



Design Review Board (DRB) Staff Report
Prepared for the February 7, 2024 DRB Meeting

Exterior Renovation

Case # 24-05: 325 Wagner EIG
325 Wagner Pl
Memphis, TN 38103

Applicant/Owner: Ezekial Sansing
1850 Autumn Ave
Memphis, TN 38112

Background: DRB review is required for this project because it received an Exterior Improvement Grant (EIG) at the January 17, 2024 CCDC Board Meeting.

The subject property is a two-story commercial building located at the northwest corner of Vance Ave. and Wagner Pl. The building occupies approximately 12,700 square feet. The building was originally constructed in 1920, and initially operated as a flour mill and later as a printing shop. Currently, the western portion of the building (fronting the Mississippi River) operates as a small event venue, while the eastern portion of the building (fronting Wagner Pl) operates as a short-term rental (Air BnB). The space between the Air BnB and the event space is not currently in use, though the applicant intends to expand the event venue into this space.

The exterior scope of work will include repair, lighting and new windows and openings that will increase the functionality of the building, while also improving its visual appearance. The scope includes:

- Cutting and installing new storefront doors
- Installing new windows
- Concrete restoration and new concrete pour
- Removal of existing steel security bars
- Lighting
- Painting

Project Description: The exterior scope of work will increase the visual appeal of the building, while complementing the newer uses of the space. The items of work include the following:

- Removal of existing steel security bars on ground-floor windows on east and south facades of the building.
- Installation of new single hung wood windows along south façade of the building.
- Painting existing overhead door on south façade of the building.
- Painting existing canopies above doors on south façade of the building.
- Restoration of existing concrete details on the east and south facades of the building.
- Pouring new concrete parge along east and south facades of the building.
- Cutting and installing two (2) new aluminum storefront doors along the west façade of the building.
- Installing a new canopy above one of the new aluminum storefront doors along the west façade of the building. New canopy will match existing canopies.
- Installing new wall washer upright fixtures along the east and south façades of the building.
- Installing new gooseneck light fixtures above the doorways on the east and south façades of the building.

Staff Report:

The proposed exterior work will increase the visual appeal of the subject property and complement ongoing investments in the neighborhood.

DRB’s Design Guidelines promote enhancing the public realm and the pedestrian experience. This project will further these goals by increasing lighting along this block, removing imposing metal bars on windows, and restoring the intricate concrete details along the highly visible east and south facades of the building. These improvements will increase comfort and feelings of safety for pedestrians traveling along Vance Avenue, who will see the newly renovated exterior as a sign of investment and activity.

This investment also complements ongoing investments in the neighborhood. On the opposite side of the street from the subject parcel, the 7 Vance Mixed Use development is currently under construction. Additionally, the recently renovated Tom Lee Park is accessible via a pathway directly to the west of the subject property. This is a key access point to this public amenity for residents and visitors in this portion of Downtown. Overall, this project represents continued investment in the neighborhood, signaling a positive trend for investment and activation of this neighborhood.

Staff Recommendation: **Staff recommends approval.**