



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

Exterior Renovation

Case # 19-91: The Pearl
669 Adams Ave.
Memphis, TN 38105

Applicant/Owner: Mr. Todd Frankel
669 Adams Ave.
Memphis, TN 38105

Background: DRB review is required for this project because it received a \$60,000 Exterior Improvement Grant at the July 17, 2019 CCDC Board Meeting.

The subject property is a circa 1968 two-story brick apartment building located on the south side of Adams Avenue, in the block between Orleans and Neely. This property, located within the Victorian Village neighborhood, contains 12 one-bedroom/efficiency apartments.

The applicant was approved for a full interior and exterior renovation of the building for multi-family rental use. Interior improvements will include select demolition to enable an open floor plan, new appliances, quartz countertops, new bathrooms, new HVAC system, and second floor skylights. Exterior building improvements include masonry repair, window replacement, painting, new exterior stairs and railings, and new lighting and signage. Site enhancements will include removing the existing driveway from Adams, relocating surface parking to the rear, adding new fenced patios to the east, and creating an outdoor courtyard on the west side of the building.

This application includes plans for the exterior renovation and signage.

Project Description: The unremarkable 1960 structure will be remade into the iconic Ding Bat Design that celebrates the transitional style. Even though this property sits nestled among historic Victorian mansions, it still tells a part of Memphis history.

The entire site will be reconfigured to introduce more shared spaces and limit automobile access to the alley in the rear. The current west parking area will be converted to a walled private garden area with picnic tables. The courtyard will feature secured access by tenants with 9 parking spaces only accessed from the rear alley. The area just east of the building will include fenced patios for the connected residential units.

The exterior renovation will consist of installing glass block windows on the north elevation and a wood paneled architectural feature which will also serve as the base for the new signage. The façade will be painted and designed to seamlessly merge with the fence to the west of the building in color and style. A new canopy with recessed lighting will also be added on the NW corner of the building.

The driveway west of the building will be removed and a new gate will be added to strengthen the pedestrian connection to Adams Ave. The new frontage also includes lighting and landscaping.

Signage:

- One (1) set of channel letters to measure 36 in. (w) x 22 in. (h) to read “The Pearl.” The letters will be sheet metal plate with 2 in. returns. The letters will be painted white and be halo lit in pale blue.

Staff Report:

The property is part of the Victorian Village Historic District. The proposed exterior renovation is consistent with the Downtown Memphis Design Guidelines and DMC priorities of improving the pedestrian experience and keeping the automobile subordinate.

The proposed exterior renovation and site improvements will transform the present apartment building into a refreshed and appropriately designed 1960s building.

Pedestrian connections will be strengthened by removing the driveway on Adams Ave. and reconfiguring parking on site to be accessible from the alley. This new site layout keeps automobiles subordinate and prioritizes the public realm.

The proposed signage is compliant with the CBID Sign Code.

Staff believes the proposed renovation is a cohesive design that amplifies the historic character of the building.

Staff Recommendation: **Staff recommends approval.**