



Agenda Item #2

Application 2025-39-CA

DETAILS

Location:

1008 Elmira Street

Summary of Request:

Demolish historic dwelling

Applicant (as applicable):

GeeGee Watt

Property Owner:

Jesse Burks

Historic District:

Oakleigh Garden

Classification:

Contributing

Summary of Analysis:

- The subject dwelling is an advanced state of deterioration.
- The application does not include redevelopment plans

Report Contents:

Property and Application History.....	2
Scope of Work.....	2
Applicable Standards	2
Staff Analysis	2
Attachments	4

PROPERTY AND APPLICATION HISTORY

Oakleigh Garden Historic District was initially listed in the National Register in 1972 under Criteria A (historic significance) and C (architectural significance) for its local significance in the areas of architecture, landscape architecture, and planning and development. The district is significant for its high concentration of 19th- and 20th-century architectural types and styles and significant in the area of landscape architecture for its canopies of live oaks planted from 1850 to 1910. The district is significant in the area of planning and development as the location of Washington Square, one of only two antebellum public parks remaining in Mobile. The district was expanded in 1984, and an updated nomination was approved in 2016.

The property at 1008 Elmira is a c. 1895 one-story wood frame shotgun with Victorian detailing. It consists of a two-bay façade with full-width front porch incorporated under a gable roof and supported by turned posts with decorative brackets. A cross-gable projection extends from the west elevation. The house has been minimally altered from its original form. It is currently in a deteriorated state.

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

SCOPE OF WORK

Demolish historic dwelling.

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

1. Consider the current significance of a structure previously determined to be historic.
 - An analysis should be undertaken to determine if the historic structure retains its integrity. In some cases, a property previously identified as a contributing historic structure may no longer retain its integrity due to changes to the structure since the time it was originally determined to be historic.
2. Impact on the Street and District
 - Consider the impact of removing the historic structure relative to its context.
 - Consider whether the building is part of an ensemble of historic buildings that create a neighborhood. (12.0)
3. Nature of Proposed Development
 - Consider the future utilization of the site. (12.0)

STAFF ANALYSIS

The significance of the structure

The house at 1008 Elmira is listed as a contributing property in the Oakleigh Garden Historic District. The modest two-bay shotgun cottage with full-width front porch represents a vernacular form common throughout the Southeast. Permit history, along with aerial and street view photos demonstrate that the structure has been allowed to deteriorate significantly in the last ten years. A site visit revealed severe rot, collapsed walls, exposure to the elements, and overgrown vegetation

Impact on the Street and District

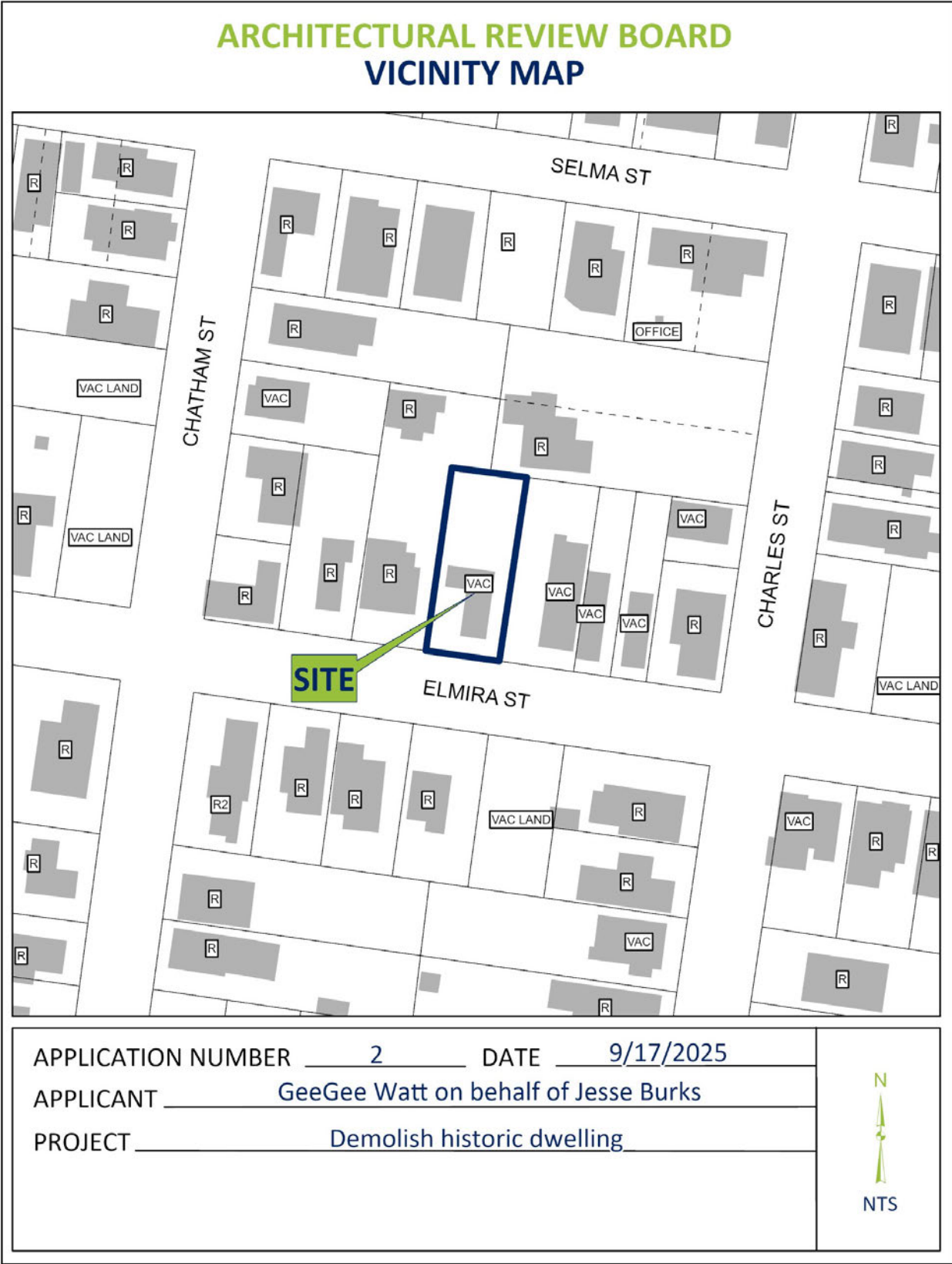
The *Guidelines* state that whether the building in question is “one of the last remaining positive examples of its kind in the neighborhood, county, or region” should be factored into any decision involving the removal of a structure within a historic district. As stated above, the shotgun form, such as the one located at 1008 Elmira Street, is common to this region, and the prevalence of its form is a defining feature of Mobile’s historic built environment. Although many can still be seen throughout Mobile’s historic districts and beyond, the numbers are declining due to demolition.

The *Guidelines* further instruct that the impact of a structure's demolition on surrounding structures, including neighboring properties, properties on the same block or across the street, or properties throughout the individual historic district should be considered. The historic rhythm of development along the north side of the subject block along Elmira Street remains intact, with all structures represented on the 1956 Sanborn Insurance Map still extant. The deletion of the historic cottage at 1008 Elmira would be the first disruption of the historic development along the north side of the subject block. Along the south side of the block, the historic dwelling at 1005 Elmira has been removed, creating a vacant lot. The loss of a structure along the north side of Elmira Street would contribute to the emergence of a gap-toothed appearance along this part of the street.

Nature of proposed development at the origination property

The *Guidelines* instruct that the future use of a cleared site should be considered. No plans for development of the lot post demolition have been submitted with the application.

Site Location – 1008 Elmira Street



Site Photos – 1008 Elmira Street



1. View of property, looking NE



2. View of property, looking NW



3. View of east elevation, looking NW



4. View of rear (north) corner of east elevation, looking W



5. View of rear (north) elevation, looking SW



6. View of west elevation, looking NE



7. View of adjacent dwellings along north side of Elmira Street, looking NW



8. View of streetscape across the street from subject property (south side of Elmira Street), looking SW



9. View of lot across the street from subject property, looking S



View of streetscape across the street from subject property (south side of Elmira Street), lo



City of Mobile • Historic Development

Demolition Application

City Ordinance requires that all applications for proposed work in historic districts include the following information:

8/18/2025

Date of Application

\$7,000

Job Cost

1008 Elmira Street

Property Address

Jesse Burks

Owner Name

GeeGee Watt

Owner's Representative Name

503 Government Blvd. Mobile, AL 36602

Representative's Address

Not Applicable

Construction Date

Phone

Email

Phone

Email

BPCH Representative

Relationship to Owner

TBD

Purchase Date

N/A

Current Appraised Value of Property (N/A if Not Available)

\$30,000

Purchase Price

Was the property occupied at time of purchase? ☐ Yes ☒ No

What was the property's condition? Dilapidated Home

What alternatives to demolition have you considered for this property?

There are no other alternatives for this site.

Have you listed the property for sale or lease since your purchase? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If "Yes", what was your asking price? _____ How many offers did you receive? _____

List any options currently held for the purchase of the property, including the price received for such option, the conditions placed on such option and the date of expiration of such option:

N/A

Do you have construction plans ready to complete the replacement project? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If so, how much have you expended on the plans? _____

What are the dates of these expenditures? _____

In order to determine your ability to complete the replacement project, do you have the following:

Performance Bond ☐ Yes ☐ No

Letter of Credit ☐ Yes ☐ No

Trust for completion of improvements ☐ Yes ☐ No

Other evidence of financial ability ☐ Yes ☐ No

Letter of commitment from a financial institution ☐ Yes ☐ No

“In no event shall the Board entertain any application for the demolition or relocation of any Historic Property unless the applicant also presents at the same time the post-demolition or post-relocation plans for the site.” Ordinance #44-084

An Architectural Review Board Application with supporting documentation and fee should accompany this request with the plans for development of the site. A sign will be placed in the front yard of the property prior to the Review Board meeting to notify surrounding property owners of a pending application. Attendance at the meeting is strongly advised in order for the applicant to respond to any questions.

A \$15 application fee is due upon filing.

Dear Architectural Board,

There are no current site plans for construction of this lot. As the Future Owner, we are awaiting the approval of demolition before investing into construction plans for the parcel in question. Should the Architectural Review Board be in favor of our request, we will adhere to the Architectural Review Board's design, development. We will regulations and submit them for review according to the guidelines.

Kind Regards,

GeeGee Watt – Irby Group Representative

[REDACTED]