

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD MINUTES
September 5, 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: Mary Cousar, Thomas Karwinski, Bradford Ladd, Harris Oswalt, Craig Roberts, and Janetta Whitt-Mitchell.
Members Absent: Gertrude Baker, Carlos Gant, Kim Harden, Nick Holmes III, and Jim Wagoner.
Staff Members Present: Devereaux Bemis, Cart Blackwell, and John Lawler.
2. Mr. Karwinski moved to approve the minutes of the August 15, 2012 meeting. The motion received a second and passed unanimously.
3. Mr. Karwinski moved to approve the midmonth COA's granted by Staff, excepting #7. Mr. Ladd asked the reason behind the objection. Mr. Karwinski explained that front railings are not the Board sanctioned midmonth approvals. The motion received a second and passed unanimously.

B. MID MONTH APPROVALS: APPROVED EXCEPTING # 7

1. **Applicant: Chris Bowen**
 - a. Property Address: 1121 Montauk Avenue
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/9/12
 - c. Project: Replace existing asphalt roof with 3-tab, black shingles.
2. **Applicant: Naomi Maurer**
 - a. Property Address: 501 Dauphin Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/6/12
 - c. Project: Install a 42" x 18" vinyl banner per the submitted design on a pole perpendicular to the building. The pole will be centered above the transom to the right of center. This is a permanent installation to serve as signage not a temporary banner.
3. **Applicant: Teddy Lee**
 - a. Property Address: 256 Dauphin Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/8/12
 - c. Project: Repaint ironwork per the existing color scheme
4. **Applicant: Maggie May Pettway**
 - a. Property Address: 910 Savannah Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/13/12
 - c. Project: Install a wooden handicap access ramp off the rear entrance.
5. **Applicant: William Cutts**
 - a. Property Address: 51 South Jackson Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/13/12
 - c. Project: Repair stucco. Paint the stucco work per the submitted Benjamin Moore color (Ashley Gray). Replace downspouts.
6. **Applicant: Charles Bowman for the RSA**
 - a. Property Address: 107 Saint Francis Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/14/12
 - c. Project: Install pavers matching those found elsewhere on the property.

7. **Applicant: Jean Butler**
 - a. Property Address: 1221 Elmira Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/14/12
 - c. Project: Install metal handrails about the front and side steps.
8. **Applicant: William and Cydney Halliday**
 - a. Property Address: 258 West Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/15/12
 - c. Project: Remove aluminum siding from the façade. Repair and replace deteriorated and/or missing woodwork and moldings to match the existing in profile, dimension, and material. Paint the affected areas white.
9. **Applicant: Melanie Glenn**
 - a. Property Address: 20 South Catherine Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/16/12
 - c. Project: Relocate a column.
10. **Applicant: Sydney Betbeze**
 - a. Property Address: 1210 Selma Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/20/12
 - c. Project: Replace the front porch's roofing.
11. **Applicant: Candace B. Cooksey**
 - a. Property Address: 63 North Reed Avenue
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/21/12
 - c. Project: Repaint per the existing color scheme. Any deteriorated woodwork will be repaired and replaced to match the existing in profile, dimension, and material.
12. **Applicant: Matt Golden**
 - a. Property Address: 251 Dauphin Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/21/12
 - c. Project: Paint the building per the submitted color scheme Repaint areas per the existing. Detailing will be red, black, and gold.
13. **Applicant: Edward Robinson**
 - a. Property Address: 65 North Monterey Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/23/12
 - c. Project: Finish a partially completed carport initially approved 2007. This COA updates one from July 11, 2011.
14. **Applicant: Liberty Roofing**
 - a. Property Address: 200 South Warren Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/24/12
 - c. Project: Reroof with charcoal colored shingles.
15. **Applicant: Sheridan Dunnam**
 - a. Property Address: 1008 Palmetto Street
 - b. Date of Approval: 8/24/12
 - c. Project: Repair porch decking and trim, replacing as needed matching the original in profile, dimension and material. Paint repairs as necessary. Paint the house to match existing. Repair wood where necessary to match existing in profile, dimension and material.

C. APPLICATIONS

1. **2012-53-CA: 207 South Georgia Avenue**
 - a. Applicant: Douglas B. Kearley for Fred and Julie Hoffmeyer
 - b. Project: New Construction – Construct a rear porch addition.

APPROVED. CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED.
2. **2012-54-CA: 714 Dauphin Street**

- a. Applicant: Robert Alden Cummings for Wendell Quimby
- b. Project: New Construction/Site Redevelopment – Pave portions of a lot, install landscaping, and install fencing.

WITHDRAWN. CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED.

3. 2012-55-CA: 957 Palmetto Street

- a. Applicant: William W. Gadd
- b. Project: After-the-Fact-Approval – Retain an unapproved front door.

DENIED. CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED.

4. 2012-56-CA: 77 Etheridge Street

- a. Applicant: Samantha Kaaa with THD At-Home Services, Inc.
- b. Project: Window Replacement – Remove wooden windows and install vinyl windows.

DENIED. CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED.

D. OTHER BUSINESS

- 1. Discussion

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

2012-53-CA: 207 South Georgia Avenue
Applicant: Douglas B. Kearley for Fred and Julie Hoffmeyer
Received: 8/20/12
Meeting: 9/5/12

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Oakleigh Garden
Classification: Contributing
Zoning: R-1
Project: New Construction – Construct a rear porch addition.

BUILDING HISTORY

This classically detailed foursquare type dwelling dates from 1909. Like many houses located on South Georgia Avenue, the house’s two-story block-like massing is fronted by full-length gallery. This house features a richly ornamented aedicule located between the façade’s two second story windows.

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 March 13, 1999. At that time, the Board approved the construction of an addition. This application calls for the removal of a 1990s rear porch and the construction of a new rear porch. The proposed porch would be an enlargement and elaboration of the existing porch.
- B. The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts state, in pertinent part:
 - 1. “New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
 - 2. “New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.”
- C. Scope of Work (per submitted plans):
 - 1. Remove a 1990s porch.
 - 2. Salvage and reuse columns, rafters, and other details from the porch.
 - 3. Construct a new rear porch addition.
 - a. The porch will measure 14’ in depth by 31’ 10” in width (not counting an approximate 2’ deep east-facing splay).
 - b. The porch will rest atop wooden posts that will be interspersed with framed, suspended, and recessed lattice skirting.

- c. The porch deck will be floored with tongue-and-groove decking.
- d. The three bay east-facing porch will be supported by squared section posts salvaged from the existing porch.
- e. Salvaged cloud lift-like brackets will surmount the paired posts.
- f. Exposed and molded rafter tails will be employed. Said rafter tails will be salvaged from the existing porch.
- g. Regularly disposed wood framed metal porch screening will be employed.
- h. Boxed lattice panels will be suspended between the East Elevations outer pair of paired columns.
- i. A brick chimney with corbelled shoulders and a capped stack will be located off the porch's South Elevation.
- j. A telescoping flight of treated wood steps will be located off the porch's North Elevation.
- k. A shed roof will surmount the porch structure. Roofing shingles matching those found on the house will sheath said roof. The side faces of the shed roof will be faced with wooden siding matching that found on the body of the house.

STAFF ANALYSIS

This application calls for the construction of a rear porch. The addition would be, at best, minimally visible from the public view. The porch would be in essence an enlargement of the existing rear porch. The existing porch was constructed during the 1990s.

The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile's Historic Districts state that additions should be differentiated from yet compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features of the existing historic fabric. In accord with Secretary of the Interior's Standards, the single story format provides a clear break between the two-story body of the house and the proposed new construction. While some historic facings and elements will match those on the building, others will be of the period therefore affording complementary differentiation. The impact of the historic fabric will be minimal.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on B (1-2), Staff does not believe this application impairs the architectural or the historical character of the building. Staff recommends approval of this application.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Douglas B. Kearley 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. Kearley if he had any comments to make, clarifications to address, or questions to ask. Mr. Kearley answered no.

Mr. Roberts and Mr. Kearley discussed the height of the chimney.

Mr. Karwinski said he had two issues which he wanted to discuss. First he stated that according to the Design Review Guidelines wooden foundation piers are not appropriate for use in the historic districts. Mr. Kearley explained that wooden posts are employed on the existing board approved porch and the proposed new porch would simply be an enlargement of the existing. Mr. Karwinski said that while

wooden foundation piers might be appropriate for decks and the like, they are not necessarily appropriate for open or enclosed roofed spaces. He asked Mr. Kearley if the existing piers exhibit signs of deterioration. Mr. Kearley answered no.

Mr. Ladd interjected asking if there were any alternative treatments that might be preferable to wooden foundation piers. Mr. Karwinski suggested brick or stucco-faced piers. Mr. Kearley said that the applicants wanted to use wooden piers.

Mr. Karwinski stated that it is important not to contradict the Guidelines.

Mr. Karwinski then articulated his second issue with the proposal. He noted that the Staff Report stated that the proposed work would be at best minimally visible from the street. Mr. Karwinski disagreed saying that the chimney stack would be clearly visible and his opinion would impair the building and the district. He suggested that the chimney be moved from the side to the rear elevation. In relocating the chimney to that elevation, Mr. Karwinski said it would be less of an issue. He said that the Board recently approved a free-standing chimney at 254 Saint Anthony Street. That new construction he noted was not engaged to the building.

Ms. Cousar and Mr. Kearley discussed the height of the chimney. Ms. Cousar said that if she remembered that section of South Georgia Avenue correctly, the height of the chimney would not be out of scale with existing construction.

Other alternative chimney treatments were mentioned.

Mr. Roberts and Ms. Cousar said that since the proposed chimney would not be as high as the existing chimney it would not adversely impact the historic integrity of the building or the district.

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 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: 9/5/13

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

2012-54-CA: 714 Dauphin Street
Applicant: Robert A. Cummings for Wendell Quimby
Received: 8/20/12
Meeting: 9/5/12

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Lower Dauphin Commercial
Classification: Non-Contributing
Zoning: B-4
Project: New Construction / Redevelopment – Install hardscaping, fencing, and landscaping.

BUILDING HISTORY

This single story commercial building dates from the 1930s.

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 March 14, 2005. At that time, the Board approved the demolition of a rear portion of the building. With this application, the owner/applicant proposes the redevelopment of the rear portion of the property.
- B. The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts state, in pertinent part:
 - 1. “Fencing should complement the building and not detract from it. Design, scale, placement and materials should be considered along with their relationship to the Historic District.”
 - 2. “Modern paving materials are acceptable in the historic districts. However, it is important that the design, location and materials be compatible with the property.”
 - 3. “Landscaping can often assist in creating an appropriate setting. Asphalt is inappropriate for walkways.”
 - 4. “The appearance of parking areas should be minimized through good site planning and design. New materials such as grasspave and grasscrete, which provide a solid parking surface while still allowing grass to grow giving the appearance of a continuance of the lawn, may be a feasible alternative.”
 - 5. “Parking areas should be screened from view by use of low masonry walls, wood or iron fences or landscaping.”
 - 6. “Ordinances relating to parking and landscaping will be enforced by the City of Mobile Urban Development Department in reviewing requests for parking lots.”
- C. **Scope of Work (per submitted site plan):**
 - 1. Conduct site preparations.
 - a. Remove a raised concrete slab.
 - b. Remove wooden posts located in the northern section of the lot.

2. Install hardscaping (curbcuts, curbing, and a parking surfaces).
 - a. The total square footage of the asphalt hardscaping will be 3370.17 square feet.
 - b. Concrete curbing will be employed.
 - c. Two west-facing curbcuts will access the asphalt parking lot from North Scott Street.
 - d. The widths of the southernmost curbcut will be:
 - i. Inner – 12’
 - ii. Outer – 46.34’
 - e. The widths of the northernmost curbcut will be:
 - i. Inner – 13.93’
 - ii. Outer – 41.74’
3. Install fencing.
 - a. Install a 4’ tall powder-coated, black painted aluminum fence.
 - b. The fence will feature fleur-de-lis finials.
4. Install landscaping
 - a. Landscaping strips will be located along the northern and western sides of property.
 - b. Grass will be planted within the planting strips.
 - c. Five Live Oak trees will be planted.

CLARIFICATIONS

1. What is happening to the southern portion of the lot?
2. Is the west-facing ramp an existing feature?
3. Will the fence feature integral or crimped top finials?

STAFF ANALYSIS

This application calls for the redevelopment of a vacant rear portion of property whose principal building faces Dauphin Street. The lot would be utilized for parking and the redevelopment would entail the installation of hardscaping, fencing, and landscaping.

The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts that good site planning and landscaping can minimize effect of parking areas. By locating the curbcuts along North Scott Street, the more trafficked Spring Hill Avenue expansion will not be affected by hardsurfacing that would engage the right of way. Landscaping strips would extend along both North Scott and Spring Hill Avenue sides of the lot and will therefore minimize the visual impact of the paved surfaces. The overall square footage of landscape meets the required allotment prescribed by the Office of Urban Development. Staff recommends the use of additional landscaping. Asphalt paving and concrete curbing would be employed. The proposed fencing would provide a sense of definition to currently open lot.

Staff has consulted City Planning, Right of Way, and Traffic Engineering with regard to the plan. Representatives of all three of these departments do not foresee issues relating to their respective approvals. In previous applications, the Board has recommended the use of shrubbery, as well as pedestrian entrances.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on B (1-6), Staff does not believe this application will impair the architectural or the historical integrity of the historic district. Pending address of the above cited clarification and discussion of the aforementioned recommendations, Staff recommends approval of this application. Staff further recommends increased landscaping.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Robert 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 comments to make, clarifications to address, or questions to ask.

Mr. Cummings answered yes. He explained to the Board that he was present on behalf of Wendell Quimby, a property owner having numerous interests in the area. Mr. Cummings then addressed the Staff Clarifications. He stated that the slab located in the southern portion of the lot would be demolished and that sod would be planted in the location. He said that the ramp constitutes an existing feature and that the fencing would match other downtown fencing. Mr. Cummings added that the fence would not feature a crimped top but would employ integral finials.

Mr. Karwinski asked for clarification regarding the slab. Mr. Cummings said the slab would be removed. Mr. Karwinski then questioned the use of that portion of the lot. Mr. Cummings said that it would be planted with grass.

Mr. Bemis asked Mr. Cummings to explain the site plan to the Board. Mr. Cummings did so.

Mr. Karwinski said that he was in agreement with Staff with regard to the landscaping. He said that he believed that an inherent problem with the proposal was that the layout was planned with a maximum use of asphalt and parking. Mr. Karwinski said that with a little more thought additional greenspace could be added without sacrificing parking. Mr. Karwinski said that he had worked up an alternative proposal.

Mr. Cummings said that his client was amenable to employing shrubbery and other lower level plantings. He added that he and Mr. Quimby had considered head on parking and other alternatives, but decided that the proposed plan best suited the location and use.

Mr. Ladd asked Mr. Karwinski if he objected to the planting provisions or the overall plan. Mr. Karwinski answered by saying both.

Mr. Ladd said that for consistencies save other recently approved parking lots should be remembered.

Mr. Karwinski said that he could recall one in particular. He stated that he voted against that application.

Mr. Cummings said that the proposed plan meets Urban Development's landscaping requirements.

Mr. Karwinski said it was his objective to make the downtown area as attractive as possible.

Mr. Cummings reiterated that his client was amenable to employing additional understory plantings.

Mr. Ladd and Ms. Whitt Mitchell asked Mr. Karwinski if adding more landscaping would in his mind improve the plan.

Mr. Karwinski explained that it was the overall plan that posed concern.

Mr. Ladd said that the location was commercial and that the addition of large amounts of landscaping would make people apprehensive with regard to safety related concerns.

Mr. Karwinski recommended the use of a landscaped buffer against the building located to the east of the lot.

Mr. Ladd and Mr. Karwinski entered into a discussion with regard to the plan. Mr. Karwinski explained his perspective saying that the plan could be improved by adding more landscaping space without sacrificing parking.

Ms. Cousar stated that she agreed with Mr. Ladd as per the atmosphere landscaping in a commercial setting can create.. She noted that plantings against the wall would not engender safety related concerns.

Mr. Cummings said that the applicant would likely be amendable to employing plantings along the east-facing wall. He reiterated that the eastern portion of the lot would be open greenspace.

A discussion ensued as to how to rule on the application. Mr. Cummings was advised to withdraw the application and reappear before the Board with a more understandable plan per Board discussion.

Mr. Cummings withdrew the application.

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

2012-55-CA: 957 Palmetto Street
Applicant: William W. Gadd
Received: 8/8/12
Meeting: 9/5/12

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Oakleigh Garden
Classification: Contributing
Zoning: R-1
Project: After-the-Fact-Approval – Retain an unapproved door.

BUILDING HISTORY

According to documentation found in the MHDC property file, the core of this house could date from circa 1890. The house was extensively altered and enlarged circa 1909. The façade of this classically detailed dwelling features a full-length gallery with bay window.

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 November 18, 1996. At that time, the Board approved the alteration of fenestration. This application is a result of a 311 that was received on August 6, 2012. The current owners/applicants appear before the Board with a request to retain an unauthorized door. The door was installed without the issuance of Certificate of Appropriateness.
- 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 reflect the age and style of the building.”
 - 2. “Doors with leaded or art glass may be appropriate when documentation exists for their use, or when they are compatible with the design and style of the structure.”
- C. **Scope of Work (per submitted site plan):**
 - 1. After-the-Fact-Approval – Retain a door.

STAFF ANALYSIS

This application involves the unauthorized replacement of a front door. The application appears before the Board as a result of a 311 call. The applicants wish to retain the replacement door.

The Design Review Guidelines state that original doors and openings should be retained. While not original to the house, the door which was removed was more in keeping with historic period which the house was built. The Design Review Guidelines go on to state that replacements should respect the age and style of the building and that leaded glass may be appropriate when historically and stylistically appropriate. It is doubtful that this house originally featured either oval-shaped glazing or leading.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

William Gadd 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. Gadd if he had any comments to make, clarifications to address, or questions to ask.

Mr. Gadd addressed the Board. He explained that the door that had been removed was not secure and that his dog could knock it open. Mr. Gadd continued saying that the door posed a safety concern and that it had been broken while the house was being painted and he had to replace it quickly. Pointing to image of the door currently in place, Mr. Gadd said that it was secure. He cited similar examples in the immediate vicinity including 1223 Selma Street, 1215 Palmetto Street, and 254 South Broad Street.

Ms. Whitt-Mitchell interjected by saying that the aforementioned doors might have been installed either prior to the existing Guidelines or the properties' inclusion in the historic district.

Mr. Blackwell attempted to address the properties in question.

Mr. Roberts said that he had a question for Staff. He asked Mr. Bemis if the use of brass comes were deemed appropriate by the Guidelines. Mr. Bemis answered no.

Mr. Gadd said that the treatment of the glass could be addressed.

Mr. Bemis said that shape of the light was not appropriate to the style and period of the house, but that it could be improved by removing the concurrent glazing and comes and installing a solid piece of beveled glass.

Mr. Karwinski said that the oval shape was an issue. He recommended that the whole upper panel be removed and reconfigured so as to employ a rectilinear light that would be more in keeping with the style and period of the house.

Mr. Ladd addressed his fellow Board members saying two alternatives had been discussed. The glazing could be replaced or the upper portion of the door could be reconfigured.

Further discussion ensued as to glazing.

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 amended by the Board, the application does impair the historic integrity of the district and the building and that a Certificate of Appropriateness not be issued. The Board ruled that applicant is to return to the Board with proposal taking into account the Board discussion within a thirty day period.

DENIED.

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

2012-56-CA: 77 Etheridge Street
Applicant: Samantha Kaaa with THD At-Home Services for Jim Wilson
Received: 8/15/12
Meeting: 9/5/12

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Old Dauphin Way
Classification: Non-Contributing
Zoning: R-1
Project: Window Replacement – Remove wooden windows and install vinyl windows.

BUILDING HISTORY

This house was constructed between 1950 and 1955. Described as “minimally traditionally,” the wood siding faced house features a block-like massing and infilled side porch.

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 applicants propose the wholesale replacement of the houses windows. Largely original, the houses fenestration is a mixture of original wooden multi-light windows and a single-picture window, and later replacement windows. The proposed windows would be vinyl in composition and operational in construction.
- 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 the building help establish the historic character of a building. Original window openings should be retained as well as original 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 or alterations should be compatible with the general character of the building.”
- C. Scope of Work (per submitted materials):
 - 1. Remove the house’s existing windows.
 - 2. Install one-over-one vinyl windows.

STAFF ANALYSIS

This application involves the removal of original wooden and some later replacement windows with vinyl windows. The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts state that original windows

should be retained. When replacement is necessary, the replacement windows should be compatible with existing. Additionally, applications for wholesale window replacement entail review of the significance of the building, condition of the existing windows, and the design of the proposed windows.

This house is listed as a non-contributing residence in the Old Dauphin Way Historic Districts. Described as “minimally traditional” in the National Register listing for the District, the dwelling is representative of the period of which it was built. Horizontal in format, featuring multi-light and one picture, and a side porch (now infilled), houses of this appearance can be found across the United States.

The house features numerous multi-light, a single picture, and several replacement windows. As evidenced by the photographs submitted with the application and staff inspection of the site, this house’s windows do show signs of deterioration. While the frames are painted shut and the caulking is flaking, the windows are repairable.

The proposed replacement windows would be vinyl in composition and one-over-one in configuration. While vinyl windows have been allowed in the Historic Districts. Their approval has been of an exploratory, test-like nature. Significantly, all of the aforementioned approvals have been on non-contributing whose original windows had long-since removed. This house retains its original windows. With regard to the proposed light configuration, the proposed one-over-one configuration does not match the existing. Though this treatment is preferable to one employing snap-on muntins, the one-over-one configuration is not in keeping with style of the house.

Based on the condition of the existing windows and the design and composition of the proposed replacement windows, Staff recommends that the applicants investigate the repair of the windows as opposed to wholesale removal and replacement.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on B (1-2), Staff believes this application will impair the architectural and the historical character of the building. Staff does not recommend approval of this application.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Mr. Gary Porter with THD At-Home Services 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. Porter if he had any comments to make, clarifications to address, or questions to ask.

Mr. Porter answered yes. He explained to the Board that his client was retired and disabled. Mr. Porter stated that existing windows had repair issues and code concerns. Egress and impact were key concerns. He told the Board that none of his suppliers could make windows to match existing and that they do not meet storm requirements. Mr. Porter said that several alternative courses of action had been considered before deciding upon the proposed replacements. He said that the proposed windows meet both the client’s safety and security concerns.

Mr. Roberts asked for clarification regarding the status of the building. He pointed out that in building was listed as both contributing and non-contributing in the Staff Report. Mr. Blackwell apologized to the Board and the applicant’s representative. He said that he had mistakenly listed the building as

contributing in the introductory portion of the application. He told the Board that the building was a non-contributing structure. Mr. Bemis said that if the area was resurveyed the building would be listed as contributing.

Mr. Roberts suggested that windows be repaired and that storm windows be employed. A exchanged regarding storm windows ensued.

Mr. Porter brought up code-related concerns. Discussion ensued. Mr. Bemis stated that it was his understanding that only above a second story did impact concerns come into play.

Mr. Karwinski stated that there were other more preferable courses of action. He said that the windows could be repaired and plyboard could be used to cover the windows in case of storm.

Mr. Porter said that his client was physically unable to install and remove the boarding.

Mr. Roberts brought up the light configuration of the proposed windows.

Mr. Bemis said that as long as the original windows remain in situ or are repaired impact requirements need not be a concern.

Mr. Porter said that impact and safety concerns remained.

Mr. Roberts addressed Mr. Porter saying that living in the historic districts required living up to standard. He said that if the applicant could not meet the standards or felt unsafe, he should consider relocating.

Mr. Ladd reminded his fellow Board members that the building is listed as non-contributing structure. He asked Mr. Bemis how this could affect their ruling. Mr. Bemis said that while non-contributing buildings received some leeway approving this application would set a precedent. He said that the question was would the approval impair the district.

Mr. Ladd recommended that the applicant investigate other alternatives.

Ms. Cousar encouraged Mr. Porter to look into repairing the windows.

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 as written.

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 impair the historic integrity of the district or the building and that a Certificate of Appropriateness not be issued.

The motion received a second and was unanimously approved.

DENIED.