



Agenda Item #5

Certified Record 2026-59-CA

DETAILS

Location:

1206 Elmira Street

Summary of Request:

After-the-fact approval to remove all existing wood windows and replace with vinyl windows; after-the-fact approval to paint brick foundation, knee wall, and column piers.

Applicant (as applicable):

Khalen Mason

Property Owner:

Bobby Dixon (c/o Khalen Mason)

Historic District:

Oakleigh Garden

Classification:

Contributing

Summary of Analysis:

- The *Design Guidelines* state that existing historic windows should be repaired instead of replaced whenever possible. When appropriate, replacement windows should match the original in size, location, and light configuration.
- The *Design Guidelines* list vinyl replacement windows as inappropriate in the local historic districts.
- Exterior brick foundations and porch have been partially painted. While painting unpainted historic masonry is not compliant with the *Guidelines*, the visual impact is minimal in this case.

Report Contents:

Property and Application History	2
Scope of Work	2
Applicable Standards	2
Staff Analysis	3
Attachments	5

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 subject property is a one-story wood-frame Craftsman bungalow, constructed c. 1929, the first year that the address appears in the Mobile City Directory. The bungalow has a front gable roof and a prominent porch with its own gable roof. The porch features square wood columns on masonry piers with a low masonry knee wall instead of a porch railing or balustrade. Concrete copings cap the masonry piers and knee walls. The yellow face brick on the porch and porch stair continues onto the raised continuous foundation of the main dwelling. The house itself is clad in wood clapboards. The dwelling originally featured double-hung wood windows with a four-over-one light pattern typical of the Craftsman style.

According to Historic Development Department records, this property has never appeared before the Architectural Review Board.

SCOPE OF WORK

1. Remove all existing wood 4-over-1 wood windows and replace with 1-over-1 vinyl windows to fit the openings.
2. Paint side knee walls of brick porch and foundation at south façade black.

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

1. 5.05 Preserve and restore the visibility of original historic materials.
 - Do not cover or obscure original building materials.
2. 5.08 Preserve and repair original masonry materials.
 - Preserve masonry features that define the overall historic character, such as walls, cornices, pediments, steps and foundations.
 - Unpainted 19th Century imported Philadelphia and locally manufactured brick may not be painted. In cases where historic brick has been previously painted, the paint color should be of a suitable color to match the age and architectural style of the structure.
3. 5.20 Preserve the functional historic and decorative features of a historic window.
 - Where historic (wooden or metal) windows are intact and in repairable condition, retain and repair them to match the existing as per location, light configuration, detail and material.
 - Preserve historic window features, including the frame, sash, muntins, mullions, glazing, sills, heads, jambs, moldings, operation, and groupings of windows.
 - Repair, rather than replace, frames and sashes, wherever possible.
 - For repair of window components, epoxies and related products may serve as effective solutions to material deterioration and operational malfunction.
4. 5.21 When historic windows are not in a repairable condition, match the replacement window design to the original.
 - In instances where there is a request to replace a building's windows, the new windows shall match the existing as per location, framing, and light configuration.
 - Use any salvageable window components on a primary elevation.

5. ACCEPTABLE WINDOW MATERIALS

Materials that are the same as the original, or that appear similar in texture, profile and finish to the original are acceptable. These often include:

- Wood sash
- Steel, if original to structure
- Custom extruded aluminum
- Aluminum clad wood
- Windows approved by the National Park Service

UNACCEPTABLE WINDOW MATERIALS Materials that do not appear similar to the original in texture, profile and finish are unacceptable. These often include:

- Vinyl
- Mill-finished aluminum
- Interior snap-in muntins (except when used in concert with exterior muntins and intervening dividers)

STAFF ANALYSIS

The subject property is listed as contributing in Oakleigh Garden Historic District. The application under review seeks after-the-fact approval for the removal and replacement of all original four-over-one wood windows with one-over-one vinyl windows that appear to fit the existing window openings. The application also seeks after-the-fact approval to paint the brick raised foundation, porch stair, knee wall, and column piers, as well as the concrete coping.

The *Guidelines* recommend that historic windows that are intact and in repairable condition be retained and repaired, and those that are not repairable be replaced with new windows that are consistent with the existing in location, framing, and light configuration. (5.20, 5.21). Acceptable replacement window materials include wood and aluminum-clad wood. According to the Guidelines, the Board should first consider the condition of the existing windows. If the existing windows are beyond the point of reasonable repair, the Board should then consider the materials, dimension, placement, configuration, and details of the proposed replacement windows. The Guidelines are unclear regarding the painting of unpainted historic masonry. The *Guidelines* specifically restrict painting “19th Century imported Philadelphia and locally manufactured brick” without mentioning appropriate treatments of other historic masonry (5.08). However, the Guidelines’ explicit instruction against covering or obscuring original building materials may be generalized to discourage painting of unpainted historic masonry (5.05).

Assessment of Existing Window Condition

The original windows had already been removed by the time staff responded to a 311 complaint of unpermitted work in a local historic district. The condition of the original windows is unknown.

Replacement Windows

The existing replacement windows are non-compliant regarding their material, configuration, and details. They appear to be compliant in their dimensions and placement.

The Design Guidelines explicitly list vinyl as inappropriate for replacement windows in existing structures in the local historic districts. The one-over-one sash configuration does not replicate the original four-over-one double-hung wood windows. However, one-over-one sash windows would have been in common use when the subject property was constructed in 1929. The replacement windows are therefore in keeping with the period of construction even if they do not exactly replicate the original appearance of this specific structure. A one-over-one configuration is also preferable to a four-over-one sash with superficial “stick-on” muntins. The addition of superficial muntins at this point would therefore not be a desirable compromise.

The replacement windows do appear to fit the existing openings. Likewise, it does not appear that any window openings were removed or added as part of the unpermitted work. The overall fenestration pattern therefore remains intact.

The primary points of mitigation are therefore the inappropriate window material and the one-over-one light configuration. The narrow side yards on this block of Elmira Street mean that most of the windows on the side of the home are minimally visible from the public right-of-way. Windows on the rear are not visible at all from the public right-of-way. One possible mitigation would be to replace the four windows on the facade and the two windows nearest the street on the east elevation with either wood or aluminum-clad wood windows with a four-over-one light configuration. These windows would need to have exterior muntins and an interior spacer bar to imitate the appearance of the original windows.

Painted Masonry Porch

When staff responded to a complaint regarding unpermitted work, the brick foundation and porch were already partially painted. Painting unpainted historic brick is not recommended because it alters the structures original material palette and design intent. Painting can also damage historic masonry if the paint used is not sufficiently vapor permeable. It is not known what type of paint was used in this application. If a masonry-specific paint formula was used, risk to the brick is minor.

The visual impact of the painted brick is far less significant than the inappropriate replacement windows. Painting is limited to the side knee walls of the front porch and the continuous foundation at the south façade. The south walls and steps of the porch remain unpainted. Paint removal is likely to cause damage and is therefore not a realistic mitigation.

Site Location – 1206 Elmira Street

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD VICINITY MAP	
	
APPLICATION NUMBER <u>5</u> DATE <u>10/7/2026</u>	
APPLICANT <u>Khalen Mason on behalf of Bobby Dixon</u>	
PROJECT <u>After-the-fact approval to remove all existing wood windows and replace with vinyl windows; after-the-fact approval to paint brick foundation, knee wall, and column piers.</u>	
 NTS	

Site Photos – 1206 Elmira Street



1. South façade, looking N



2. South façade and west elevation, looking NE



3. West elevation, looking NE



4. East elevation, looking NW



5. Closeup of vinyl replacement windows on south façade at front porch. Windows appear to fit the existing opening.



6. Closeup of vinyl replacement windows on south façade. Windows appear to fit the existing opening.

Sanborn Maps - 1206 Elmira Street



7. West knee wall of porch painted black



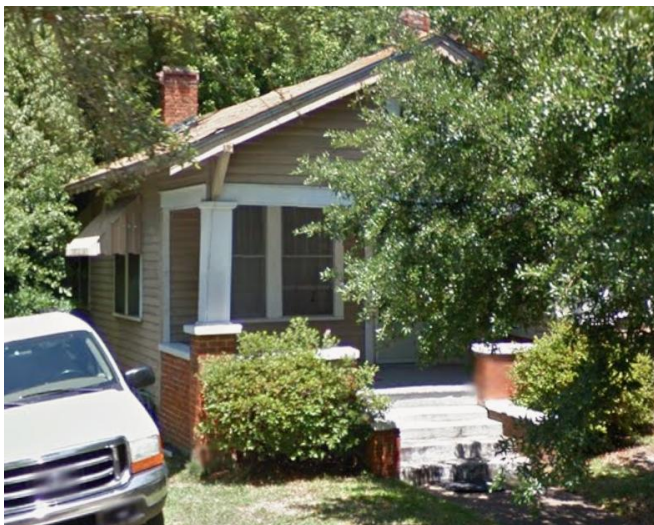
8. East knee wall of porch and foundation painted black.



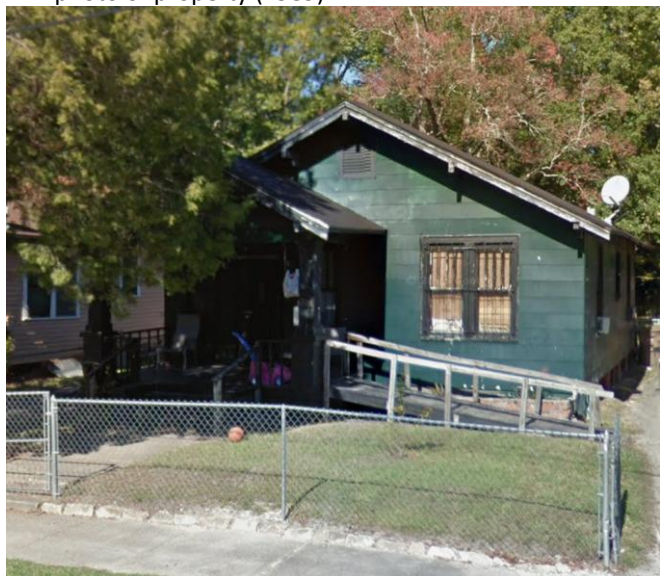
9. MHDC survey photo of property (1979)



10. Original four-over-one windows visible in MHDC survey photo of property (1989)



11. Google Map Street View of property (2016). Four-over-one sash windows are visible on south façade at porch.



12. Comparable four-over-one windows in place at 1204 Elmira Street (Google Maps, 2016)

Manage Permit

Search

MW

HD-178122-2026 (1206 ELMIRA ST MOBILE, AL 36604)



New permit

Summary

Details

Location

Additional Info

Workflow

Linked Records

Holds

Contacts (1)

Fees (1)

Bonds

Activities

Files (3)

Print Documents

Conditions

Tasks

Internal Notes

Inspection Cases

Communication (3)

Review Team

Impact Units

History

Project Information

Major/Minor Project Checklist

Exterior Painting Checklist

Additional Information

REVIEW TYPE:
(choose one)

Full ARB

Does the Project involve Signage?

No

If Yes, an ARB Sign Permit application is required.

If Mid-Month, what type:

Does the Project involve Demolition?

No

If Yes, an ARB Demolition application is required.

* Cost of Project
\$10,000.00

Does the Project involve Tree Removal?

No

If Yes, a site plan showing all trees and landscaping that will be removed is required.

Proposed Scope of Work
Vinyl windows installedNOTE: The
Approved Scope of
Work must be
inserted here in

APPROVED Scope of Work