



Design Review Board (DRB) Staff Report
Prepared for the December 6, 2023 DRB Meeting

Exterior Renovation

Case # 23-77: Krosstown Venue
1400 Madison Ave.
Memphis, TN 38104

Applicant: Kinsey Thompson
1951 Westbriar Dr.
Cordova, TN 38016

Background: The subject property (0.2 acres) is located at the northwest corner of Madison Avenue and Watkins Street in the Medical District subarea of the CBID. The existing one- and two-story structures on the site will be stabilized and renovated to accommodate a ground-floor commercial use and 3 upper-floor apartments, and a courtyard will be created on the west side of the property.

The building was initially constructed circa 1910 with a bakery located on the ground floor and a residence above. In 1944, the building was converted into a dry cleaning business, with a prominent neon sign reading “Krosstown Kleaners,” which has become a neighborhood landmark. The building has remained vacant for several years following the closure of the dry cleaning business.

DRB review is required for this project because it received a \$200,000 Development Loan at the November 17, 2021 CCDC Board Meeting.

Project Description: The building consists of a primary structure and several accessory structures. The primary structure includes all two-story sections of the building as well as the one-story section to the southwest, while the accessory structures include the one-story sections attached to the north and northwest of the primary structure. The scope of work for the initial phase of construction includes all structures except for the north-most structure, which will be reserved for a future phase 2 redevelopment effort.

The applicant intends to renovate the interior of the primary and accessory structures to create a ground floor commercial space

(2,242 sq. ft.) with 3 one-bedroom apartment units on the second floor (2,097 sq. ft.). Three parking spaces will be available on-site to the north of the building, and the remaining parking will be available at the lot immediately to the east. Since the building has remained vacant and neglected for several years, it will require extensive renovations to bring it back into an active use. The interior scope of work includes demolition, extensive plumbing, HVAC and electrical work.

The exterior scope of work includes:

- Masonry repair, tuckpoint and repainting
- Repair and replacement of ground-floor windows on east elevation with picture windows
- Repair and replacement of ground-floor windows on west elevation with single-hung and picture windows
- Replacement and installation of new second-floor windows with single-hung windows on east, west, north and south elevations
- Stabilization and extension of the second floor to the north of the primary structure
- Installation of new fiber cement board siding on second floor of new construction
- Installation of new aluminum and glass storefront wall along the southeast corner and primary commercial entrance
- Recovering and replacing existing roofing with single ply TPO roofing
- Installation of new single ply TPO roofing
- Creation of a new courtyard with landscaping on west side of property
- Cutting new entryway on the west side of primary structure, opening to new courtyard. Installation of new standard aluminum storefront door.
- Replacement of existing fence with a new masonry fence and gate surrounding new courtyard on west side of property.

Staff Report:

The proposed renovations will stabilize and bring the building back into productive use while preserving the existing historic character of the building where possible. DRB's Design Guidelines encourage authentic designs that reflect the building's time as well as style, enhancing the pedestrian experience and the preservation of character-defining features.

While the building is not officially recognized as a historic structure, it has existed for over 100 years, and the applicant's proposed renovations will maintain the existing character of the building to

the highest extent possible. The proposed windows, doors and storefront are in character with the existing structure, and the applicant intends to preserve the existing sign reading “Krosstown Kleaners” located on the south side of the building. Additionally, the brick exterior of the primary structure will be repaired and repainted, further contributing to the authentic preservation of this historic building.

The proposed design also remains supportive of the pedestrian environment, as the building’s ground-floor footprint will remain unchanged, and the activation of the currently vacant storefront along Madison Avenue will increase commercial offerings and pedestrian activity in the neighborhood. The location of parking to the north and east of the building also further supports an active pedestrian realm while maintaining accessibility.

Staff Recommendation: **Staff recommends approval, (with conditions if necessary)**