.
  - a. The north (rear) elevation would have a 3' by 5' two-over-two single-hung window.
  - b. The west elevation would be blank (i.e., without windows).
  - c. The east elevation would be blank (i.e., without windows).

**10. Applicant: Mitchell Construction LLC**

- a. Property Address: 18 S. Catherine Street
- b. Date of Approval: 10/17/2022
- c. Project: Repair rotten wood around existing window; retain window.

**11. Applicant: Dial Construction Inc.**

- a. Property Address: 153 S. Catherine Street
- b. Date of Approval: 10/18/2022
- c. Project: Replace damaged shingles on roof in-kind.  
Repair and replace rotten wood siding in-kind.  
Repair bases under front porch columns in-kind.  
Repaint house in-kind.

**12. Applicant: Bernhardt Roofing & General Construction LLC**

- a. Property Address: 1660 Virginia Street
- b. Date of Approval: 10/18/2022
- c. Project: Reroof with architectural shingles. Color: charcoal black  
Replace rotten fascia in-kind

**13. Applicant: City of Mobile**

- a. Property Address: 256 N. Joachim Street
- b. Date of Approval: 10/18/2022
- c. Project: Install 30'-high flagpole at niche on north side of house.

**14. Applicant: CDX 100 Property LLC**

- a. Property Address: 200 S. Washington Avenue
- b. Date of Approval: 10/18/2022
- c. Project: Reroof in-kind with shingles in charcoal color.

**15. Applicant: Noell Broughton**

- a. Property Address: 555 Dauphin Street
- b. Date of Approval: 10/21/2022
- c. Project: Install 2-sided 3'x1.5' hanging blade sign from canopy on north elevation.  
"Grace"

**16. Applicant: Jacob Williams**

- a. Property Address: 356 S. Broad Street
- b. Date of Approval: 10/24/2022
- c. Project: Reroof in-kind with asphalt-based shingles on northwest addition of dwelling.  
Repair and replace in-kind lapped siding on northwest corner of dwelling.

**C. APPLICATIONS**

**1. 2022-66-CA: 1007 Texas Street**

- a. Applicant: 195, LLC/ Cory Bronenkamp
- b. Project: Move existing shotgun type house from 1208 Congress Street to 1007 Texas Street

**APPROVED - CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED**

**2. 2022-67-CA: 302 S. Ann Street**

- a. Applicant: JL Property Investments, LLC/ John Turner
- b. Project: Replace two windows on rear elevation with vinyl windows

**APPROVED - CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED**

**3. 2022-68-CA: 934 Conti Street**

- a. Applicant: Douglas Kearley on behalf of Mark Fesperman
- b. Project: Construct new wood steps and canopy on west elevation of house

**APPROVED - CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED**

**4. 2022-69-CA: 50 Common Street**

- a. Applicant: Douglas Kearley on behalf of Steve May
- b. Project: Construct 20'x24' frame storage building in rear yard

**APPROVED - CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED**

**5. 2022-47-CA: NW corner of S. Claiborne and Canal streets**

- a. Applicant: Michael Cartoski on behalf of FD Stonewater/U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- b. Project: Full Approval: Construct 6-story office building and related site improvements

**APPROVED - CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED**

**D. OTHER BUSINESS**

1. The next ARB meeting is scheduled for November 16, 2022.

**Public comment** regarding items on this agenda will be accepted via e-mail ([christine.dawson@cityofmobile.org](mailto:christine.dawson@cityofmobile.org)) or USPS (Mobile Historic Development Commission, P.O. Box 1827, Mobile, AL 36633) until 5PM on Tuesday, November 1, 2022. Please include your name, home address, and the item number about which you are writing.

**APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**  
**CERTIFIED RECORD**

|                           |  |                        |                       |
|---------------------------|--|------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>ADDRESS</b>            | 1007 Texas St.   | <b>APPLICATION NO.</b> | 2022-66-CA            |
| <b>SUMMARY OF REQUEST</b> | Move existing shotgun house from 1208 Congress Street to vacant lot at 1007 Texas Street |                        |                       |
| <b>APPLICANT</b>          | Cory Bronenkamp  | <b>OWNER, IF OTHER</b> | Porchlight LLC (land) |

|                          |                 |                     |           |
|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------|
| <b>HISTORIC DISTRICT</b> | Oakleigh Garden | <b>MEETING DATE</b> | 11/2/2022 |
| <b>CLASSIFICATION</b>    | Vacant          | <b>REVIEWER</b>     | C. Dawson |

**DISTRICT/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 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-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 wood-frame shotgun type house proposed to be moved to 1007 Texas Street currently resides at 1208 Congress Street, which is not located within a historic district. The house was constructed c. 1900. The 1925 Sanborn map (the earliest available) shows a footprint similar to the one currently existing. At the time the map was prepared, shotgun houses were located to the immediate east, west, north, and south of 1208 Congress Street, and houses with larger footprints were located to the east on the north side of the block, west of Clay Street. Historic aerial photographs from 1952 and 1955 show the north and south sides of Congress between Calhoun and Clay to be well-populated with houses. However, by 1967, the south side of the street had been entirely cleared, as it remains today. At some point between 1967 and 1980 (the next available aerial photograph), the house at the northwest corner of Congress and Clay streets was removed, and the houses between that corner at 1208 Congress were removed between 1997 and 2004. The 2006 aerial photograph shows two new infill houses on those lots. The shotgun house adjacent to the west of 1208 Congress, as shown on the 1925 Sanborn map, is extant.

The vacant lot at 1007 Texas Street was part of a larger property until 1904, when it was conveyed to Lucy Layton. No house appears in this location on the 1904 Sanborn map. It is believed Layton constructed a one-story frame house with a shotgun footprint and full-width front porch between 1904 and 1925, as such a house appears on the Sanborn map of that year. The property was transferred at an unknown date between 1904 and 1993 to Josephine Farrell; no deed could be located for this transfer, and it is believed Farrell acquired the property as an heir of Layton. The building appears on aerial photographs through 1980. The next available aerial photograph was taken on 1997, and the building was no longer extant at that time. Therefore, the building was removed between 1980 and 1997.

The property at 1007 Texas Street has never previously appeared before the Architectural Review Board.

## **SCOPE OF WORK (per submitted application and communications):**

1. Move the frame shotgun house at 1208 Congress Street to the vacant lot at 1007 Texas Street, placing the structure 19' south of the Texas Street ROW and approximately 12' east of the western property line.
2. The building would be placed on a foundation of concrete block piers with cement parging and vertical wood slat infill. The foundation would be of the same height as existing in its current location (1208 Congress).
3. The existing windows, doors, and siding would be maintained.
  - a. The existing burglar door on the façade would be removed.
4. Paint the house (body: alabaster; trim: Benjamin Moore Revere Pewter; porch ceiling: sky blue).
5. Site Improvements
  - a. Install an approximate 12'-wide gravel driveway on the east side of the house, using the existing curb cut and apron for access from the street.
  - b. Install a concrete walkway between the sidewalk and front steps of the house.

## **STAFF REPORT**

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

1. Impact on the Street and District
  - “Consider the impact of removing the historic structure relative to its context.
  - Consider whether the building is part of an ensemble of historic buildings that create a neighborhood.” (12.0)
2. Nature of Proposed Development
  - “Consider the future utilization of the site.” (12.0)
3. Relocation Guidelines
  - New Location: “Consider whether or not a structure will be relocated within the same district and in a similar context. Relocation may be more appropriate when the receiving site is in the district. Relocated buildings shall be placed in situations that do not impair the architecture or the historic character of the surrounding buildings and district.”
  - Building Placement: “When relocating a building, maintain its general placement and orientation on the new site so as to maintain the architectural and historical character of the streetscape and district.
  - Where possible, relocate a building to a site that is similar in size as perceived from the street.” (12.0)
4. “Repair and, when necessary, replace piers, foundations, and foundation infill to reflect historic character.”
  - Maintain the original rhythm of a foundation.
  - Do not secure lattice to the face of the building.
  - If used, hang lattice below the skirt board or siding between piers and frame with trim.
  - Recess foundation screening from the front of the foundation piers.” (6.8)
5. “Visually connect the street and building.”
  - Maintain or install a walkway leading directly from the sidewalk to the main building entry.” (10.5)
6. “Minimize the visual impact of parking.”
  - Locate a parking area at the rear or to the side of a site whenever possible.

- 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.” (10.7)

## **B. Staff Analysis**

The subject property, 1007 Texas Street, is a vacant lot within the Oakleigh Garden Historic District. The application under review involves moving the house currently located at 1208 Congress Street to 1007 Texas Street and making site improvements.

The structure to be moved is not located in a historic district, though, if surveyed, it might be considered eligible for listing in the National Register as part of a district. Because the house will be removed from its original site, the end result for Congress Street is identical to a demolition. When demolition is considered, the *Guidelines* direct, “Consider the future utilization of the site” and, “Consider whether the building is part of an ensemble of historic buildings that create a neighborhood.” The subject block of Congress Street has experienced a high rate of building loss in the last 60 years, as only the subject house and its neighbor to the west are extant from the early twentieth century. The removal of the building would result in an empty lot (literal disinvestment). (A.1, 2)

Regarding the proposed new location for the house at 1007 Texas Street, the *Guidelines* state, “Consider whether or not a structure will be relocated within the same district and in a similar context. Relocation may be more appropriate when the receiving site is in the district. Relocated buildings shall be placed in situations that do not impair the architecture or the historic character of the surrounding buildings and district.” The application proposes to move the structure to a different neighborhood; however, the architectural context would be similar to the one from which the building would come, i.e., smaller frame single-family residences dating from the turn of the twentieth century, including an existing shotgun to the east (left) at the structure’s new location. The relocated building would blend well with the existing buildings on this stretch of Texas Street, even ostensibly duplicating the shotgun house formerly on the site. The submitted site plan shows it would be located approximately 19’ south of the Texas Street right-of-way (ROW), a significantly larger setback than the approximate 2’ the house currently sits north of the Congress Street ROW. However, the proposed setback negotiates the setbacks of nearby houses on Texas Street, including 1004 Texas (approximately 7.9’), 1005 Texas (approximately 21’), and 1006 Texas (approximately 10’) and 1009 Texas (approximately 20.9’). The proposed setback would be in conformance with the *Guidelines*, which encourage that relocated buildings maintain their general placement and orientation on the new site “so as to maintain the architectural and historical character of the streetscape and district.” (A.3)

A concrete walkway linking the front steps to the sidewalk would be installed, and a gravel driveway would be installed to the east of the house on its new site at 1007 Texas Street. Both the walkway and driveway would be created in accordance with the *Guidelines*. (A.5, 6)

## **C. Summary of Analysis**

- The house at 1208 Congress Street is not located in a historic district, though if surveyed, the area may retain sufficient material and design integrity to be listed in the National Register.
- The lot to which the shotgun house would be moved is currently vacant but formerly was the site of a similar shotgun type house.
- The proposed new foundation of the house is in conformance with the *Guidelines*.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Based on Section B above, Staff believes the proposed removal of the house at 1208 Congress Street would impair the architectural or historic character of that street, though it is not located in a designated historic district. However, Staff believes the placement of the house at 1007 Texas Street would not impair the architectural or historic character of the surrounding Oakleigh Garden District. Staff recommends approval of the application.

## **PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

Mr. Cory Bronenkamp was present to discuss the application. He stated that he had nothing to add.

## **BOARD DISCUSSION**

Mr. Rodrigues questioned if the dwelling has asbestos siding as it appears in the photos.

Mr. Bronenkamp responded that it does, and that any siding damaged in the move would be replaced with a comparable material which matches the existing.

## **FINDING OF FACT**

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

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

## **DECISION ON THE APPLICATION**

Mr. Roberts moved that, based on the facts approved by the Board, the removal of existing shotgun house from 1208 Congress Street and its replacement at the vacant lot at 1007 Texas Street would not impair the architectural or historic character of the surrounding district, and a Certificate of Appropriateness should be granted.

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



**APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**  
**CERTIFIED RECORD**

|                           |  |                        |            |
|---------------------------|--|------------------------|------------|
| <b>ADDRESS</b>            | 302 S. Ann Street  | <b>APPLICATION NO.</b> | 2022-67-CA |
| <b>SUMMARY OF REQUEST</b> | Replace two windows on rear elevation with vinyl windows |                        |            |
| <b>APPLICANT</b>          | JL Property Investments, LLC/ John Turner                | <b>OWNER, IF OTHER</b> |            |
| <b>HISTORIC DISTRICT</b>  | Leinkauf   | <b>MEETING DATE</b>    | 11/2/2022  |
| <b>CLASSIFICATION</b>     | Contributing   | <b>REVIEWER</b>        | C. Dawson  |

**DISTRICT/PROPERTY AND APPLICATION HISTORY**

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

Per the 2008 National Register district expansion documentation, the two-story, side-gabled apartment building was constructed in 1939. At the time of the district expansion, the building had six-over-six windows. A survey photo dated 1986 in the MHDC property file shows wood windows extant. There is no Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) on record for the installation of the currently existing six-over-six, six-over-one, and one-over-one vinyl windows, though they may have been installed in the period between the 1986 survey photo and the property's listing in the National Register.

According to the MHDC files, this property has not appeared previously before the Architectural Review Board (ARB).

**SCOPE OF WORK (per submitted application and communications)**

1. Remove two (paired) existing vinyl windows on the rear elevation and replace in-kind.

**STAFF REPORT**

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

1. Materials that are the same as the original, or that appear similar in texture, profile, and finish to the original are acceptable. These often include
  - Wood sash
  - Steel, if original to the structure
  - Custom extruded aluminum
  - Aluminum clad wood

Materials that do not appear similar to the original in texture, profile, and finish are unacceptable. These often include

- Vinyl
- Mill-finished aluminum

- Interior snap-in muntins (except when used in concert with exterior muntins and intervening dividers) (5.22)

### **B. Staff Analysis**

The subject property, 302 S. Ann Street, is a contributing property within the Leinkauf Historic District. The application under review involves the removal of two vinyl windows, which per the applicant were installed approximately twenty (20) years ago, and their replacement with vinyl one-over-one sashes to match existing.

When undertaking rehabilitation work on historic properties, the *Guidelines* emphasize matching replacement materials to the original materials in composition, scale, and finish and replacing missing historic windows on key walls with historically accurate replacements. (A.1) Unfortunately, when the windows were replaced at some unknown point in the past, none of these guidelines was observed.

Regardless of the material of the currently installed windows, the proposed installation of vinyl windows is not in conformance with the *Guidelines*, which state vinyl windows do not “appear similar in texture, profile, and finish to the original.” (A.1) The current owner’s desire to replace the vinyl windows offers a good opportunity to begin restoring the size, profile, and configuration, if not materials, of the historic windows lost approximately twenty years ago.

### **C. Summary of Analysis**

- The subject property is a Contributing element within the Leinkauf National Register Historic District.
- The application requests a COA to replace two existing vinyl windows on the rear of the building with vinyl windows to match the existing.
- The proposed windows do not conform to the *Guidelines*.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Based on Section B above, Staff believes the proposed replacement of two vinyl windows with vinyl windows would continue to impair the architectural and historic character of the subject property and the surrounding district. Staff recommends denial of the application.

### **PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

Mr. Christian Williams was present to discuss the application on behalf of the owner. He stated that the two windows in question are leaking and, therefore, the owner is looking for an immediate, if temporary, solution. He stated that vinyl windows are an immediate solution, whereas wood frame windows require a three to six months wait time.

### **BOARD DISCUSSION**

Mr. Roberts asked whether the Board hadn’t previously approved vinyl windows for rear elevations which are not visible to the street, and hadn’t a precedent for doing so already been established.

Ms. Dawson replied that Staff recommendations are based on the *Design Guidelines* and not precedent.

Mr. Blackwell commented that previous approvals of vinyl windows on rear elevations were granted to non-contributing structures, and the subject property is considered contributing.

Ms. Davis asked Mr. Williams if the vinyl replacement windows were going to be a temporary fix until windows of acceptable materials could be obtained.

Mr. Williams responded that yes, eventually acceptable windows would be obtained, but in the meantime the two windows in question are a problem.

Mr. Wagoner asked Mr. Williams, if time is the issue, if the two problem windows would be temporarily replaced with vinyl windows, then later all windows on the rear elevation, including the two being discussed today, would be replaced with wood windows?

Mr. Williams responded that this was correct.

Ms. Davis ask for confirmation that the vinyl windows were not a long-term solution.

Mr. Williams confirmed that they were not.

Mr. Wagoner stated that “temporary” needed to be defined.

Mr. Williams responded that six months would be an appropriate amount of time.

#### **FINDING OF FACT**

Mr. Blackwell moved that the Board amend the facts in the Staff’s report to include the statement that the replacement of the two rear windows are a temporary replacement of six months, after which the applicant will apply for a subsequent Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to replace the subject windows, along with all vinyl windows on the rear elevation, with a window material acceptable by the *Design Guidelines*.

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

#### **DECISION ON THE APPLICATION**

Mr. Blackwell moved that, based on the facts approved by the Board, and the temporary nature of the application, the replacement of two windows on the rear elevation with vinyl windows to match existing would not impair the architectural or historic character of the historic structure or of the surrounding district, and a Certificate of Appropriateness should be granted.

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

**APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**  
**CERTIFIED RECORD**

|                           |  |                        |                |
|---------------------------|--|------------------------|----------------|
| <b>ADDRESS</b>            | 934 Conti Street   | <b>APPLICATION NO.</b> | 2022-68-CA     |
| <b>SUMMARY OF REQUEST</b> | Repairs to exterior of the house; construction of new steps and canopy on west elevation |                        |                |
| <b>APPLICANT</b>          | Douglas Kearley  | <b>OWNER, IF OTHER</b> | Mark Fesperman |

|                          |                  |                     |            |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------|
| <b>HISTORIC DISTRICT</b> | Old Dauphin Way  | <b>MEETING DATE</b> | 11/02/2022 |
| <b>CLASSIFICATION</b>    | Non-contributing | <b>REVIEWER</b>     | A. 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 20<sup>th</sup>-century apartments.”

The subject lot is a narrow and deep lot fronting Conti Street. The 1904 Sanborn Map depicts 934 Conti abutting 15 Common Street at its north (rear) property line. Also represented on this overlay is a small rectangular one-story frame dwelling, orientated with the long side facing the street, with a front porch spanning the façade. The setback was quite deep, as the dwelling sat on the most northern (or rear) third of the lot. The 1925 Sanborn map shows the property truncated by approximately 42 feet on its north end to account for an additional lot created on Common Street (number 17) just south of 15 Common Street, which appears to have absorbed the small dwelling previously on 934 Conti. At this time, a one-story frame double residence had been constructed on the property. This structure was a double shotgun in form with a hipped roof and a single front porch spanning the southern façade. MHDC files document that this structure was damaged by fire in December 2004 and was subsequently demolished in 2005. The lot remained vacant until a structure formerly located at 1107 Springhill Avenue (not in a historic district) was relocated to the subject property in 2019. This frame dwelling is historic, also appearing on both the 1904 and 1925 Sanborn maps. It features a front-gabled front porch and an offset wing which was repositioned to the north (rear) elevation when the structure was moved to its present location.

According to the MHDC vertical files, this property has appeared before the Architectural Review Board (ARB) three times. In 2005 the ARB approved the demolition of the original dwelling on the property. In April 2019, an application for the relocation of the current house was approved in concept, and in June 2019, full approval was given for the relocation of the same house.

**SCOPE OF WORK (per submitted application and communication)**

1. Construct new steps and canopy on west elevation.
  - a. Steps and canopy would be associated with existing entry door located on the northernmost third of the elevation.
  - b. The canopy, steps, stoop, railing, and balustrade would be constructed of pressure treated wood. The stoop would be supported by brick piers.

- c. Four steps measuring 4'-0" wide would rise (from south to north) to a landing. The stoop would measure 4'-0" deep by 5'-0" wide. The balustrade would consist of two 6"x6" posts with post caps, hand rail, center rail, and toe rail. A railing would wrap around the west and north sides of the stoop with a third 6"x 6" post on the northwest corner of the stoop.
- d. The canopy would measure 9'-0" wide, stretching across the entry door and proposed steps. It would extend 4'-0" from the west wall and be supported by two equally spaced wood brackets. It would be painted to match the house.
2. Repairs to south façade, east, and west elevations.
  - a. On the south façade, the repairs proposed consist of the following:
    - Repair, replace (where necessary), and repaint in-kind the existing columns, windows, railings, door, and siding.
  - b. On all remaining elevations:
    - Repair and replace in-kind broken glass. Scrape, prime, and paint existing wood windows.
    - Repair and repaint in-kind existing wood siding.
3. Install foundation infill between existing brick piers.
  - a. The proposed foundation infill would be comprised of 1" by 2" pretreated vertical wood pickets installed at 3 ½" intervals and set between two 1" by 2" horizontal rails.

## STAFF REPORT

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

1. **6.28** Design exterior materials and finishes associated with additions and alterations to non-historic structures to be compatible with the historic district.
  - Use materials with a character compatible to those used historically and with proven durability.
  - Maintain original material wherever possible provided the material is durable and compatible with the surrounding historic district.
2. **6.30** Design a new porch or an alteration to an existing porch to respect the character of the district.
  - Locate and orient the new porch on a non-historic residential building similarly to those seen in the district.
  - Size a front porch element to be at a similar proportion to the original structure as those seen in the district.
3. **6.31** Design a foundation to be consistent with those in the district and use a durable foundation material on all sides of a building.
4. **6.32** Design details and ornamentation to minimize impacts to the historic district.
  - Design details and ornamentation at a scale that is consistent with details and ornamentation on historic buildings in the district.

### B. Staff Analysis

The application under review for 934 Conti Street proposes the construction of a new porch and stoop adjacent to an existing side entry on the west elevation of the dwelling, repairs to the exterior of the house, and the installation of foundation infill between existing brick foundation piers.

The proposed materials and finishes for the new steps and canopy are consistent with those used in the district. Likewise, the proposed design, size, and orientation of this addition respects the character of the subject house and is similar to porches and stoops seen in the district. (A.1, 2, 4).

With regard to the proposed repairs to the exterior of the house, all are in-kind repairs which respect the *Guidelines* by not altering the structure and preserving the original materials which are compatible with the surrounding district (A.1, 4).

With regard to the installation of foundation infill, vertical wood pickets are an acceptable foundation material used in Mobile's historic districts (A.3).

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Based on Section B above, Staff believes the construction of new steps and wood canopy adjacent to an existing side entry on the west elevation of the dwelling, repairs to the exterior of the house, and the installation of foundation infill would not impair the architectural and historic character of the surrounding district. Staff recommends approval of the application.

### **PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

Mr. Douglas Kearley was present to discuss the application. He stated that he had nothing to add.

### **BOARD DISCUSSION**

The Board had no questions or comments.

### **FINDING OF FACT**

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

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

### **DECISION ON THE APPLICATION**

Mr. Blackwell moved that, based on the facts approved by the Board, the construction of a new porch and stoop, repairs to the exterior of the house, and the installation of foundation infill between existing brick foundation piers at 934 Conti Street would not impair the architectural or historic character of the surrounding district, and a Certificate of Appropriateness should be granted.

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

**APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**  
**CERTIFIED RECORD**

|                           |  |                        |            |
|---------------------------|--|------------------------|------------|
| <b>ADDRESS</b>            | 50 Common Street                         | <b>APPLICATION NO.</b> | 2022-69-CA |
| <b>SUMMARY OF REQUEST</b> | Construction of a frame storage building |                        |            |
| <b>APPLICANT</b>          | Douglas B. Kearley                       | <b>OWNER, IF OTHER</b> | Steve May  |

|                          |                  |                     |            |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------|
| <b>HISTORIC DISTRICT</b> | Old Dauphin Way  | <b>MEETING DATE</b> | 11/02/2022 |
| <b>CLASSIFICATION</b>    | Non-contributing | <b>REVIEWER</b>     | A. 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 20<sup>th</sup>-century apartments.”

The subject lot fronts Common Street on the east and is bordered on the north and south by Caroline Avenue and Conti Street, respectively. The 1904 Sanborn map depicts a one-story frame dwelling on the property, almost square in form with a projecting rear wing on the north end of the west elevation and a rear porch on the south end. A small front porch is centered on the east façade. The 1925 overlay depicts the same structure, although it appears is has been divided into two residences, and the front porch has been removed. Aerial photography reveals that this structure remained extant through 1955 but was no longer on the lot in the subsequent photo taken in 1967. The lot remained vacant until 2019 when the current historic home was relocated to the property from 137 Tuscaloosa Street (outside of a historic district).

This property has appeared before the Architectural Review Board (ARB) three (3) times previously. In February 2019, an application was approved in concept to relocate a portion of a house dating from 1871 from 137 Tuscaloosa Street to the subject lot. This same proposal was approved in full in May 2019. In August 2019, the construction of a rear addition was approved.

**SCOPE OF WORK (per submitted application and communication)**

1. Construct a single-story wood frame accessory storage building.
  - a. The proposed structure would measure 24’-0” wide by 20’-0” deep. The end walls would measure 13’-10” tall from grade. The raised foundation would measure 2’-6” tall. The building would sit behind the primary structure, to the southwest on an empty lot which abuts the main lot. The façade would be oriented to Common Street (east).
  - b. The façade would be clad in sand finished stucco to match the house facade, with the north, south, and west elevations clad in wood or cement fiber lap siding. All fenestration, details and ornamentation would be wood, with many elements salvaged from the Hawthorne House (Stanton Road). The structure would sit on brick piers and be topped with a gable roof of dimensional fiberglass asphalt shingles.
  - c. The elevations would appear as follows:
    - 1) East façade (front):

A front porch measuring 6'-0" deep would span the width of the façade, supported by four (2) equally spaced salvaged Doric columns which would sit under a wood cornice. Two (2) site-built vertical-board barn doors would be centered on the façade, each measuring 3'-0" wide by 8'-0" tall. An 8" molded top baseboard would span the width of the front wall. Four (4) steps would be centered on the façade to provide access to the front porch.

2) West elevation (rear):

No fenestration is proposed for this elevation.

3) North and south elevation:

On both elevations, (1) six-over-six salvaged window measuring 3'-0" wide by 6'-6" tall, flanked by a pair of salvaged shutters, would sit just east of center on the elevation.

## STAFF REPORT

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

1. 9.1 Design an accessory structure to be subordinate in scale to that of the primary structure.
  - If a proposed accessory structure is larger than the size of typical historic accessory structures in the district, break up the mass of the larger structure into smaller modules that reflect traditional accessory structures.
2. 9.2 Locate a new accessory structure in line with other visible accessory structures in the district.

- These are traditionally located at the rear of a lot.

#### ACCEPTABLE ACCESSORY STRUCTURE MATERIALS

Materials that are compatible with the historic district in scale and character are acceptable. These often include:

- Wood frame
- Masonry
- Cement-based fiber siding
- Installations (Pre-made store-bought sheds, provided they are minimally visible from public areas)

#### UNACCEPTABLE ACCESSORY STRUCTURE MATERIALS

Materials that are not compatible with the historic district in scale and character are unacceptable. These often include:

- Metal (except for a greenhouse)
- Plastic (except for a greenhouse)
- Fiberglass (except for a greenhouse)

### B. Staff Analysis

The application under review proposes the construction of a one-story frame accessory storage structure at 50 Common Street. The *Design Review Guidelines* direct that certain items be taken into account with the installation of accessory structures within Mobile's historic districts. These include scale, location, and materials.

In regard to scale, the *Guidelines* state that accessory structures be subordinate in size to the main structure (A.1). The proposed storage building measures 24'-0" wide by 20'-0" deep, with a wall height 13'-10", making it considerably smaller in scale in comparison to the primary dwelling on the subject lot



which measures 44'-0" wide by 55'-6" deep. The proposed location for the structure at the rear of the property also complies with the *Guidelines*' directives (A.2).

In addition to these *Guidelines* specific to accessory structures, accessory structures are meant to adhere to guidelines set up for new residential construction in historic districts. Within this context, the proposed storage structure complies with the *Guidelines* all areas including placement and orientation, massing and scale, and materials and finishes.

### **C. Summary of Analysis**

- The application proposes the construction of a one-story frame storage structure at 50 Common Street.
- The proposed design falls within the *Guidelines*' directives in regard to scale, location, design, ornamentation, and materials.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Based on Section B above, Staff believes that the construction of a one-story frame storage structure would not impair the architectural or historic character of the surrounding district. Staff recommends approval of the application.

### **PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

Mr. Douglas Kearley was present to discuss the application. He stated that the columns being installed at the property were salvaged from the Hawthorne House on Stanton Road.

### **BOARD DISCUSSION**

The Board had no questions or comments.

### **FINDING OF FACT**

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

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

### **DECISION ON THE APPLICATION**

Mr. Blackwell moved that, based on the facts approved by the Board, the construction of a frame storage structure at 50 Common Street would not impair the architectural or historic character of the surrounding district, and a Certificate of Appropriateness should be granted.

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

**APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**  
**CERTIFIED RECORD**

|                           |  |                        |                       |
|---------------------------|--|------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>ADDRESS/PARCEL</b>     | R022906400013012   | <b>APPLICATION NO.</b> | 2022-47-CA            |
| <b>SUMMARY OF REQUEST</b> | Full Approval: Construct 6-story office building at northwest corner of Claiborne and Canal streets; site improvements |                        |                       |
| <b>APPLICANT</b>          | Michael Cartoski/FD Stonewater on behalf of USACE  | <b>OWNER, IF OTHER</b> | City of Mobile (land) |
| <b>HISTORIC DISTRICT</b>  | Church Street East   | <b>MEETING DATE</b>    | 11/2/2022             |
| <b>CLASSIFICATION</b>     | Vacant   | <b>REVIEWER</b>        | C. Dawson             |

**DISTRICT/PROPERTY AND APPLICATION HISTORY**

Church Street East Historic District was initially listed in the National Register in 1971 under Criteria A (historic significance) and C (architectural significance) for its local significance in the areas of architecture, education, and urban planning. The district is significant for its concentration of multiple 19<sup>th</sup> century architectural styles and because it encompasses the site of Mobile in the early 1700s. The district boundaries were expanded in 1984 and 2005.

The larger parcel of which the subject parcel was part, is occupied by the 1964 Civic Center, a complex composed of an arena, a theater, and an exposition hall. As shown on the 1876 Hopkins ward map of Mobile showing the area bounded by Church, Lawrence, Canal, and Claiborne streets - the land on which the Civic Center and associated parking now exist - was densely developed with residences. The 1885 Sanborn map illustrates only the far northwest corner of the current Civic Center property, showing an area densely populated with one-story frame dwellings, “tenements”, and “shanties.” A two-story brick stable with attached one-story brick barber shop is shown on Lawrence Street just north of the current location of Civic Center Drive. Two grocery stores, one at the northeast corner of Monroe and Lawrence and one at the southwest corner of Monroe and Hamilton, were recorded, and a saloon was placed at the southeast corner of Monroe and Lawrence.

The entire Civic Center area is illustrated on the 1891 Sanborn map, which continues to show a densely developed residential area. Interspersed with the mostly one-story frame houses of varying size were grocery stores, barber shops, an ice cream shop, retail stores, a fire station, a church, a saloon, and a restaurant. By the time the 1904 Sanborn map was prepared, more residences including more two-story dwellings were present, and the variety of businesses appears to have narrowed. A two-story frame residence with apparent bay window on its façade was shown at the northeast corner of Monroe and Franklin streets, and a two-story brick furniture store was at the opposite end of the block at the northwest corner of Monroe and Franklin streets. The neighborhood included a Chinese laundry, a barber, Bethel A.M.E. Church, and a furniture warehouse.

The 1924 Sanborn map, updated in 1955, shows a similar pattern with a few exceptions. A cinder block dwelling had been constructed at the southwest corner of Hamilton and Eslava streets at some point between 1924 and 1955, and a cinder block addition had been made to a frame house on Claiborne Street south of Monroe in the same period. The grocery stores and barbers seem to have disappeared, and the block bounded by Madison, Claiborne, Canal, and Franklin streets had been cleared for use as a “Public

Play Ground” complete with public restrooms. The two and one-half story brick Robert E. Lee Public School occupied the block bounded by Madison, Franklin, Hamilton, and Canal streets.

Available aerial photographs of the Civic Center area taken in 1938, 1952, 1955, and 1960 show essentially the same development as reflected in the 1924/1955 Sanborn map. By the time of the next available aerial photograph, 1967, more than seven blocks had been leveled to make way for the Civic Center. The only structure remaining was the public school bounded by Madison, Franklin, Hamilton, and Canal streets. The school disappeared by the time of the next available aerial photograph, taken in 1980.

Per the vertical files of the Historic Development Department, the larger parcel, of which the subject parcel was part until recently, has appeared four (4) times previously before the Architectural Review Board (ARB). In November 1983, the ARB approved placement of a commemorative plaque on a brick base at the corner of Claiborne Street and Auditorium Drive (now Civic Center Drive). The installation of a 100’ telecommunications tower and construction of a one-story 10’x16’ accessory structure on a small parcel to the immediate north of the subject parcel were approved by the ARB in July 1998. The ARB approved the construction of two steel and glass bus shelters located along the Lawrence Street side of the parcel was approved in October 2009. Most recently, the current applicant received approval in concept (square footage/footprint, height of the proposed building, height of the proposed fence, and proposed setbacks) on August 17, 2022.

#### **SCOPE OF WORK (per submitted application, *revised* plans, and communications)**

1. Construct 6-story office building at the southeast corner of the property.
  - a. The building footprint would measure 284’-1” along the Canal Street (south) elevation and 120’-0” along the Claiborne Street (east) elevation. The primary entrance would be located on the west side of the building in a cutout of the northwest corner creating an entry porch. The central bay on the east and west elevations would be recessed from the outermost plane of the elevation by approximately 10’.
  - b. The building would be approximately 86’ high with a central HVAC penthouse adding an additional 14’ in height. The first floor would be 16’ in height; the floor-to-floor height for the second to sixth floors would be 14’.
  - c. The lowest two stories (base) of the building would be clad in a light tan-colored brick laid in stretcher bond. The upper four stories would be constructed of 10’ precast architectural concrete, which would be painted a light color.
  - d. The windows and doors would be commercial coated aluminum.
  - e. The roof would be flat. The rooftop mechanical equipment would be enclosed by horizontal ribbed metal walls.
  - f. The windows would be placed to line up vertically and appear to span two stories (first and second, third and fourth, fifth and sixth) with painted concrete with formliner separating the two floors. The formliner would measure approximately 5’ high by 10’ wide.
    - 1) Windows on the first floor north, east, and south elevations and southern bay of the west elevation would be two-light fixed sashes measuring 3’ wide by approximately 9’ high.
    - 2) Windows on the second floor north, east, and south elevations and southern bay of the west elevation would be one-by-one fixed lights measuring 3’ wide by approximately 7’-6” high.
    - 3) Windows on the first and second floors at the western inset bay and entry cutout at the northwest corner would be full-height (two-story) fixed light curtain window walls with smaller “base” and “cap” lights.
    - 4) Windows on the upper four stories of the east and west elevations would be four-light fixed sashes measuring approximately 9’ square.

- 5) Windows on the upper four floors of the north and south elevations would be eight-light fixed sashes (with horizontal orientation) measuring approximately 9' square.
  - 6) Windows on the upper four stories would be shaded with horizontal (south elevation) and vertical (east and west elevations) sunshades protruding approximately 18" from the face of the building.
- g. The elevations would appear as follows.
- 1) West (façade)
    - a) Base (bottom two floors): pier supporting overhang; paired entry doors; full-height windows; pier supporting overhang; full-height windows; pier supporting overhang; recessed window bay at central third of elevation; four evenly spaced two-light windows
    - b) Upper four floors: one-by-one window; one-by-one window; recessed wall of windows at central third of elevation; one-by-one window; one-by-one window
    - c) The main entry would be accessed via a set of steps with ramp from an entry drive off Canal Street. The steps/ramp would measure approximately 35' wide and be protected by security bollards of as-yet unspecified design.
    - d) The front entry also would be accessed by a secondary ramp, running perpendicular from the parking garage walkway proposed for the north side of the building.
  - 2) South elevation
    - a) First floor: 16 full-height (2-story) curtain wall windows; single aluminum and glass storefront type door within central window bay; 16 full-height (2-story) curtain wall windows
    - b) Second floor: 16 full-height (2-story) curtain wall windows; central window bay; 16 full-height (2-story) curtain wall windows
    - c) Third through sixth floors: eight evenly spaced windows; central window bay; eight evenly spaced windows
  - 3) East elevation
    - a) First floor: four full-height (2-story) curtain wall windows; paired coated aluminum doors accessing loading area; four full-height (2-story) curtain wall windows
    - b) Second floor: four full-height (2-story) curtain wall window; central window bay; four full-height (2-story) curtain wall windows
    - c) Third through sixth floors: two evenly spaced windows: central window bay: two evenly spaced windows
  - 4) North elevation
    - a) First floor: 12 full-height (2-story) curtain wall windows; paired aluminum doors accessing maintenance yard; two full-height (2-story) curtain wall windows; single aluminum and glass storefront type door within central window bay; 12 full-height (2-story) curtain wall windows; three piers supporting overhang
    - b) Second floor: 16 full-height (2-story) curtain wall windows; central window bay; 12 full-height (2-story) curtain wall windows; three piers supporting overhang
    - c) Third through sixth floors: eight evenly spaced windows; central window bay; eight evenly spaced windows

## 2. Site Improvements

- a. Demolish existing brick wall at the northwest corner of Claiborne and Canal streets,

- and remove any existing trees on the site.
- b. Remove existing pylon sign.
- c. Raise grade 4' for flood protection.
- d. Install 8' high aluminum picket fencing around site perimeter. The building would be set back from the Canal Street and Claiborne Street rights-of-way (ROWS) by 50'.
- e. Construct 4' high retaining walls to enclose two low planters (one on either side of the entry steps on the west side of the building). The planting beds would measure approximately 60'x35' and 60'x70'. The materials have not been specified.
- f. Plant a tree allée along the northern side of the building, bordering a walkway from a parking garage that is not part of this project.
- g. Construct a mechanical equipment yard enclosure measuring 60' wide by 40' deep, approximately centered on the north elevation. The 8' high walls would be composed of a metal wall system with variegated surface (see the provided Morin product information) in a gray color to complement the other tones of the building.

## STAFF REPORT

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

1. 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.
  - 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. (7.30)
2. 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.
  - 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. (7.34)
3. 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. (7.35)
4. 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. (7.36)
5. Although imitation is discouraged, traditional façade and material patterns used in historic structures should inform the design of new commercial structures in locally-designated historic districts. Traditional multi-story commercial façade composition in Mobile features a clear differentiation between the street level and upper floors. The street level generally appears taller than other floors and has a high percentage of fixed plate glass with a small percentage of opaque framing materials, a bulkhead, and a recessed entry. An upper floor...is the reverse – opaque materials dominate, and windows appear as smaller openings punctuating a more solid wall. (7.0)
  6. Maintain the distinction between the street level and upper floor on multi-story structures.
    - Incorporate a high percentage of transparent glass into the first floor of the primary façade.
    - Design upper floors to appear more opaque than the street level.
    - Express the distinction in floor heights between street levels and upper levels through detailing, materials, and fenestration. The presence of a belt course is an important feature in this relationship.
    - Do not use highly reflective or darkly tinted glass. (7.40)
    - 76. Maintain the traditional spacing pattern created by upper story windows.
    - Use traditional proportions of windows, individually or in groups.
    - Maintain the traditional placement of window headers and sills relative to cornices and belt courses. (7.41)
  7. In order to assure that historic resources are appreciated as authentic contributing buildings, it is important that new buildings be distinguishable from them. Therefore, new construction should appear as a product of its own time, while also being compatible with the historically significant features of the area...Building materials and finishes for new structures...should contribute to the visual continuity of the district and appear similar to those seen traditionally. (7.0)
  8. Design a fence to be compatible with the architectural style of the house and existing fences in the neighborhood.
    - 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. (10.2)
  9. Acceptable Fence Materials: Materials that have a similar character, durability, and finish to those of fences of historic properties in the district are acceptable. These often include:
    - wood picket
    - wood slat
    - wood lattice
    - iron or steel
    - historically appropriate wire fences
    - aluminum that appears similar to iron

Unacceptable Fence Materials: Materials that do not have a similar character, durability, and finish to those of fences of historic properties in the district are unacceptable. These often

include:

- chain link
  - stockade
  - post and rail
  - Masonite
  - PVC
  - plywood or asbestos paneling
  - razor wire
  - barbed wire (10.3)
10. Visually connect the street and building.
- Maintain or install a walkway leading directly from the sidewalk to the main building entry. (10.5)

## **B. Staff Analysis**

The application under consideration is for full approval of the construction of a 6-story office building and site improvements at the southeast corner of what is known as the Civic Center site. The existing Civic Center buildings were considered Non-Contributing elements to the Church Street East district at the time of the last survey in 2005. The proposed site does not fall precisely into any of the commercial contexts (Main Street, Commercial Corridor, Interior Neighborhood) outlined in the *Guidelines*.

At the August 17, 2022 meeting, the ARB instructed the applicant to observe the suggestions made by Staff, which were, 1) create an entry (or the appearance of an entry) on the south side of the building, 2) incorporate recesses or projecting bays into the north and south elevations to alleviate their massive, monotonous appearance, and 3) provide proposed materials for windows, doors, exterior stairs/ramps, fencing, retaining walls, bollards, and mechanical equipment enclosures on the roof and ground and to provide details on exterior lighting. The ARB further advised the applicant to minimize the view of the proposed gym at the northwest entry, consider the effects of coal dust on the proposed building materials, and take advantage of the potential of the sunshades as a design element.

The revised design maintains the primary entry for the proposed new building on the west elevation, facing a new entry drive to the Civic Center site, not a public street. (A.1) However, in accordance with the Staff suggestion, an entry is proposed for the south elevation (facing Canal Street). No sidewalk is proposed from the door to Canal Street to visually connect the street and building (A.10) due to security concerns. An outdoor break area is proposed instead.

The design and scale of a commercial building also are key elements for compatibility with a surrounding historic district. The *Guidelines* again refer to “nearby historic structures,” which in this specific case do not exist. The *Guidelines* do, however, instruct, “Where the volume of new construction is larger than historic structures in the district, break down the massing into smaller components to increase compatibility.” This can be accomplished with the use of vertical and horizontal articulation and changes in color, texture, and materials. (A.2) The *Guidelines* further instruct that, “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.” (A.4) The design of the proposed office building incorporates inset notches on the east and west (short) elevations to break up their mass. The revised design incorporates full-height window bays at the center of the north and south elevations, which effectively created three bays where the original design consisted of long, monotonous north and south elevations. The design also calls for the use of brick veneer at the base (lowest two floors) of the building to differentiate it from the upper four floors.

The revised submission provides information on proposed materials, as required by the ARB. Windows and doors would be of commercial coated aluminum, a material permitted in Mobile's historic districts. Exterior stairs, ramps, and retaining walls would be of cement. The proposed fencing would be of aluminum, though its precise design has not been defined by the building user. The bollards to be located along the access drive perpendicular to Canal Street would be of stainless steel. The rooftop and north elevation mechanical enclosures would be of a metal wall system. The *Guidelines* direct that, "Building materials and finishes for new structures...should contribute to the visual continuity of the district and appear similar to those seen traditionally." (A.7) While metal walls are not traditionally seen in Mobile's historic districts, the building site is visually distant (more than 450' away) from the nearest historic building in the district; thus, there are no "nearby historic buildings" in the district to use as reference.

In response to an ARB concern, the revised design includes aluminum fins at the second-floor level of the northwest porch entry. This design element would serve to screen the view of the window wall, which was previously the location of a proposed employee gym. Per the applicant, the gym's location within the building has not been finalized.

The revised design echoes the 1947 Waterman Building's use of both horizontal and vertical sunshades, thus taking advantage of their design potential and offering passive protection from the sun's heat. Horizontal aluminum shades are proposed on the south elevation, and vertical shades are proposed on the east and west elevations.

### **C. Summary of Analysis**

- At their August 17, 2022 meeting, the ARB resolved to approve the proposed building in concept (to include the proposed square footage/footprint, six-story height of the building, height of the surrounding fence, and proposed setbacks). The applicant was advised to observe the Staff suggestions regarding revisions to the application, which were as follows.
  - Create an entry (or the appearance of an entry) on the south side of the building. Such a doorway might offer access to the broad grassy area along Canal Street for building users. Installation of a walkway from Canal Street to the entry on the south elevation, even if not in use, would visually connect the building to a public street.
  - Incorporate recesses or projecting bays into the north and south elevations to alleviate their massive, monotonous appearance.
  - Provide proposed materials for windows, doors, exterior stairs/ramps, fencing, retaining walls, bollards, and mechanical equipment enclosures on the roof and ground. Provide details on exterior lighting.
- The revised plans include a doorway centered on the south (Canal Street) elevation of the building, providing an entrance facing the public street.
- The revised plans break up the long south elevation with the insertion of a central glass bay running the height of the building, resulting in three bays where the previous plan provided one.
- The window, door, fencing, bollard mechanical equipment enclosures on the roof and north elevation materials have been specified.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff believes the revisions to the plans for a 6-story office building and related site improvements at the northwest corner of South Claiborne and Canal streets adequately address the suggestions of Staff and ARB direction. Staff further believes the proposed office building and site improvements other than fencing and lighting, would not impair the architectural or historic character of the surrounding district and recommends approval of the application, with the fencing and lighting designs to be submitted for review and approval separately.



## **PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

Mr. Michael Cartoski of FD Stonewater and Mr. Rich Van Zeyl of Wight Company were present to discuss the application.

Mr. Van Zeyl thanked the Design Review Committee for working to move the project forward, and for bringing to their attention the Waterman Building, which was used as a historic reference to direct the implementation of the suggestions made by Staff and the Board at the August 17<sup>th</sup> ARB meeting. He also noted that the central bay on the north and south elevations, composed of windows, would be used as employee lounges on each floor.

## **BOARD DISCUSSION**

Mr. Roberts commented that he loved the building design. He asked if the building's orientation would change at all as the parking garage comes to fruition and employees potentially having to walk a long distance from the garage to the building.

Mr. Van Zeyl replied that the building design would not change, that the entrance to the building is specifically placed with employees in mind.

Mr. Blackwell complimented the proposed design. He questioned the design of the fence, specifically the previously proposed design with the flared top, which he stated is unacceptable for the landscape. He also questioned the design for the proposed mechanical equipment enclosures on the roof and ground.

Mr. Wagoner stated that one of the Staff suggestions is that COA approval is contingent on fence, lighting and mechanical area design.

Ms. Dawson clarified that the applicant did submit designs for the mechanical area; that the fence and lighting designs are outstanding.

Mr. Van Zeyl produced the mechanical equipment enclosure designs for the Board's observation. He noted that the enclosure would be designed with an opaque material.

Mr. Blackwell stated that he had no objections to the mechanical area designs.

Mr. Rodrigues asked if the lighting and fencing designs would be reviewed for approval at a later date.

Mr. Wagoner stated that this is correct.

Mr. Wagoner added that he concurs with Mr. Blackwell's concerns about the flared fence designed. He stated that he understands the security concerns but that to other options need to be considered and that the historic district and context needs to be taken into consideration. He directed the designers' attention to the fencing at the FBI building in Mobile's downtown.

## **FINDING OF FACT**

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

The motion was seconded by Mr. Roberts and it was approved unanimously.

## **DECISION ON THE APPLICATION**

Mr. Blackwell moved that, based on the facts approved by the Board, the construction of a 6-story office building and site improvements at the southeast corner of what is known as the Civic Center site would not impair the architectural or historic character of the surrounding district, and a Certificate of Appropriateness should be granted, with fencing and lighting design to be reviewed under a separate Certificate of Appropriateness application.

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

## **D. OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Roberts requested that Staff visit the new construction at 280 Chatham Street in the Oakleigh Garden District to determine if it is being constructed per the design approved by the ARB. Ms. Dawson stated Staff would do so.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:51 p.m.