



Agenda Item #1

Application 2024-05-CA

DETAILS

Location:

351 Flint Street

Summary of Request:

After-the-Fact: Demolish accessory structure; remove exterior brick chimney; create new window opening at former chimney location; demolish deteriorated rear addition.

Remove framing and install siding to match existing at two extant window openings.

Applicant (as applicable):

Demetrius Hendrix

Property Owner:

Same

Historic District:

Leinkauf

Classification:

Contributing

Summary of Analysis:

- The demolished garage dated to sometime between 1956 and 2002. Photographs show it was in poor condition and lacked significant architectural detailing that could help narrow down the period of construction.
- The demolished chimney was in an advanced state of deterioration and posed a legitimate safety concern.
- The addition of a new window opening at the location of the demolished chimney will present a change to the façade rhythm. Use of a salvaged wood window identical to existing windows minimizes visual disruption of the façade.
- The demolished rear addition was not historic, and photographs show was in an advanced state of deterioration.
- The window openings the applicant proposes removing and siding over are both located on tertiary elevations (south and east) but are partially visible from Flint and Alabama Streets, respectively.

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PROPERTY AND APPLICATION HISTORY

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

The property at 351 Flint Street is a frame one-story minimal traditional dwelling with a side gable roof and a simple brick front porch under a shed roof. The dwelling was likely constructed in 1934. The building does not appear on the 1924 Sanborn map but is found on the 1956 overlay. Mobile City Directories first list the address in 1935. The address does not appear in the 1933 directory. The 1956 Sanborn overlay shows a small structure with a footprint that is roughly square with no accessory structures. The cross-gable rear addition on the east side of the building was therefore constructed after 1956 and before 1967, when it first appears on an aerial photograph of the area. Google Earth images show that the smaller shed-roofed rear addition and the wood frame garage structure were constructed prior to 2002. Both the shed-roofed addition and the garage were stylistically quite plain and could have been constructed at any time in the second half of the 20th Century.

This property has never appeared before the Architectural Review Board.

SCOPE OF WORK

1. Demolish detached garage structure at rear (east end) of property.
2. Demolish non-historic rear addition.
3. Demolish external brick chimney on north elevation.
4. Create new window opening at chimney location on north elevation; install salvaged 3-over-1 wood window.

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

1. **5.3** Preserve the key historic walls of a building.
 - Maintain significant historic façades in their original form.
 - Maintain historic façade elements.
 - Pay special attention to maintaining the historic appearance of building walls of corner buildings.
2. **5.10** Preserve the original form of a historic roof.
 - Maintain the original pitch.
 - Preserve decorative elements, including crests and chimneys.
3. **12.0** Guidelines for Demolition
 - Consider the current significance of a structure previously determined to be historic.
 - Consider the condition of the structure in question. Demolition may be more appropriate when a building is deteriorated or in poor condition.
 - Consider whether the building is one of the last remaining positive examples of its kind in the neighborhood, county, or region.
 - Consider the impact that demolition will have on surrounding structures, including neighboring properties, properties on the same block or across the street, or properties throughout the individual historic district.
 - Consider whether the building is part of an ensemble of historic buildings that create a neighborhood.
 - Consider the future utilization of the site

STAFF ANALYSIS

The subject property is a contributing resource within the Leinkauf Historic District. The application under review seeks after-the-fact approval to demolish an accessory garage structure; demolish a shed-roofed rear addition; remove an external brick chimney on the north elevation; and create a new window opening at the location of the former chimney. The application also asks for approval to remove framing at two existing window openings and install siding to match existing.

Demolition of Rear Addition and Accessory Structure

The *Guidelines* require that the following be considered when a demolition is proposed: the architectural significance of the building, the impact the demolition will have on the streetscape, and the nature of future utilization of the site. (12.0)

The existing National Register nomination identifies the period of significance for Leinkauf as extending from 1896 to 1955. The nomination lists structures constructed after this date as non-contributing. If the district were resurveyed today, structures built prior to 1974 would be re-evaluated in keeping with the National Park Service's requirement that structures must be 50 years old or older before they can be considered eligible for the National Register. The exact dates of construction of the rear addition and garage are not known, but both were certainly constructed after 1956 since they do not appear on the Sanborn map overlay for that year. They are, therefore, non-contributing according to the current National Register nomination. The Google map street view from 2002 is the first known documentation of the rear addition and garage. While it is possible the structures were completed prior to 1974, there is no historic documentation to confirm this. Both structures were also devoid of any decorative architectural details that could help narrow down the date of construction.

Demolition of the garage and rear addition had minimal impact on the streetscape. They were not especially fine examples of a specific architectural style, and neither was one of the last examples of a common architectural form within the district. The garage especially was not typical of the district as a whole. While the dwelling fronts on Flint Street, the garage fronts on Alabama Street. Historically, neither residences nor accessory structures fronted Alabama. In 1956, a single garage structure is shown in the rear yard of 400 Michigan Avenue with a frontage on Alabama. This structure is extant today and is far more architecturally distinctive than the demolished garage at 351 Flint Street. It features a clipped gable roof, a 6-lite wood window, and decorative eave brackets.

The *Guidelines* also state that "demolition may be more appropriate when a building is deteriorated or in poor condition." Both the rear addition and the garage had been neglected and allowed to deteriorate for many years. The rear addition was in particularly poor condition. Google maps images from 2011 and 2013 show both structures with peeling paint and encroaching vegetation. The rear addition appears to have a partially tarped roofed in both 2011 and 2013. Vines and other vegetation completely covered the east side of the garage in 2013. The applicant has provided more recent photographs showing that the addition's northwest corner and a portion of its roof had collapsed. There was also visible rot and deterioration of the wood cladding. The applicant's photos also show a hole in the southeast corner of the garage roof.

Demolition of External Chimney

The *Guidelines* instruct property owners to maintain historic roof elements, including chimneys, wherever possible. (5.10) The applicant has provided documentation that the existing brick chimney was structurally unstable and that attempts to stabilize it were unsuccessful. Daniel Franklin, a Certified Field Inspector for AFS Foundation Repair, performed a site inspection and found the chimney to be more than 5 inches out of plumb with horizontal cracking approximately 1/3 of the way up the chimney. An attempt was made to install helical piers to bring the chimney back into alignment, but the job foreman determined that the chimney did not have a proper footing that would support the piers. The inspector concluded that the only structure preventing the

chimney from toppling over was a rotten roofing truss. The chimney was determined to be a legitimate safety concern and was taken down.

New Window Opening

Following removal of the chimney, the applicant began making repairs to the deteriorated siding in that location. The applicant made the decision at this time to frame out a new window opening in this location. The window opening has the same dimensions as the existing full-sized window openings. The applicant proposes installing a salvaged 3-over-1 wood window to match the existing windows.

The *Guidelines* instructs property owners to “maintain significant historic façades in their original form” and specifically to “pay special attention to maintaining the historic appearance of building walls of corner buildings.” (5.3) 351 Flint Street is a corner building, and the new window opening is on the north elevation, which fronts Alabama Street. The *Guidelines* also identify window “location and configuration” as significant character defining features. The proposed new window opening will introduce a change to the original fenestration pattern of the north elevation of 351 Flint Street. However, addition of the new window will also fill blank wall space left by the demolition of the chimney. The use of a salvaged 3-over-1 wood window at this location identical to the existing windows will further minimize disruption to the “rhythm” of the north elevation.

Infill Existing Window Openings

Since being in touch with Historic Development Department staff, the applicant has requested permission to remove and infill and side over two existing window openings: one on the east elevation and one on the south. As discussed above, the *Guidelines* instruct property owners to retain original fenestration patterns, especially on corner buildings. (5.03) Both window openings the applicant proposes covering are located on tertiary elevations, that is, they do not front either Flint or Alabama Streets. The window opening on the east elevation was uncovered during the removal of the shed-roofed addition and does not retain original window sash. The opening is currently infilled with a wood panel and is easily visible from Alabama Street. The south window opening retains its original sash, which are in poor but salvageable condition. The applicant has indicated to staff that he would like to remove this window as there will be an interior bathroom at this location. The window is located toward the rear of the south elevation behind an existing fence that partially obscures view of the window from Flint Street.

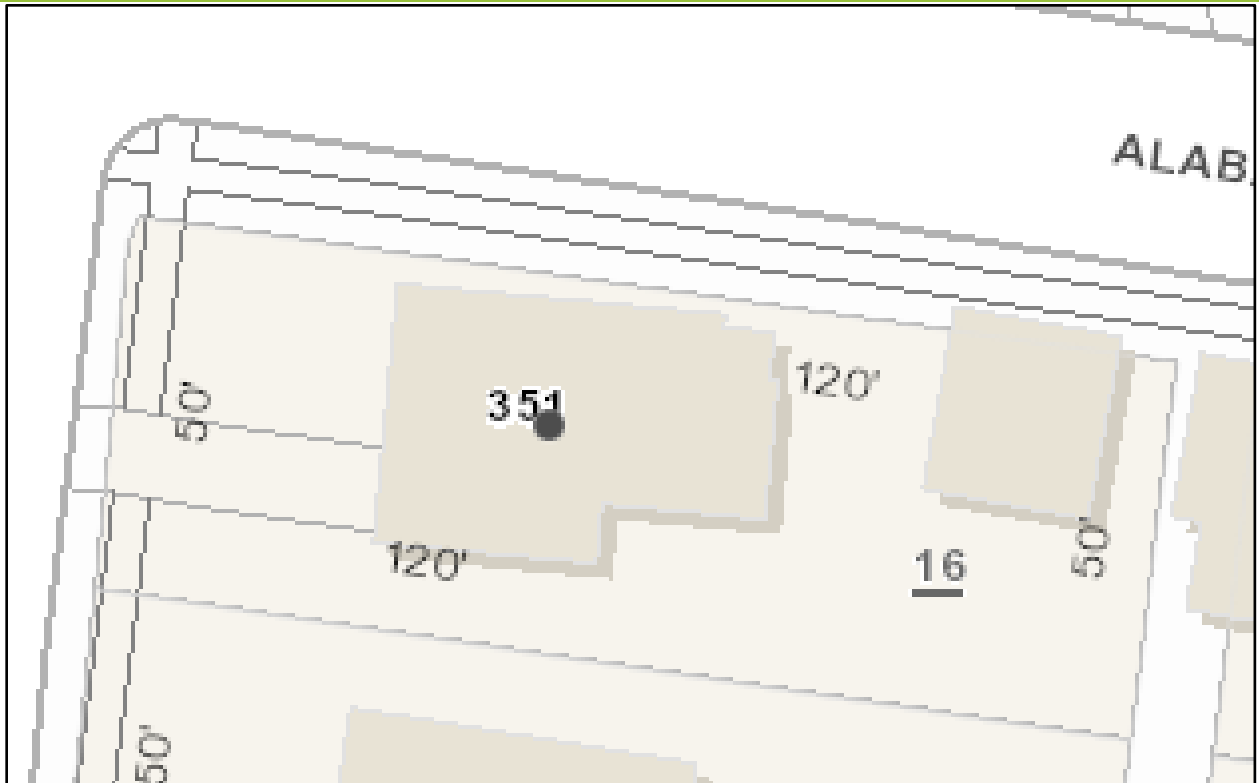
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD VICINITY MAP



APPLICATION NUMBER	2	DATE	2/7/2024
APPLICANT	Demetrius Hendrix		
PROJECT	Demolish existing chimney; demolish non-historic shed		

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NTS



Site Photos – 351 Flint Street



1. West (front) façade, looking east



2. South elevation, looking northeast. Arrow indicates window proposed for infill.



3. South elevation, looking northwest. Arrow indicates window proposed for infill.



4. East (rear) elevation, looking west. Arrow indicates window proposed for infill.



5. North elevation, looking southwest. Arrow indicates window proposed for infill.



6. North elevation, looking south. New window opening shown at former location of demolished chimney.



7. North elevation prior to removal of chimney and rear addition (photo provided by applicant)



8. Garage prior to removal (photo provided by applicant)