

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD MINUTES
May 2, 2012 – 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: Gertrude Baker, Kim Harden, Nick Holmes, III, Thomas Karwinski, Bradford Ladd, Harris Oswalt, Craig Roberts, and Jim Wagoner.
Members Absent: Carlos Gant and Janetta Whitt-Mitchell.
Staff Members Present: Devereaux Bemis, Cart Blackwell, Keri Coumanis, and John Lawler.
2. Harris Oswalt moved to approve the minutes of the April 18, 2012 meeting. The motion received a second and passed unanimously.
3. Thomas 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: Robert Spotswood**
 - a. Property Address: 102 Espejo Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 4/11/12
 - c. Project: Repair porch decking, railings, and woodwork to match the existing in profile, dimension, and material. Touch up the paint per the existing color scheme.
2. **Applicant: Sara McCoy**
 - a. Property Address: 1401 Dauphin Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 4/12/12
 - c. Project: Paint the house per the submitted color scheme. The stucco fill within the half timbered gables will be Benjamin Moore's Arcadia White. The half timbering will be Devoe's Tumbleweed Trail. The windows will be Benjamin Moore's Rustic Taupe. The window sills will be Devoe's Tumbleweed Trail. The front door will be Devoe's Ivory Sand.
3. **Applicant: Renee Richard**
 - a. Property Address: 18 South Monterey Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 4/13/12
 - c. Project: Install a home generator approximately 3' x 5' behind house. The generator will not be visible from the public view.
4. **Applicant: TLC Contractors**
 - a. Property Address: 358 Tuttle Avenue
 - b. Date of Approval: 4/16/12
 - c. Project: Reroof the house to match the existing.
5. **Applicant: Zach Depolo**
 - a. Property Address: 560 Dauphin Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 4/17/12
 - c. Project: Extend an existing eight foot wooden fence to square off the lot line of this inner lot property. Repair and install ten feet of paving located off the rear elevation.
6. **Applicant: Holmes and Holmes Architects**
 - a. Property Address: 257 North Conception Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 4/17/12
 - c. Project: Repair and replace deteriorated when and where necessary to match the existing in profile, dimension, and material. Touch up the color scheme per the existing.

7. **Applicant: Linda Clements**
 - a. Property Address: 161 South Jefferson Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 4/18/12
 - c. Project: Repair and replace deteriorated woodwork, decking, and siding to match the existing in profile, dimension, and material. Repair window components to match the existing. Repaint per the existing color scheme.
8. **Applicant: John Parker with Bay Landscaping**
 - a. Property Address: 1550 Eslava Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 4/18/12
 - c. Project: Repair concrete paving in the drive and sidewalk to match the existing in material and composition.
9. **Applicant: John Van Hook**
 - a. Property Address: 1509 Monroe Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 4/23/12
 - c. Project: Construct a privacy fence along the east property line. The fence will step up in height from 3' to 6' as it transitions into the back lot.
10. **Applicant: Joseph Jones**
 - a. Property Address: 206 Tuttle Avenue
 - b. Date of Approval: 4/23/12
 - c. Project: Pave driveway between strips to conform to existing footprint.
11. **Applicant: Larry Harris**
 - a. Property Address: 108 Hannon Avenue
 - b. Date of Approval: 4/18/12
 - c. Project: Replace front and rear doors to match with wood, patch roof leaks. Replace sewer line.
12. **Applicant: David McConnell**
 - a. Property Address: 303 North Jackson Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 4/18/12
 - c. Project: Paint the existing picket fencing. Install gates to match.

C. APPLICATIONS

1. **2012-28-CA: 1104 Palmetto Street**
 - a. Applicant: Jeff Garret and Thor Cumbie
 - b. Project: Construct an Addition – Construct a new rear porch on the location of an existing porch and deck.
APPROVED. CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED.
2. **2012-29-CA: 1050 Palmetto Street**
 - a. Applicant: Jonathan Boyer with Weather Guard for Edgar Hughes
 - b. Project: Roofing - Install metal roofing atop the main house and an ancillary structure.
APPROVED AS AMENDED. CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED.
3. **2012-30-CA: 255 Church Street**
 - a. Applicant: Orin Robinson with Victor Signs for the Quality Inn
 - b. Project: Signage – Remove and install signage.
APPROVED AS AMENDED. CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED.
4. **2012-31-CA: 1551 Old Shell Road (Catherine Street property subdivided from)**
 - a. Applicant: Dawn Crow with Brown Chambless Architects for Dr. Philip Buttera
 - b. Project: Signage and Landscaping – Install signage and landscaping.
APPROVED AS AMENDED. CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED.

5. 2012-32-CA: 61 South Conception Street

- a. Applicant: Beverly Terry with Clark, Geer, Latham & Associates for Celia Wallace
- b. Project: Redevelopment - Construct a parking lot and install landscaping.

APPROVED AS AMENDED. CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED.

6. 2012-33-CA: 109 Bradford Avenue

- a. Applicant: Murray Thames with Thames Contractor, Inc for L'Arche
- b. Project: Replace Windows – Remove unauthorized, nonconforming windows and install new replacement windows.

APPROVED IN PART AND DENIED IN PART. CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED.

D. OTHER BUSINESS

- 1. Window Replacements.
- 2. Discussion.

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

2012-28-CA: 1104 Palmetto Street
Applicant: Jeff Garrett and Thor Cumbie
Received: 4/18/12
Meeting: 5/2/12

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Oakleigh Garden
Classification: Contributing
Zoning: R-1
Project: Construct an Addition – Construct a new rear porch on the location of an existing porch and deck.

BUILDING HISTORY

The exact date of this house is unknown. This property and the two adjacent properties to the west (numbers 1106 and 1108 Palmetto Street) occupy the rear portion of the Old Edwards Place. Featuring a sizable house facing Church Street, the Edwards Place extended the whole depth of the block. The property was subdivided in the early 20th Century. The current dwelling is not recorded on this lot until 1927. Based on the proportions and construction, it has been suggested that the house was constructed prior to 1927 and was moved to this lot from another location. The house features both Queen Anne and Arts & Crafts detailing.

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 last appeared before the Architectural Review Board on April 2, 1990. At that time, the Board approved the painting of the residence. This application calls for the removal of the existing rear porch & deck and the construction of a new rear porch.
- B. The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts and the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards state, in pertinent part:
 - 1. “The porch is an important regional characteristic of Mobile architecture. Historic porches should be maintained and repaired to reflect their period.”
 - 2. “The form and shape of the porch and its roof should maintain their historic appearance. Materials should blend with the style of the building.”
 - 3. “New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.”

4. “New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.”

C. Scope of Work:

1. Remove the rear porch and deck.
2. Construct a new rear porch.
 - a. The 16’ deep porch will extend the length of the rear elevation.
 - b. The three by two bay porch will rest atop brick foundation piers matching those supporting the main house. Said piers will be painted to match the existing.
 - c. Framed, suspended, and recessed lattice screening will be installed between the piers. Said wooden screening will be painted to match the existing.
 - d. The porch’s wooden skirt board will align with the skirt surrounding the body of the main house.
 - e. The porch will feature wooden decking.
 - f. With regard to the three bay North (Rear) Elevation, four square section wooden porch posts featuring rectilinear bases and capitals will demarcate the porch bays.
 - g. Tripartite vertical divisions will be created within the outer North Elevation’s outer bays by way of wooden framing securing the porch screening. A horizontal division will be provided by the top rail of an open balustrade.
 - h. The two bay East and West (Side) Elevations will feature subsidiary divisions matching those employed on the North Elevation.
 - i. A screened double door will be located within the North Elevation’s central bay.
 - j. The taller outer bays will feature a two part entablature.
 - k. The porch will feature a three part roof structure.
 - l. The North Elevation’s central bay will be surmounted by a shed roof. The gables of the flanking outer bays will feature vertical board siding matching that employed on the rear elevation’s existing central gable.
 - m. The roofing shingles will match those employed on the body of the house.
 - n. The woodwork and decking will be painted to match the existing color scheme.

STAFF CLARIFICATIONS

3. What type decking will be employed?

STAFF ANALYSIS

This application involves the construction of a new rear porch. The construction of the proposed rear addition would entail the demolition of the existing rear porch and a later deck. The existing rear porch is original to the house, but it is of little architectural significance.

The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts state that porches are defining regional characteristic of Mobile architecture and that they should be maintained and repaired to reflect their period. (See B (1) of the Staff Report.) The Guidelines address front porches and significant rear porches. Architecturally insignificant, small scale porches like the existing have regularly been approved for demolition. Location and proposed new construction are taken into account.

The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Historic Rehabilitation state that additions to historic buildings should be differentiated from yet compatible with existing fabric with regard to massing, scale, and architectural features. (See B (3) of the Staff Report.)

Located off the rear elevation of this inner lot house, the proposed porch would be minimally visible from the public view. The foundation treatment, gable facing, color scheme, and roof sheathing would match that of the main house; thereby providing continuity between the old and the new. The proposed porch's north facing gabled ends would provide a sense of differentiation from the east-west facing gable that surmounts the body of the house. These smaller porch gables appear to successfully negotiate the rear elevations central gable.

STAFF REQUESTS/CLARIFICATIONS

1. Staff requests further clarification regarding the relationship between the proposed porch's roof structure and the rear elevation's prominent gabled dormer.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on B (1-4), Staff does not believe this application will impair the architectural or the historical character of the building or the district. Pending details and/or clarification regarding the relationship between the additions proposed gabled end pavilions and the Rear Elevation's existing windowed roof gable, Staff recommends approval of this application.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Jeff Garrett 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 Mr. Garrett if he had any comments to make, questions to ask, or clarifications to address. Mr. Garrett answered no.

Mr. Ladd thanked Mr. Garrett for addressing the Staff Clarifications.

Addressing his fellow Board members, he asked them if they had any questions which to ask the applicant. No questions 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, he closed the period of public comment.

FINDING OF FACT

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

The motion received a second and was unanimously approved.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

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: 5/2/13

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

2012-29-CA: 1050 Palmetto Street
Applicant: Edgar Hughes
Received: 4/16/12
Meeting: 5/2/12

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Oakleigh Garden
Classification: Contributing
Zoning: R-1
Project: Roofing - Install a metal roof atop the main house and an ancillary building.

BUILDING HISTORY

This center hall house features a full-length gallery and recessed side wing. The 1884 corner lot dwelling was the first residence constructed on this block. Located caddy-corner to Washington Square, the Italianate styled dwelling adopts a traditional Gulf Coast plan.

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 last appeared before the Architectural Review Board on October 16, 1990. At that time, the Board approved the construction of a two-story garage. This application calls for installation of metal roofing on the house and the garage.
- B. The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts state, in pertinent part:
 - 1. “A roof is one of the most dominant features of a building. Original or historic roof forms, as well as the original pitch of the roof should be maintained. Materials should be appropriate to the form and pitch and color.”
- C. Scope of Work:
 - 1. Install a metal roofing system (per submitted plans and materials).
 - a. The rib panel style will be Galvalume (a silver aluminum color).
 - b. The roofing system will feature accompanying flashing.
 - c. Any rotten roof decking will be replaced when and where necessary.

STAFF ANALYSIS

This application involves the installation of a metal roof. Metal roofing is among the approved roofing materials listed in the Design Review Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts. Individual applications are reviewed on a case by case basis.

Metal roofing is a traditional roofing material in Mobile. As the 19th-century progressed, metal roofs were employed more frequently. Both frame & brick and residential & commercial buildings featured metal roofs. Standing seam panels and individual shingles were the most common metal roofing types. 5-V crimp metal roofing was another alternative.

The Design Review Guidelines state that roofing materials should be appropriate to the form, pitch, and color of the roof(s). (See B (1) of the Staff Report.)

This house does not feature a complicated roof structure. Neither dormers, turrets, nor multiple projecting bays need to be addressed. A hipped roof side wing and rear service wing extend from the hipped roof body of the center hall house.

The roof pitches are not pronounced.

The proposed roof is aluminum in color. This silver color is the traditional color of metal roofing.

In reviewing previous applications the Board has discussed the number and spacing of ridges. Standing Seam and 5-V crimp have been approved on account of the fewer number and lower height of dividing seams. The proposed roofing features more pronounced and closely placed ridges.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on previous Board rulings, Staff believes the proposed roofing will impair the architectural and the historical character of the building and the district. Staff recommends that the applicants consider either a Mini-Batten or 5-V Crimp metal roofing. (See pages 6-7 of the submitted materials.)

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Jonathan Boyer and Rip Hanks were present to discuss the application

BOARD DISCUSSION

Mr. Blackwell informed the Board that the applicant's amended their application to call for the use of the Staff recommended 5-V crimp roofing.

The Board discussion took place concurrently with the public testimony.

Mr. Ladd welcomed the applicant's representatives. He asked Mr. Boyer and Mr. Hanks if they had any comments to make, clarifications to address, or questions to ask with regard to the Staff Report.

Mr. Boyer told the Board of the various features of 5-V Crimp roofing. He explained to the Board that Weather Guard promotes historically appropriate, long term roofing solutions.

Mr. Ladd thanked the applicants and their representatives for working with Staff.

Mr. Ladd asked his fellow Board members if they had any questions to ask the applicant's representatives.

Mr. Karwinski said he had one question. He asked Mr. Boyer if the existing roofing would be retained. Mr. Boyer said that only one layer of asphalt shingle sheaths the roof structure. He told the Board that the applicants wanted to retain the existing layer of shingles below the metal roofing.

Mr. Ladd asked if any other Board member had any questions to ask the applicant's representatives. Upon hearing no response, he asked if there was anyone from the audience who wished to speak either for or against the application. No comments ensued. Mr. Ladd closed the period of public comment.

FINDING OF FACT

Mr. Karwinski moved that, based upon the evidence presented in the application and during the public testimony, the Board finds the facts in the Staff report, amending facts to note that the roof would be sheathed with 5-V crimp metal panels.

The motion received a second and was unanimously approved.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Mr. Karwinski moved that, based upon the facts as amended 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: 5/2/13

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

2012-30-CA: 255 Church Street
Applicant: Orin Robinson with Victor Signs for the Quality Inn
Received: 4/16/12
Meeting: 5/2/12

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Church Street East
Classification: Non-Contributing
Zoning: B-4
Project: Signage – Remove and install signage.

BUILDING HISTORY

This late 1960s motel complex occupies an entire city block.

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 last appeared before the Architectural Review Board on February 17, 2010. At that time the Board approved the replacement of two monument signs and one wall sign. This application calls for the replacement of the previously approved signage.
- B. The Sign Design Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts and Government Street state, in pertinent part:
 - 1. “Signs shall not be mounted or erected so they do not obscure the architectural features or openings of a building.
 - 2. “No sign or portion of a sign shall above the cornice line at the top of the building face.”
 - 3. “The overall design of all signage including the mounting framework shall relate to the design of the principal building on the property. Buildings with a recognizable style such as Greek Revival, Italianate, Victorian, Queen Anne, Neo-classic, Craftsman, et. Al., should sue signage of the same design. This can be done through the use of similar decorative features such as columns or brackets.”
 - 3. “For buildings without a recognizable style, the sign shall adopt the decorative features of the building, utilizing the same materials and colors.”
 - 4. “The size of the sign shall be in proportion to the building and neighboring structures and signs.”
 - 5. “The total maximum allowable signage area for all signs is one and one half square feet per linear foot of the principal building, not to exceed 64 square feet. A multi-tenant building is also limited to a maximum of 64 square feet.”
 - 6. “The total allowable square footage for the display area of a monument sign is (50) fifty square feet.”

7. “The structural materials of the sign should match the historic materials of the building. Wood, metal, stucco, stone or brick, is allowed. Plastic, vinyl or similar materials are prohibited. Neon, resin to give the appearance of wood, and fabric may be used as appropriate.”
8. “Internally lit signs are prohibited.”
9. “Lighted signs shall use focused, low intensity illumination. Such lighting shall not shine into or create glare at pedestrian or vehicular traffic, nor shall it shine into adjacent areas. Light fixtures mounted on the ground shall be screened by landscaping.”

C. Scope of Work:

1. Remove the South Elevation’s wall sign.
2. Install new wall sign.
 - a. The two part sign will be comprised of a portion of signage bearing the name the franchise and a second portion of signage featuring the logo of the franchise.
 - b. The logo will measure 1’ 8” in height and 2’ 1” in width.
 - c. The two courses of lettering will 2’ 1” in height & 9’ 7/16” in width and - respectively.
3. Remove the monument sign located at the northeast corner of the property (southwest intersection of South Joachim and Church Streets).
4. Install a new monument sign.
 - a. The sign will rest atop an existing brick base..
 - b. The single-faced sign will be made of metal.
5. Remove the monument sign located at the northwest corner of the property (southeast intersection of South Jackson and Church Streets).
6. Install a new monument sign.
 - a. The sign will measure 5’ 3” in height and 4’ 9” in width.
 - b. The double-faced sign will be made of metal.

STAFF ANALYSIS

This application involves the installation of signage. A new franchise has acquired the property and proposes the replacement of existing signage with signage advertising the new chain. When reviewing signage applications; the size, location, materials, lighting, and design of the proposed signage are taken into account.

The Sign Design Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts and Government Street allow up to sixty-four square feet of signage for a given property. Signage exceeding the sixty-four square foot allotment requires a variance. (See B [5] of the Staff Report) This property has a variance allowing up to 118.56 square feet of signage. The total square footage of the proposed signage does not exceed the amount allowed by the variance. Additionally, the size of the signage is proportionally appropriate to the building, property, and immediate context. (See B [4] of the Staff Report.)

In accord with the Sign Design Guidelines, the proposed signage neither obscures the building’s architectural features nor extends beyond the cornice line. (See B [1-2] of the Staff Report.)

Metal is an approved signage material. (See B [7] of the Staff Report.)

The proposed monument signs will rely upon ground level spotlights. The wall sign will employ reverse channel LED illumination. Both lighting options are listed as appropriate for use in Mobile’s Historic Districts. (See B [8-9] of the Staff Report.)

The sign designs are appropriate for use in the historic districts.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on B (1-7), Staff does not believe this application will impair the architectural or the historical character of the historic district. Staff recommends approval of this application.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Amkit Gandhi was present to discuss the application.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The Board discussion took place currently with the public testimony.

Mr. Ladd welcomed the applicant. He asked Mr. Amkit if he had any clarifications to address, comments to make, or questions to ask. Mr. Amkit answered no.

Mr. Ladd asked his fellow Board members if they had any questions to ask the applicant.

Mr. Roberts asked Staff for clarification regarding the wall sign. Mr. Blackwell addressed Mr. Roberts' concerns.

Ms. Baker asked Mr. Blackwell if the location of the monument sign would remain the same. He answered yes.

A discussion of sign heights ensued. Mr. Bemis explained that while the Sign Design Guidelines for Mobile's Historic Districts and Government Street restrict the height of monument signs to a total of 8', the Review Board has ruled consistently since the 1990s to restrict the height of said signs to 5'. Mr. Oswald and Ms. Harden noted that proposed monument sign boards would be taller than the existing sign boards. Mr. Blackwell asked Mr. Amkit if the proposed sign designs could be adjusted to fit within the existing sign frames. Mr. Amkit answered yes.

Mr. Ladd asked his fellow Board members if they had any further questions which to ask the applicant. No questions ensued.

Addressing the audience, Mr. Ladd asked those assembled if they had any comments to make either for or against the application. Upon hearing no response from the audience, he closed the period of public comment.

FINDING OF FACT

Mr. Oswald moved that, based upon the evidence presented in the application and during the public testimony, the Board finds the facts in the Staff report, amending facts to note that proposed signage would be altered to fit within the existing sign frame.

The motion received a second and was unanimously approved.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Mr. Oswalt moved that, based upon the facts as amended 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: 5/2/13

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

2012-31-CA: 1551 Old Shell Road (Catherine Street portion thereof)
Applicant: Dawn Crow with Brown Chambless Architects
Received: 4/16/12
Meeting: 5/2/12

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Old Dauphin Way
Classification: Non-Contributing
Zoning: B-1
Project: Signage and Landscaping – Install signage and landscaping.

BUILDING HISTORY

This proposal involves a vacant lot that was until recently part of non-contributing site whose northern portion still features a non-contributing commercial structure.

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 last appeared before the Architectural Review Board on February 1, 2012. At that time the Board approved the construction a new medical office building on the currently vacant lot. The applicant’s representatives return to the Board with an application calling for installation of signage and landscaping.
- B. The Sign Design Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts and Government Street and the Design Review Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts state, in pertinent part:
 1. “Signs shall not be mounted or erected so they do not obscure the architectural features or openings of a building.
 2. “No sign or portion of a sign shall above the cornice line at the top of the building face.”
 3. “The overall design of all signage including the mounting framework shall relate to the design of the principal building on the property. Buildings with a recognizable style such as Greek Revival, Italianate, Victorian, Queen Anne, Neo-classic, Craftsman, et. Al., should sue signage of the same design. This can be done through the use of similar decorative features such as columns or brackets.”
 3. “For buildings without a recognizable style, the sign shall adopt the decorative features of the building, utilizing the same materials and colors.”
 4. “The size of the sign shall be in proportion to the building and neighboring structures and signs.”
 5. “The total maximum allowable signage area for all signs is one and one half square feet per linear foot of the principal building, not to exceed 64 square feet. A multi-tenant building is also limited to a maximum of 64 square feet.”

6. “The total allowable square footage for the display area of a monument sign is (50) fifty square feet.”
7. “The structural materials of the sign should match the historic materials of the building. Wood, metal, stucco, stone or brick, is allowed. Plastic, vinyl or similar materials are prohibited. Neon, resin to give the appearance of wood, and fabric may be used as appropriate.”
8. “Internally lit signs are prohibited.”
9. “Lighted signs shall use focused, low intensity illumination. Such lighting shall not shine into or create glare at pedestrian or vehicular traffic, nor shall it shine into adjacent areas. Light fixtures mounted on the ground shall be screened by landscaping.”
10. “Landscaping can often assist in creating an appropriate setting.”
11. “The appearance of parking areas should be minimized through good site planning and design.”

C. Scope of Work (per submitted site plan):

1. Install signage.
 - a. The monument sign will be located off Catherine Street, just off the sidewalk and roughly in plane with the South Elevation.
 - b. The sign structure will measure approximately 4’ in height and 8’ in length (steps in for the base is wider than the sign face).
 - c. A stepped and ramped brick base will support the sign face.
 - d. The double-face sign field will measure 7’ in width.
 - e. The stuccoed field will feature aluminum lettering, numbering, and a logo.
 - f. A capstone will surmount the sign.
 - g. Ground level lighting nestled in landscaping will illuminate the sign. Said lighting will not produce glare that would affect vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
2. Install landscaping.
 - a. The approved site plan has been altered to accommodate additional parking. Parking has been extended the length of the Southern lot line and landscaping reduced to the side of the building.
 - b. See the landscape plan for existing trees that will be either retained or removed.
 - c. Sod will be planted within the 10’ wide perimeter buffer as well as fronting the building and within the landscape island fronting the porte-cochere.
 - d. Trees, shrubbery, and groundcover plantings are proposed. See Landscape Detail Sheet for proposed installations and locations. Plantings will surround the site.
 - e. Tree plantings will include Live Oaks, Willow Oaks, Drake Elms, and Crepe Myrtles.
 - f. Shrubby will include Clevera, Shi Shi Camellias, Nellie Stevens, Miscanthus, Japanese Yews, Knockout Roses, Dwarf Hawthornes, and Saw Palmettos.
 - g. Ground cover plantings will include Agapanthuses, Butterfly Irises, Varigated Liriope, Big Blue Liriope, and seasonal plantings.
3. Three backflow preventers will be located off the building’s North Elevation.

STAFF ANALYSIS

This application involves the installation of signage and landscaping.

When reviewing signage applications, the size, location, materials, lighting, and design of the proposed signage is taken into account.

The Sign Design Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts and Government Street allow up to sixty-four square feet of signage for a given property. Signage exceeding the sixty-four square foot allotment

requires a variance. (See B (5) of the Staff Report) The proposed signage does not exceed 64 square feet. Monument signs are restricted to a maximum of 50 square feet. (See B (6) of the Staff Report.) The proposed sign measures over 50 square feet in size. The size of the signage is proportional to the approved building, the larger property, and immediate context. (See B (4) of the Staff Report.)

In accord with the Sign Design Guidelines, the proposed signage neither obscures the building's architectural features nor extends beyond the cornice line. (See B (1-2) of the Staff Report.)

Metal is an approved signage material.

The proposed monument sign will rely upon ground level spotlights.

The sign designs are appropriate for use in the historic districts.

Additionally, the sign has been placed to engage both the passerby and the building as was suggested at the February 1, 2012 meeting.

The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile's Historic Districts state that landscaping can often assist in creating an appropriate setting and that the appearance of parking areas should be minimized through good site planning and design. (See B (10-11) of the Staff Report.)

The areas allotted for side and rear parking areas have been altered. While alterations have been made for improved and increased vehicular use, both the siting and the proposed landscaping mitigate the impact of the changes. Plantings would surround the perimeter of the newly created lot and front the approved building. These upper, intermediate, and ground level plantings anchor the building within its setting.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval in part and denial in part.

Based on B (6), Staff believes the monument sign will impair the architectural and historical integrity of the historic district. Staff would recommend approval of the monument sign if its total square footage was reduced to amount not exceeding 50 square feet.

Based on B (1-5, 7-11), Staff does not believe this application will impair the architectural or the historical character of the building or the district. Staff recommends approval of this application.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Wilbur Hill with Brown Chambless Architects was present to discuss the application

BOARD DISCUSSION

Mr. Blackwell explained to the Board that the proposed signage is below 50 square feet in size.

The Board discussion took place concurrently with the public testimony.

Mr. Ladd welcomed the applicant's representative. He asked Mr. Hill if he had any comments to make, clarifications to address, or questions to ask. Mr. Hill answered no.

Mr. Hill addressed concerns regarding to the Backflow preventers. He told the Board that they would be two in number and that they are required by state law. Mr. Hill went on to say that the two units would have to be placed within a hot box. When asked what the enclosure would look like, he responded by saying it would resemble a transformer. Lamenting the appearance, he said that it was unfortunately unavoidable on account of code requirements. Ms. Harden asked Mr. Hill as to the overall height of the enclosure. Mr. Hill said that it was unknown at the present time.

Mr. Kawinski asked Mr. Hill to clarify the setback of the proposed monument sign. Mr. Hill asked Mr. Karwinski if he had any suggestions. Mr. Karwinski recommended 5'. Mr. Hill said that the proposed signage could be placed at that setback.

Mr. Wagoner and Ms. Harden asked Mr. Hill if he had contacted Urban Forestry regarding existing plantings. Mr. Hill said that Urban Forestry had been involved in the project from its earliest stages. He stated that a concerted effort had been made to retain as many heritage trees as possible.

Ms. Harden suggested that additional ground plantings be employed around the backflow units.

Mr. Ladd asked his fellow Board members if they had any final questions for the applicant's representatives. No further questions ensued from the Board.

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

FINDING OF FACT

Mr. Karwinski moved that, based upon the evidence presented in the application and during the public testimony, the Board finds the facts in the Staff report, amending facts to note that the total signage would be below 50 square feet and that the monument sign would be located 5' beyond the inner edge of the sidewalk.

The motion received a second and was unanimously approved.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Mr. Karwinski moved that, based upon the facts as amended 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: 5/2/13

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

2012-32-CA: 61 South Conception Street
Applicant: Beverly Terry with Clark, Geer, Latham & Associates for Mrs. Celia Wallace
Received: 4/16/12
Meeting: 5/2/12

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Church Street East
Classification: Non-Contributing
Zoning: B-4
Project: Redevelopment - Construct a parking lot and install landscaping.

BUILDING HISTORY

The Old YMCA formerly occupied this site. The 1897 building designed by Watkins and Johnson was demolished in 2003.

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. According to Staff Files, this property has never appeared before the Architectural Review Board.
- B. The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts and the Sign Design Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts and Government Street state, in pertinent part:
 - 1. “Modern paving materials are acceptable in the historic districts. However, it is important that the design, location and materials be compatible with the historic districts.”
 - 2. “Landscaping can often assist in creating an appropriate setting. Asphalt is inappropriate for walkways. Gravel and shell are preferred paving materials, however a variance from the Board of Zoning Adjustment is required for commercial applications.”
 - 3. “The appearance of parking areas should be minimized through good site planning and design. New materials such as grasspave or grassgrete, which provide a solid parking surface while still allowing grass to grow giving the appearance of the continuance of a front lawn, may be a feasible alternative.”
 - 4. “Parking areas should be screened from view by the use of low masonry walls, wood or iron fences or landscaping.”
 - 5. Directional signs “require a Certificate of Appropriateness but do not count toward the size requirements...”
- C. Scope of Work:
 - 1. Construct a parking lot.
 - a. The asphalt parking lot will be L-shaped in plan.
 - b. There will be twenty-nine regular parking spaces and two handicap parking spaces.
 - c. Two curbcuts will access the parking from Conception Street.
 - d. Install two directional signs.

2. Install landscaping and other improvements.
 - a. A U-shaped landscaped area will be located at the southern lot line along Government Street. Six Elm trees will be planted in this landscaped buffer. Three Elms will be located in the southeast corner and three Elms in the southwest corner. A 4' wide concrete walkway will be centered within the landscape area.
 - a. A landscape strip will extend along South Conception Street (western lot line) between the two curbcuts. The landscape strip will extend into the lot at eastern and western sections to bracket parking spaces. Single trees will be planted in these advanced ends.
 - b. A rectangular landscape station will be located in the northwest corner of the lot. Three Elm trees will be planted in this landscape station.
 - c. A landscape strip will extend from the northwest corner planting station and along the northern lot line. Four Crape Myrtles will be located along the northern lot line.
 - d. The landscape strip extending along the northern lot line will wrap around a portion of the eastern lot line.

STAFF ANALYSIS

This application involves the redevelopment of a vacant lot. A parking lot is proposed for the site. The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile's Historic Districts state that appearance of parking areas should be minimized by way of good site planning and design. Landscaping can assist in providing an appropriate setting. (See B (2-3) of the Staff Report.)

The proposed parking lot would occupy the majority of the L-shaped lot. Landscaping, in the form of overstory and understory plantings, would be planted along southern (Government Street), western (Conception Street), and northern (inner lot) sides of the lot. Staff recommends the use of ground plantings as a means of further obscuring the parking lot and softening its impact on the surroundings.

In addition to landscaping, the Design Review Guidelines require that the lot be obscured by low walls or fencing. (See B [4] of the Staff Report.) Staff recommends the use of a four-foot-iron fence to enclose the lot. Instead of a single point of ingress and egress, the plan calls for separate drives for incoming and outgoing traffic; thereby avoiding a large, disruptive curbcut. The two drives are located along the western side of the lot, off Conception Street. Staff recommends that the applicant place a pedestrian entrance and walk between the two drives and that the three parking spaces located between said drives be converted to landscaping.

Two directional signs are proposed. Directional signage is not counted toward a property's total signage allotment. (See B (5) of the Staff Report.) The directional signs are small in size and low in height.

CLARIFICATIONS

1. What are the inner and outer widths of the proposed curbcuts?
2. Will street lamps be located in the Conception Street right of way be relocated?

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based B (2 & 4), Staff believes that this application as proposed impairs the architectural and historical integrity of the surrounding historic district. Pending the clarifications listed above, the employment of a pedestrian entrance and walk, the conversion of three parking spaces into landscaping, and the installation of ground level plantings, Staff would recommend approval.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Beverly Terry with Clark, Geer, Latham & Associates 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. Terry if she had any comments to make, clarifications to address, or questions to ask.

Ms. Terry said that while the applicant was amenable to adding a pedestrian entrance and fencing, she was not in favor of converting three parking spaces into landscaping. She explained to the Board that the application as proposed not only meets but exceeds the required landscape requirement.

Mr. Bemis stated that the Board routinely requires applicants to exceed the Planning Commission's requirements.

Mr. Wagoner asked if the parking lot would be for public or private use. Ms. Terry said that she was unsure as to the use of the lot.

Ms. Terry asked for clarification as to where the fence should extend. Mr. Bemis told Ms. Terry that it should enclose the lot and be located on the property line.

A discussion of the surrounding properties ensued. Mr. Karwinski said that he found the location of the parking stalls along the wall of the building abutting the eastern property line a weak point in the design. He suggested the employment of a landscape buffer. Mr. Ladd said that a buffer would interfere with turning radiance.

Mr. Holmes asked Staff to discuss recent precedence for parking lots within the historic districts. The parking lot located 57 Saint Emanuel Street, 112 Government Street, and 250 Government Street were mentioned and discussed. Mr. Holmes noted that these approved lots featured minimal if any continuous buffers.

Mr. Holmes and Ms. Harden asked Ms. Terry if the applicant was amenable to installing perimeter shrubbery. She answered yes. Ms. Harden suggested that it be located along the Government Street and Conception Street frontages. Ms. Terry said that if Traffic Engineering allowed its use, shrubbery could be employed.

Mr. Karwinski suggested that the middle parking space located between the two vehicular entrances be converted to landscaping. Mr. Bemis said it could be curved in form.

Mr. Karwinski and Mr. Roberts recommended that the backs of the signs be painted either black or Bellingrath Green. Discussion ensued.

Speaking from the audience; Jonathan Rudolf, the applicant's legal representation, asked Mr. Bemis if the painting of signage was required by the City Code. Mr. Bemis said that directional and parking signage had never previously been monitored. He noted that the Downtown Alliance encourages the painting of the rear of freestanding signs.

Mr. Ladd reminded Mr. Rudolf and the Board of the property's prominent location.

Mr. Ladd asked his fellow Board members if they had any further questions for the applicant's representative. Upon hearing no response, he asked if there was anyone from the audience who wished to speak either for or against the application. No comments or questions ensued. Mr. Ladd closed the period of public comment.

FINDING OF FACT

Mr. Oswalt 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 the inclusion of a perimeter lot line iron fence measuring 4' in height (not featuring a crimped top), the planting perimeter shrubbery along the Government Street and Conception Street frontages, and use of a pedestrian entrance between the two vehicular entrances. The painting of the rear of any signage was also recommended.

The motion received a second and was unanimously approved.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Mr. Oswalt moved that, based upon the facts as amended 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: 5/2/13

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

2012-33-CA: 109 Bradford Avenue
Applicant: Murray Thames with Murray Thames Contractor for L'Arche
Received: 4/9/12
Meeting: 5/2/12

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Old Dauphin Way
Classification: Contributing
Zoning: R-1
Project: Replace Windows – Remove unauthorized, nonconforming windows and install new replacement windows.

BUILDING HISTORY

This two-story, four unit apartment house is one of several of similar design found across the Old Dauphin Way Historic District. Masonry in construction and four rooms in depth, the symmetrical building features a façade fronted by tiered porches accessed by French doors. The building is a representative of a significant number of small scale, multi-family houses that were constructed across the Southeast and Northeast during the early 20th Century.

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 last appeared before the Architectural Review Board on September 3, 2011. At that time, the Board approved the construction of new rear porches and the installation of replacement windows. The approved replacement windows were aluminum clad casements with light configurations that matched the originals. The original windows were removed in October of 2008 without the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness or a Building Permit. The new owner applicants propose the alternative replacement windows. The proposed windows would feature the same light pattern as the originals, but would more substantially framed and double paned than those approved on August 3, 2011.
- B. The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts state, in pertinent part:
 - 1. “The type, size and dividing lights of windows and their location and configuration (rhythm) on a building help establish the historic character of a building. Original windows should be retained as well as window sashes and glazing.”
 - 2. “Where windows cannot be repaired, new windows must be compatible to the existing. The size and placement of new windows for additions and alterations should be compatible with general character of the building.”

C. Scope of Work (per submitted drawings):

1. Remove unauthorized, non-conforming windows vinyl windows.
2. Install new replacement windows.
 - a. The double-paned units will be aluminum clad in construction.
 - b. The windows will be situated within wooden casings and filler strips (if needed).

STAFF ANALYSIS

This application involves the replacement of nonconforming windows. The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts state that original window openings should be retained as well as original window sashes and glazing. (See B (1) of the Staff Report.)

This building originally featured metal casement windows. The windows were removed without a Certificate of Appropriateness or a building permit. On November 11, 2008, the Board ruled that the unauthorized vinyl replacement windows should be removed and that the metal casement windows be installed. The property subsequently changed owners. In a compromise, the Board approved modified replacement windows on August 3, 2011. The approved vinyl clad wooden windows were designed to replicate the light configuration of the original metal casement windows. While the proposed windows feature the same design as the approved replacement windows, they differ in terms of their construction and installation. The windows up for review are double-paned in construction and would be more substantially framed in their installation.

With regard to double-paned construction, the Guidelines do not disallow their use. The Board has approved only one case of insulated windows in a historic building. On May 4, 2011, the Board approved the replacement of deteriorated single-paned windows located within the sanctuary of the Old Dauphin Way Methodist Church, 1507 Dauphin Street. That approval came about at the second of two protracted meetings during which the pros and cons of window replacements were discussed. In two instances the Board has approved the replacement of single paned windows with double paned windows. Double-paned windows were approved for installation by the Board on November 5, 2008 at 1601 Dauphin Street and on March 3, 2004 at 1217 Government Street.

As per casings and framing, the Design Review Guidelines state that the size and placement of windows should be compatible with the general character of the building. (See B (2) of the Staff Report.) The proposed windows would be secured within their respective bays by way of more substantial frames and additional fillers. On March 4, 2009, the Board approved the doors and windows installed at 22 South Conception Street. This application reappeared before the Board as result of a 311 call. The windows as installed were more substantially framed than the originals. The Board approved the windows as installed on account of the imprecise nature of the original drawings.

Summary: The original windows were removed without ARB approval or a building permit.
 The Board denied the new windows that were installed.
 The property changed owners.
 The Board approved vinyl windows that matched the originals in all but material.
 Owners now seek to install windows that are too small for the opening.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on B (1-2), and previous Board rulings and Staff Recommendations, Staff believes this application impairs the architectural and the historical character of the building and the district. Staff does not recommend approval of this application.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Murray Thames was present to discuss the application.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Mr. Blackwell addressed the Board. Gesturing to the PowerPoint image, he explained that the applicant's wanted to amend their application to include the shuttering of two side elevation windows.

The Board discussion took place concurrently with the public testimony.

Mr. Ladd welcomed the applicant's representative. He asked Mr. Thames if he had any comments to make, clarification to address, or questions to ask.

Mr. Thames spoke to the proposed window's quality of construction and design. He cited nearby examples of inappropriate windows. Mr. Ladd said that the windows in questions could either have been installed without approval or prior to creation of the historic district.

Mr. Roberts told Mr. Thames that windows are hot topic in preservation. He said that Guidelines require replacement in kind. He applauded L'Arche for its efforts.

Mr. Holmes pointed out the differences between the proposed and the existing windows. Pointing to the shoddy aluminum sashes currently in place, he complemented the proposed windows. Mr. Holmes stated their construction type and light configuration matched the removed originals. He said that in his experience, he knew of only two large manufacturers of quality windows and that proposed windows would be made by one of those concerns. Mr. Holmes said that application as proposed would improve the appearance and the integrity of the building of the building and the streetscape. He added that window replacements have and will continue to be contentious issue.

Mr. Blackwell informed the Board and Mr. Thames of the City's glass requirements. He said that given the building's use and height, impact glass would not be required.

Mr. Thames spoke of the design and construction of the windows. Mr. Blackwell provided the Board with a sample section of the proposed window.

Mr. Bemis and Mr. Holmes entered into a discussion regarding the National Parks Service's approval of alternative windows.

Mr. Holmes stated that the Guidelines do not disallow double-paned windows.

Mr. Thames said that the window manufacturer cannot make the previously approved single pane windows.

Mr. Holmes said that double-paned windows have been employed for tax credited National Parks projects.

Mr. Bemis said that Certified Local Government Programs restrict the use of double-paned windows. He stated that when L'Arche acquired the property, they knew of the requirements. He added that the Board had already compromised with the applicant.

Mr. Ladd mentioned other instances in which double-paned windows had been allowed with Old Dauphin Way Methodist Church among them. Ms. Harden pointed out that the original plans for that building called for double paned windows though.

Ms. Coumanis cited the dialysis center at 1217 Government Street and the residence at Macy Place as two further instances of Board approved installations of double-paned windows. The latter she noted replaced unauthorized vinyl windows. Ms. Coumanis added that projects involved non-contributing properties.

Mr. Holmes reminded the Board that the proposed windows matched the originals with regard to construction and configuration.

Mr. Lawler stated that court cases generally focus on appearance.

Mr. Karwinski stated that the façade should be priority. He said that he that he did not object to the existing windows.

Mr. Bemis cited the Guidelines and the history of the application.

Ms. Harden voiced concern as to the size of the proposed windows.

Mr. Thames said that while units would be filled, the framing would be properly executed.

Mr. Holmes cited the Guidelines by saying that replacement windows should be compatible with the existing.

Mr. Bemis reminded the Board of the previous court order.

Ms. Coumanis asked Mr. Thames if he could do mock up installations. Mr. Thames answered yes.

The shuttering of the two North Elevation windows was discussed. Mr. Karwinski recommended the use of brick fill. Mr. Thames said that he was amendable to brick, stucco, or shuttering.

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, amending facts to include the bricking of two North Elevation windows.

The motion received a second and was unanimously approved.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Mr. Holmes moved that, based upon the facts as amended by the Board, the application does impair the historic integrity of the district or the building and that a Certificate of Appropriateness not be issued, but that the applicant can reappear before the Board once an installation has been installed. The bricking of the windows was approved as that portion of application was deemed not to impair the architectural or the historical character of the building or the district.

The motion received a second and was unanimously approved.

Certificate of Appropriateness Expiration Date: 5/2/13