



Agenda Item #1

Application 2025-30-CA

DETAILS

Location:

1159 Old Shell Road

Summary of Request:

After-the-fact window and column replacement on façade; Paint applied to brick porch wall

Applicant (as applicable):

1818 Designs, LLC

Property Owner:

Same

Historic District:

Old Dauphin Way

Classification:

Contributing

Summary of Analysis:

- Staff conducted a site visit at the property after receiving a call regarding ongoing non-compliant work.
- Historic windows on the façade were removed, contrary to submitted plans and approved work. Openings were filled with an inappropriate arrangement.
- Windows on the east and west elevation have been replaced. Plans state that existing windows are to be repaired.
- Paint was applied to the brick porch wall.
- UPDATE: Applicant has submitted a condition report for the three full length windows original to the facade

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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 1159 Old Shell Road was constructed in 1900 for Lorenzo Hardy, who acquired the lot in May 1900 and is first listed residing at what was then 129 Springhill Shell Road in 1901. The 1902 City Directory lists the address as 127 Old Shell Road, and the 1904 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows a frame dwelling with a similar footprint to the existing structure at this address. The overall form of the existing structure - with its complex roof structure, asymmetrical façade, and protruding end bay – is typical of a turn-of-the-century Queen Anne Style cottage. The form closely parallels that of the neighboring dwelling immediately to the east, suggesting the two may have once been identical sister houses. Originally 1159 Old Shell Road likely had a wood-frame porch with turned columns and decorative woodwork similar to that seen at 1157 Old Shell Road. This porch was removed at an unknown date and replaced with a Craftsman style brick porch with battered wood columns, as seen in a photograph taken in October 1983. Stylistic evidence suggests this alteration was made sometime between 1920 and 1930, though this has not been confirmed. The porch roof and battered columns were demolished without approval in 2008. At the time, the Historic Development Department (HDD) staff issued a Stop Work Order. The brick stairs, platform, and column plinths remained intact. Plans to construct a rear addition, restore and rebuild the craftsman style porch and columns, repair all existing wood windows, and carry out other in-kind repairs and replacements were submitted to the ARB in 2024. In May 2025, HDD Staff was alerted to potential non-compliant work in progress at the property. A site visit revealed that some of the exterior work had deviated from the submitted plans. A Stop Work Order was issued.

According to HDD files, this property has appeared once before the Architectural Review Board (ARB). In 2024, a COA was issued to restore the front porch, conduct exterior restoration and repairs, and to construct a rear addition.

SCOPE OF WORK

After-the-fact approval of exterior work which does not follow approved SOW or submitted plans, to include:

1. Installation of five replacement windows along the façade.
 - a. Three (3) original boxhead windows, reeded trim and bullseye corner blocks along the porch bay of the façade (with one located on the east side of the bay window) were removed. One (1) two-over-two window and trim centered on the bay window was removed. One (1) one-over-one window and trim located on the west side of the bay window was removed.
 - b. Each original boxhead opening was filled a wood one-over-one window below a lintel board, with a fixed single-light window above.
 - c. Both the two-over-two and one-over-one windows were replaced with wood one-over-one windows which fit the existing openings.
 - d. Flat Hardie board trim was installed around to replace all original trim.
2. Replacement of all windows on side elevations.
 - a. Historic one-over-one windows, and associated trim were removed along the east and west elevations.
 - b. Replacement windows are one-over-one wood windows which fit the original openings.
 - c. Submitted plans call for repair of all existing windows on the east and west elevations.
3. Installation of four (4) non-tapered Hardie board boxed columns located on existing plinths on porch.
 - a. The non-tapered profile does not match those on the submitted plans.
 - b. The plans reflect the installation of three (3) tapered columns to match historic photograph.
4. Paint applied to brick porch wall

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. **5.4** 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.
3. **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.
4. **5.7** When replacing materials on a non-primary façade or elevation, match the original material in composition, scale and finish.
 - Use original materials to replace damaged materials on a non-primary façade when possible.
5. **5.8** 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.
 - 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.
6. **5.17** Preserve historic stylistic and architectural details and ornamentation.
 - Retain historic details and ornamentation intact.
 - Repair historic details and ornamentation that are deteriorated.
7. **5.19** Where repair is impossible, replace details and ornamentation accurately.
 - When replacing historic details, match the original in profile, dimension, and material.
 - A substitute material may be considered if it appears similar in character and finish to the original. A measured drawing may be required in these instances to recreate missing historic details from photographs.
 - Do not apply architectural details that were not part of the original structure. For example, decorative mill work should not be added to a building if it was not an original feature. Doing so would convey a false history.
8. **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.

9. **5.22** When a historic window is missing on a key character-defining wall, use a historically accurate replacement.

- Historically accurate light patterns shall be employed. Use photographic, physical, and/or documentary evidence for the design.
- A new window shall be installed in such a manner as to fit within the original window opening and match in depth and filling of the reveal. A reveal is the part of the side of a window opening that is between the outer surface of the wall and the window.
- A doubled-paned or clad wood window may be considered as a replacement alternative only if the replacement matches the configuration, dimensions, and profiles of original windows.
- For increased efficiency, storm windows can be installed. A storm window shall fit within the window reveal and avoid damaging window casings. Operable storm windows are encouraged.

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)

10. **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.

11. **5.22** When a historic window is missing on a key character-defining wall, use a historically accurate replacement.

- Historically accurate light patterns shall be employed. Use photographic, physical, and/or documentary evidence for the design.
- A new window shall be installed in such a manner as to fit within the original window opening and match in depth and filling of the reveal. A reveal is the part of the side of a window opening that is between the outer surface of the wall and the window.
- A double-paned or clad wood window may be considered as a replacement alternative only if the replacement matches the configuration, dimensions, and profiles of original windows.
- For increased efficiency, storm windows can be installed. A storm window shall fit within the window reveal and avoid damaging window casings. Operable storm windows are encouraged.

12. **6.5** Repair a porch in a way that maintains the original character.

13. **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.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The subject property is a contributing structure to the Old Dauphin Way Historic District. The application under review requests after-the-fact approval for replacement windows on the façade and east and west elevations; four (4) new box columns; and paint applied to the brick porch wall.

After receiving notification of potential non-compliant work in progress at 1159 Old Shell Road, Staff conducted a site visit. The following work was discovered which deviates from the plans submitted to the Historic Development office and permitting office:

WINDOWS

The submitted plans associated with the subject project indicate that all existing windows are to be repaired. At the site the following was observed:

- Three boxed head windows and the surrounding reeded trim with bullseye corner blocks were removed and replaced. Each original boxhead opening was filled a wood one-over-one window below a fascia board, with a fixed single-light window above. Flat Hardie board trim was installed around the window openings.
- One (1) two-over-two window and trim centered on the bay window was removed. One (1) one-over-one window and trim located on the west side of the bay window was removed.
- All one-over-one windows and trim along the east and west elevations were replaced with wood one-over-one windows which fit the openings and Hardie board trim.

The box head windows on the façade are an important architectural element of the subject dwelling, serving to significantly define not only its Queen Anne style origins, but also its historic functions. Box head windows are constructed so that the sashes can slide vertically up into the head – and sometimes above it into a cavity in the wall – to provide maximum opening for ventilation. They were prominent decorative features of Queen Anne style architecture and an integral part of the subject structure’s façade. (5.3, 5.4, 5.6) Like the signature box head window, Queen Anne homes also frequently boasted three-part bay windows featuring sash windows with two-over-one and one-over-one configurations, such as the one at the subject property. Historic photographs reveal that the previously existing sashes in the bay were most likely the original, which match those of the twin neighbor at 1157 Old Shell Road. The Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, along with Mobile’s Design Review Guidelines, call for the repair rather than replacement of historic windows. Guideline 5.20 reads as follows:

“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.” (5.20)*

The replacement window arrangement installed in each of the box head window openings consists of a wood one-over-one window below a lintel board, with a fixed single-light window above. This is an inappropriate alternative to the full-length window previously extant in these openings and considerably alters the stylistic expression of the façade.

During the site visit, historic windows were found on the property. These windows appear to be the original box head windows removed from the façade, and potentially those from the bay window as well. The windows seem to be in good repairable condition. Also discovered was a dumpster containing removed trim.

The previously existing wood one-over-one windows on the east and west elevations were proposed and approved to be repaired, according to the submitted plans and approved scope of work (SOW). They have been replaced with wood one-over-one windows that fit the existing openings. The material, dimensions and light configuration are in keeping with the original, with a flatter profile.

PORCH COLUMNS

Also noted during the Staff site visit, there are four non-tapered Hardie board boxed columns, which have been installed on existing masonry plinths along the porch bay of the façade. When the craftsman style front porch was constructed c. 1920/30s, three tapered box columns typical of the craftsman style were installed, which are documented in historic photographs. The submitted plans state that replacement columns would be tapered wood columns which are based on a historic photo of the dwelling. The Design Review Guidelines state:

“Preserve historic stylistic and architectural details and ornamentation.

- *Retain historic details and ornamentation intact.*
- *Repair historic details and ornamentation that are deteriorated.” (5.17)*

“Where repair is impossible, replace details and ornamentation accurately.

- *When replacing historic details, match the original in profile, dimension, and material.*
- *A substitute material may be considered if it appears similar in character and finish to the original. A measured drawing may be required in these instances to recreate missing historic details from photographs.*
- *Do not apply architectural details that were not part of the original structure. For example, decorative mill work should not be added to a building if it was not an original feature. Doing so would convey a false history.” (5.19)*

The current replacement columns lack the dimensionality provided by the taper and the paneling seen on the original columns in historic photographs. The use of Hardie board, though not congruent with what was submitted by the applicant, is a suitable replacement material as noted in guideline 5.19 above; however, the flatter profile of the replacement columns produces an overall look of inferior craftsmanship and does not appropriately convey the craftsman styling of the historic porch. (5.3, 5.4, 5.6)

PAINTED BRICK PORCH WALL

Staff further observed that paint had been applied to the brick porch wall and masonry steps. Painting the brick or steps was not noted in the submitted plans, or any issued COAs. The proposed plans and approved SOW state that the brick wall and steps would be power washed. Painting the brick veneer of the historic house is not in conformance with the *Guidelines*, which instruct to “maintain significant facades in their original form” and further state, “masonry features that define the overall historic character, such as walls, cornices, pediments, steps, or foundations” should be preserved. (5.3, 5.8)

SITE LOCATION – 1159 OLD SHELL ROAD



Site Photos – 1159 OLD SHELL ROAD



1. View of subject property, looking SW



2. View of property, looking SE



3. Detail of replacement windows on façade



4. Detail of replacement window on façade



5. View of property prior to rehabilitation



6. Interior view of box head windows in place (May 2024)

Site Photos – 1159 OLD SHELL ROAD



7. Interior view of bay window sashes in place (May 2024)



8. Historic survey photo showing craftsman porch and columns.



9. View of neighbor twin property at 1157 Old Shell Road.



10. View of east elevation replacement windows.



11. View of west elevation replacement windows.



12. Detail of replacement one-over-one windows.

Site Photos – 1159 OLD SHELL ROAD



13. Detail of replacement one-over-one windows.



14. Detail of replacement one-over-one windows.



15. Removed historic windows



16. Removed historic windows



17. Detail of replacement one-over-one windows.



18. Removed trim

DISCUSSION ON THE APPLICATION DURING ORIGINAL REVIEW AT JUNE 18TH ARB MEETING:

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Mr. Stefan Rel and Ms. Rebecca Rel were present to discuss the application. Mr. Rel gave a brief history of the project, explaining miscommunications and missteps regarding the review and permitting process. He stated that the windows on the façade are custom windows and that rehabilitating the original windows was not feasible.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Ms. Echols asked Staff to clarify the procedures for obtaining a COA. Ms. Allen gave a history of COAs issued for the property and added further context to how the process that resulted in the present situation of the project.

Mr. Blackwell asked for clarification regarding the proposed columns. Ms. Allen explained that the plans call for tapered wood columns which match the original per a historic survey photo, and the applicant had installed Hardie board non-tapered box columns. Mr. Rel stated that the columns could be altered to express a tapered profile.

Mr. McNair asked whether the brick had been painted. Ms. Wilson explained that during a site visit, Staff found that paint samples had been applied to a portion of the brick.

Ms. Roselius asked whether the applicant investigated repairing the window. Mr. Rel responded that Oakleigh Custom Woodworks had been consulted, and it was found that the windows were not repairable.

Cameron Pfeiffer-Traylor asked the applicant if any other window specialists were contacted. Mr. Rel responded that he was not aware that the application/approved scope of work called for restoration and not replacement.

Ms. Traylor asked if the applicant had previously restored another house in a local historic district. Mr. Rel responded that he had. Ms. Traylor argued that the applicant should have known that approval was needed to veer from the approved scope of work.

Mr. Blackwell commented that the window light patterns somewhat match the original but wondered as to why the corner bullseye trim blocks were removed. He asked if those could be reapplied. Mr. Rel responded that they could.

Mr. McNair asked for a description of the original windows. Ms. Wilson, HDD Staff, explained the design and significance of the original windows.

Ms. Rel came to the podium to give further detail. She explained why installing the fixed transom was an effort to replicate the look of the original window. She stated that the chosen custom replacement was designed with the objective of matching the original configuration. She suggested painting the dividing lintel board to emulate the upper sash of the original.

Ms. Echols explained why the original wood windows are superior to even custom-made wood windows, encouraging the applicant to restore historic windows whenever possible.

Mr. Blackwell discussed the possibility of altering the replacement windows to appear more appropriate.

Ms. Roselius stated that the cost of restoring the original windows has not been fully considered. She suggested tabling the application to allow the applicant to do further research.

Ms. Traylor concurred with Ms. Roselius.

3:58 pm, Mr. Blackwell left the meeting.

Multiple Board members contributed to further discussion regarding the importance of restoring old growth wood windows and the visual differentiation between the original window configuration and that of the replacement windows.

Ms. Rel stated that she better understands the Board's concerns and reiterated that there was no intent to impair the architectural integrity of the structure.

Bruce McGowin outlined the process for tabling an application.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Ms. Roselius moved to table the application, asking the applicant to taper the porch columns and provide further information regarding the repairability of the façade windows.

Ms. Traylor seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

UPDATES TO APPLICATION:

- After discussion with HD Staff, the applicant agreed to taper the porch columns.
- A letter from Oakleigh Woodworks was submitted to Staff providing a condition assessment of the three full-length windows original to the façade.



June 24, 2025

Russell & Tiffany Perkins
1818 Design, LLC.
For 1159 Old Shell Road
Mobile, AL 36604

Dear Russell and Tiffany,

Architectural Review Board

We met with you yesterday after you met with Annie of the HMDC. This is the letter they require for your change in application of the front windows at 1159 Old Shell Road.

We went out and looked at the windows with you in February and explained that the sashes were beyond reasonable repair for the three triple windows on the front porch. The jambs were also in need of extensive repair and we recommended that you replace the units. At that time you decided to go with alternative windows, not provided by us.

I hope this closes the loop with the ARB. You have done a wonderful job with the work you have put into the house. We were very impressed when we saw it yesterday and it is a great enhancement to the neighborhood.

Please let me know if you need anything further.

Sincerely,

Anne

Anne Read