



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

Exterior Renovation

Case # 21-37: 135 S. Main St.
Memphis, TN 38103

Applicant: Suk Woo
Blue Fin Japanese Restaurant
135 S. Main St.
Memphis, TN 38103

Background: DRB review is required for the exterior elements of this project because it received an Exterior Improvement Grant from the Center City Development Corporation (CCDC) at its May 19, 2021 meeting.

The subject property, Bluefin, is located the west side of South Main Street, in the block between Gayoso and Peabody Place (between the Majestic Grill and the Peabody Place Executive Center).

Project Description: Bluefin currently has an uncovered patio along the Main Street Mall with available outdoor dining furniture. The patio space is fenced with black metal, however, it is weather dependent due to the absence of a roof.

The applicant plans to use the EIG grant to install a high-quality frame and awning to cover the existing patio. The awning will be treated as a permanent improvement and is rated for a 10-year minimum useful life. The royal blue fabric will match the existing blue storefront detail and theme of the business. The existing strung lights will remain, as well as the existing trees.

The awning will take approximately six weeks to order and be installed, prior to DRB approval.

Staff Report: As local bars and restaurants begin to re-open in Downtown Memphis, many business owners are altering their operations to accommodate the hesitancies and safety concerns of their customers. One major, impactful nationwide shift is the expansion of outdoor dining availability.

DMC Staff is passionate about supporting local businesses and is ready to welcome Memphians back to downtown. It is staff's opinion that applications for patio improvements are consistent with the purpose and intent of the EIG program, especially during this time where a pandemic has caused additional need for innovation and flexibility. The awning fabric and frame are of high-quality and are consistent with other covered outdoor dining restaurants along the Main St. Mall: Majestic Grill, Blind Bear, Aldo's Pizza, Local and S.A.G.E.

Staff Recommendation: **Staff recommends approval.**