ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD MINUTES
March 6th 2019 – 3:00 P.M.
Multi-Purpose Room, Mobile Government Plaza, 205 Government Street

A. CALL TO ORDER

1. The Chair, Steve Stone, called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m. Paige Largue, MHDC Staff, called the roll as follows:
   
   **Members Present:** Steve Stone, Catarina Echols, Bob Allen, Kim Harden, Nicholas Holmes III, Carolyn Hasser and Craig Roberts.
   
   **Members Absent:** Jim Wagoner, Robert Brown, and David Barr.
   
   **Staff Members Present:** John Sledge, Bridget Daniel, Paige Largue.

2. Ms. Largue noted a revision had been made in the minutes. Mr. Holmes moved to approve the minutes of the March 6th 2019 meeting.
   The motion received a second and was approved unanimously.

3. Mr. Holmes moved to approve the Mid-Months as written. Ms. Harden seconded the motion. The motion was approved with one in opposition, Mr. Allen.

B. MID-MONTH APPROVALS: APPROVED.

1. **Applicant:** Weinacker’s Plaza, LLC
   
   a. **Property Address:** 1550 Government Street
   b. **Date of Approval:** 2/12/2019
   c. **Project:** Install painted metal monument sign.

2. **Applicant:** Terry Buford
   
   a. **Property Address:** 162 Michigan Avenue
   b. **Date of Approval:** 2/12/2019
   c. **Project:** Remove deteriorated privacy fence, erect new six foot privacy fence, and erect 39” picket fence around front yard, paint picket fence white. Repair/replace any rotted exterior siding to match original in materials, profile, and dimension. Carport to be approved at a later date.

3. **Applicant:** Diane Nemetz
   
   a. **Property Address:** 4 Straight Street
   b. **Date of Approval:** 2/13/2019
   c. **Project:** Repair/replace rotten wood to match, repaint to match. Reflash chimney, jack and level house.

4. **Applicant:** Alver and Dixie Carlson
   
   a. **Property Address:** 1653 Dauphin Street
   b. **Date of Approval:** 2/15/2019
   c. **Project:** Repaint house in existing color scheme. Repair and replace deteriorated wood work to match in dimensions, profile and material. Reroof rear porch to asphalt or architectural shingles in autumn.

5. **Applicant:** A-1 Roofing and Construction on behalf of Christine Stanton
   
   a. **Property Address:** 355 McMillan Avenue
   b. **Date of Approval:** 2/19/2019
   c. **Project:** Reroof with asphalt/fiberglass shingles in charcoal.

6. **Applicant:** Fishing Chaos
   
   a. **Property Address:** 453 Dauphin Street
   b. **Date of Approval:** 2/19/2019
   c. **Project:** Install one wooden hanging blade sign 8 square feet per side.
7. **Applicant:** Jeffrey Davis  
   a. **Property Address:** 957 Selma Street  
   b. **Date of Approval:** 2/19/2019  
   c. **Project:** Renew approval of 12/22/2106 for renovation of shotgun house.

8. **Applicant:** Rocky Faye Fremin of FCS Facility Maintenance  
   a. **Property Address:** 1154 Texas Street  
   b. **Date of Approval:** 2/20/2019  
   c. **Project:** Mothball and secure property with clear boarding. Paint white.

9. **Applicant:** Loper Law, LLC on behalf Jemco, LLC  
   a. **Property Address:** 452 Government Street Ste E  
   b. **Date of Approval:** 2/20/2019  
   c. **Project:** Install 2’0” x 8’0” painted metal, individual sign.

10. **Applicant:** Cynthia Tyon  
    a. **Property Address:** 1357 Old Shell Road  
    b. **Date of Approval:** 2/20/2019  
    c. **Project:** Renew COA for reconstruction of porch.

11. **Applicant:** Judith Aran  
    a. **Property Address:** 1220 Elmira Street  
    b. **Date of Approval:** 2/21/2019  
    c. **Project:** Erect three foot wooden fence in front yard.

12. **Applicant:** John Wink of Wink Management, LLC  
    a. **Property Address:** 160 Davitt Street  
    b. **Date of Approval:** 2/22/2019  
    c. **Project:** Reroof with asphalt shingles to match.

**C. APPLICATIONS**

1. **2019-10-CA: 113 A Monroe Street**  
   a. **Applicant:** Mr. Nicholas Holmes III of Holmes and Holmes Architects on behalf of Ft. Conde Restoration Venture, LLC  
   b. **Project:** New Construction: Construct commercial property.  
   **APPROVED. CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED.**

2. **2019-11-CA: 300 Michigan Avenue**  
   a. **Applicant:** Douglas B. Kearley of DBK, Inc. on behalf of 300 Michigan, LLC.  
   b. **Project:** New Construction: Construct single family residence and ancillary building.  
   **APPROVED. CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED.**

3. **2019-12-CA: 405 Chatham Street**  
   a. **Applicant:** Porchlight, LLC  
   b. **Project:** New Construction: Construct single family residence.  
   **DENIED. CERTIFIED RECORD ATTACHED.**

4. **2019-13-CA: 1009 Selma Street**  
   a. **Applicant:** Porchlight, LLC  
   b. **Project:** New Construction: Construct single family residence.  
   **WITHDRAWN.**

5. **2019-14-CA: 1011 Selma Street**  
   a. **Applicant:** Porchlight, LLC  
   b. **Project:** New Construction: Construct single family residence.  
   **WITHDRAWN.**

**D. OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Next meeting will be March 20th
APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

2019-10-CA: 113 A Monroe Street
Applicant: Mr. Nicholas Holmes III of Holmes and Holmes Architects on behalf of Ft. Conde
Restoration Venture, LLC
Received: 1/29/2019
Meeting: 3/6/2019

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Church Street East
Classification: Non-Contributing
Zoning: T5.1

BUILDING HISTORY

This vacant lot sits east adjacent to the Olensky Building.

STANDARD OF REVIEW

Section 9 of the Preservation Ordinance states “the Board shall not approve any application proposing a Material Change in Appearance unless it finds the change…will not materially impair the architectural or historic value of the building, the buildings on adjacent sites or in the immediate vicinity, or the general visual character of the district.”

STAFF REPORT

A. According to the MHDC vertical files, this property has not appeared before the Architectural Review Board. The proposed scope of work includes construction of a new commercial building.

B. The Design Review Guidelines state in pertinent part:
   1. “(Interior Neighborhood Context) refers to new commercial construction that develops in the interior of a predominantly residential historic district.”
   2. “This context refers specifically to new, small scale commercial construction for corner stores or other neighborhood-serving retail uses that are completely surrounded by residential structures.”
   3. “In most cases, commercial infill in this context is likely to develop on corner lots; however, interior commercial infill is also possible, and particularly in DeTonti Square the northern edge of Church Street East.”
   4. “For this context, new commercial construction should strongly consider massing, scale, and orientation to ensure compatibility with nearby historic residential buildings. This context is potentially relevant to DeTonti Square, Oakleigh Garden, Leinkauf, and portions of Old Dauphin Way and Church Street East.”
   5. “Place and orient new commercial construction at interior neighborhood locations to be compatible with that of nearby historic residential structures.”
   6. “Establish front setbacks similar to those in adjacent historic residential development or historic residential development on the same block.”
   7. “Orient façades to be parallel with the street.”
   8. “Design a building to be compatible with massing and scale with historic structures in the district.”
10. “Limit the height or the perceived height of buildings to be similar to heights of nearby historic structures.”
11. “Use materials that help to convey scale in their proportion, detail and form.”
12. “Design building massing and scale to maintain the visual continuity of the district.”
13. “Maintain traditional spacing patterns created by the repetition of building widths along the street.”
14. “Maintain traditional entry patterns along the street.”
15. “Use building materials that are compatible with the surrounding historic residential context.”
16. “Use a material that is compatible with the surrounding historic residential structures. Use wood siding for a commercial structure where the majority of the surrounding historic residential structures use wood siding.”
17. “Install a simple wood or wire fence. Heights of wooden picket fences are ordinarily restricted to 36”. Consideration for up to 48”, depending on the location of the fence, shall be given. A variance might be required. Staff can advise and assist applicants with regard to a variance. If combined with a wall, the total vertical dimension of the wall and fence collectively should not exceed 36,” or in some cases 48”."
18. “Maintain or install a walkway leading directly from the sidewalk to the main building entry.”

C. Scope of Work (per submitted site plan):
   1. Construct a commercial building and conduct site improvements..
      a. Construct a commercial (hotel/bed and breakfast) building.
         i. The house will be setback 8’0” so as to negotiate the secondary frontage setback of the neighboring building at 113 Monroe Street.
         ii. The building envelope will be 49’4” in width and 53’4” in depth.
         iii. The raised slab foundation will measure at least 3’10” in height.
         iv. The aforementioned foundation will be skirted by stucco-faced simulated piers spaced at equidistant intervals with inset stucco face skirting between.
         v. The walls will be clad with stucco.
         vi. The ceiling heights will be 10’4”.
         vii. The windows will be aluminum clad wood in construction and multi-light in configuration.
         viii. The dominant roof will be combination gable in construction.
         ix. Secondary roofs will be shed roofs.
         x. Architectural GAF shingles will sheath the roof.
         xi. North Elevation (Façade)
            a. The North Elevation will feature open (porch/ gallery) spaces.
            b. A five bay, double gallery will inform the façade.
            c. The gallery will span the width of the façade.
            d. A flight of concrete steps with metal handrail will access the westernmost bay of the porch.
            e. A louvered vent will punctuate said gable.
            f. Six square section columnar posts will define the porch.
            g. Wooden balustrade will span between columnar posts.
            h. A pair of glazed and wood doors (painted) will provide ingress to and egress from the gallery on the first and second story.
            i. The first story doors will be flanked by gas lanterns.
j. Doors on both the first and second story will be flanked on the east and west sides with paired windows.
k. The aforementioned windows will be six-over-six in configuration.
l. The third story will feature a set of equidistant shed roof dormers.
m. Dormers will feature three multi-paned windows.
xii. West (a side) Elevation
  a. The ends of the porch bays will define the northernmost and southernmost potions of the West elevation as it relates to the body of the house.
b. The West Elevation’s fenestration (in a northerly to southerly direction) will be as follows on the first floor: one six-over-six window.
c. The West Elevation’s fenestration (in a northerly to southerly direction) will be as follows on the second floor: one six-over-six window.
d. The West Elevation’s gable will feature a six-over-six window on the third floor.
e. Painted metal steps will extend to the third floor balcony on the southern potion of the elevation.
xiii. South (Rear) Elevation
  a. The Rear Elevation will feature open (porch/ gallery) spaces on the first and second floors and a balcony on the third floor.
b. A five bay, double gallery will inform the façade.
c. The gallery will span the width of the façade.
d. A flight of wooden steps spanning the two westernmost bays will access the second floor gallery.
e. Painted metal steps informing the westernmost portion of the elevation will afford access to the third floor balcony from the second floor.
f. Six square section columnar posts will define the porch.
g. A glazed and wood door will provide ingress to and egress from the gallery on the first and second story.
h. The aforementioned door will be off center in the central bay.
i. Equidistant paired windows will flank the door on both the first and second floors.
j. The aforementioned windows will be six-over-six in configuration.
k. The third story will feature three sets of equidistant glazed door systems. A shed roof will surmount the third floor.
xiv. East (side) Elevation
  a. The ends of the porch bays will define the northernmost and southernmost potions of the East elevation as it relates to the body of the house.
b. The East Elevation’s first floor fenestration will feature two six-over-six windows.
c. The East Elevation’s second floor fenestration will feature two six-over-six windows.
d. The East Elevation’s gable will feature a six-over-six window on the third floor.

b. Institute hardscaping, site repairs and improvements.
   a. Remove existing steps.
   b. Remove an existing tree.
   c. Construct new set of concrete steps east of building that will access pool.
   d. Pool will be surrounded by pavers.
   e. Pool area will be fenced in.

STAFF ANALYSIS

New commercial design should conform to one of the following main typologies: main street, commercial corridor, or interior neighborhood. The property is located adjacent to adaptively reused and mixed use properties within the Church Street East Historic District (See B-2). Buildings located in the interior neighborhood context are in close proximity to historic residences.

Placement of commercial buildings in an interior corridor context involves consideration setbacks and orientation (see B-5). Setbacks from the street and between buildings are taken into account. As to orientation, the building faces Monroe Street. The way the proposed building is oriented mimics other residential properties (now demolished) along this portion of Monroe Street. As the property is an inner lot, responsiveness to the setbacks of the adjacent 113 Monroe Street is taken into account. With regard to the front setback, the building is setback 8’0’ from the right of way. The building closely aligns with the secondary frontage at 113 Monroe Street. This setback also responds to buildings facing St. Emanuel Street on the same block (See B-6).

Massing refers to the relationship between the component parts comprising a building. The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts state that massing and scale of new commercial construction in a n interior neighborhood context should appear to be similar to that of historic buildings in the districts (See B-16). Scale is related to massing. The building proposed is two and a half stories, which mimics the two story buildings existing on the block. The building is rectangular in massing, as is the other properties in Fort Conde Village (See B-20).

As to materials, the drawings of the proposed building depict a stucco treatment. Many 19th Century and early 20th century buildings were stucco faced brick (See B-23). While the proposed building is commercial in nature it mimics residential design elements. Galleries are seen on the adjacent stucco building and neighboring wood frame buildings. Approvable materials such as aluminum clad and wood are being employed. The materials and design then complement the character of the neighborhood.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on B (1-6) Staff does not believe this application would impair either architectural or the historical character of the building or the surrounding district. Staff recommends approval in full.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Mr. Nick Holmes recused himself from voting.

Mr. Nick Holmes, representative, was present for the discussion.
BOARD DISCUSSION

The Board discussion took place concurrently with the public testimony.

Mr. Stone welcomed Mr. Holmes and asked if he had any clarifications, comments or questions. Mr. Holmes stated a brief history of the project. Mr. Holmes explained Larry Posner who leases the Fort Conde Inn and several other buildings from the city had originally commissioned plans from a New York law firm. Mr. Holmes further explained his firm re-worked the plans and simplified the design. He noted they may add in a gutter due to storm water management requirements. Mr. Roberts inquired as to the material of the gutter. Mr. Holmes responded the gutter would probably not be copper.

No further discussion from the Board ensued.

Mr. Stone opened the application to public comment. With no one to speak either for or against the application, Mr. Stone closed the period of public comment.

FINDING OF FACT

Mr. Roberts moved that, based upon the evidence presented in the application and during the public testimony the Board finds the facts in the Staff report, as written.

The motion received a second by Mrs. Hasser and was unanimously approved.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Mr. Roberts moved that, based upon the facts as approved by the Board, a Certificate of Appropriateness be issued.

The motion received a second by Mr. Mrs. Hasser and was approved unanimously.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS EXPIRATION DATE: March 11, 2020
APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

2019-11-CA: 300 Michigan Avenue
Applicant: Mr. Douglas Kearley of DBK, Inc. on behalf of 300 Michigan, LLC
Received: 2/19/2019
Meeting: 3/6/2019

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Leinkauf
Classification: Non-Contributing
Zoning: R-1
Project: New Construction: Construct single family residence and ancillary building.

BUILDING HISTORY

A two story wood frame dwelling previously sat on this site.

STANDARD OF REVIEW

Section 9 of the Preservation Ordinance states “the Board shall not approve any application proposing a Material Change in Appearance unless it finds the change...will not materially impair the architectural or historic value of the building, the buildings on adjacent sites or in the immediate vicinity, or the general visual character of the district.”

STAFF REPORT

A. This property has not appeared before the Architectural Review Board according to the MHDC vertical files. The proposed scope of work includes constructing a single and a half story residence and carport.

B. The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts state, in pertinent part:
   1. “Maintain alignment of front setbacks.”
   2. “Maintain the rhythm of buildings and side yards.”
   3. “Design the massing of new construction to appear similar to that of historic buildings in the district.”
   4. “Design the scale of new construction to appear similar to that of historic buildings in the district.”
   5. “Design piers, a foundation, and foundation infill to be compatible with those of nearby historic properties.
   6. “Size foundations and floor heights to appear similar to those of nearby historic buildings.”
   7. “Use building height in front that is compatible with adjacent contributing properties.”
   8. “Design building elements on exterior buildings walls to be compatible with those on nearby historic buildings. These elements often include but are not limited to: balconies, chimneys, and dormers.”
   9. “Use exterior building materials and finishes that complement the character of the surrounding district.”
   10. “Locate and size a window to create a solid-to-void ratio similar to the ratios seen on nearby historic windows.”
11. “Use traditional window casement and trim similar to those seen in nearby historic buildings.”
12. “Place and size a special feature, including a transom, sidelight or decorative framing element, to complement those seen in nearby historic buildings.
13. “Match the scale of a porch to the main building and reflect the scale of porches of nearby historic buildings.”
14. “When using artificial materials, use a blind or shutter unit that has a thickness, weight and design similar to wood.”
15. “Design a roof on new construction to be compatible with those on adjacent historic buildings.”
16. “Design an accessory structure to be subordinate in scale to that of the primary structure.”
17. “Locate a new accessory structure in line with other visible accessory structures in the district.”
18. “These are traditionally located at the rear of a lot.”
19. “Acceptable accessory structure materials include: “wood frame; masonry; cement fiber based siding; installations (premade store-bought sheds provided they are minimally visible from public areas).”
20. Unacceptable materials: “metal, plastic and fiberglass except for greenhouse.”

C. Scope of Work (per submitted site plan):

1. Construct a one and a half single family residence.
   a. The house will be setback 25’0” from the right of way.
   b. The raised slab foundation will measure at least 2’6” in height.
   c. The aforementioned foundation will faced in brick veneer.
   d. A water table will extend around the house.
   e. The walls will be clad with clinker face brick. The mortar joints will be white.
   f. A dormer and rear elevation will be clad in hardiplank siding.
   g. The first floor ceiling height will be 10’4”. The second floor ceiling height will be 8’4”.
   h. The windows will be aluminum clad wood in construction and six-over-one in configuration.
   i. The roof will be cross-gabled and feature a dormer.
   j. Exposed rafter tails will be employed.
   k. Architectural GAF shingles will sheath the roof.
   l. East Elevation (Façade)
      i. The East Elevation will feature enclosed and open (porch) spaces.
      ii. A double bay porch will advance from the southernmost portion of the façade.
      iii. The porch will be 17’0” in length, 7’0” in depth, and gable roof in form.
      iv. A louvered vent will punctuate the gable.
      v. A flight of brick steps will access the northern bay of the porch.
      vi. Two brick arched collonades define the porch.
      vii. An aluminum clad or wooden paneled door with transom will serve as egress/ingress from the porch.
      viii. The northern portion of the façade will feature a gable roof form.
      ix. A louvered vent will punctuate the gable.
x. The northern portion of the facade will feature two, six-over-one, equidistant windows.

m. North (a side) Elevation
   i. The end of the porch bay will define the easternmost portion of the North elevation as it relates to the body of the house.
   ii. A portion of the North elevation will feature an advanced portion surmounted by a gable roof.
   iii. A louvered vent will punctuate the gable.
   iv. This portion will feature a set of three, six-over-one windows.
   v. West of the advanced portion of the North elevation will be two six-over-one windows.
   vi. West of the aforementioned windows will be a chimney.
   vii. An open porch space will terminate the North elevation.

n. East (Rear) Elevation
   i. The rear elevation will be defined by a three bay open space (porch).
   ii. The bays will be defined by paired square columnar posts.
   iii. A wooden flight of steps will provide access to the porch.
   iv. A set of glass doors with overhead transom will be featured between bays.
   v. The doors will provide egress/ingress to the porch.
   vi. The second floor will feature a recessed portion taking the form of a porch.
   vii. A wooden balustrade will extend the length of the recessed opening.
   viii. A pair of glass doors flanked by sidelights will provide ingress/egress onto the porch.

o. South (side) Elevation
   i. The South Elevation’s fenestration (in a easterly to westerly direction) will be as follows: a single six-over-six window; a single six-over-six window; a set of paired six-over-one windows; and a single six-over-one window.
   ii. The second floor will feature a shed roof dormer west of the front façade line.
   iii. The dormer will feature a set of paired six-over-one windows.

2. Construct an ancillary building (carport/storage).
   i. The two bay carport may or may not be connected to the main residence by a covered walkway.
   ii. The carport will be located in the rear of lot, 50’0” from the rear elevation of the main house.
   iii. The carport and storage will total 22’0” in depth and 20’0” in width.
   iv. An enclosed storage room located in the rear will be 20’0” in length and 8’0” in depth.
   v. The vehicular bays will be punctuated by paired columnar posts.
   vi. The building will be clad in hardiplank siding.
   vii. A gable roof will surmount the building.
   viii. Louvered vents will punctuate the gables.
   ix. The roof will be sheathed in architectural shingles.
   x. Exposed rafter tails will be employed to match the main residence.
3. Conduct site improvements.
   i. Install concrete walkway from street to steps leading to front entrance.
   ii. Install concrete driveway to access the carport.
   iii. Construct a six fence wooden privacy fence not to extend in front of the façade line.
   iv. Construct a 3’ picketed fence along a portion of the driveway.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The subject property, 300 Michigan Avenue, is located within the Leinkauf Historic District. The application up for review involves construction of single family residential on a corner lot and ancillary structure to be located in the rear of the yard.

With regard to placement, two components are taken into account – setback from the street and distance between buildings. The Design Review Guidelines for New Residential Construction in Mobile’s Historic Districts state that new buildings should be responsive to and maintain the alignment of traditional façade lines (See B-1), as well as the rhythm of side & rear setbacks (See B-2). The property under review, an corner block situation, is located adjacent to/in the vicinity of contributing buildings and beside a vacant lot. The setbacks closely reflect the historical character of the contributing aspects of the built landscape, however staff recommends the set back closer to 20’0” instead of 25’0”. The proposed placement negotiates the placement buildings located to either side of it (not adjacent). The side setbacks are traditional in dimension. The façade directly engages the street in its orientation. The proposed front walk and side drive would further stress the primacy of the street and reintroduce lost rhythmic sequence of elements respectful of traditional placement patterns.

The Design Review Guidelines state that mass - the relationship of the parts of the larger whole comprising a building - for new construction should be in keeping with arrangement and proportion of surrounding historic residences (B-3). The proposed house adopts the block-like a residential typology – a “bungalow”. A continuous foundation anchors the building. An advance porch feature smaller, but proportionally responsive gable roofs. The advances of plan, coupled with the depth of the front porch, serve to relieve and enliven the massing without causing for irregularity. The scale of the porch and massing of the proposed house respond to a prevalent historical typology in general and specific. – a porch fronted residence (See B-13). The roughly two (2) foot height of the foundation is reflective of traditional foundation elevations (See B-5) and dwellings on properties abutting the subject address. While a raised slab in construction, the foundation would employ brick face with water table. The massing of the structure, one informed by 10’4” ceilings, is compatible with the architectural context of the contributing landscape which it is situated amidst (See B-7).

Scale refers to a building’s size in relationship to other buildings. The Design Review Guidelines for New Residential Construction state that new construction should be in scale with nearby historic buildings (See B-4). As mentioned in the preceding paragraph addressing massing, the elevation of the foundations, height of the ceilings, and pitch of the roof combine to form a whole that would be compatible with surrounding architectural landscape. Neighboring typologies include one and two story four squares, extended four squares and bungalows.

With regard to building components, the Design Review Guidelines call for responsiveness to traditional design traditions. Compatibility is the goal. As mentioned in the portion of the narrative articulating massing, the typology evoked has precedent in the immediate and surrounding landscape (See B-8). The corner porch is seen along Michigan Avenue. Going further into building components, the building
employs sash window types (sash) and wall treatment (brick) that inform the immediate and vast majority of the surrounding architectural and historical context (See B-11).

In accord with the Design Guidelines for New Construction, the building materials blend with those employed in the past and in immediate surroundings (See B 9 & 14.). Brick veneer and aluminum clad windows are approved for new construction within Mobile’s Historic Districts.

The ancillary building mimics features found on the proposed main residence. The structure is subordinate in scale. The ancillary building is located to the rear of the lot. The two vehicular bay carport with storage employs paired columns and hardiplank siding.

Based on B (1-12) Staff does not believe this application would impair either architectural or the historical character of the building or the surrounding district. Staff recommends approval in full.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Mr. Douglas Kearley, representative, was present for the discussion.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The Board discussion took place concurrently with the public testimony.

Mr. Stone welcomed Mr. Kearley and asked if he had any clarifications, comments or questions. Mr. Kearley responded Ms. Largue addressed the application in full.

No further discussion from the Board ensued.

Mr. Stone opened the application to public comment. With no one to speak either for or against the application, Mr. Stone closed the period of public comment.

FINDING OF FACT

Mr. Roberts moved that, based upon the evidence presented in the application and during the public testimony the Board finds the facts in the Staff report, as written.

The motion received a second by Mr. Holmes and was unanimously approved.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Mr. Roberts moved that, based upon the facts as approved by the Board, a Certificate of Appropriateness be issued.

The motion received a second by Ms. Harden and was approved unanimously.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS EXPIRATION DATE: March 11, 2020
APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

2019-12-CA: 405 Chatham Street
Applicant: Porchlight, LLC
Received: 2/7/2019
Meeting: 3/6/2019

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Oakleigh Garden
Classification: Non-contributing
Zoning: R-1
Project: New Construction – Construct a single family residence.

BUILDING HISTORY

According the 1904 Sanborn Map, a “dilapidated” structure stood on the subject property.

STANDARD OF REVIEW

Section 9 of the Preservation Ordinance states “the Board shall not approve any application proposing a Material Change in Appearance unless it finds the change…will not materially impair the architectural or historic value of the building, the buildings on adjacent sites or in the immediate vicinity, or the general visual character of the district…”

STAFF REPORT

A. This property has never appeared before the Architectural Review Board. The application up for review calls for the construction of a single family residence on the site.

B. The Design Review Guidelines for Mobile’s Historic Districts state, in pertinent part:
   1. “Maintain alignment of front setbacks.”
   2. “Maintain the rhythm of buildings and side yards.”
   3. “Design the massing of new construction to appear similar to that of historic buildings in the district.”
   4. “Design the scale of new construction to appear similar to that of historic buildings in the district.”
   5. “Design piers, a foundation, and foundation infill to be compatible with those of nearby historic properties.
   6. “Size foundations and floor heights to appear similar to those of nearby historic buildings.”
   7. “Use building height in front that is compatible with adjacent contributing properties.”
   8. “Design building elements on exterior buildings walls to be compatible with those on nearby historic buildings. These elements often include but are not limited to: balconies, chimneys, and dormers.”
   9. “Use exterior building materials and finishes that complement the character of the surrounding district.”
   10. “Locate and size a window to create a solid-to-void ratio similar to the ratios seen on nearby historic windows.”
   11. “Use traditional window casement and trim similar to those seen in nearby historic buildings.”
   12. “Place and size a special feature, including a transom, sidelight or decorative framing element, to complement those seen in nearby historic buildings.”
13. “Match the scale of a porch to the main building and reflect the scale of porches of nearby historic buildings.”
14. “When using artificial materials, use a blind or shutter unit that has a thickness, weight and design similar to wood.”
15. “Design a roof on new construction to be compatible with those on adjacent historic buildings.”

C. Scope of Work:
1. Construct a single family residence.
   a. The house will be setback so as to negotiate the setback of the neighboring house at 407 Chatham Street (9’6”).
   b. The raised slab foundation will measure at least 1’9” in height.
   c. The aforementioned foundation will be skirted by stucco-faced simulated piers spaced at equidistant intervals with framed lattice panels set between on the North and South Elevations.
   d. The West and East Elevations will be stucco over CMU.
   e. A continuous 10” skirt board will extend around the house.
   f. The walls will be clad with 6” hardiplank siding.
   g. The ceiling heights will be 9’5”.
   h. The windows will be aluminum clad wood in construction and multi-light in configuration.
   i. The dominant roof will be a gable in construction.
   j. Exposed rafter tails and brackets will be employed.
   k. Secondary roofs will also be gable in construction.
   l. Architectural GAF shingles will sheath the roof.
   m. West Elevation (Façade)
      i. The West Elevation will feature enclosed and open (porch) spaces.
      ii. A single bay porch will advance from the southernmost portion of the portion of the façade.
      iii. The porch will be 15’0” in length and gable roof in form.
      iv. A flight of wooden composite steps will access the central bay of the porch.
      v. Brackets will be employed along the rakes and at the apex of the aforementioned gable.
      vi. A louvered vent will punctuate the gable.
      vii. Two sets of square section columnar posts will define the porch.
      viii. A glazed and paneled wood door (painted) will provide ingress to and egress from the porch.
      ix. A double window will be employed on the eastern portion of the porch. Said windows will be six-over-six in configuration and flanked by paneled wood shutters. (Two panes across, three below.)
      x. The westernmost portion of the facade will feature two six-over-six windows with paneled wood shutters.
   n. South (a side) Elevation
      i. The end of the porch bay will define the westernmost portion of the West elevation as it relates to the body of the house.
      ii. The South Elevation’s fenestration (in a westerly to easterly direction) will be as follows: three square transom windows;
followed by a pair of six-over-six windows; and a single six-over-six window.

iii. The small gable roofed (roof oriented to the East and setback from the subject elevation) rear wing will not feature fenestration.

iv. A wooden stoop with flight of steps (oriented to the East) with square sections newel posts and picketed railings will situated at the juncture of the body of the house and aforementioned smaller rear wing.

o. East (Rear) Elevation

i. The southernmost portion of the Rear Elevation will feature a glazed and panel door.

ii. The previously mentioned wooden stoop and flight of steps with their associated railing will provide access to the porch.

iii. A louvered vent will punctuate the dominate gable.

iv. A 15’0’ wide advanced small rear wing located off of the northernmost portion of the East Elevation will feature two six-over-six windows (two across, three below).

v. A gable roof will surmount the aforementioned rear wing.

p. North (side) Elevation

i. The North Elevation’s fenestration (in an easterly to westerly direction) will be as follows: a pair of six-over-six window; two four-over-four windows; two six-over-six windows; a four-over-four window; and a six-over-six window.

2. Conduct site improvements.

i. Install concrete walkway from street to steps leading to front entrance.

ii. Install concrete driveway from an existing curb cut located at southwest corner of the lot.

iii. Replace existing fence with 6’ wooden fence behind the front facade line.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The subject property, 405 Chatham Street, is located within the Oakleigh Garden Historic District. The application up for review involves construction of single family residential infill between a two houses.

The application is the second modular building typology to appear before the Board. Modular construction in terms of both individual component and comprehensive volume possesses a long history in Mobile architecture. In 1817, Stephen Hallett, an individual who would become one of the leading figures in Mobile’s Antebellum epoch, shipped in disassembled form multiple house frames to Mobile for ultimate construction. Hallett and his brother would go on to develop Mobile’s first sash and blind factories. The City would become a center for that particular expression of early industrial prefabrication. Window sashes, louvered shutters, paneled doors, and eared architraves (“Egyptian Doors”) were the predominant constructions of those outfits. These were shipped across the City, Gulf, and Black Belt. The types of pre-manufactured components increased in number, design, and material during the last decade of the Antebellum era before exploding during the Postbellum era. Ironwork and plaster compositions were two locally popular material compositions that joined the more pervasive wooden products. Railings, scroll sawn work, Friezes, crestings, and countless other elements went from individual creation to mass production. Scale and scope also expanded. Following on the heels of Stephen Hallett was Hinkle
and Guild of Cincinnati went on to design, construct, and ship whole houses. Azalea Manor located at 1624 Spring Hill Avenue is undoubtedly Hinkle and Guild creation. James Barber and latterly Aladdin and Sears & Roebuck followed suit. Modular is then not new phenomenon. The City of Mobile has experimented with it in one recent instance. A house resembling a double shotgun is the single instance of that test project. Known as the “Delaware Double”, that building is located at 906-908 Delaware Street not too far south of the subject property.

All proposed designs located within locally designated historic districts will be reviewed by the Board so as to ensure compatibility with the surrounding historical character of the surrounding properties and districts. As will all infill, context is key when reviewing all new construction in historic districts. When reviewing the applications for new residential construction, the following criteria are taken into account so as retain architectural and respect historical contexts: placement; orientation; massing; scale; building elements; and materials.

With regard to placement, two components are taken into account – setback from the street and distance between buildings. The Design Review Guidelines for New Residential Construction in Mobile’s Historic Districts state that new buildings should be responsive to and maintain the alignment of traditional façade lines (See B-1), as well as the rhythm of side & rear setbacks (See B-2). The property under review, an inner block situation, is located adjacent to/in the vicinity of contributing buildings. In accord with Design Guidelines, the setbacks reflect the historical character of the contributing aspects of the built landscape. The proposed placement negotiates the placement the buildings located south adjacent to it. To the South stands 407 Chatham Street, the residence that the proposed placement responds. The side setbacks are traditional in dimension. The façade directly engages the street in its orientation. The proposed front walk and side drive would reintroduce lost rhythmic sequence of elements respectful of traditional placement patterns.

The Design Review Guidelines state that mass - the relationship of the parts of the larger whole comprising a building - for new construction should be in keeping with arrangement and proportion of surrounding historic residences (B-3). The proposed house adopts the large block-like of the Arts and Crafts Movement’s predominant residential typology – a “bungalow”. A continuous foundation and dominant roof anchor the building. A rear wing and advance porch feature smaller, but proportionally responsive gable roofs. These advances and recesses of plan, coupled with the depth of the front porch, serve to relieve and enliven the massing without causing for irregularity. The outward massing of the building, a block with a corner porch surmounted by a gabled roof, is one found adjacent to the property at 407 Chatham Street. The scale of the porch and massing of the proposed house respond to a prevalent historical typology in general and specific – a porch fronted residence, more specifically the corner porch bungalow (See B-13.). The roughly two (2’0”) foot height of the foundation is reflective of traditional foundation elevations (See B-5.) and dwellings on properties abutting the subject address. While a raised slab in construction, the foundation would feature a regularized sequence of simulated stucco-faced piers which would serve to simultaneously unify and compartmentalize that lowest level of the built elevation. The massing of the structure, one informed by 9’ ceilings atop a continuous 1’ skirt board, is compatible with the architectural context of the contributing landscape which it is situated amidst (See B-7.). As mentioned previously, the dominant street-oriented gable roof is relieved by a secondary roof informing the front porch, as well as secondary roof informing the surmounting (See B-15.).

Scale refers to a building’s size in relationship to other buildings. The Design Review Guidelines for New Residential Construction state that new construction should be in scale with nearby historic buildings (See B-4.). The adjacent building is one story in height. As mentioned in the preceding paragraph addressing massing, the elevation of the foundations, height of the ceilings, and pitch of the roof combine to form a whole that would be compatible with surrounding architectural landscape.

With regard to building components, the Design Review Guidelines call for responsiveness to traditional design traditions. As mentioned in the portion of the narrative articulating massing, the typology evoked
has precedent in the immediate and surrounding landscape (See B-8.). Going further into building components, the building employs sash window types (sash) and wall treatment (siding) that inform the immediate and vast majority of the surrounding architectural and historical context (See B-11.). While the type of window is responsive, the configuration could be bettered. The proposed window spacing affords a traditional solid-to-void ratio (See B-10). A change in configuration on the front and side elevation might be suggested. Placement and employ of special features such as brackets and vents also serve to tie the building to other historic buildings.

In accord with the Design Guidelines for New Construction, the building materials, while of the present day, blend with those employed in the past and in immediate surroundings (See B 9 & 14.). Hardieboard siding and aluminum clad windows are approved for new construction within Mobile’s Historic Districts.

NON-BINDING STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Consider a six-over-six window configuration (three panes across and below for the front (West elevation) facade.
2. Consider a set of two windows instead of three transoms windows on the South (side) elevation.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on B (1-15), Staff does not believe this application would impair the architectural or the historical character of the surrounding district. Staff recommends approval pending the applicant’s response to recommendations.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Mr. Mike Rogers, representative for Porchlight, LLC, was present for the discussion.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The Board discussion took place concurrently with the public testimony.

Mr. Stone welcomed Mr. Rogers and asked if he had any clarifications, comments or questions. Mr. Rogers stated he was open to suggestions from the Board. Mr. Rogers explained the windows on the northern portion of the West (façade) elevation were spaced to accommodate a double bed between them. He further explained the decision was based on functionality, instead of aesthetics. Mr. Rogers then expressed willingness to change the three transom windows on the South elevation. He noted the three transom windows were designed to accommodate the interior layout.

Mr. Roberts thanked Mr. Rogers for taking on this project. Mr. Roberts stated concern for the design of the shutters. He stated shutters were not usually installed on double windows. He requested leaving off the shutters for the double window, and making sure the shutters fit the opening of the remaining windows. Mr. Rogers stated his intention was not to match a 1920’s residence. Ms. Largue asked Mr. Rogers if he would be amenable to removing the shutters from the double window under the porch. Mr. Rogers stated he would.

Mr. David Gray, resident of Oakleigh Garden Historic District, expressed concern about the proposed project at 405 Chatham Street being the same plan as the recently constructed 357 Chatham Street. He noted his reservations regarding “pre-fabricated” housing proliferating in the neighborhood, and expressed the desire to see other design plans. Mr. Rogers stated the same level of design and ornamentation is typical of the several plans for the project. He explained the project had to balance affordability with design.
Mr. Roberts noted the house has ornamentation and design elements such as the louvered gable vent, and kneebraces. Mr. Roberts remarked the house is not pre-fabricated (such as a Sears Roebuck Catalog house) but that it is two pieces “built from scratch.” Mr. Gray then stated he was fine with the proposed buildings but would like to see them more towards the east and south. Mr. Roberts agreed with the need for variety in the district. He elaborated stating density is necessary in historic districts, and the concern with new construction is if it meets the Design Review Guidelines.

Mr. Gray commented on the new TIGER grant project for Broad Street and the previous Bring Back Broad initiative. Mr. Roberts replied the Board had no control over the project. Ms. Harden suggested Mr. Gray reach out to Shayla Beaco who is Executive Director of Build Mobile and over Long Range Planning.

Mr. Rogers noted the proposed design is Gold Certified and can withstand wind loads of 160 miles per hour.

Mr. Jaime Betbeze, Oakleigh resident and neighborhood representative for the MHDC (Mobile Historic Development Commission), noted neighborhood residents’ concern turned to excitement on the 357 Chatham Street residence. He stated he was able to see the implementation of the first house of the project (357 Chatham Street) and was able to attend the open house. Mr. Betbeze commented several neighbors gave feedback and were overall satisfied with the quality. Mr. Betbeze acknowledged several designs are going to be introduced over the course of the project, and that the overall design fits in the context of the neighborhood. He stated the neighbors he spoke with wished to slightly alter some of the design elements to better fit the context. Mr. Betbeze explained he agreed with Mr. Roberts is concern that the front elevation windows were too narrow and asked if six-over-six pattern (three panes across, two below) could replace the narrow windows. He then requested the shutter size be changed to fit within the window opening. Mr. Roberts noted the Board considers window patterns on new construction and designs for the aforementioned are not required to be traditional, but to reflect traditional patterns. Mr. Rogers asked if the audience would want a headboard in front of windows, noting he had received feedback that most owners would not. Mr. Betbeze stated most residents with historic homeowners have solutions such as blinds to circumvent the issue with furniture placement. Mr. Roberts agreed historic homeowners deal with that issue regularly.

Mr. Betbeze continued discussing the fenestration. He commented the massing and scale of the windows on the side elevations mostly mimic traditional window size and pattern. Mr. Betbeze explained the neighbors he spoke with were concerned with the three transom windows located at the western portion of the South (side) elevation. He further explained it to be an odd configuration and one that would be better suited towards the rear portion of the elevation. Mr. Rogers stated he would be open to different window configurations at that location. He suggested one small window. Mr. Rogers also stated he thought the concern was a matter of taste rather than incompliance with the guidelines.

Mr. Roberts stated if the building was mimicking a traditional design, that the windows should mimic a traditional design. Mr. Holmes expressed his disagreement with Mr. Roberts. Mr. Rogers stated the design was meant to be a contemporary interpretation. Mrs. Echols stated she lived in a 1920’s home with similar window configurations. She commented the design, while more modern, is tasteful and fits the context. Mr. Holmes stated the design meets the guidelines. He explained he did not think the design would hurt the neighborhood, and the critical issue was that new housing would be placed on existing vacant lots. Mr. Betbeze stated the neighbors he communicated with are receptive to the idea, but that this is the opportunity for the neighborhood to express concern and to better the design. Mr. Holmes stated the concern of the Board was if it met the Design Review Guidelines.

Ms. Harden stated one goal in new construction is to be aware of proportions. She explained majority of the side elevation windows look in proportion to the district, and that the windows in the front and rear
elevations are longer and skinnier. Ms. Harden expressed concern over disconnect between the windows of the two elevations. Mr. Betbeze stated that was his issue as well.

Mr. Betbeze then stated his last comment regarded the foundation. He stated the foundation for another design called for lattice between piers while stucco was proposed for the front elevation of 405 Chatham Street. Ms. Largue noted stucco was an acceptable treatment and that lattice between faux piers is proposed to be employed on the side elevations. Mr. Betbeze stated he thought “criss-cross” lattice was more appropriate for the design.

Mr. Rogers addressed both the Board and audience. Regarding the foundation, he stated part of the issue with employing lattice on the front elevation foundation is a design issue because it is a solid concrete wall. He noted the houses in Oakleigh have a variety of foundation treatments and windows. Mr. Rogers explained other foundations found in the neighborhood include brick filled between piers. He further explained the stucco over concrete will be less maintenance.

Mr. Rogers stated he would be open to altering some design details. He stated the proposal is an architect’s design. Mr. Rogers explained the intent on the project is to make the neighborhood better. He noted the recent rehabilitation of 1004 Texas Street and an apartment complex on Texas Street.

Mr. Betbeze commented that the meeting was an for the ARB and neighborhood to look at the implemented design at 357 Chatham Street and work towards a better design.

Ms. Largue noted when looking at new construction, placement; massing; scale and materials are the primary items taken into consideration. She explained windows are a consideration as well, such as their solid-to-void ratio. Ms. Harden stated she was still concerned with the front elevation’s windows. Mr. Stone noted that the minutes of the ARB meeting for 357 Chatham Street reflect the Board’s concern with windows as well.

Mr. Allen commented his bungalow had been denied shutters in the past. Mr. Allen stated he had an issue with the front elevations windows and the three small transom windows located on the western portion of the South (side) elevation. He explained bungalows often had two smaller windows toward the front of the house when flanking a chimney. He also noted the proposed design had seven window designs and that many bungalows in the past were more simplistic. He stated his concern that several of these residences with similar or identical window design will be within the same three blocks. Mr. Allen commented the designs would give the neighborhood a suburban feel and therefore affect the character of the neighborhood. Mr. Stone noted the proposed design is receiving so much feedback because similar designs will be brought before the Board as part of a larger project.

Mr. Sledge stated that in terms of historic context several working class cottages with similar design and decoration can be found in the neighborhood. He noted seven residences of similar design on Rapier Avenue. Mr. Roberts stated his main concern was with the front façade, but that he would like to see more variation in future submissions. Mr. Rogers replied there are around eight designs total, including a shotgun style plan.

No further discussion from the Board ensued.

Mr. Stone opened the application to public comment. Ms. Johnelle Brewster, Oakleigh resident, commented the shutter should be fifty percent of the actual window size as to fit the opening.

Mr. Allen stated the Design Review Guidelines does not mandate a house replicate a historic home. He commented there is plenty of room for modern design that mimic the massing and scale.
FINDING OF FACT

Mr. Holmes moved that, based upon the evidence presented in the application and during the public testimony the Board finds the facts in the Staff report, as written.

The motion received a second by Ms. Harden and was unanimously approved.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Mr. Roberts asked if the applicant would be willing to holdover the application. The applicant wished for the Board to approve or deny the application.

Mr. Holmes moved that, based upon the facts as approved by the Board, a Certificate of Appropriateness be approved.

The motion received a second by Mrs. Echols, and a third by Mrs. Hasser. However, four members: Ms. Harden, Mr. Stone, Mr. Allen, and Mr. Roberts were in opposition to granting the COA. The application was denied.