



AGENDA

CITY OF OPELIKA
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
May 9, 2024
4:30 p.m.
Meeting Chambers at Opelika Municipal Courtroom
300 MLK Boulevard

Call to Order

Approve April 11, 2024 minutes.

Public Comment/Citizen Communication

Old Business

New Business

1. 1 N. 8th St: Downtown Historic District
COA: New Construction
Owner: Stone Martin Builders
2. 712 N. Railroad Ave: Downtown Historic District
COA: Façade Renovation
Owner: Richard Patton
3. 713 1st Ave: Downtown Historic District
COA: Façade Renovation
Owner: Richard Patton
4. 721 1st Ave: Downtown Historic District
COA: New Construction-Preliminary Review Only
Owner: Richard Patton
5. Presentation by The Walker Collaborative
Opelika Historic Design Review Guidelines

Other Business

6. Enforcement Report
7. Staff Report

8. Next meeting June 13, 2024

9. Adjournment

The City of Opelika complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to meetings. If you need special assistance, please call the City's ADA Coordinator 72 hours prior to the meeting at (334)705-5130.

City of Opelika
Historic Preservation Commission
Staff Report



Agenda Item #: 1
Meeting Date: 05/09/2024
Action Requested: COA: New Construction
Location of Property: 1 N. 8th St; Downtown Historic District
Petitioner: Stone Martin Builders

Resources:

Vacant lot located in the Downtown Historic District. Former site of the Opera House.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. New construction two-story, wood-framed office building with covered, wrap around balcony and brick masonry veneer. The new office space will connect atmospherically to the existing office building on the first floor only. Specs include wood exterior doors painted; pre-finished aluminum clad wood windows at main entry with black finish; windows elsewhere to be storefront black; exterior lighting at balcony and ground floor to be cooper; sconces at parapet to be black; downspouts and gutter boxes to be pre-finished aluminum in black; exposed wood structure to be stained cedar; brick to be Sherman bluff heritage with ivory mortar; cementitious boards and cedar trim at main entry will be painted; steel pipe columns and structural beams and welded decorative elements to be painted black; cast stone equal to RockCast “Riesling”; cornice at main entry to be EDON fiberglass profile CR283, painted to match cast stone.
2. A sign to be painted directly on to the brick veneer, with colors to match existing office painted signage.

Guidelines: **STANDARD # 9:** New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

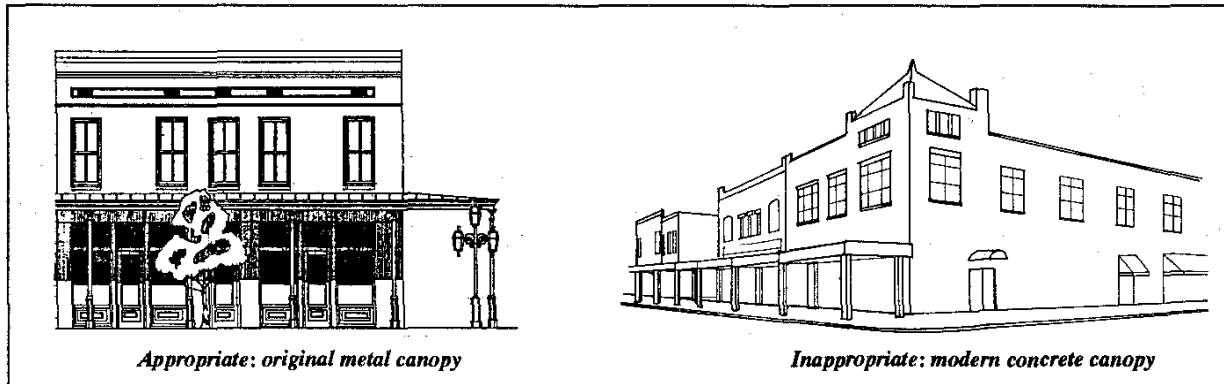
NEW CONSTRUCTION

Opelika has several vacancies located within a block of commercial buildings. This configuration has been described as looking like a missing tooth. Open space that adjoins the street should be developed in scale, use, and character with the neighborhood. New designs, which express changing tastes and needs, tell the on—going story of a downtown’s evolution. New designs should not attempt to create a false “historic” appearance. New designs are evaluated in terms of how well they relate to neighboring buildings’ composition, materials, size/scale, rhythm of openings, orientation/alignment, setback/site, style, and landscape.

CANOPIES - #17.

Maintain original canopies and balconies.

PRESERVATION: Although canopies, porches, and balconies are not commonly found on commercial buildings, when they exist, they are distinctive features. Original materials, details, shape, outline, and roof height should be retained. Enclosing canopies and balconies is not appropriate if it destroys the visual openness of the porch appearance. Concrete canopies or covered walkways are not appropriate.



LIGHTING - #21.

Use light fixtures to unify the streetscape and accent the buildings at night.

STYLE: Period Street lighting, such as free—standing lamp posts, is presently available in several styles and forms. Traditional or modern designs are appropriate and ornate designs may be appropriate if they are based on documentation. Fake looking “colonial” lamp posts are not appropriate for most historic commercial areas.

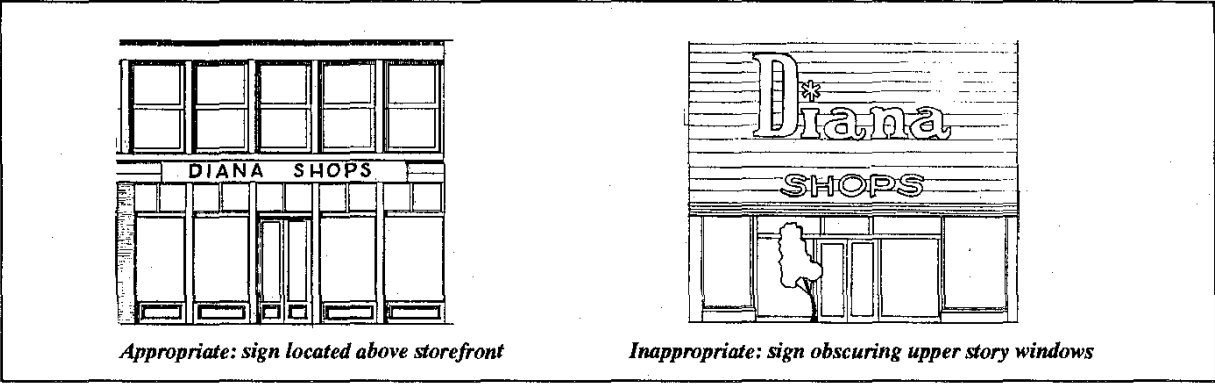
TYPE: Incandescent, gas lighting, and vapor lighting are appropriate. Harsh cold florescent lighting should be avoided.

SIGNS #6.

Signs should complement, rather than compete with, the character of the building and downtown.

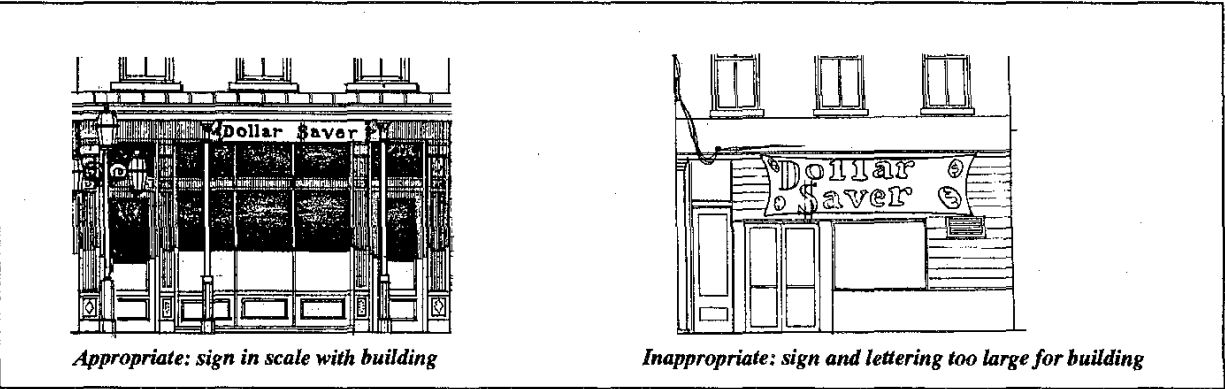
These design guidelines apply to the exterior signs within the Northside and Geneva Street Historic Preservation Districts. All signs in a historic preservation district must meet the provisions of the Opelika Zoning Ordinance as well as receive a Certificate of Appropriateness. A Certificate of Appropriateness review will determine whether a sign proposal meets the context of these guidelines. Whenever there is a conflict between the regulations of the zoning ordinance and these guidelines, the more stringent regulations will take precedence. (Updated 08/12/13)

LOCATION: Signs should be designed with the historic character of the building and district in mind. The design should be compatible with the architectural features of a building or neighboring buildings and should not obscure architectural details of the building. Locate signs on flat unadorned parts of the facade or paint directly onto the glass storefront. Hanging signs should not project more than 40 inches beyond adjoining buildings or obscure the view of the streetscape. A hanging sign should be at least 8 feet off the ground. Signs should not be located on the roof. They should be aligned with others in the area in order to create a more uniform appearance. (Updated 08/12/14)



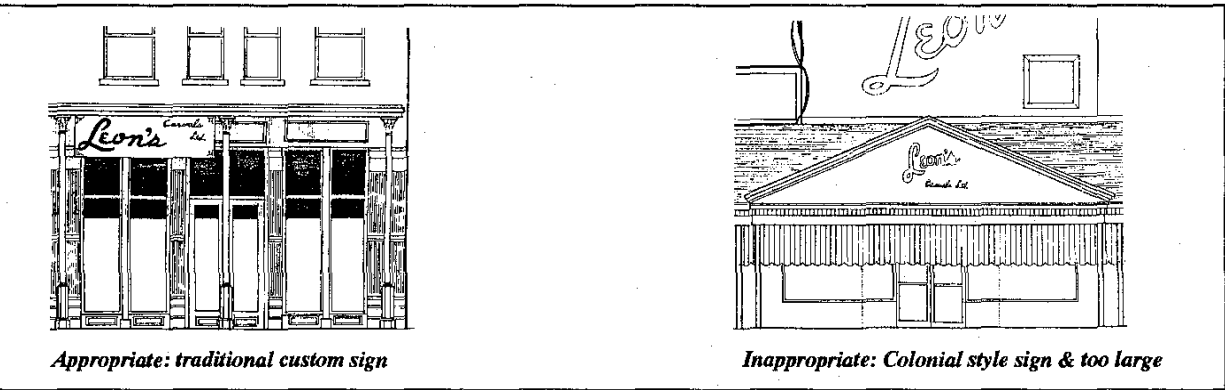
TYPES: A variety of signs may adorn a building. Awning signs and small facade sign panels can attract the attention of passing motorists or pedestrians across the street. Signs painted on storefront windows and doors attract the attention of pedestrians. Hanging signs should be attached so that they do not damage the wall surface. Attach signs through joints in the masonry rather than to the brick itself. Moveable or portable signs are not appropriate. Sandwich Boards measuring up to 24” wide by 36” tall may be approved by staff and must be of an A-frame design. The use of painted wood signs is encouraged and the use of metal and plastic signs are discouraged. One sandwich sign per building is permitted, though buildings housing multiple businesses may share a slightly larger, 24” wide by 48” sign. (Updated 08/12/14)

SIZE: Size should be determined by the scale of the building, not whether the sign is meant to be viewed by a passing motorist or pedestrian. Generally, lettering should not exceed 18 inches high. The maximum area of any sign in a historic commercial district shall be limited to twenty-four (24) square feet, and in the Gateway Corridor (Geneva St, 10th St, Torbert Ave, 2nd Ave) shall be limited to forty-eight (48) square feet, unless acceptable documentation proves that original signage from the date of construction of the building or the most significant architectural renovation of the building was larger.



MATERIALS: Sign materials should be compatible with those of the historic building. Traditional signs were often painted on finished wood or metal panels. Signs painted onto fabric awnings are effective. Unfinished plywood and plastic signs may not be appropriate in the downtown.

DESIGN: New signs should not attempt to look older than the building. Colonial designs are not appropriate on Victorian buildings. Custom signs are preferable to mass-produced standardized signs. Simple designs which are subordinate to the building are appropriate. Where several businesses occupy a building, it is best to coordinate the signs. The use of symbolic, three-dimensional signs, such as the red and white barbers’ pole, is encouraged.



LIGHTING: The sign should be illuminated to fit the design of the building. The color and intensity of illumination are central to achieving a complimentary balance of the building and signs. Light intensity should not overpower the building or street edge. Sign lighting should be subdued or indirect. Internally lit (*including digital*) plastic signs are not appropriate, although, in some cases, neon signs may be appropriate. Neon lighting should be used in limited volume to ensure that it does not become visually obtrusive and dominate the street frontage. Incandescent lights are preferable to the harsh, cold appearance of fluorescent lights. Flashing lights are not appropriate. (*updated 08/12/14*)

HISTORIC SIGNS: Retain historic signs whenever possible. (See Preservation Brief #25.) Preserve signs that: reflect the history of a building or district; are characteristic of a particular historic period or style; are associated with events, people, or places; are evidence of the history of a product or business; display excellent craftsmanship, use of materials, or design; are incorporated into the buildings design or physical fabric. *Photo evidence of previous sign design and/or style is encouraged. (Updated 08/12/14).*

Photo's:

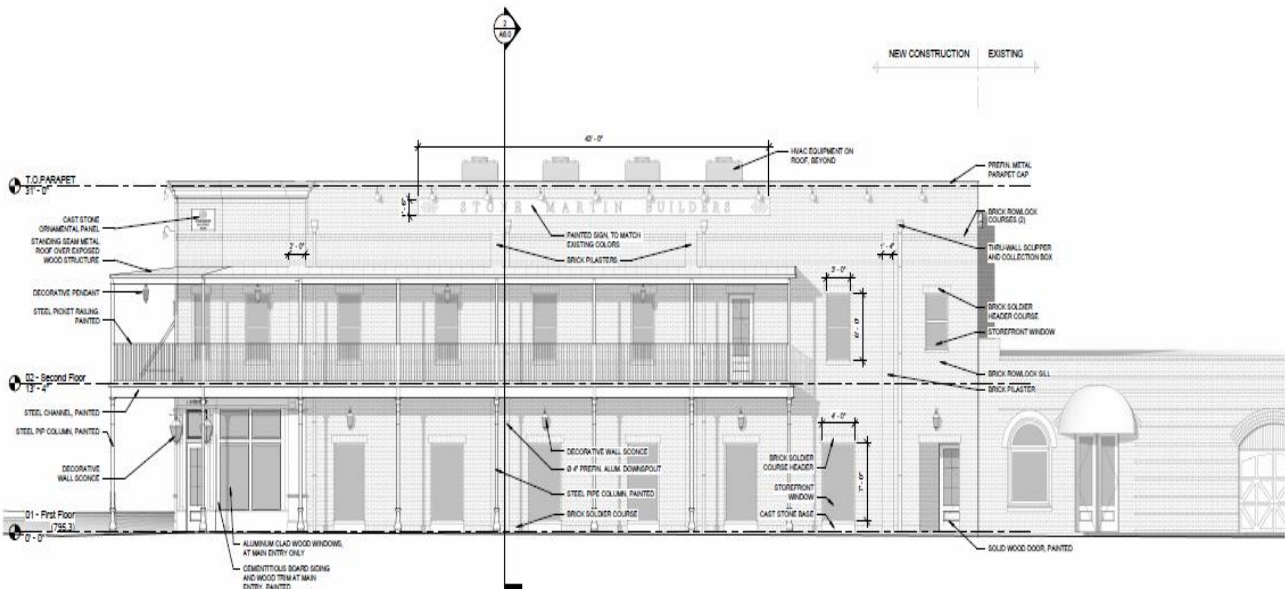
Old Opera House building:



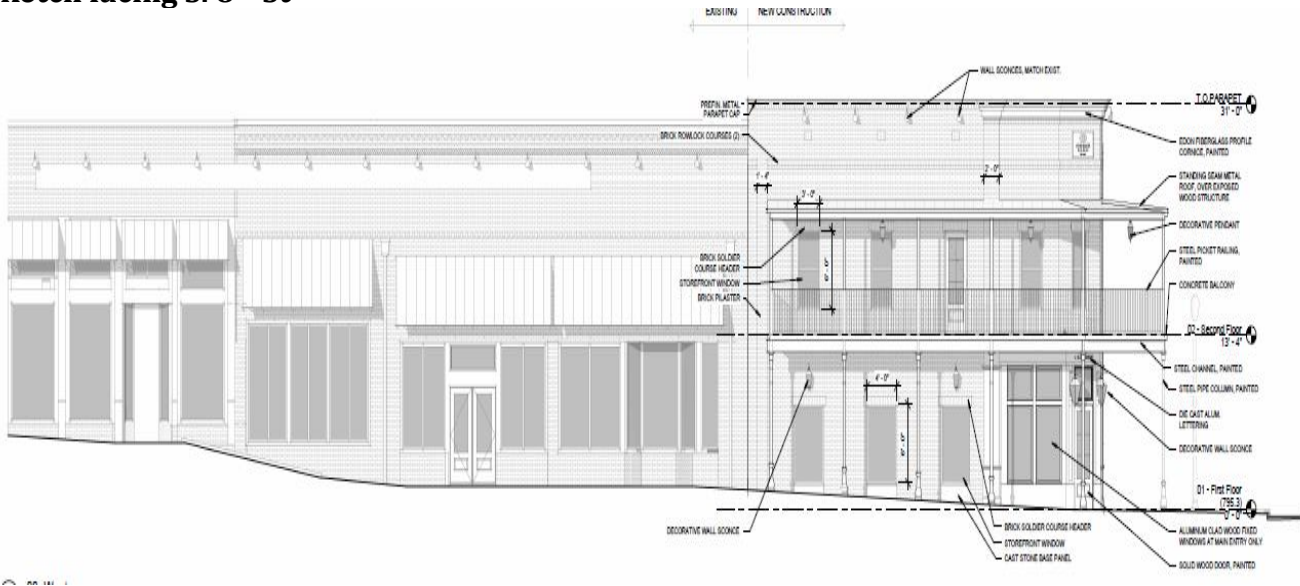
Proposed project rendering:



Sketch facing N. Railroad Ave



Sketch facing S. 8th St



Specs:



SHELLMAN BLUFF TEXTURED BRICK
IVORY MORTAR

ACME BRICK COMPANY

Brick facade



SW 7615 SEA SERPENT
CEMENTITIOUS AND WOOD PANELING AT ENTRY



SW 6258 TRICORN BLACK
STEEL COLUMNS AND BEAMS, DECORATIVE STEEL,
STEEL RAILINGS, EXTERIOR DOORS

SHERWIN-WILLIAMS COMPANY

Paint colors for paneling at entry and balcony columns, railings, and door



COLUMN CAPITAL, INVERTED.
8 1/2" W x 8" H
CI9102



COLUMN BASE
10 1/2" W x 26 3/4" H
CI6009

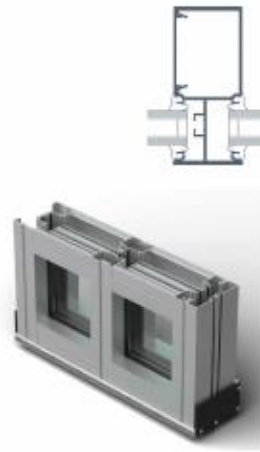
TS DISTRIBUTERS, INC.
<https://www.tsdistributors.com/>

Balcony column details



URBAN CASEMENT FIXED, BLACK
ALUMINUM CLAD WOOD WINDOW
AT ENTRY ONLY

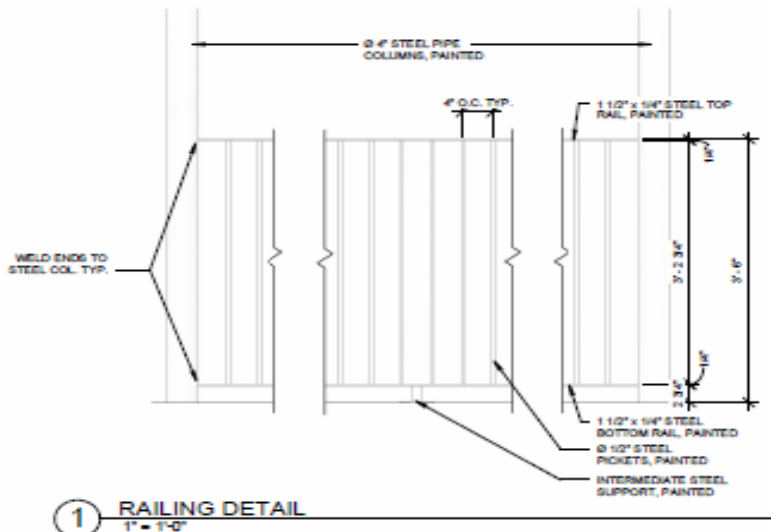
SIERRA PACIFIC WINDOWS



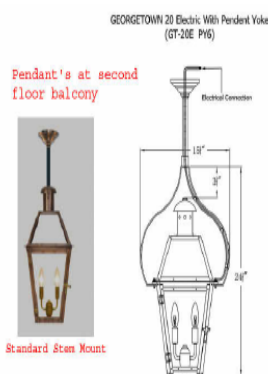
ALUMINUM STOREFRONT WINDOW,
FRONT SET
BLACK

PRECISION GLASS

Casement display window 1st floor

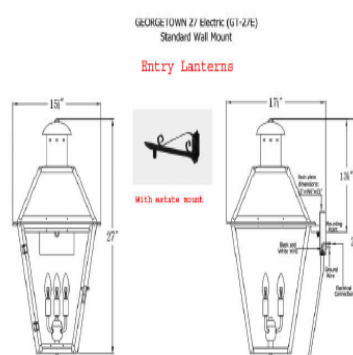


Railing details



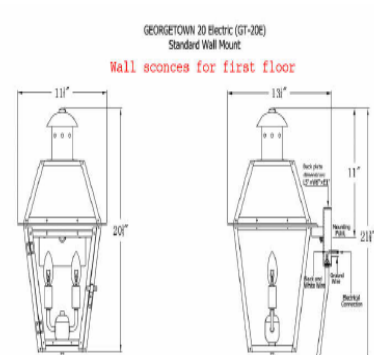
Standard Stem Mount

The CopperSmith		
Product Description	Drawing Description	1157 Nord Drive Perry Indiana 46369
Corkcore 2-GLZ Candidates	REV A/0	
Waste 2-GLZ	Date: 01/18/2022	SKU Number: C7-205
Disclaimer: Not Intended for Sale		Product Name: Corkcore, 24" Width



With estate mount

The CopperSmith		
Product Description	Drawing Description	9532 Hard Drive
Storako 9532 Controller	MS-A/D	Foley Atlanta 30336
Walter 40W	Order 02/14/2022	SKU Number: C7-275
Completed for David Walker		Product Name: Storako 9532 Hard Drive

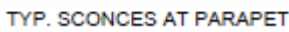


The CopperSmith		
Product Description	Drawing Description	9532 Hard Drive
Serials 2 #32 Cords/60	REV A/D	Policy Address 30336
Welder 2 #30	Order 01/06/2022	SKU Number 071-206
	Completed the Design 10/06/2022	Read and Review Comments 20/06/2022

Pendant-2nd floor balcony

Entry lanterns

Wall sconces 1st floor



Staff recommendation:

- Page 8 of 8

City of Opelika
Historic Preservation Commission
Staff Report



Agenda Item #: 2
Meeting Date: 05/09/2024
Action Requested: COA: Replace garage doors, Install roll up doors and new entry Doors, Clean and repoint brick.
Location of Property: 712 N. Railroad Ave; Downtown Historic District
Petitioner: Richard Patton

Resources:

Building Early 20th century; one story brick load bearing wall construction; sheet metal gutter. New sheet metal garage.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. Replace the left garage door with roll-up glass and black framed aluminum glazed door.
2. Replace the right garage door with recessed black framed aluminum storefront and side entry door.
3. Replace two single doors with wood doors.
4. Install individual painted aluminum lettering measuring 14"x 192" (~32SF) on front facade.

Proposed Guidelines:

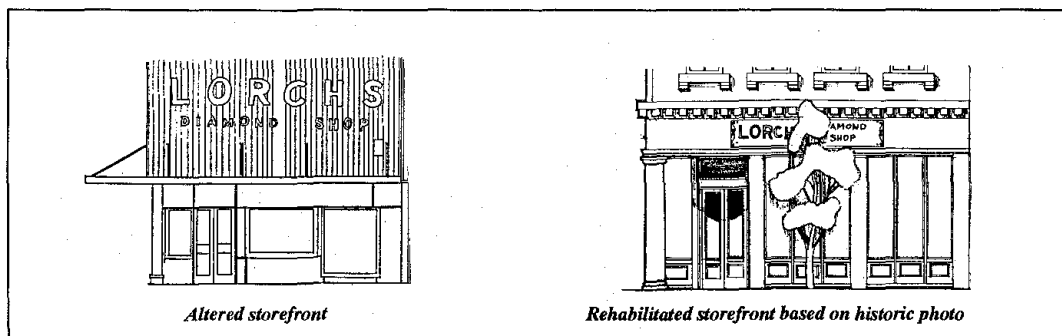
STOREFRONTS

Through time, many of the historic commercial buildings in Opelika have been altered to create a more up-to-date look in keeping with changing trends and fashions. For example, one trend, which swept through Main Street cities across the country in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s, was concealing the ornamental details and materials of the historic facade behind a plain front in order to make the building appear modern and streamlined. In Opelika, change occurred more often on the storefront than on the upper level of the facade. The first approach, in rehabilitation, is to uncover the original facade, and storefront whenever possible. When the original facade no longer exists, either leave it as it is or recreate the facade and storefront based on historical or physical evidence. If documentation does not exist about the appearance of the original facade one option is to create a new design composed of traditional features which are compatible with nearby buildings. A few storefronts have evolved over the years and have acquired their own sense of identity. For example, a glass art Deco storefront, added to a Victorian building, may have achieved importance and should be preserved. For more detailed information on Storefront Rehabilitation, refer to Technical Brief #11, which is included in this notebook.

RECONSTRUCTED STOREFRONT -#3

Reconstruction of a historic storefront should be based on physical evidence and historical documentation such as photographs.

RE-CONSTRUCTION: Obtain historic photographs, post cards of downtown, and historical background about the building by contacting the historical society, library, and/or state archives.



DOORS - #9.

Preserve the original front doors and opening.

PRESERVATION: The original size and shape of door openings should be maintained, not in-filled. Original doors and door hardware should be repaired and maintained. Replacement doors, when necessary, should be compatible with the original doors in terms of style, size, material, and glass panel configuration.

NEW OPENINGS: When the creation of new openings is necessary in order to meet fire codes, they should be located on sides or to the rear of buildings, rather than on the front. New openings, when permitted, should be compatible in scale, size, proportion, and placement to historic openings.

CLOSING AN OPENING: If the blocking of an opening is allowed, infill materials should be compatible with the building and should be placed 2" to 6" back from the building face. Use of fixed reflective glass is not recommended.

MASONRY - #15.

Original masonry including brick, stone, terra cotta, and stucco walls and details should be preserved and maintained.

CLEANING: Cleaning of masonry should be done by the gentlest means possible. Never sandblast a masonry building. Do a test patch prior to undertaking any cleaning method. Do not paint unpainted masonry. Once painted, it is often better to repaint rather than remove paint. Carefully investigate the condition of masonry before removing stucco. (See Preservation Brief #1, 6, 7)

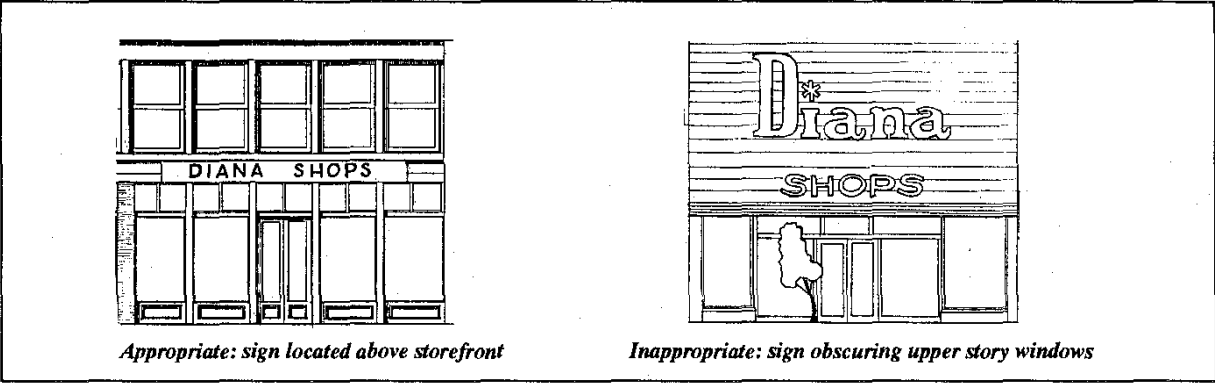
REPAIRING: Waterproofing sealants should not be used on masonry, unless they are vapor permeable. Repairs should match the historic masonry in size, shape, texture, and color. Repointing of existing masonry should incorporate the same mortar mix, tooling, and color as the historic masonry pointing. (See Preservation Brief #2)

SIGNS #6.

Signs should complement, rather than compete with, the character of the building and downtown.

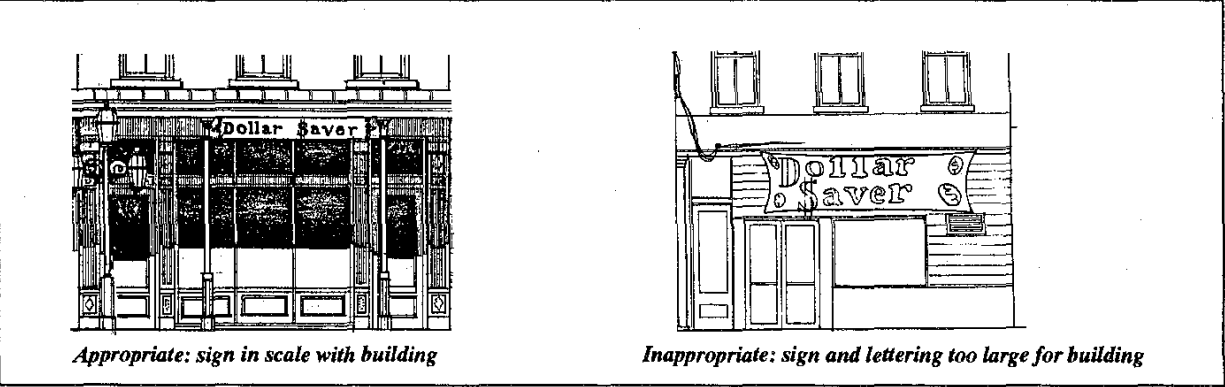
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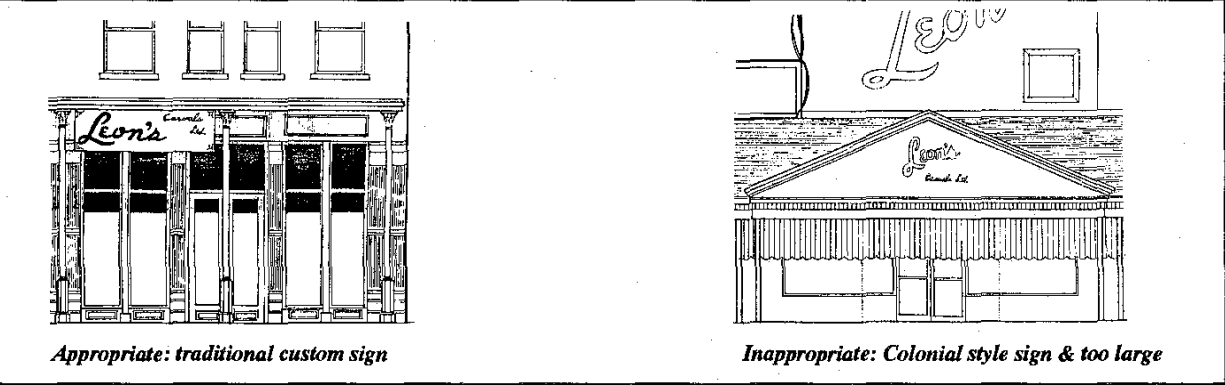
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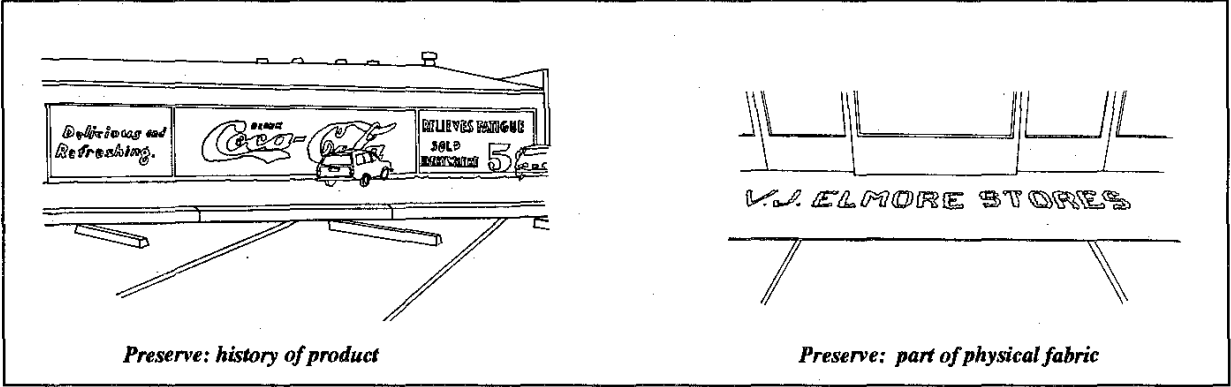
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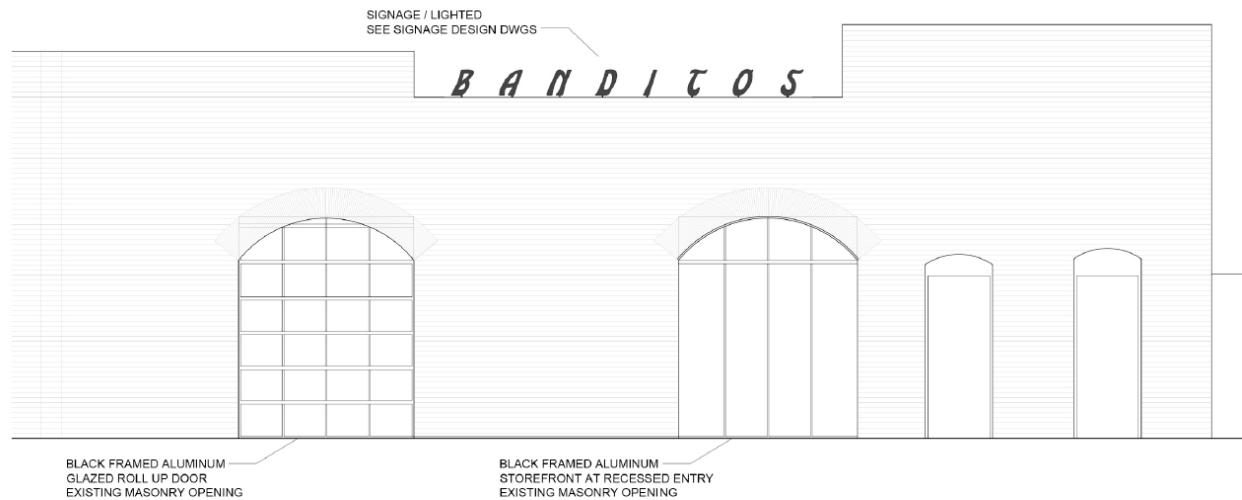
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Photo's:



Before photo



After photo

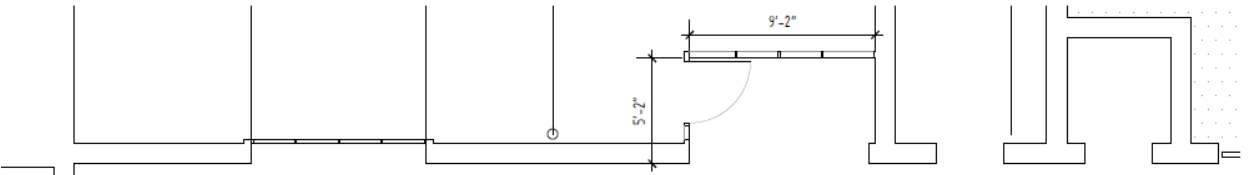
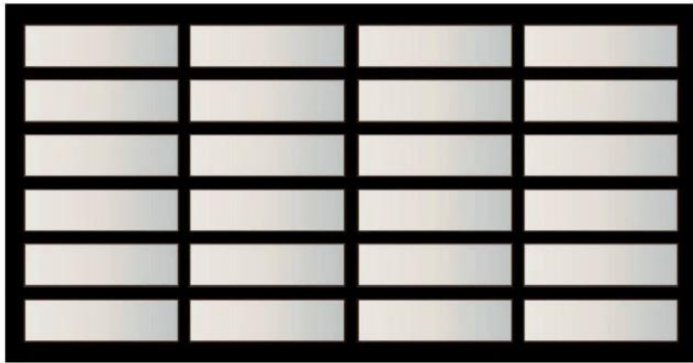


Diagram shows 5'2" inset with side entry door



BLACK PAINTED OR ANODIZED OVERHEAD GLASS DOOR (NOT TO SCALE)

Metal and glass garage door



8'H X 3'W BLACK ANODIZED
MEDIUM STYLE ALUMINUM STOREFRONT DOOR

Side entry metal w/glass door



Resting Pulse garage door



Metal framed windows



Metal framed entry door



Individual lettering to be mounted on front façade (not roofline)

Staff recommendation:

1. *Staff recommends approval of roll-up aluminum and glass garage door on right.*
2. *Staff recommends approval of recessed entry, retaining original opening, and side entry door.*
3. *Staff recommends approval of wood single doors.*
4. *Staff recommends approval of individual painted aluminum lettering for signage mounted on front facade.*

**City of Opelika
Historic Preservation Commission
Staff Report**



Agenda Item #: 3
Meeting Date: 05/09/2024
Action Requested: COA: Façade Renovation
Location of Property: 709 1st Ave; Downtown Historic District
Petitioner: Richard Patton

Resources:

Montgomery Company-Old Renfro Brothers Cotton Warehouse: 1878, enlarged in 1909-1924; one story brick load bearing wall construction round and flat arched openings; corbelled brick cornice. Part of this section of the building that dates from 1909-1924 has been removed. However, the alterations have maintained the vernacular with retention of original round arched openings for doors.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. This façade is from 1st Ave and N. Railroad Ave leading into The Railyard. This outdoor space is next to John Emerald Distillery.
2. The brick will be repointed and a new 12ft wood fence with sliding gate will be installed. Fence to be stained or painted.
3. Install wood doors on all arched garage openings and wood doors on utility closets. Doors to be stained or painted.

Proposed Guidelines:

STANDARD #5: Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be retained and preserved.

MASONRY - #15.

Original masonry including brick, stone, terra cotta, and stucco walls and details should be preserved and maintained.

CLEANING: Cleaning of masonry should be done by the gentlest means possible. Never sandblast a masonry building. Do a test patch prior to undertaking any cleaning method. Once painted, it is often better to repaint rather than remove paint. Carefully investigate the condition of masonry before removing stucco. (See Preservation Brief #1, 6, 7) In almost all cases, unpainted masonry should not be painted. The painting of unpainted brick should only be considered under the following circumstances:

1. The masonry is not historic, nor is likely to become contributing in the future.
2. The brick is soft brick or porous historic brick that was intended to be sealed. Most known brick in Opelika's historic districts have more modern bricks.
3. A majority of the existing structure's masonry is already painted.
4. Masonry at ground level or below needs to be waterproofed to exclude ground water.
5. The structure has been extensively damaged by fire, natural disaster, or pre-existing alterations that the masonry no longer conveys the buildings historic character. This should not include major additions or changes that show the historic evolution of a building. (rev. 01/19/2022)

REPAIRING: Waterproofing sealants should not be used on masonry, unless they are vapor permeable. Repairs should match the historic masonry in size, shape, texture, and color. Repointing of existing masonry should incorporate the same mortar mix, tooling, and color as the historic masonry pointing. (See Preservation Brief #2)

DOORS - #9.

Preserve the original front doors and opening.

PRESERVATION: The original size and shape of door openings should be maintained, not in-filled. Original doors and door hardware should be repaired and maintained. Replacement doors, when necessary, should be compatible with the original doors in terms of style, size, material, and glass panel configuration.

NEW OPENINGS: When the creation of new openings is necessary in order to meet fire codes, they should be located on sides or to the rear of buildings, rather than on the front. New openings, when permitted, should be compatible in scale, size, proportion, and placement to historic openings.

CLOSING AN OPENING: If the blocking of an opening is allowed, infill materials should be compatible with the building and should be placed 2” to 6” back from the building face. Use of fixed reflective glass is not recommended.

Photo’s:



N. Railroad Ave elevation



1st Ave elevation

**City of Opelika
Historic Preservation Commission
Staff Report**



Agenda Item #: 4
Meeting Date: 05/09/2024
Action Requested: COA: New Construction-Preliminary Review only
Location of Property: 725 1st Ave; Downtown Historic District
Petitioner: Richard Patton

Resources:

Vacant lot at the corner of 1st Avenue (Griff Goods) and S. 8th Street (Stone Martin).

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. New construction commercial two-story building. The exterior will be Shou Sugi Ban. This wood is preserved by charring the wood making it fire retardant as well as resistant to rot, insects, and decay.
2. Windows will all be black metal framing. No additional specs provided.

Proposed Guidelines:

STANDARD #3: Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

Guidelines which address issues concerning New Construction, Relocation, Additions, and Demolition are extremely important. The intent of historic district zoning is not to freeze an area in time, but rather to encourage new, complementary buildings on vacant sites on the Main Street.

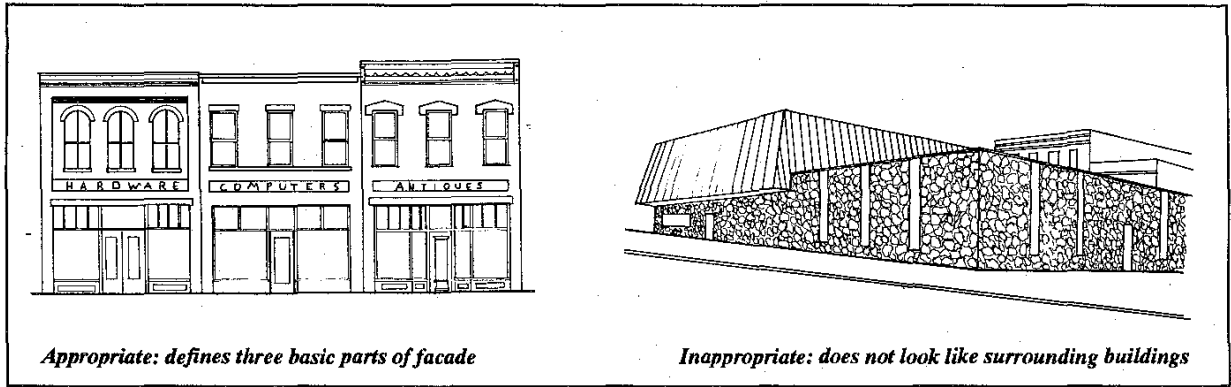
NEW CONSTRUCTION

Opelika has several vacancies located within a block of commercial buildings. This configuration has been described as looking like a missing tooth. Open space that adjoins the street should be developed in scale, use, and character with the neighborhood. New designs, which express changing tastes and needs, tell the on—going story of a downtown’s evolution. New designs should not attempt to create a false “historic” appearance. New designs are evaluated in terms of how well they relate to neighboring buildings’ composition, materials, size/scale, rhythm of openings, orientation/alignment, setback/site, style, and landscape.

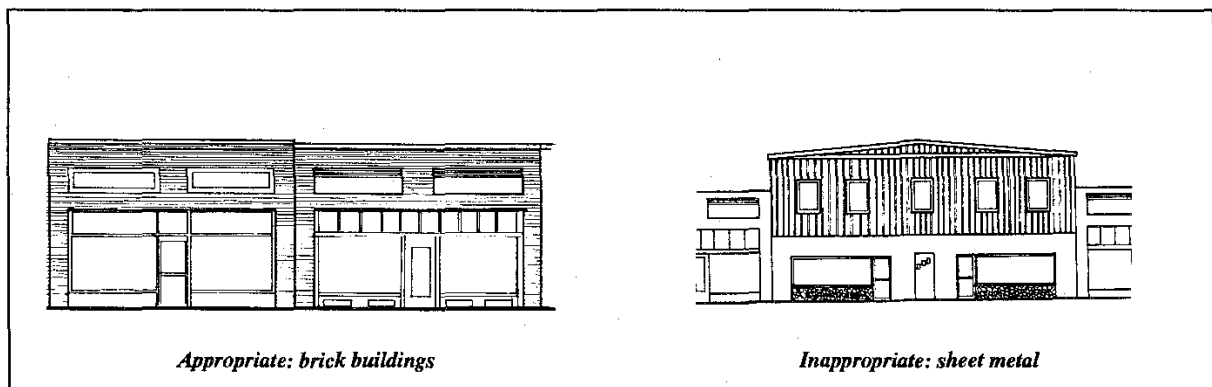
NEW CONSTRUCTION - #29.

New construction should be compatible with neighboring buildings.

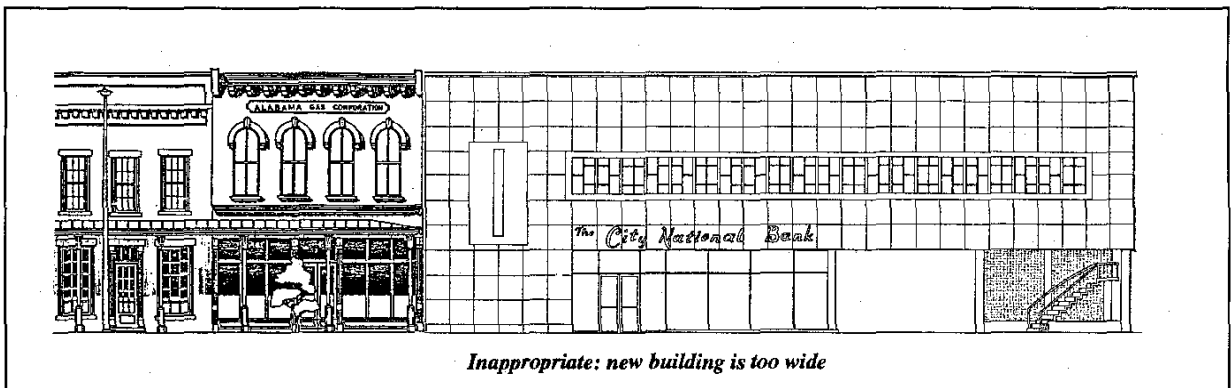
COMPOSITION: New buildings should define the three basic divisions of a commercial facade: a top which is typically a flat roof with a parapet and decorative cornice; a middle area defined by the upper story windows which are vertical and regularly placed; and a bottom which is transparent and has the elements of a storefront, including a bulkhead, a display window, and a transom.



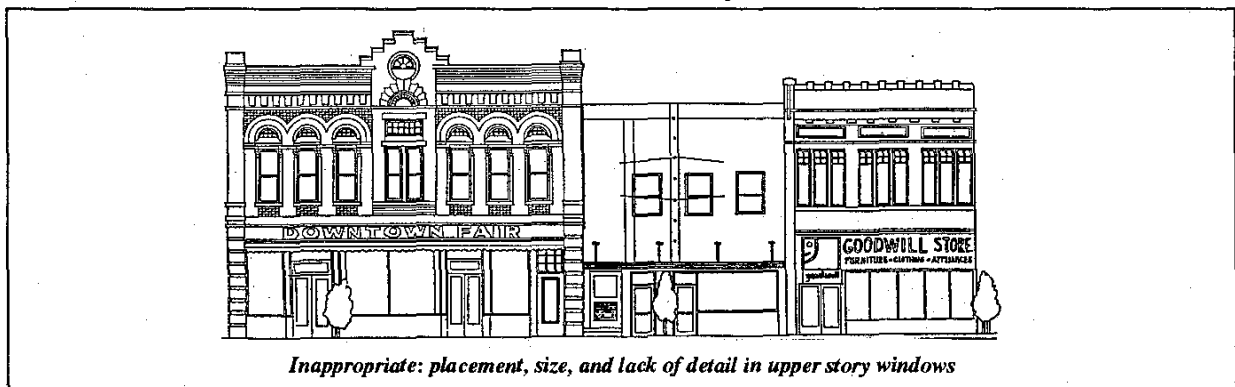
MATERIALS: New materials should relate to the historic materials in terms of texture, scale, color, and composition. New buildings should utilize the same materials as those on existing historic structures. Masonry, particularly brick, is an appropriate material. Inappropriate materials are plywood, composition panel, plastic, imitation brick or stone, vinyl or synthetic siding, sheet metal, and stone veneer. Neither stucco nor concrete block impart the same scale or texture as brick.



SIZE / SCALE: New buildings should be in scale with existing buildings. This means that they should not be appreciably taller, shorter, wider, or narrower than the buildings adjacent to them. Multi-story buildings should have a vertical emphasis, meaning that they should be taller than they are wide. The scale of key elements and details should refer to nearby buildings.

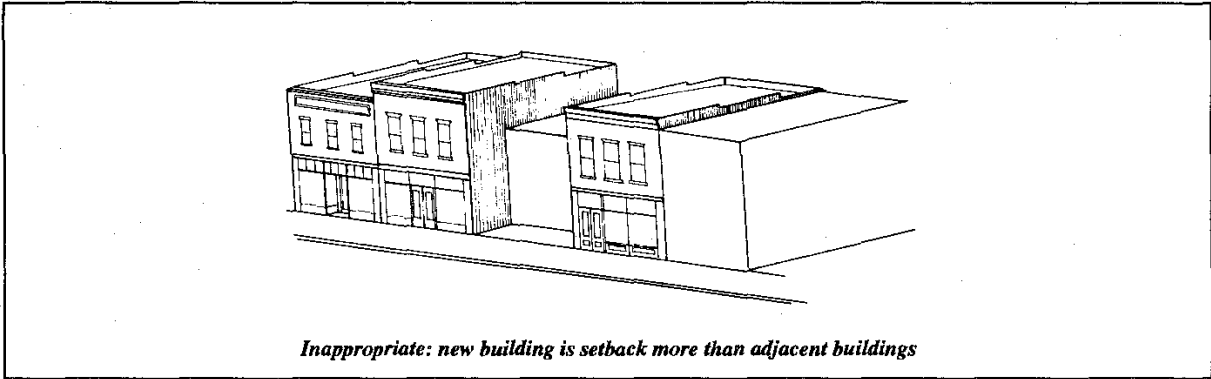


RHYTHM OF OPENINGS: The design, scale, and placement of openings in buildings, which provide a visual rhythm along the street, should be continued. Walls should be divided into bays by windows. New construction should avoid creating long unrelieved expanses of wall along the street. Window openings should be vertically proportioned and placed symmetrically on the facade. They should be slightly recessed back from the surface. Windows should be defined by sills, lintels, or decorative surrounds.



ORIENTATION / ALIGNMENT: Orientation of new construction should match that of existing adjacent buildings. Facades should face the same direction as those of neighboring buildings. The similar heights of buildings are emphasized by the alignment of cornices and/or horizontal bands of second story windows. New construction should continue the visual continuity of horizontal elements.

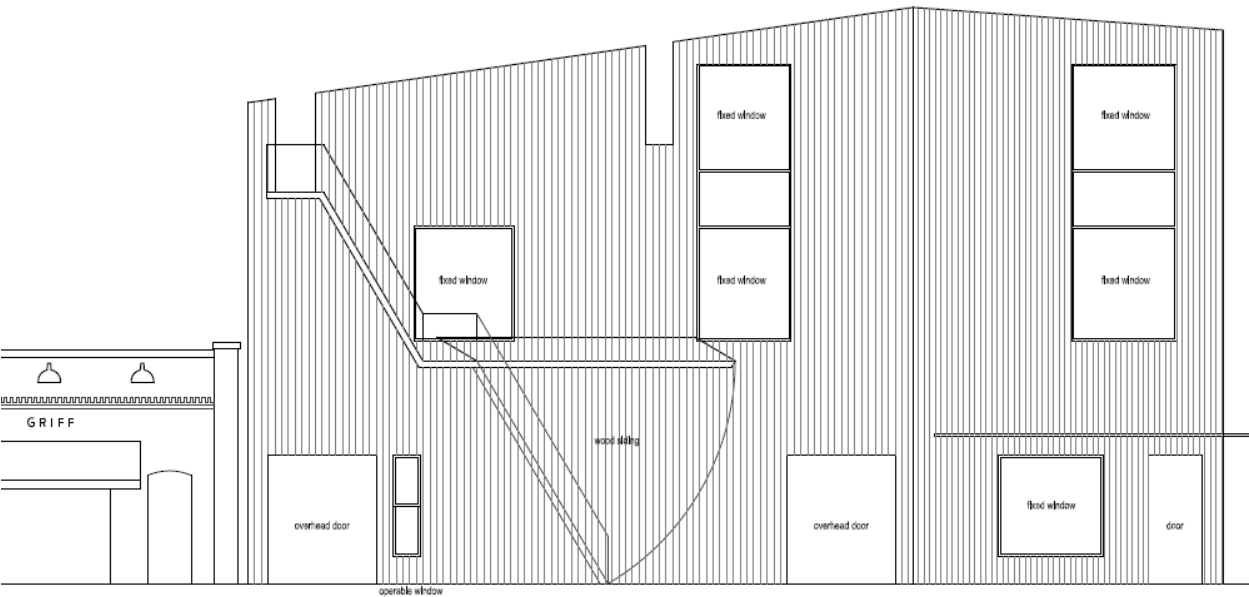
SETBACK / SPACING: New buildings should conform with adjacent or surrounding buildings in terms of their setback and the spacing between buildings. Historically, blocks of commercial buildings directly fronting the sidewalk are attached to each other, sharing a party wall. New buildings should create a continuously walled complex that holds the lines of the streets. Generally, avoid buildings designed as free-standing objects.



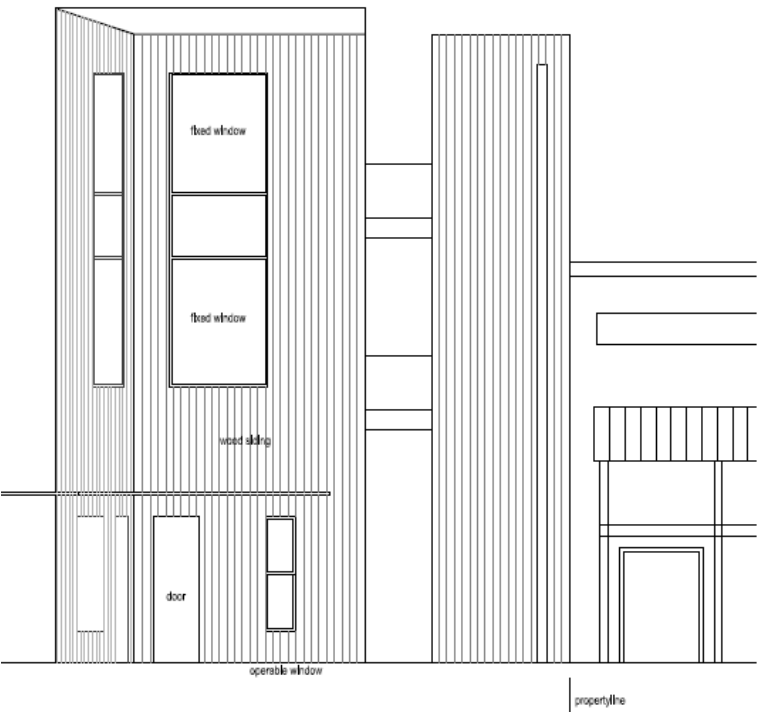
STYLE: The design of new buildings should complement existing historical architecture rather than attempt to imitate it. The new construction should be distinguishable from the old so that the evolution of the Main Street district can be visually read. New designs should creatively draw on the important characteristics of existing buildings.

LANDSCAPE: Site planning should respect the precedents set by other buildings in the block. In areas where many trees form a bower across the streets, new plantings should be planned to achieve a similar effect. For walls, fences, and paving, use materials consistently found in the district. (refer to Design Guideline #22)

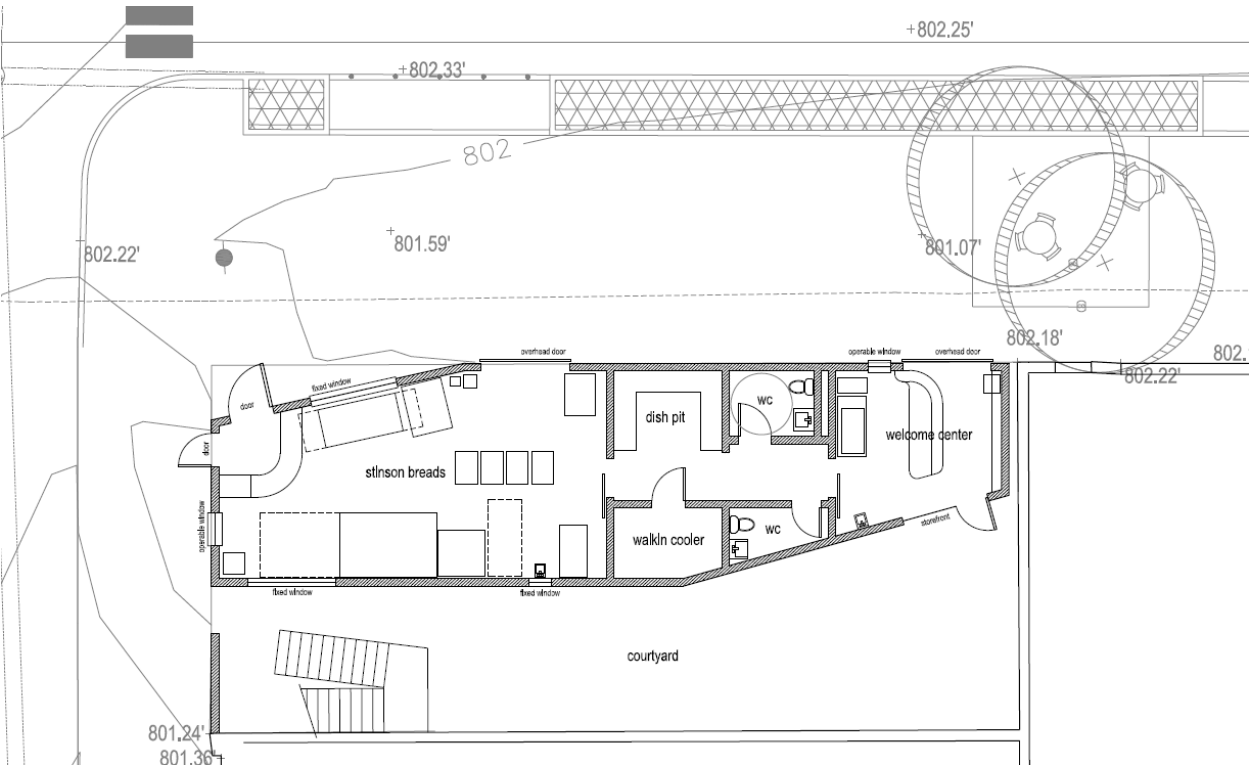
Photo's:



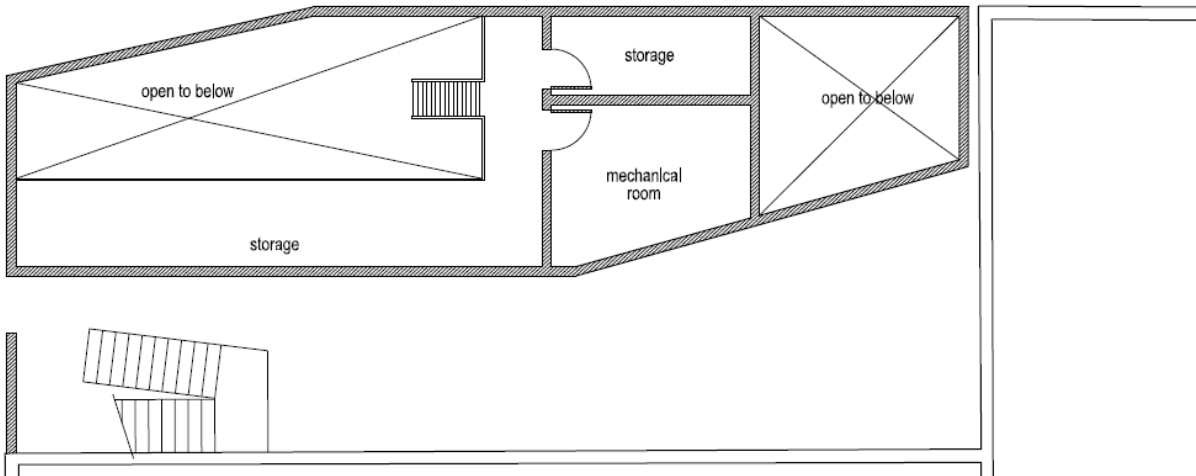
Rendering face 1st Ave (Griff Goods)



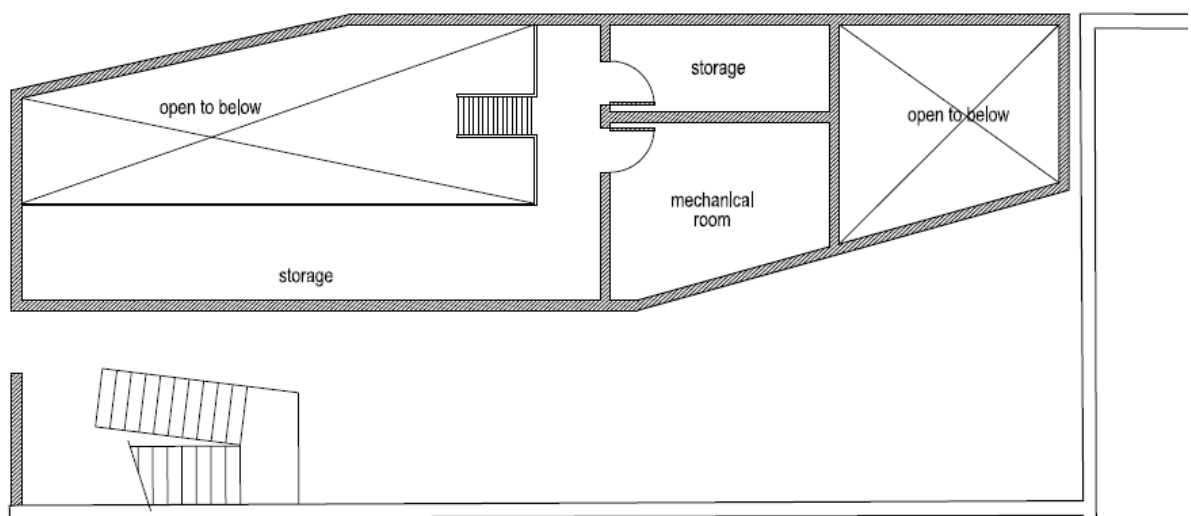
Rendering facing S. 8th St (Stone Martin)



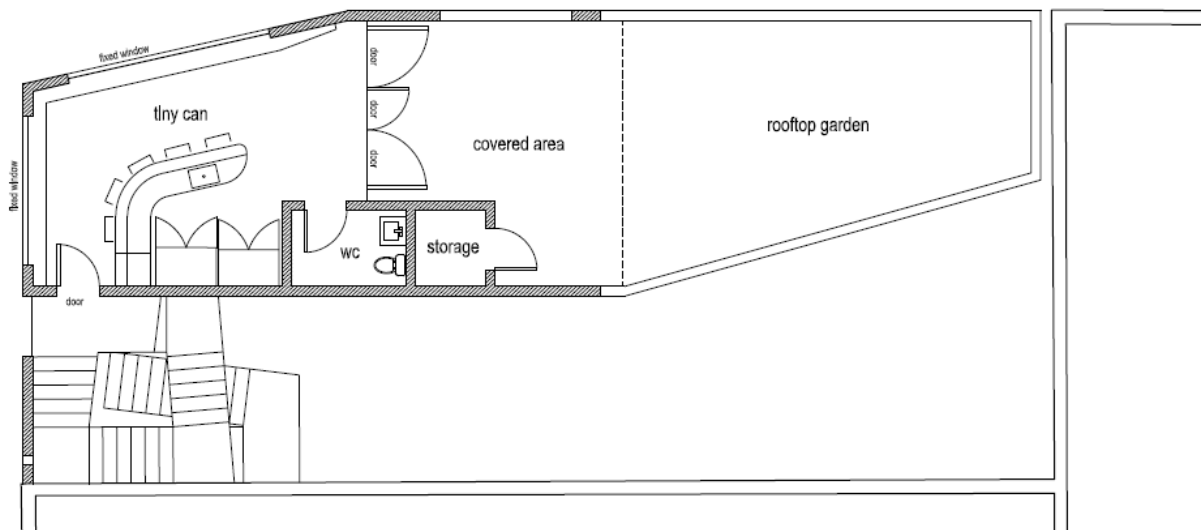
First floor facing 1st Ave with sidewalk at existing café tables



First floor mezzanine



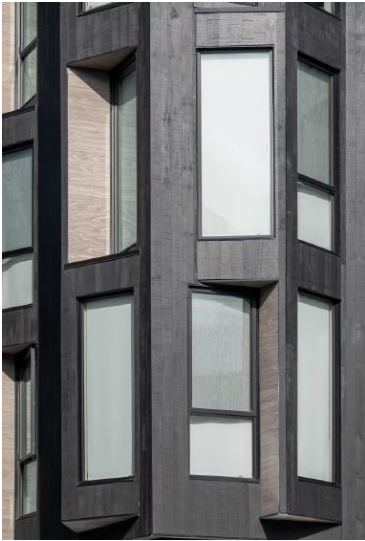
Second floor with open mezzanine



Third floor roof top area

Examples of charred wood designs:







Staff recommendation:

1. The Commission should consider the following guidelines during preliminary review:
 - New materials should relate to historic materials in terms of texture, scale, composition and utilize the same materials as those on existing historic structures.
 - New buildings should define the three basic divisions of a commercial façade: a top which is typically a flat roof with a parapet and decorative cornice; a middle area defined by the upper story windows which are vertical and regularly placed; and a bottom which is transparent and has the elements of a storefront, including bulkhead, a display window, and a transom.
 - New designs should creatively draw on the important characteristics of existing buildings.
 - New buildings should be in scale with existing buildings. They should not be appreciably taller, shorter, wider, or narrower than the buildings adjacent to them. The scale of key elements and details should refer to nearby buildings.
 - The design, scale, and placement of openings, which provide a visual rhythm along the street, should be continued. Walls should be divided into bays by windows. New construction should avoid creating long unrelieved expanses of wall along the street. Window openings should be vertically proportioned and placed symmetrically on the façade. Windows should be defined by sills, lintels, or decorative surrounds.