

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD MINUTES
January 16, 2013 – 3:00 P.M.
Pre-Council Chambers, Mobile Government Plaza, 205 Government Street

A. CALL TO ORDER

1. The Chair, Bradford Ladd, called the meeting to order at 3:00. Cart Blackwell, MHDC Staff, called the roll as follows:
Members Present: Nick Holmes III, Thomas Karwinski, Andrew Martin, Bradford Ladd, Craig Roberts, and Steve Stone.
Members Absent: Gertrude Baker, Kim Harden, Carolyn Hasser, Harris Oswalt, Jim Wagoner, and Janetta Whitt-Mitchell.
Staff Members Present: Devereaux Bemis, Cart Blackwell, and John Lawler.
2. After Board discussion the ruling on the application for 261 South Georgia Avenue, Mr. Roberts moved to approve the minutes of the January 2, 2013 meeting. The motion received a second and passed unanimously.
3. Mr. Karwinski moved to approve the midmonth COA's granted by Staff. The motion received a second and passed unanimously.

B. MID MONTH APPROVALS: APPROVED.

1. **Applicant: Michael Lord**
 - a. Property Address: 1352 Old Shell Road
 - b. Date of Approval: 12/19/12
 - c. Project: Repair windows to match the original in profile, dimension and materials.
2. **Applicant: Bryan Wiggins**
 - a. Property Address: 163 South Jefferson Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 12/31/12
 - c. Project: Reconstruct a picket fence on the same location and according to the same design as an earlier fence.
3. **Applicant: Mark Dodson**
 - a. Property Address: 165 Hannon Avenue
 - b. Date of Approval: 1/2/13
 - c. Project: Replace rotten wood and paint gray to match.
4. **Applicant: Sally M. Bachran and George M. Penados**
 - a. Property Address: 1159 Texas Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 1/3/13
 - c. Project: Level and re-point the foundation piers. Repair and/or replace deteriorated wooden siding to match the existing in profile, dimension, and material. Repair and when necessary replace any deteriorated woodwork to match the existing. Repair the damaged roof and windows to match the existing in kind. Install plywood over the exposed rear wall until this first phase of the building's restoration is completed. At that point, a plan for new rear elevation will appear before the Board.
5. **Applicant: Douglas B. Kearley for John Schley Rutherford**
 - a. Property Address: 201 North Conception Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 1/3/13

c. Project: Install a temporary chain link fence around portions of the property for the duration of the house's restoration. If the restoration exceeds 31 December 2013, the CoA will be have to be renewed.

6. Applicant: Katherine Whitely

- a. Property Address: 106 South Catherine Street
- b. Date of Approval: 1/4/13
- c. Project: Repaint the house and paint the new carport per the submitted Sherwin Williams color scheme: the body will be Quiver Tan; the door and window trim will be Red Cent; the columns, rafter tails, windows, and other doors will be Panda White; and the porch floor will be Relaxed Khaki.

7. Applicant: Bobby Gipson

- a. Property Address: 250 Dexter Avenue
- b. Date of Approval: 1/3/13
- c. Project: Replace rotten wood to match, repaint house in BLP colors--Body Government Street Olive; Trim DeTonti Off White; porch deck Bellingrath Green. Repair rotten rear deck. Replace two sills on south elevation.

8. Applicant: Do Right Construction for Ms. Maggie Crawford

- a. Property Address: 104 North Julia Street
- b. Date of Approval: 1/4/13
- c. Project: Repair any deteriorated woodwork to match the existing in profile, dimension, and material. Repaint per the existing color scheme.

C. APPLICATIONS

1. 2013-05-CA: 701 Spring Hill Avenue

- a. Applicant: Benjamin Cummings for Wendell Quimby
- b. Project: Approval of Altered Plans – Approve altered fenestration.
APPROVED. CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED.

2. 2013-06-CA: 202 Government Street

- a. Applicant: Angie Odom for the Red Square Agency
- b. Project: Install a new garage door in Government St. façade
APPROVED BY SPECIAL COMMITTEE. CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED.

3. 2013-07-CA: 50-52 North Georgia Avenue

- a. Applicant: Jennifer Bexley
- b. Project: After-the-Fact-Approval – Retain two doors.
DENIED. CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED.

D. OTHER BUSINESS

- 1. Discussion

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

2012-05-CA: 701 Spring Hill Avenue
Applicant: Benjamin Cummings for Wendell Quimby
Received: 12/28/12
Meeting: 1/16/12

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Lower Dauphin Commercial
Classification: Contributing
Zoning: B-4
Project: Approval of Altered Plans – Approve altered fenestration.

BUILDING HISTORY

This multi building complex occupies a triangular block bound by Spring Hill Avenue, Washington Street, Dauphin Street, and Scott Street. The address first appears in the City Directories in 1947; therefore the building dates from circa 1946. The single-story Flat Iron-like building features a streamlined rounded-corner entrance.

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. This building last appeared before the Architectural Review Board on June 6, 2012. At that time, the Board approved the exterior restoration and renovation of the empty unit. Changes were made to the building during the process of the renovation. The changes differ from the approved scope of work. This application calls for approval of altered access and fenestration.
- B. The Design Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts state, in pertinent part:
 - 1. “Often one of the most important decorative features of a house, doorways reflect the age and style of a building. 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. “The type, size and dividing lights of windows and their location and configuration (rhythm) on the building help establish the historic character of a building. Original windows openings should be retained as well as original window sashes and glazing.”
 - 3. “Where windows cannot be repaired, new windows must be compatible to the existing. The size and placement of new windows for additions or alterations should be compatible with the general character of the building.”
 - 4. “Wood and metal garage doors should be simple in design compatible with the main building.”
- C. Scope of Work (per submitted drawings and explications):
 - 1. Approve alterations to approved plans.
 - a. Retain the main entrance’s glazed and paneled door. A single-light door had been approved.

- b. Retain the two windows located to the north of the main entrance. Four windows had been approved.
- c. Retain a tripartite window grouping on the North Elevation. A pair of windows had been approved. An existing beam prevented its construction.
- d. Retain the handicap access as constructed. The grade was changed thereby making a handrail unnecessary.
- e. Retain altered bays on the South Elevations. The altered sequence reflects original bay breaks as discovered during the renovations.
- f. A board and batten partition will not be constructed in the North Elevation's northernmost vehicular bay.

STAFF ANALYSIS

This application involves the approval of altered plans. Changes were made as the building was being renovated. Some of the changes reflect construction-related discoveries pertaining to the structural fabric of the building. Other changes were motivated by aesthetic concerns.

The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile's Historic Districts state that replacement doors should respect the age and style of the building (See B-1) and complement the design. The door design was altered so that the solid expanse of the paneling would align with the wooden paneling located beneath the flanking fenestration.

The Design Review Guidelines state that the location and configuration of windows on the building help establish the historic character (See B-2). Alterations should be compatible with the general character of the building (See B-3). The placement and spacing of windows was altered on account of the discoveries of a previously unknown pier that determined the original placement of fenestration as well as the consideration of how one bank of windows would relate to the others. The ribbon-like arrangement has remained the same.

As a consequence of changing the grade of the sidewalk and by installing landscaping, the handicap access ramp was not installed.

The existing vehicular gates were retained; therefore, the board-and-batten partitions that were initially proposed were not constructed.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on B (1-4), Staff does not believe this application will impair the approved architectural or historical character of the building. Staff recommends approval of this application.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Ben Cummings was present to discuss the application.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The Board discussion took place concurrently with the public testimony. Mr. Ladd welcomed the applicant's representative. He asked Mr. Cummings if he had any clarifications to address, comments to make, or questions to ask.

Mr. Cummings explained the historical and aesthetic reasons behind the alterations. He stated that the ramp and handrail were not constructed because the sidewalk grade had been changed. Mr. Cummings then said that one of the bank of windows located to either side of the door that had been drawn narrower in the plans and that as constructed it had been widened to match windows located nearby. Another fenestrated expanse had deviated from the approved plans on account of a construction related discovery, that a pier depicted in the plans was not original to the building. The aforementioned pier was not constructed. Mr. Cummings stated that as constructed, the present pier spacing replicates the original bay divisions.

Mr. Ladd thanked Mr. Cummings. He asked his fellow Board members if they had any questions to ask the applicant's representative.

Mr. Karwinski stated two other changes were not addressed in the application or the Staff Report, but should be noted. The awning located above the main entrance and those extending over the re-exposed window bays had been altered. Mr. Karwinski added that a mechanical device attached to the South Elevation constituted the other change. He said that while these alterations were reversible and did not affect the approval.

Mr. Karwinski said that given the street side location of the mechanical device, it would be less noticeable if it was painted. He asked Mr. Cummings if the mechanical device could be painted. Mr. Cummings answered yes. Mr. Roberts agreed with Mr. Karwinski.

Mr. Ladd asked if any other Board members had any questions to ask the applicant's representative. No further Board discussion ensued.

Mr. Ladd asked if there was anyone from the audience who wished to speak either for or against the application. Upon hearing no response, Mr. Ladd closed the period of public comment.

FINDING OF FACT

Mr. Holmes 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

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

The motion received a second and was unanimously approved.

Certificate of Appropriateness Expiration Date: 1/16/14

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

2013-06-CA: 202 Government Street
Applicant: Red Square Agency
Received: 12/31/12
Meeting: 1/16/12

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Lower Dauphin Commercial
Classification: Non-Contributing
Zoning: B-4
Project: Install a new garage door.

BUILDING HISTORY

According to previous notations in this property's MHDC file, this mid 20th-Century original housed the Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph office. The building has undergone numerous alterations since its construction.

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. This building last appeared before the Architectural Review Board on March 6, 2008. At that time, the Board approved the installation of new signage.
- B. The Design Guidelines for Mobile's Historic Districts and Government Street state, in pertinent part:
 - 1. "Wood and metal garage doors should be simple in design and compatible with the main building."
- C. Scope of Work (per submitted plans and photographs):
 - 1. Remove the existing gate/grille from the South Elevation's vehicular bay.
 - 2. Install a new garage door in the same location.

STAFF ANALYSIS

This application involves the removal and replacement of a vehicular door. The existing garage door facing Government Street was approved on December 3, 2007. The Design Review Guidelines state that garage doors should be simple in design and compatible with the main building (See B-1).

Although the building is non-contributing this type of request creates concern. The current style of the building uses historicized detailing to create the appearance of an older structure. The installation of the very modern door is out of character with the current design of the building. Staff believes this creates a dichotomy that draws attention to a modern garage door which is generally inappropriate in style for the building.

Reviewing the illustration sent by the applicant, the folding garage doors on the right are more in keeping with the doors and window on the façade. Since the owners have expressed a desire for more light the upper panel (below the transom) could be replaced with glass, frosted in required. These would be more appropriate to the look of the building and not be as jarring on Government Street as the proposed door.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on B (1), Staff believes that this application impairs the historical character of the neighborhood and suggests the folding garage doors with glass in place of the long panels would be a better solution. Staff recommends the application not be approved, and encourages the applicant to consider the aforementioned suggestion regarding the substitute design.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Angie Odom was present to discuss the application.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The Board discussion took place concurrently with the public testimony. Mr. Ladd welcomed the applicant's representative. He asked Ms. Odom if she had any clarifications to address, comments to make, or questions to ask.

Ms. Odom first addressed code-related concerns. She explained to the Board that the sizes and type of glass had affected how the design could be constructed. Ms. Odom mentioned that monetary concerns also factored into the selection of materials and the manner of construction. She closed by saying that the design would meet the code requirements.

Mr. Holmes asked for additional clarification regarding code-related concerns. Ms. Odom clarified Mr. Holmes query.

Mr. Stone asked Ms. Odom what materials would be used and how the door would be constructed. Ms. Odom responded by saying that a wooden door was proposed. Regarding the construction, she said the horizontal divisions would continue the lines of the adjacent fenestration.

Mr. Karwinski distributed to his fellow Board members and Ms. Odom a rendering he had executed of the entrance proposed for alteration. He noted that the drawing submitted for review depicted an opening whose head height was higher than the adjacent openings. Mr. Karwinski stated that in actuality the heights of the building's ground floor fenestration aligned. He said that taking into account the height of the opening would change the appearance of the garage door.

Mr. Martin asked Ms. Odom if the height of the opening would change. Ms. Odom answered no and added that the proportions of the panels could be adjusted so that they still aligned with adjacent horizontal registers.

Mr. Karwinski and Mr. Roberts entered into a discussion regarding the scale, proportions, and finish of the garage door.

Mr. Ladd asked if anyone from the audience wished to speak either for or against the application. Upon hearing no response Mr. Ladd closed the period of public comment.

FINDING OF FACT

Mr. Roberts moved that, based upon the evidence presented in the application and during the public testimony, the Board finds the facts in the Staff report, amending facts to note that the door would be located within the existing 10' high opening and that panel configuration would reflect adjacent fenestration.

The motion received a second and was unanimously approved.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Mr. Roberts moved that, based upon the facts as amended by the Board, the application is incomplete and that it be subject to review by three Board members (Mr. Karwinski, Mr. Roberts, and Mr. Martin) who will review the revised drawing and determine whether the historic integrity of the district is affected. Upon review and approval of the revised drawing by said committee, a Certificate of Appropriateness could then be issued.

*On January 17, 2013, the applicant's representative submitted revised drawings that accurately depicted the height and the design of the proposed scope of work. The Board authorized committee reviewed and approved the plan.

Certificate of Appropriateness Expiration Date: 1/17/14

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

2013-03-CA: 50-52 North Georgia Avenue
Applicant: Jennifer Bexley
Received: 12/10/12 (Held over at the applicant's request from the 1/2/13 meeting)
Meeting: 1/16/13

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Old Dauphin Way
Classification: Non-Contributing
Zoning: R-1
Project: After-the-Fact-Approval – Retain two doors.

BUILDING HISTORY

This brick duplex 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. This property has never appeared before the Architectural Review Board. The application was scheduled for review at the January 2, 2013. At the request of the applicant, review of the application was held over for the present meeting. The application calls for the after-the-fact-approval of two doors. The doors were installed without the issuance of Certificate of Appropriateness. A 311 call was made and Staff responded. The applicants appear before the Board with a request to retain the doors.
- B. The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile's Historic Districts state, in pertinent part:
 - 1. “Often one of the most important decorative features of a house, doorways reflect the age and style of a building. 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. With regard to materials, metal is listed as inappropriate.
- C. Scope of Work (per submitted site plan):
 - 1. Retain two metal doors located on the duplex's west-facing façade.

STAFF ANALYSIS

This application involves the after-the-fact-approval of two doors. The doors were installed without the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness. The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile's Historic Districts state that original doors should be retained and that replacement doors should respect the age and style of the building (See B-1).The wooden doors featured a chamfered vertical treatment and a staggered

light treatment. The replacement doors are metal in composition. The Design Review Guidelines list metal as an inappropriate material (See B-2). Staff recommends that the applicant install doors that are more in keeping the historic character of the building.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on B (1-2), Staff believes this application impairs the historical character of the district. Staff does not recommend approval of this application.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Jennifer Bexley was present to discuss the application.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The Board discussion took place concurrently with the public testimony. Mr. Ladd welcomed the applicant. He asked Ms. Bexley if she had any clarifications to address, comments to make, or questions to ask.

Ms. Bexley addressed the Board. She explained that her employer owns the building. Ms. Bexley said that he owns several rental properties and that this application represented his first encounter with the Architectural Review. She told the Board that when the property was first purchased she was unaware that the building was located in a locally designated historic district and therefore subject to the jurisdiction of the Architectural Review Board.

Mr. Roberts interjected by asking if a building permit had been pulled for the work. Ms. Bexley said that to her knowledge no. Mr. Roberts said that if a building permit had been pulled she, the owner, or any other representative would have been notified of the property's inclusion within a historic district.

Ms. Bexley told the Board that while the original doors had not been discarded, they were rotten and posed a safety concern. She said that on North Georgia Avenue alone, two similar doors could be seen.

Mr. Roberts asked Staff if allowances could be made for a contributing building. Mr. Blackwell stated that fiberglass doors had been approved on non-contributing building during their last meeting. He added that metal doors had been approved on commercial and institutional buildings. Mr. Blackwell alluded to the Design Review Guidelines. Mr. Bemis reiterated that Guidelines which list metal as inappropriate material for doors located on historic buildings and if and when the Old Dauphin Way Historic Building was resurveyed the subject building would be listed as a contributing building.

Mr. Ladd asked Ms. Bexley if she had priced wooden replacement doors. Ms. Bexley responded by saying that she had not done so initially, but upon speaking with Mr. Blackwell she had begun investigations. She added that had stopped her inquiries in the hope that application might be approved. She asked for guidance.

Mr. Karwinski said that it was his opinion that the design of the door was less an issue than the material. He stated that wood doors were more appropriate for buildings located within historic districts.

Mr. Holmes and Mr. Karwinski recommended local distributors to me Ms. Bexley.

Mr. Holmes said that a door that reflects the period of construction would be appropriate. He added that it need not necessarily replicate the original

.

FINDING OF FACT

Mr. Roberts 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

Mr. Roberts moved that, based upon the facts as approved by the Board, the application does impair the historic integrity of the district or the building and that a Certificate of Appropriateness be issued and that the applicant reappear before the Board with a revised application within a six week period (not later than March 15th)

The motion received a second and was unanimously approved.