



Design Review Board (DRB) Staff Report
Prepared for the December 7, 2022 DRB Meeting

Exterior Renovation

- Case # 22-72: Premier Palace
629 Monroe Avenue
Memphis, TN 38103
- Applicant/Owner: Mike Todd
Monroe Associates, LLC
629 Monroe Associates
Memphis, TN 38103
- Background: DRB review is required for this project because it received an Exterior Improvement Grant at the August 18, 2021 CCDC Board Meeting. The applicant in this case is the grant recipient, the property owner, and the general contractor performing the work.
- The 12,741 sq. ft. building, located within the heart of the Edge District, was built in 1925 and was originally home to Southern Motor Co., a Cadillac dealership in the early 20th century. The building has been known more recently as Premier Palace, an event venue in the heart of the Edge district
- Project Description: The north facade of the building was demoed and received extensive masonry repair and tuckpointing. A historically accurate custom fabricated chocolate mortar was used to tuckpoint, where needed. The parapet wall was also reinforced to make it structurally sound.
- New brick was purchased to match the existing brick that could not be salvaged. New transom windows were added to match the original design of the building. The original transom openings were most recently covered with an inappropriate metal paneling that was subsequently removed.
- A new metal canopy was installed above the storefront windows along the entire façade frontage. New pedestrian downlighting was installed beneath the canopy using Peek LED Outdoor Flushmount fixtures. Additional architectural lighting has been installed between the transom windows, above the metal canopy. This architectural lighting consist of six LED up/down wall sconces designed to highlight the character of the building.

The public sidewalk was also repaired as needed and replaced with 4000 psi concrete. Moreover, the applicant is providing water access for the Memphis Medical District Collaborative's Ambassador Team to help water neighborhood landscaping.

Staff Report:

The subject property is a historic building in the heart of the Edge neighborhood. The applicant planned and executed a series of exterior improvements designed to prolong the use and life of the building without compromising the integrity of character-defining architectural features. For example, the new transom windows will restore the appearance of the building to something much closer to the original look. Masonry repair, tuckpointing, and parapet repair were completed in a historically-sensitive way designed to complement the original design of the building. The new metal canopy, while not necessarily original, is in keeping with the character and style of the building and other comparable structures in the district.

While the work performed should have occurred after DRB approval was officially granted, staff is comfortable recommending approval at this time given the high-quality nature of the completed work. Going forward, the applicant understands that DRB approval will be required prior to start of work.

Staff Recommendation: **Staff recommends approval**