



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

Exterior Renovation

Case # 18-136:

540 S Main St.
Memphis, TN 38103

Applicant:

Mr. Jeff Zepatos
717 Riverside Dr. #1310
Memphis, TN 38103

Owner:

Mr. Harry & Ms. Karan Zepatos
2025 Glenbuck Cv.
Germantown, TN 38139

Background:

DRB review is required for this project because it received a \$60,000 EIG and a \$200,000 Development at the December 19, 2018 CCRFC Board Meeting. The subject property was constructed circa 1925 and consists of a series of traditional commercial bays with the Arcade Restaurant serving as the anchor tenant at the corner. The single-story building (over 15,543 SF with additional basement space) features a flat roof with a parapet and exterior cladding of brick with large aluminum and wood storefront windows. The property is a contributing structure as part of the South Main National Register Historic District.

Project Description:

The proposed renovations will improve the primary building façades on GE Patterson and S. Main Street. Major elements of this work includes repairing exterior masonry and cornices, repairing/replacing wood storefronts, painting exterior wood trim, repairing pilasters, securing the existing neon signage and replacing a section of the exterior wall facing Main Street with a new infill commercial storefront to match the other bays. The new commercial storefront will belong to the Arcade as they expand with a new entrance to a separate space to serve as a separate coffee bar and event space.

Additionally, exterior improvements are proposed for the south elevation of the building adjacent to the parking lot. Aesthetic upgrades to the parking lot including new asphalt, lighting, and landscaping. A new hardscaped plaza and pedestrian connection will be also added between the southern edge of the building and

the parking lot and include landscaping and lighting. It will be 18 ft. wide and serve as active space for outdoor exercise from the next door fitness business. The new pedestrian plaza along the south edge of the building will borrow excessive width from the center aisle of the parking lot, meaning the same number of spaces will be maintained. The fencing that is presently on site on the west (Main Street) and east ends (alley) of the parking lot will be removed and controlled access for vehicular traffic will be added. Finishing touches for the plaza include the south facade building mural, interesting pathway uplighting and parking lot lanterns, and plantings strategically placed throughout.

Public art and signage will be submitted with a separate application.

Staff Report:

The property is a contributing structure as part of the South Main National Register Historic District. The proposed renovation is consistent with the Downtown Memphis Design Guidelines and DMC priorities of designing to fit within the context and drawing upon local design traditions.

The proposed renovation of the Arcade and surrounding commercial bays primarily aims to restore the existing character of the building. Improvements such as repairing exterior masonry and cornices, repairing/replacing wood storefronts and repairing pilasters improve the existing condition while maintaining the same appearance. Touches such as painting some of the storefronts refresh the building and allow tenants a personalized touch.

The new infill commercial storefront will be an appropriate renovation that is consistent with the appearance of the existing storefronts with a new wooden storefront and transom windows. The space will be activating a presently vacant storefront and extend the vibrancy of the Arcade south on Main St.

The proposed parking lot improvements will address the grade change from west to east, while creating a safer and more aesthetically pleasing space. This is achieved by removing the existing chain link fence, repaving the entire lot, incorporating new lighting and art and adding landscaping.

Staff is supportive of the proposed design and believes that it respectfully restores a building that serves as an anchor to the South Main neighborhood. The improvements maintain the building's character while proposing minimal modifications that are appropriate for the context and look to local design traditions.

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