



Agenda Item #2

Application 2024-06-CA

DETAILS

Location:

113 Parker Street

Summary of Request:

Remove existing knee wall around porch.
Replace existing columns.

Applicant (as applicable):

Darren Walters

Property Owner:

Same

Historic District:

Old Dauphin Way

Classification:

Contributing

Summary of Analysis:

- Porch is defined by a frame knee wall.
- Tuscan Free Classic columns support the porch roof.
- The application proposes removing the knee wall and not replacing, removing and replacing columns with boxed columns.

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PROPERTY AND APPLICATION HISTORY

Old Dauphin Way Historic District was initially listed in the National Register in 1984 under Criterion C for significant architecture and community planning. The district includes most nineteenth-century architectural styles and shows adaptations of middle-class domestic designs of the nineteenth century to the regional, Gulf Coast climate. It includes “fine examples of commercial, institutional, and religious structures as well as 20th-century apartments.”

The property at 113 Parker Street is a frame one-story Craftsman style bungalow with a hip roof and a recessed front porch with clapboard knee wall (it was originally shingled) and paired and tripled (at outside corners) Tuscan free classic columns. The house is clapboarded with a shingled skirt below windowsill level and rests on brick piers. It features a central entrance with transom and flanking 1/1 windows. Although the exact construction date is unknown, maps and architectural details allow for a reasonable approximation. The extant house is represented on the 1925 Sanborn map. Considering this evidence and the style of the building, it can be reasonably deduced to have been built c. 1915. The form on the Sanborn map depicts the same footprint. Historic Development Department 1984 file photo shows the shingled knee wall, but the 2016 Google Street View indicates the clapboard replacements.

This property has never appeared before the Architectural Review Board (ARB).

SCOPE OF WORK

1. Remove knee wall at porch.
2. Replace rotten porch columns with 6"x6" boxed columns with bases and capitals.

APPLICABLE STANDARDS (*Design Review Guidelines for Mobile's Historic Districts*)

1. **5.4** Preserve original building materials.
 - Repair deteriorated building materials by patching, piecing-in, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing the material.
 - Remove only those materials which are deteriorated, and beyond reasonable repair.
 - Do not remove original materials that are in good condition.
2. **5.6** Use original materials to replace damaged materials on primary surfaces where possible.
 - Use original materials to replace damaged building materials on a primary façade if possible. If the original material is wood clapboard, for example, then the replacement material should be a material that matches the original in finish, size and the amount of exposed lap. If the original material is not available from the site, use a replacement material that is visually comparable with the original material.
 - Replace only the amount of material required. If a few boards are damaged beyond repair, for example, then only they should be replaced, rather than the entire wall.
 - Do not replace building materials on the primary façade, such as wood siding and masonry, with alternative or imitation materials unless it cannot be avoided.
 - Wholesale replacement of exterior finishes is generally not allowed.
3. **6.5** Repair a porch in a way that maintains the original character.
4. **6.6** If replacement is required, design it to reflect the time period of the historic structure.
 - Replace a historic porch element to match the original.
 - Use replacement materials and elements that are appropriate to the style, texture, finish, composition and proportion of the historic structure.
 - Where an original porch is missing entirely, base a replacement porch on physical or photographic evidence. If no evidence exists, draw from similar structures in the neighborhood.

- Match the balustrade of a historic porch to the design and materials of the porch.
- When reconstructing a porch, pay particular attention to matching the handrails, lower rails, balusters, decking, posts/columns, proportions and decorative details.
- Do not completely replace an entire porch or element unless absolutely necessary. Only replace the element or portion of an element that requires replacement.
- Do not use cast-iron columns or railing where no evidence exists that these elements were used historically.
- Do not use a brick base for a wood column (exception is Craftsman styles).
- Do not use a railing that is too elaborate for the building (of a different style).
- Do not relocate an original front stairway or steps.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The subject property is a contributing resource within the Old Dauphin Way Historic District. The application under review seeks approval to remove the frame knee wall at the porch, remove the existing columns, and replace them with boxed columns.

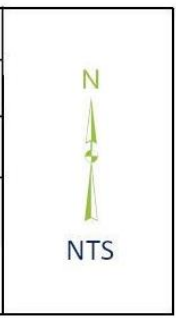
The clapboard knee wall was originally a shingled to match the shingled skirt around the house. At some later date, the shingles at the knee wall were replaced by clapboards. The *Guidelines* recommend that original building materials be preserved. Any deterioration should be removed only when beyond reasonable repair, and replacement materials should match in material, profile, and dimension. (5.4, 5.6) The *Guidelines* further recommend that porch repairs maintain the original character, calling for historic elements to match the original. (6.5, 6.6) The knee wall appears to be an original feature of the porch, and is a common element seen on Craftsman style bungalows. The same porch design with a knee wall is present at both 105 and 108 Parker Street. Although the existing knee wall is damaged and deteriorated in places, it does not appear to be beyond reasonable repair.

Like the knee wall, the style and placement of a structure's porch columns further define its character. The existing columns are rotten in places, and some have shifted or have come detached from their base. Although the grouped Tuscan Free Classic columns currently supporting the porch do not seem to be beyond repair, if replacement is undertaken, grouped battered columns may be considered as a more suitable alternative than the proposed simple, boxed columns. Grouping the columns would better preserve the historic design patterns of the porch. Installing a single box column in the place of existing paired columns would weaken the established aesthetic, both at this property and on the street. Likewise, pairs of boxed columns would not as efficiently visually communicate the intended expression. In addition to the precedent set at the subject property for grouped columns, this feature can be observed at 108 Parker. (6.5, 6.6)

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD VICINITY MAP



APPLICATION NUMBER	3	DATE	2/7/2024
APPLICANT	Darren Walters		
PROJECT	Porch design changes		





1. West elevation (façade), looking east



2. Detail: damaged porch columns and knee wall, looking southeast



3. Detail: cheek walls, looking north



4. View of porch, looking northeast



5. Detail: column bases, looking northwest



6. Side (south elevation), looking north

Site Photos – 113 Parker Street



7. 105 Parker Street



8. 108 Parker Street