



**Design Review Board (DRB)  
Staff Report**

Exterior Renovation

Case # 21-63: 502 S. Second St.  
Memphis, TN 38103

Applicant: Nichole Hall  
P.O. Box 41095  
Memphis, TN 38174

Background: DRB review is required for this project because it received an Exterior Improvement Grant from the CCDC at its July 21, 2021 meeting.

The subject property is located along historic Film Row, on the east side of S. Second St., between E. Butler Ave. and G.E. Patterson Ave. The site contains a 4,580 sq. ft. single-story masonry building, built in 1930. The structure was formerly occupied by the Metro Goldwyn Mayer (MGM) Warehouse & Corporate Office of the National Theater Supply Company.

Project Description: The applicant will be transforming the existing vacant building into a luxe jazz suite.

The space was stripped of any previous decorative fixtures prior to the applicant's acquisition of the property. The improvements to the building include restoring the exterior masonry, cladding the exterior with new architectural panels, replacement of the doors and windows with a new metal-framed system, new exterior lighting, new signage, and planters. A second-story covered outdoor patio space will be added along with an aluminum railing for added visual interest and vibrancy.

The bulk of the renovations will be occurring along the western and southern facades, with additional repairs along the rear (eastern façade). The space shares a wall with the northern parcel along the property line. All renovations will occur south of the property line.

**Staff Report:**

Staff is supportive of the proposed renovations at this location. The project follows our Downtown Design Guideline principle of “Promoting Creativity” in exploring new and visually interesting ways to activate a long-vacant building.

The parcel is a later addition to the adjacent structure, also originally used as the Metro-Goldwyn Mayer warehouse. The adjacent building has three separate tenant-occupied spaces that face S. Second St. The adjacent space starts on the north side of the brick demarcation line and the storefronts look to have been upgraded in the past, unlike the parcel proposed here.

The adaptive-reuse of this space will enhance the public realm with new lighting, visual interest, and transparency. The original masonry will be restored with tuck-pointing, and will not be damaged by the new architectural panels. The canopies and resurfacing of the sidewalks increase safety and weather protection for pedestrians.

The renovations to this building join the recently approved projects along the same pedestrian corridor: Century House, WLOK Radio, and Uporium. Film Row is experiencing increasing interest from property owners, and staff feels that a creative, vibrant, and visually exciting addition to this block will only further future investment in along a corridor prime for opportunity.

**Staff Recommendation:**     **Staff recommends approval.**