



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

Exterior Renovation

Case # 20-85: Viet Hoa Market
40 N Cleveland
Memphis, TN 38104

Applicant: Monica Pham
40 N Cleveland
Memphis, TN 38104

Background: DRB review is required for the exterior elements of this project because it received an Exterior Improvement Grant from the Center City Development Corporation (CCDC) at its October 21, 2020 meeting.

The subject property is a one-story neighborhood grocery store located at the intersection of Cleveland and Court. The store has operated as Viet Hoa Food Market since 2002, and provides a wide variety of fresh produce, seafood, and meat, as well as specialty Asian ingredients. The store's owner is leveraging funding from the CCDC, the Memphis Medical District Collaborative (MMDC) and the Division of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to make transformative changes to the building's exterior.

Project Description: The proposed exterior renovations to 40 N Cleveland are concentrated on the building's façade facing Cleveland St. The existing metal mansard roof will be removed from the façade, as well as from half of the building's north side. The removal of the roof will uncover existing brick, which will be cleaned and painted. A new automatic glass door will be installed in the place of the existing doors. The entry will be framed by a new decorative timber structure modeled after a Vietnamese pagoda. Existing wood paneling that has been used to cover the windows on the Cleveland façade will be removed from the groupings of windows to the immediate south and north of the entrance, creating new views into the store. The remaining windows, which can not be uncovered due to the layout of the store will be covered with vinyl graphics. (The exact design of the graphics has not yet been determined).

New exterior light fixtures will be placed between each grouping of windows on the façade to provide additional lighting for the property. Fabric awnings will be installed over the windows facing Cleveland, providing shade over the exterior walkway, which will also be expanded. The applicant plans on potentially using this expanded space for outdoor sales.

Two wall signs will be placed on either side of the entrance, above the storefront windows. The wall signs will be lit by gooseneck light fixtures. A new landscaped entry featuring a monument sign will help draw visitors into the site. The final signage designs will be submitted in a separate application to DRB staff. Other notable site features include a hedge along the perimeter of the property on Cleveland, which will partially screen the parking lot.

Staff Report:

Viet Hoa Food Market is already a key neighborhood business that provides fresh food for residents of its immediate neighborhood, while also drawing shoppers from the greater Memphis area due to its selection of hard-to-find ingredients. But the physical design of the existing building does not reflect the incredible asset found within. The exterior windows are covered by boards, preventing any views of the interior. Much of the façade is covered up by a metal mansard roof which is in poor condition. The parking area in front of the building lacks landscaping, shade, and other signs of obvious care.

The proposed changes will clean up the building's façade, create a more inviting entrance, and increase the building's overall transparency. The addition of awnings for shade, and the potential to use the exterior walkways for outdoor sales and other events further enhances the building's connection with the public realm. New landscaping, including the hedge around the parking lot, will beautify the site, and visually de-emphasize the parking. Overall, the proposed changes are a comprehensive set of improvements that will make the exterior of Viet Hoa Market reflect the vibrant business found inside.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval, with the condition of additional approval for signage and window graphics at a later date.