



Agenda Item #3

Application 2025-40-CA

DETAILS

Location:

356 Dunham Street

Summary of Request:

Demolish historic dwelling

Applicant (as applicable):

Jesse Burks

Property Owner:

GeeGee Watt

Historic District:

Oakleigh Garden (Local Only)

Classification:

Contributing

Summary of Analysis:

- The subject dwelling is an advanced state of deterioration which presents a public danger
- The property has been cited by Municipal Enforcement
- The application does not include redevelopment plans
- **UPDATE: Redevelopment plan letter and statement of structural integrity included**

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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 356 Dunham is a c. 1900 one-story raised frame dwelling with hipped roof and a full-width front porch. A small side wing projects off the south elevation. The 1904 Sanborn map shows that originally both the façade and the side projection were accentuated by full-width porches. At some point, the side porch was removed, and the front porch was rebuilt with masonry in the Craftsman style and screened in.

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 365 Dunham is listed as a contributing property in the local only portion of the Oakleigh Garden Historic District. The modest raised cottage with full-width front porch and small side projection represents a vernacular form common throughout Mobile's historic districts. Permit history, along with aerial and street view photos demonstrate that the structure has been allowed to deteriorate significantly. A site visit revealed that the dwelling appears structurally compromised. Of note were a collapsed rear end wall and extensive rot to exterior elevations. The property was cited by Municipal Enforcement as a public nuisance in May of this year.

Impact on the Street and District

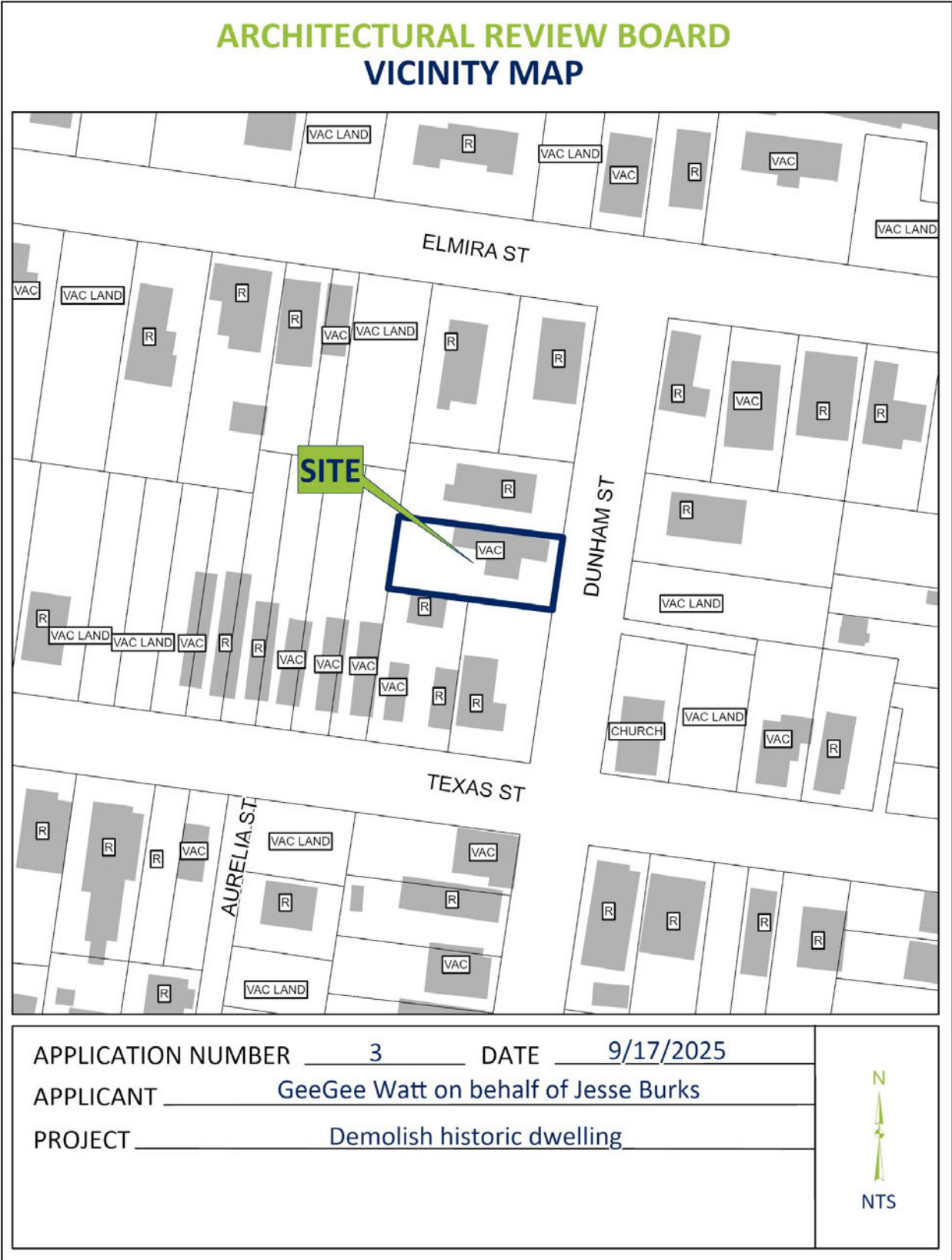
The *Guidelines* state that whether the building in question is "one of the last remaining positive examples of its kind in the neighborhood, county, or region" should be factored into any decision involving the removal of a structure within a historic district. As stated above, the vernacular form such as the one located at 356 Dunham Street, is common to the local area, 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 west side of the subject block along Dunham Street remains mostly intact, with all but one of the structures represented on the 1904 Sanborn Insurance Map still extant. The deletion of the historic cottage at 356 Dunham would further disrupt this largely preserved historic development along this side of the street. The east side of this block of Dunham Street had experienced more significant loss of its original structures, leaving multiple vacant lots. The loss of a structure along the west side of Dunham Street would further contribute to the street's loss of integrity.

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 NW



2. View of property, looking SW



3. View of south elevation, looking NW



4. View of northwest corner of structure (rear), looking S



5. View of rear of property



6. Detail of façade, looking W



7. View of adjacent dwellings along west side of Dunham Street



8. View of streetscape across the street from subject property (east side of Dunham Street), looking SE



9. View of streetscape across the street from subject property, looking NE



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

356 Dunham 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

Email

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? **Delapidated, Condemned by the City of Mobile**

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

Build Mobile, PO Box 1827, Mobile, Alabama 36633

For more information: www.BuildMobile.org | planning@cityofmobile.org | 251.208.5895

Visit our help window: Mobile Government Plaza, 205 Government Street, Third Floor South Tower

Revised April 2020

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.



BARTON & EDGAR

ENGINEERING

3213 MIDTOWN PARK SOUTH | MOBILE, AL | 251.219.4942

October 2, 2025

Mrs. GeeGee Watt
Irby Group

Re: Structural Inspection
356 Dunham Street
Mobile, AL 36609

Mrs. Watt,

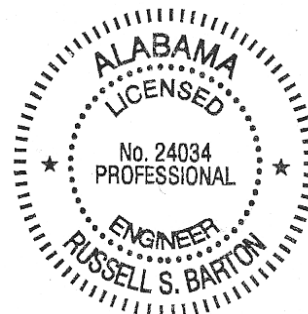
Per your request, we performed an inspection on the house referenced above (Reference Photograph #1). The residence is a one-story wood-framed structure with wood siding. The house is on a crawl space with brick piers. We estimate that the house is approximately 100 years old. The purpose of our inspection was to see if this structure could be repaired.

There are openings in structure that have caused significant structural damage. Vegetation overgrowth has damaged the front porch, ceiling, and roof. Holes in the floor framing are likely a result of a long-term roof leak (Reference Photograph #2). Openings are present in the roof and ceiling near the front of the house. The floors appear to be rotten. There are visible openings through the wall sheathing, damaged windows, studs open to the weather, and girders that are completely deteriorated. Cracks are present in the foundation and the mortar in brick piers are completely loose and missing (Reference Photographs #3 & #7). One section of the rear wall farming has completely collapsed (Reference Photographs #4-#6). Rear section of the roof, walls and floor has also collapsed (Reference Photograph #7).

Based on what I've observed, there is no practical way to repair or renovate this structure. Once a structure is damaged beyond 50 percent of the value, the entire house must be brought up to the 2021 IRC code per the City of Mobile. This would involve new roofing, hurricane clips, new studs, exterior sheathing, house wrap, new plywood subfloor, new joists, new girders, and new foundations. These items I listed do not even touch on likely mechanical, electrical, and plumbing damage. I would recommend demolition and rebuilding this unsafe structure. Let me know if you have any questions. Should you have any further concerns please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

Russell S. Barton, P.E.
Alabama License #24034





Photograph #1



Photograph #2



Photograph #3



Photograph #4



Photograph #5



Photograph #6



Photograph #7



Photograph #8



IRBYGROUP
COMPANY

503 Government Street
Mobile, AL 36602
(251) 444-0000 | www.BCHBuilds.com

September 25, 2025

Ms. Annie Allen
Deputy Director
City of Mobile – Historical Development
200 Government Street, 2nd Floor
Mobile, AL 36602

RE: Proposal – Demolition of 356 Dunham Street, Mobile, AL 36604

Dear Ms. Allen,

Blueprint Community Homes (BPCH Builders, LLC), the *Buyer* is requesting approval for the demolition permit application;

**356 Dunham Street
Mobile, AL 36604**

on behalf of (Jesse Burks) the *Owner*. The current home is located in the Historical Oakleigh District. The property was previously issued a “Notice to Remedy Dangerous/Unsafe or Blighted Structure” by the City of Mobile. This property was inspected by Miranda Davis, Municipal Code Enforcement Officer on July 21, 2025. The Violations were observed as follows:

- Part of a building, part of a structure, party wall or foundation in a dangerous and unsafe condition;
- High weeds and grass; and/or
- An accumulation of trash and debris.

The property was found to be in violation of Chapter 52, Article II “Abatement of Unsafe Buildings and Structural Nuisances” of the Municipal Code of the City of Mobile.



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Contingent upon the approval of the demolition permit, in conjunction with the purchase of the property by BPCH Builders, LLC our proposal is as follows; Closing to take place within 14 days of a board approved demolition permit. Immediately following the purchase, the property will be maintained according to city municipal codes and ordinances until all permits have been reviewed and approved by the City of Mobile. Demolition and construction will commence immediately and consecutively once the required permits have been received. During the demolition and build back all debris will be disposed of via an on site dumpster and red dirt contained as per required until completion.

The building plans will be for a single-family residential home, designed to maintain the integrity of the surrounding historical district. Sod will be installed at the end of construction to restore curb appeal to the parcel. We thank you for your time and consideration of this application.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jared Irby", with a stylized, cursive script.

Jared Irby
Chief Executive Officer