



Historic Landmarks and Preservation Districts Commission

Report to the Committee

To: Old Louisville Architectural Review Committee
Thru: Savannah Darr, Historic Preservation Officer
From: Katherine Groskreutz, Planning and Design Coordinator
Date: August 29, 2022 *S.Darr*

Case No: 21-COA-0180
Classification: Committee Review

GENERAL INFORMATION

Property Address: 530 W. Oak St.

Applicant: Jeff Blanchard, Oak Seed Inc.
1203 S. 6th St.
Louisville, KY 40203
(502) 509-2509
oakseedinc@gmail.com

Owner: Same as applicant

Estimated Project Cost: \$2,500

Description of proposed exterior alteration:

The applicant is seeking after-the-fact approval for painting a previously unpainted masonry storefront façade facing Oak Street. The masonry was mid-century, orange glazed infill brick. The current paint is a grey primer coat. The applicant proposes to paint the façade a warm red tone to match the older red brick found on the rest of the building.

Communications with Applicant, Completion of Application

The applicant received a notice of violation on August 12, 2021 (ENF-ZON-21-000802) for painting the brick. The COA application was received on August 16, 2021. The application had no contact information. A contact letter informing the applicant that the application was incomplete was mailed to the applicant on October 1, 2021. The applicant emailed staff with contact information after receiving the letter and provided an explanation of the project and his plans for the building on October 24, 2021. The applicant stated the building was often tagged by graffiti and becoming an ongoing maintenance issue, and that damage was occurring to the brick due to the frequency of tagging and cleaning. He also stated that his long-term

plans are to renovate the storefront based on historic images from the 1920s. Staff and the applicant continued to find solutions through 2021 and 2022. Staff conducted a site visit on June 21, 2022 to assess the condition of the brick and storefront façade and review paint samples.

The case is scheduled to be heard by the Old Louisville Architectural Review Committee (ARC) on Wednesday, September 7 at 5:30 pm, via WebEx video conference.

FINDINGS

Guidelines

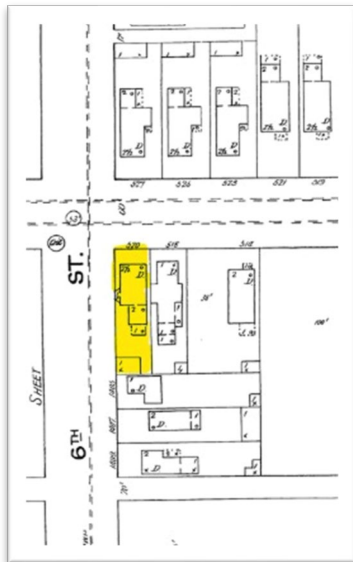
The following design review guidelines, approved for the Old Louisville Preservation District, are applicable to the proposed exterior alteration: **Masonry** and **Paint**. The report of the Commission Staff's findings of fact and conclusions with respect to these guidelines is attached to this report.

The following additional findings are incorporated in this report:

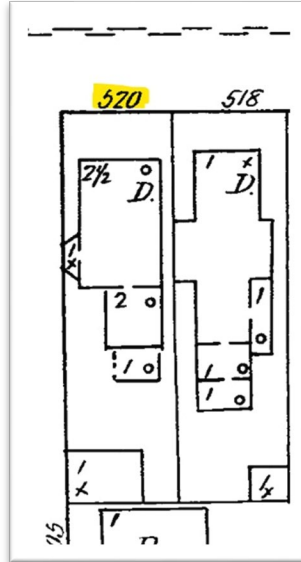
Site Context/ Background

The subject property is zoned TNZD in the Traditional Neighborhood Form District. The site is located on the southeast corner of the intersection of W. Oak and S. 6th Streets. The primary structure is a circa 1880, two-and-a-half-story, masonry, Italianate-style building. The front façade has a one-story storefront addition built to the street facing W. Oak and corner entrance facing the intersection. This is the façade that has been painted. The site is surrounded by other historic masonry residential and commercial structures to the west, south and east, and there are vacant parcels to the north.

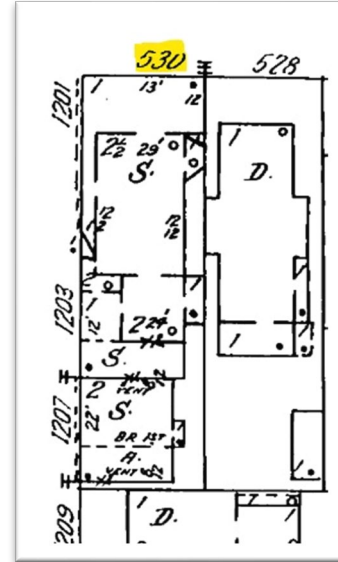
Various wood and masonry one- to two-story hyphens have been added to the rear along S. 6th Street joining it with a two-story masonry building that may have been a later carriage house. The 1892 Sanborn Map shows the residence was originally addressed as 520 W. Oak and had a stepped down rear, which is still somewhat visible from S. 6th, and a one-story carriage house in the southwestern most rear yard. The 1905 Sanborn shows only minor changes to the rear of the primary structure and the rear carriage house. By the 1940 Sanborn Map, the site had been built out to the existing dimensions and reflects the current street address. It went from being a single-family home to a commercial or mixed-use establishment and was most recently a tavern. The applicant submitted a photograph showing the original storefront, and that the existing brick was later infill sometime in the mid-century.



1892 Sanborn



1892 Sanborn Detail



1941 Sanborn Detail

Conclusions

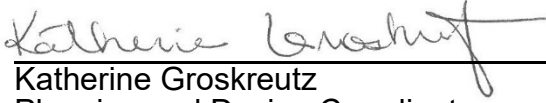
During the staff visit conducted in June 2022, staff found the brick wall had multiple cracks, was crumbling around the foundation line, and was pulling away slightly from the more historic portions of the building on the northeast corner. While some of these issues may be exacerbated by some deferred maintenance, it appears that subpar infill construction was done in the mid-century when the original storefront was filled in. Some of the unpainted brick was still exposed to inspect, and staff determined it was rough and not the higher quality, smooth glazed brick that was sometimes used during this time period. Even though the brick could be considered historic in its own right, it is not character defining for the building and was not a sympathetic alteration to the front facade.

While the after-the-fact request to allow paint on the storefront façade facing W. Oak Street does not meet some of the design guidelines for **Paint** and **Masonry**, specifically **M24** and **P1**, there are extenuating circumstances surrounding the continued graffiti and cleaning. The constant spray paint and subsequent required cleaning had visibly damaged the brick and mortar. Since the brick does not have a very smooth, higher-quality glazing, trying to remove the primer coat currently in place would likely cause further damage to the brick surface. Painting this non-original brick will allow the applicant to maintain the front façade more easily as he works towards restoring the front to its more historic and transparent form, and allow the existing wall to be more visually compatible with the rest of the building. There is also evidence of paint on the upper stories of the front façade masonry, so some painted brick does exist onsite as an existing condition. The applicant requests the paint to be a stop gap to the graffiti as he works toward a longer-term plan of restoring the storefront façade to reflect the historic photograph.

RECOMMENDATION

On the basis of the information furnished by the applicant and the specific conditions of this site, staff recommends the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness be **approved** with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall work with staff to finalize a color that closely matches the color of the existing historic red brick.
2. The applicant shall use a "breathable" masonry paint that is compatible with and can create a strong bond with existing primer.
3. The applicant shall apply for any further changes to the exterior of the building and site prior to any work taking place.


Katherine Groskreutz
Planning and Design Coordinator

08/29/2022
Date



Google Streetview, June 2021, showing damage



1930 Photo of Historic Storefront

MASONRY

Design Guideline Checklist

- + Meets Guidelines
 - Does Not Meet Guidelines
 - +/- Meets Guidelines with Conditions as Noted
- NA Not Applicable
NSI Not Sufficient Information

	Guideline	Finding	Comment
M1	Do not construct new masonry features that are either falsely historical (characteristic of periods prior to the building's actual construction) or are incompatible with the building or historic district in terms of size, scale, material, or color.	NA	
M2	Do not cut new openings into exterior walls on elevations that can be seen from a public way. Creating an opening for the installation of an air conditioning unit, for example, is not appropriate for a façade that is visible from a public way.	NA	
M3	Photographically document architectural features that are slated for reconstruction prior to the removal of any historic fabric.	NA	
M4	Match the existing bonding pattern, coursing, color, size, strength, and pointing mortar of masonry when replacing a section of brick wall. Bricks should always be toothed-in to historic brickwork, to disguise the joint between new and old.	NA	
M5	Do not remove or rebuild substantial portions of exterior walls if such an action would adversely impact a structure's historic integrity.	NA	
M6	Make sure that any exterior replacement bricks are suited for exterior use.	NA	
M7	Do not replace sections of historic brick with brick that is substantially stronger.	NA	
M8	Repoint only those joints that are no longer sound. Do not remove all joints, sound and unsound, in an effort to achieve a uniform appearance when repointing. Large-scale removal of mortar joints often results in damage to historic masonry.	NA	
M9	Remove unsound mortar joints carefully with hand tools that are narrower than the mortar joint. Power tools should not be used, because they have the potential to scar adjacent masonry.	NA	
M10	Remove unsound mortar to a depth of two-and-one-half the times the width of the joint or to sound mortar, whichever is greater.	NA	
M11	Match historic mortar joints in color, texture, joint size, and tooling when repointing.	NA	
M12	Use a mortar mix that is compatible with historic masonry. Repointing mortar should be equivalent to or softer than the original mortar. When repointing mortar is harder than the surrounding masonry, as is the case with many modern mixtures, moisture cannot escape through the joints. Trapped moisture will crystallize within the walls and fragment surrounding brick and stone.	NA	
M13	If possible, have your mortar analyzed. In order to determine an appropriate mortar mix for individual historic structures, it is recommended that property owners have a sample of the original mortar sent to a lab for analysis. If this is not feasible, a high lime and low Portland cement content mortar mix (1 part cement, 1 part lime, and 6 parts sand) is frequently acceptable.	NA	
M14	Do not attempt to remove joints that have been repointed using a very hard mortar or in an unworkmanlike manner until natural weathering has begun to weaken and crack them. Removal prior to that time would likely damage the masonry units	NA	

M15	Do not use synthetic caulking to repoint historic masonry.	NA	
M16	Have realistic expectations of how the cleaned masonry surface will appear. Remember, it is better to underclean than overclean. A "like new" appearance is rarely desirable.	NA	
M17	Make sure that your contractor has a clear understanding of the physical and chemical properties of your masonry before proposing or testing any chemical cleaning treatments. Such treatments, if improperly applied, can result in permanent damage that significantly outweighs any benefits of cleaning.	NA	
M18	Test proposed cleaning treatments in an inconspicuous area of the building to evaluate potential adverse effects to the masonry. Observation over a complete seasonal cycle is preferable, so that long-term effects may be ascertained. If chemical treatments are found to be acceptable, be sure that those applying the treatment follow all manufacturers' instructions.	NA	
M19	Do not use sandblasting or high-pressure water to clean historic masonry. The process of sandblasting or cleaning buildings using water pressure greater than 300 psi removes the tough, outer-protective surface of the brick and loosens mortar joints, accelerating deterioration.	NA	
M20	Do not clean masonry on buildings with deteriorated mortar joints. Such masonry should be properly repointed prior to cleaning to ensure that water does not penetrate the wall during the cleaning process.	NA	
M21	Do not use any type of water- or chemical-based cleaning systems when a possibility for freezing temperatures exists. Masonry cleaning should not be undertaken until the temperature will remain above 50 degrees for 72 hours after cleaning.	NA	
M22	Remove graffiti as soon as possible, beginning with the gentlest means possible and taking care not to inadvertently etch an outline of the graffiti onto the wall.	NA	
M23	Use solvent-based chemical strippers to remove paint from previously-painted masonry only after testing its effectiveness and evaluating its potential to damage brickwork. Testing should be carried out in an inconspicuous location.	NA	
M24	Do not paint masonry or stucco that has never been painted. While one layer of paint may not affect the appearance of the masonry or stucco, accumulated layers will eventually obscure decorative detail.	-	The masonry was previously unpainted; see conclusions
M25	Paint previously-painted masonry a color that is close to its existing color, approximates a natural masonry color as approved, or is recommended by staff. Staff is available to consult with you on appropriate colors.	+/-	See conditions of approval
M26	Use a "breathable" masonry paint that is compatible with and can create a strong bond with existing paint.	+/-	See conditions of approval
M27	Make sure that areas of patched stucco match the strength, composition, color, and texture of the original to the greatest degree possible.	NA	
M28	When patching stucco, cut back the successive layers to provide a key for the new layers to prevent new cracking.	NA	
M29	Carry out stucco repairs so that the dimension between the surface of the stucco and adjacent finishes remains unchanged.	NA	
M30	Do not install stucco, Dryvit, or permastone-type cladding over historic masonry or wood siding.	NA	
M31	Do not resurface historic masonry with exterior insulation.	NA	
M32	Use a masonry or terra cotta chimney cap if needed. Metal chimney caps are not historically appropriate.	NA	

PAINT

Design Guideline Checklist

+	Meets Guidelines	NA	Not Applicable
-	Does Not Meet Guidelines	NSI	Not Sufficient Information
+/-	Meets Guidelines with Conditions as Noted		

	Guideline	Finding	Comment
P1	Painting masonry or stucco that has never been painted is not recommended. Paint is difficult to remove, accumulated layers will obscure decorative detail, and paint coatings (even "breathable" paints) will affect the wall's vapor transmission performance. The presence of a lead oxide wash does not constitute a precedent for painting a building.	-	The masonry was previously unpainted; see conclusions
P2	When removing paint from previously-painted masonry, use gentle treatments that have been previously tested in an inconspicuous location. Do not sandblast or use acid-based cleaners.	NA	
P3	Use a "breathable" masonry paint that is compatible with and can create a strong bond with existing paint, only on previously-painted masonry.	+/-	See conditions of approval
P4	If painting previously-painted masonry, select a color that matches the existing color, approximates a natural masonry color as approved, or is recommended by the staff. Staff is available to consult with you on appropriate colors.	+/-	See conditions of approval
P5	Have paint samples analyzed when possible. Paint seriation studies can determine historic pigments and appropriate colors for repainting, by analyzing a paint sample under special lighting conditions to ascertain specific color, hue, and value of paint layers.	NA	
P6	Do not expose metal types that require protection from the elements or apply paint or other coatings to metals that were historically meant to be exposed, such as copper, bronze, or stainless steel.	NA	
P7	Paint replacement gutters, downspouts, metal frame screen and storm windows, roof-vent assemblies, and fire escapes to match wall, trim, cornice, or roof color of the house, whichever is most effective in reducing the visibility of these elements.	NA	
P8	Be aware that historic structures often contain hazardous substances, such as lead paint and asbestos. Contact the Board of Health regarding proper methods of removal and disposal.	NA	