



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

Exterior Renovation

Case # 18-130: 18 S Main St.  
Memphis, TN 38103

Applicant: Ms. Emily Redding  
Designshop, pllc  
498 S Main St.  
Memphis, TN 38103

Owner: 18 S. Main Mem, LLC  
3839 Flatlands Ave. Suite 206  
Brooklyn, NY 11234

Background: DRB review is required for this project because it received a 13.5-Year PILOT at the July 10, 2018 CCRFC Board Meeting. The applicant will renovate the building as a mixed-use development. The ground-floor and basement will be available for retail and similar commercial uses. The upper floors will be developed as creative office space. The applicant plans an extensive renovation of the building and a contemporary reimagining of the previously-altered building façade.

The subject property is located on the east side of the Main Street Mall, in the block between Madison Avenue and Monroe Avenue.

Project Description: The building uses will be determined by the tenant(s); however, the development group is actively seeking operators for a 1000 SF coffee shop and a 5000 SF signature restaurant to occupy the ground (main street) level. Both are intended to be an active, vibrant and highly visible addition to the pedestrian-friendly mall. Additionally, the lower level, which is accessed from Floyd and November 6<sup>th</sup> alleys is expected to attract a 1000 SF speakeasy/pub for the corner and a 1200 SF fitness tenant of the stationary cycling, yoga and/or aerobics-type. Above all of this would be a 9000 SF single-tenant office space.

The project will have two phases but for DRB Review, Phase I will primarily be exterior work and Phase II will include tenant infill, site work and hard and soft landscaping. The exterior scope of the

project (Phase I) includes exterior demolition, a new Main Street façade, and re-opened “bricked-in” windows in both Floyd and November 6<sup>th</sup> alleys. The varying sizes in the new windows matches the varying sizes of the bricked in openings. New openings within the existing brick façade along Floyd Alley are being considered and would return at a later phase.

The overall aesthetic of the renovated building is designed for visual interplay between the building, its tenants and life on Main Street. The signature feature of the design is the glass curtainwall system, which was selected to be unobtrusive and virtually seamless, offering optimal transparency. Horizontal spaces of the glass panels between joints are 9 ft. 6 in. and the vertical spaces are 3 ft. 1.25 in. White spandrel glass will connect the curtain wall system and the storefront system on the ground floor.

To provide some level of sun-shading, vertical fins become an important sustainable feature. The curtainwall is outfitted with exterior mounted “fins” that are integral to the glazing system. The fins will reduce glare and heat providing a comfortable and safe working environment for the occupants within. The fins will either be heavy-gauge perforated metal or laminated glass. The fins are intended to add a hint of color to the facade.

Architectural lighting, public art and signage will be addressed in a separate application.

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The property is located in the Downtown Core and is not located in a Historic District. The proposed renovation is consistent with the Downtown Memphis Design Guidelines and DMC priorities of honoring the heritage of the city and enhancing the public realm.

Considering the façade of the building has been unsympathetically altered over the years, the design is proudly a product of its own time. The proposed renovation of the Main St. façade is intended to create a new aesthetic for Main Street that embraces contemporary design and materials.

In addition to building a whole new facade, the applicant will also introduce new components such as architectural lighting, public art and signage that will complement the renovation.

The proposed renovation puts a vacant structure back into active use, enhances the curb appeal, and strengthens the Main St. Mall as the main pedestrian corridor for Downtown.

Staff is supportive of the proposed design and believes that it will serve as a strong example of creative contemporary design that prioritizes transparency and vibrancy on the Main St. Mall. Projects such as this are critical in maintaining Main Street's signature mix of historic structures and modern touches that ensure a unique and authentic public realm.

**Staff Recommendation:** **Staff recommends approval with the condition that the applicant return with a separate application for architectural lighting, public art and signage.**