



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

Exterior Renovation

Case # 19-38: Memphis Magnetic Recording
618 Vance Ave.
Memphis, TN 38126

Applicant/Owner: Ms. Claire & Mr. Scott McEwen
Memphis Magnetic Recording
618 Vance Ave.
Memphis, TN 38126

Background: DRB review is required for this project because it received a \$28,344 South City Good Neighbor Grant at the March 20, 2019 CCDC Board Meeting.

The subject property is located on the north side of Vance Ave., in the block between Cynthia Pl. and S Orleans St. The site contains a one-story brick building that has been vacant prior to its recent purchase. Claire & Scott McEwen purchased the building to renovate it and build a recording facility in the South City Neighborhood.

Project Description: The applicant has already completed an extensive interior renovation and is planning an exterior renovation to complete the transformation of the property.

The owners have recently built an addition on the west side of the building which serves as the entrance to the recording studio. This entrance will receive a new canopy which will be made from an existing canopy on the building, which will be shortened for this new location. The entrance will be framed with two new light fixtures and two planters which will help identify the entrance.

The primary southern elevation has openings that had already been bricked in with concrete masonry units (CMUs). The applicant is proposing to paint the lower half of this elevation dark grey to create more visual continuity between the brick and these old openings. Then above the vertical brick detail, the building will be painted white. On this portion of the building will also be the area for signage. The rest of the building will be painted white. Three (3)

light fixtures have already been installed to illuminate this portion of the façade.

In front of the building, a new concrete driveway and sidewalk will be poured and bike racks will be installed to serve as functional bike parking and public art. The piece will consist of five (5) arrows piercing the space in front of the building and will be custom made for this project. They will be mild steel with a galvanized coating and measure between 9 and 11 ft. tall. Additional improvements includes planting trees next to the arrows of the edge of the lot.

Signage:

- One (1) wall sign that measures 27 in. (h) x 46 in. (w) and read, “Memphis Magnetic.” The letters will be non-illuminated aluminum reverse channel letters.

Staff Report:

The proposed renovation is consistent with the Downtown Memphis Design Guidelines and DMC priorities of promoting creativity and enhancing the pedestrian experience.

The building now serving as Memphis Magnetic Recording until recently has been a vacant property. The owners purchased the brick shell and envisioned a transformation to a recording studio in the South City neighborhood. With the completion of the interior renovation, the proposed exterior complements the high quality interior with a creative reimagination of the primary façade.

With exterior paint, an awning, sculpture/bike racks, signage and concrete driveway & sidewalk, the curb appeal of the southern elevation and entrance to the building will be transformed. The arrows are a creative solution to the need to provide bike parking on site while animating the front of the building and introducing a piece of public art. Collectively, the proposed work is high impact and will outwardly introduce this new businesses to Vance Ave.

The signage included in this application is compliant with the CBID sign code.

Staff is supportive of the proposed design and believes that it appropriately renovates the exterior of the building and complements the aesthetic for Memphis Magnetic Recording.

Although the southern elevation is the primary façade of the building, the eastern elevation is visible from Adams Ave. and includes bars on the windows that no longer provide access to the

building. Staff recommends these bars be removed as recommended by the Downtown Memphis Design Guidelines & Principles.

Staff Recommendation: **Staff recommends approval with the condition that the applicant remove the bars from the windows on the eastern elevation.**