



Design Review Board (DRB) Staff Report

New Construction

Case # 19-48: Fire Station #5
389 Washington Ave. (NW corner of Adams Ave. & High St.)
Memphis, TN 38105

Applicant/Owner: City of Memphis
125 N. Main St.
Memphis, TN 38103

Background: DRB review is required for all private development projects that receive a public incentive and any public project located Downtown, such as a new public building. This application involves the construction of a new City of Memphis Fire Station at the northwest corner of Adams Avenue and High Street.

Project Description: The proposed 2-story building will be approximately 12,000 sq. ft. and include two apparatus bays, 9 sleeping quarters, and associated administrative function space. The building will be clad in brick veneer and be designed to evoke the historic architecture and character of the adjacent Victorian Village neighborhood.

The façade of the building will be oriented to Adams Avenue, with the front setback largely dictated by the turning radii and space requirements of Fire Department vehicles. The architectural design employs a traditional organization of base, middle, and top as distinct features of each elevation. The building base is articulated using a sloping brick rowlock sill. The middle section of each elevation features a simple brick veneer in a different brick color than the base. A horizontal double-brick soldier course and brick quoins at the corners are also visible. The top of each elevation is articulated using another brick soldier course and metal coping. The roofing material will be prefinished standing seam metal product.

Each of the four building elevations utilize the same material palette. The applicant has strategically added windows, horizontal soldier courses, and other decorative elements to each of the four building elevations. Large, uninterrupted expanses of blank brick wall have been avoided. Exterior signage will be placed on the building façade

and will consist of a cast stone emblem and letters to read “Fire Station 5.”

Staff Report:

Staff opinion is that the proposed new construction meets the Downtown Memphis Design Guidelines. The new Fire Station is designed to fit the historic context of the Victorian Village District. The proposed design strikes an appropriate balance between new construction taking its cues from the existing context while also striving to be a product of its own time.

As a corner building, the design appropriately addresses both the south and east building elevations with pedestrian-scale design features including ground-floor windows, brick base, decorative light fixtures, and a decorative brick herringbone pattern over the vehicular doors. The site plan also locates vehicular parking to the rear and side of the main building, as recommended by the Design Guidelines.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval.