



Agenda Item #6

Applications 2024-25-CA

DETAILS

Location:

6 S. Franklin Street

Summary of Request:

Remove frame and metal enclosure of rear double gallery and secure exposed openings. Perform emergency repairs of north and south elevation brick walls.

Applicant (as applicable):

Mike Rogers

Property Owner:

Historic Mobile, LLC

Historic District:

Lower Dauphin Street Commercial

Classification:

Contributing

Summary of Analysis:

- The application seeks approval for the demolition of the enclosure of the rear wing galleries and implementation of other measures to stabilize the building prior to full rehabilitation.
- The submitted plans are in compliance with the *Design Review Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts*.

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PROPERTY AND APPLICATION HISTORY

Lower Dauphin Street Commercial Historic District was initially listed in the National Register in 1979 under Criteria A (historic significance) and C (architectural significance) for its local significance in the areas of commerce and architecture. The district is significant for its unique character stemming from the high concentration of closely spaced two- and three-story brick buildings and as Mobile's nineteenth century commercial thoroughfare. The district boundaries were expanded in 1982, 1995, 1998, and 2019.

The subject property was constructed c. 1852 (though possibly as early as 1824) for Giovanni Giacomo Chighizola, an Italian immigrant born in 1789. Chighizola established himself as a merchant in Mobile. The property was sold out of the Chighizola family in 1880 and passed through several owners until it was purchased by Morris Hoffman, a furniture merchant, in 1938. The property was owned by the Hoffman family and used for storage until December 2023, when Historic Mobile purchased the property with the intent of selling it to a party who would rehabilitate it.

The house was constructed as a side-hall plan residence with two rooms on the first and second floors. More private rooms and servants' quarters were arrayed in an offset rear wing, and those rooms were accessed via open galleries on the south elevation of the wing. The building footprint shown on the 1878 Hopkins ward map of Mobile shows a main front structure with inset rear additions unfolding to the west. The rear wing was constructed as a series of rooms accessible by open galleries, rather than an enclosed hallway, and the roof steps down as the importance of the occupants decreases. The frame porches on the rear wing and a frame porch across the east elevation (façade) are very clearly depicted on the 1885, 1891, 1904, and 1924 Sanborn maps. By the time the 1955 revision of the 1924 Sanborn map was prepared, the porches on the south elevation had been enclosed, and the house is shown as being used for furniture storage. Therefore, the existing corrugated metal and wood enclosure along the western half of the south elevation date to some point between 1924 and 1955, but likely around 1938 when the property changed hands. The full-width porch or balcony on the façade was still extant as of the 1955 Sanborn map but has since disappeared.

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

SCOPE OF WORK

1. Complete emergency repairs and stabilization.
 - a. Remove failing portions of north and south (side) walls and rebuild using existing bricks. Replace missing bricks in-kind. All masonry work will utilize an appropriate lime-based mortar mix.
 - b. Repoint areas where historic mortar has deteriorated, using an appropriate lime-based mortar.
 - c. Remove and replace damaged/deteriorated roofing, rafters, and decking. Extant slates will be stored for later reinstallation. Install a temporary peel-and-stick shingle roof for stabilization purposes until the slate roof is reinstalled in a future phase.
2. Remove rear double gallery enclosure.
 - a. The two-story frame and metal enclosure (including windows, door, later decking, and stairs) of the rear double gallery would be removed.
 - b. The original porch roof (the overhang of the rear wing roof) would remain. The later porch addition framing, including the roof extension, would be removed.
 - c. Secure the existing door and window openings along the south side of the building to preclude entry by animals or vagrants.
 - A temporary plywood enclosure wall would be erected at the perimeter of the original gallery.

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

1. 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. (5.4)
2. Preserve and restore the visibility of original historic materials.
 - Consider removing later covering materials that have not achieved historic significance.
 - Once a non-historic siding is removed, repair the original, underlying material.
 - Do not cover or obscure original building materials. (5.5)
 3. 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. (5.6)
 4. Preserve and repair original masonry materials.
 - Preserve masonry features that define the overall historic character, such as walls, cornices, pediments, steps and foundations.
 - Take particular care with historic masonry. Consult Staff for guidance when repairing and replacing mortar joints and masonry. (5.8)
 5. Repair and maintain original roof materials rather than replace them, wherever possible.
 - Patch and replace damaged areas of an existing roof. (5.12)

STAFF ANALYSIS

The subject property is a contributing resource in the Lower Dauphin Street Commercial District and has sat derelict for at least five decades. The applicant wishes to rehabilitate the property, and the proposed work tasks are the first steps toward achieving that goal, as stabilization and emergency repairs are necessary.

Based on the ownership and use of the subject property, it is likely the wood framing and metal siding that enclose the rear gallery, were constructed between 1938 and 1955. As recognized by the Secretary of the Interior, changes to historic properties may merit preservation if they have achieved historic significance in their own right.¹ The application under review seeks to remove the c. 1938 enclosure in order to reveal the original double gallery along the south elevation in the process of a full rehabilitation. Despite its survival over the last 85 years, the enclosure was not well constructed, as the deterioration evident on the interior illustrates. The failures of the enclosure have led to damage and deterioration of the c. 1852 Chighizola House, consistent with the trapping of moisture. Further, the enclosure obscures the character-defining double gallery at the rear wing of the house. Therefore, in accordance with the *Guidelines*, the removal of the metal siding enclosure would reveal original building materials and bolster preservation efforts for the historic structure. (5.5)

The proposed removal of failing masonry on the north and south elevations, replacement of missing bricks on the south elevation, and repointing in areas where the lime-based mortar has degraded over the last 170 years would be in full compliance with the *Guidelines'* instructions to, "Use original materials to replace damaged building

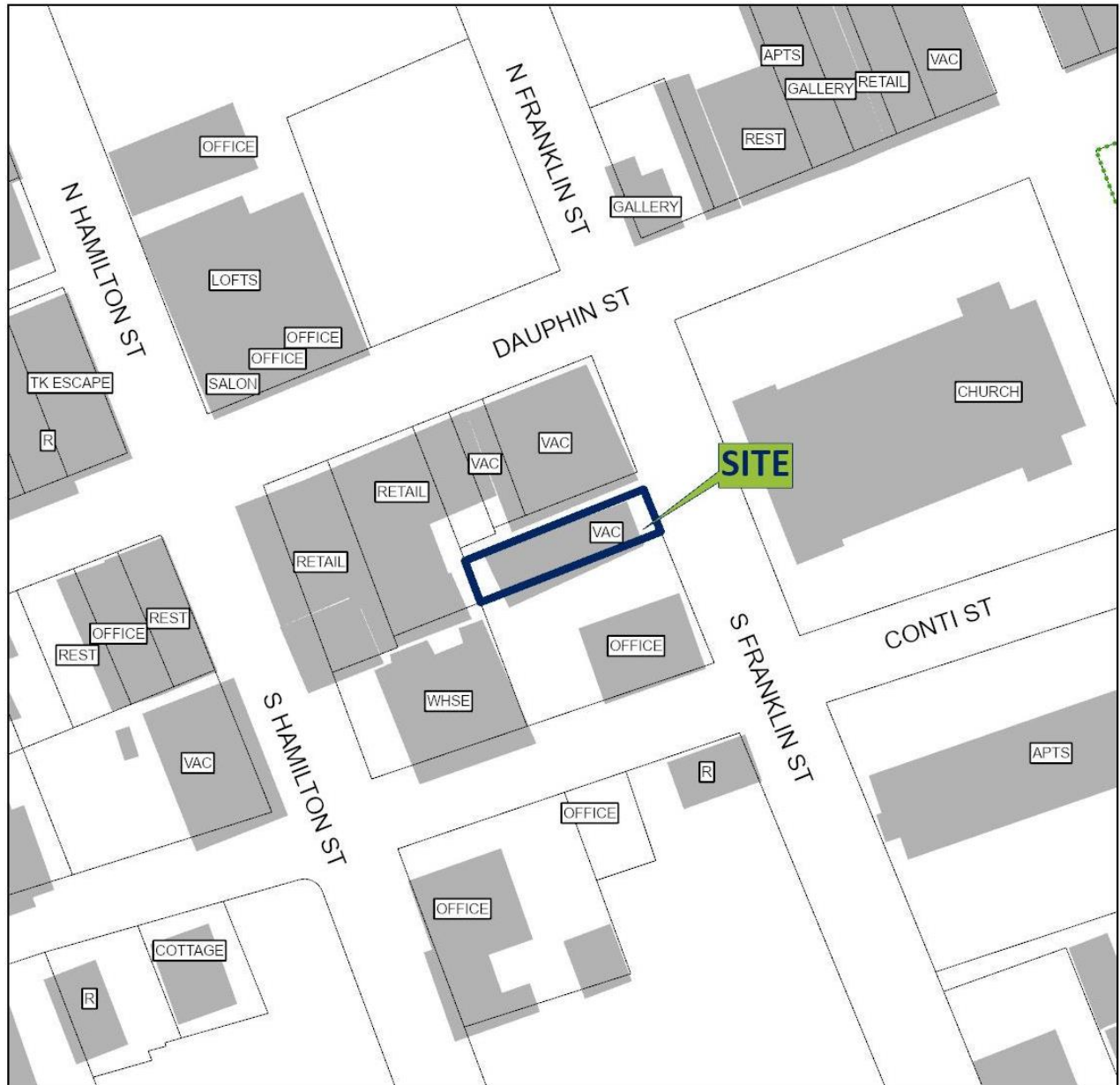
¹ Standard 4, Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties ("Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.")

materials on a primary façade if possible” and, “Replace only the amount of material required.” (5.6, 5.7) The applicant will save for reuse any bricks removed in the process of stabilization, and replacement bricks, if necessary, will match as closely as possible the existing bricks. (5.4, 5.8)

The deteriorated roof structure will be repaired, and extant slates will be saved for later use. The applicant proposes a temporary shingle roof while later phases of the rehabilitation are planned and executed. It is the applicant’s intention to, “Repair and maintain original roof materials rather than replace them,” as provided by the *Guidelines*. (5.12)

Site Location – 6 S. Franklin Street

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD VICINITY MAP



APPLICATION NUMBER	6	DATE	5/15/2024
APPLICANT	Mike Rogers		
PROJECT	Repairs & temporary alterations to secure & prepare building for future rehabilitation		



Site Photos – 6 S. Franklin Street



1. View west-northwest along south wall of 1st floor porch, rear wing



2. example of deteriorated mortar in south wall of rear wing



3. View west along south elevation, 2nd floor porch, rear wing; note later roof extension and stairs (left)



4. View north into space between front block of house and rear wing (shown as frame porch on Sanborn maps)



5. View east along south wall, 1st floor porch, rear wing



6. View north-northwest to area of missing bricks over window on south elevation

Site Photos – 6 S. Franklin Street



7. view northwest to south (left) and east (right) elevations of subject property



8. View northwest to frame and metal enclosure of double gallery at rear wing



9. view west-southwest to north elevation of subject property; note precarious condition of brick wall