



Design Review Board (DRB) Staff Report
Prepared for the June 1, 2022 DRB Meeting

Exterior Renovation

Case # 22-27: The Heartbreak
633 Monroe
Memphis, TN 38103

Applicant: Jon Hodge
Its Not Me Its You, LLC
9277 Cordova Park Rd
Cordova, TN 38018

Background: DRB review is required for this project because it received approval for a PILOT tax incentive at the April 12, 2022 CCRFC Board Meeting.

The subject property is 633 Monroe, a 3-story commercial building in the Edge district, built circa 1903. The property has been vacant and blighted for several years. With the assistance of a CCRFC PILOT, the current owners plan on performing a full interior and exterior renovation of the building in order to convert it into an active mixed-use property with ground-floor commercial, and up to 5 apartments.

Project Description: The subject property has deteriorated in condition due to years of neglect. On every side of the building, existing brick will be tuck-pointed and repaired as needed. The brick and other masonry features, which have previously been painted, will be repainted to unify the appearance of the building. All existing windows will be replaced with new windows with black aluminum frames that match the sash divisions of the existing windows.

On the building's Monroe façade, the existing wood storefront will be replaced with a new wood storefront that matches the pattern of the original. A new metal canopy will be added between the transom and display windows. The canopy will project 4 ft. from the face of the building, with 9 ft. 2 in. of vertical clearance. The faux-limestone pilasters and decorative band surrounding the storefront will be maintained and painted off-white (Sherwin Williams 7008 – Alabaster). The brick above will be painted a dark grey (Sherwin Williams 7674 - Peppercorn), and the rest of decorative faux-

limestone banding will be painted black (Sherwin Williams 6258 – Tricorn Black). The existing shingles on the building’s shingle “eye-brow” will be replaced by new slate-look shingles.

The west and east sides of the building are planned to be used as mural walls, with murals painted in black (Sherwin Williams 6248 – Tricorn Black) over a base of off-white (Sherwin Williams 7008 – Alabaster). A new metal roof will be installed above the mid-section of the building.

On the south end of the building, existing brick will be painted dark grey (Sherwin Williams 6258 – Tricorn Black). Existing lap siding on the ground floor will be replaced with new fiber cement siding. An existing deteriorating fire escape will be removed. A central outdoor terrace will be added to the third floor, replacing two existing window openings. A new rectangular grouping of windows on the second floor that mirrors the terrace opening above will also replace two existing window openings on the second floor.

Proposed lighting for the building includes focused downlights that will highlight the vertical elements of the façade, interspersed with linear downlights in between. The final fixtures have not been selected, but the applicant plans to use programmable LED lights that can shine in multiple colors in order to create custom color schemes for different occasions. The canopy below the transom window will also feature a linear neon light.

Staff Report:

The proposed renovation of 633 Monroe is largely consistent with the recommendations of the Downtown Design Guidelines, and will help save a key building at the heart of the Edge district. Distinctive architectural features on the facade, including the faux-limestone pilasters and banding, and the shingle “eye-brow” will remain, and the new windows and storefront system will maintain the pattern of the original features. The changes to the building’s historic pattern of openings on the south side are not highly visible from the public right of way, and do not compromise the building’s overall character.

The use of the east and west sides of the building as mural walls is an appropriate way to integrate public art into the project. The proposed architectural lighting will provide a greater sense of safety for pedestrians, and accentuate the design of the building. Staff deems that the approach to lighting and public art included in the application will meet the PILOT bonus criteria for enhanced architectural lighting and public art. However, the applicant will

need to submit the final mural designs and light fixture selections in a future application.

Staff does recommend that the applicant consider changing one minor element of the proposed design: the use of black paint on the building's faux-limestone decorative bands on the second and third floor, which are currently lighter accents that contrast with the darker background of the building's brick. Painting these accents a darker color visually pushes them into the background, and disconnects them from similar faux-limestone decorations on the ground floor (which remain a lighter off-white color in the proposed design). Applying the same light color used on the ground floor's faux-limestone elements to the decorative banding above would better highlight these character defining features, and better maintain the historic rhythm of the facade.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval, with the condition that the faux-limestone details above the first floor should be painted a lighter color that matches the faux-limestone surrounding the storefront, and additional applications for the final signage, lighting, and art.