

STAFF REPORT 8/14/2019 MEETING
APPLICATION NUMBER 19-6367
ADDRESS: 601-607 SHELBY
HISTORIC DISTRICT: DETROIT FINANCIAL
APPLICANT: TYSON GERSH

PREPARED BY: J.ROSS

PROPOSAL

The property, 601-607 Shelby (AKA, the U.S. Mortgage Bond Building), is a steel-frame, nine-story, Italian Renaissance Revival style building that was erected 1924-1925 to house a bank and offices. At its south and east elevations, the resource displays a high granite base (measuring 6'-6" at its highest point), and is faced in Indiana limestone at stories 1-3 and brick at the upper stories. A classical cornice of limestone separates the three-story lower section from the smooth-finished limestone upper façades. The original cornice remains in place. The building is rectangular in plan and is adjacent to 220 West Congress as well as the building at 625 Shelby Street to the north. There are five window bays on the Shelby façade, and six on the West Congress façade. The building displays tall arched aluminum windows which extend the height of first and second stories. The windows at stories 3-9 are 1/1 aluminum units and are paired, with a single window on each end bay.

In 1962, a pedestrian bridge was built at the first floor, mezzanine level, connecting 607 Shelby to the State Savings Bank Building's (151 W. Fort Street) second story, west elevation. The bridge features a steel frame construction with glass windows. The bridge's under carriage is clad with steel panels which have been covered with a latex coating





With the current submission, the applicant is seeking the Commission's approval of the following proposal:

- Remove the existing black text coating from the steel panel at the underside of the pedestrian bridge (method of removal not provided)
- Prime the steel panel (name of the material/product not provided)
- **As per the submitted rendering**, paint the steel panels at the underside of the pedestrian bridge (name of the material/product not provided)

STAFF OBSERVATIONS

It is staff's opinion that the bridge is a significant structure and the steel panel exterior cladding is a distinctive material that characterizes the property. As noted above, the applicant is seeking to paint a new mural at the stainless steel panels/underside of the pedestrian bridge. The work will also involve the removal of the existing latex covering at that location and priming the panels prior to the installation of the mural. However, the current application does not provide the following information:

- The method which the applicant will employ to remove the existing latex coating
- The name/specs of the product which will be used to prime the steel panel
- The name/specs of the product which will be used to paint the steel panel

Note that it is staff's opinion that the proposed mural will not have a negative *visual* impact on the building or surrounding district as it will be located at the underside of the bridge. However, it is unclear to staff if the proposed installation/treatment (removal of the current coating, priming, and

installation of the new material) is not likely to permanently damage the steel panel. Staff has contacted the applicant and requested that they provide the above-listed outstanding information prior to the 8/14/2019 meeting.

APPLICABLE ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

- (1) *Relationship of Materials.* A great variety of building materials exist throughout the district, with concentrations of finished, pressed or glazed brick, limestone, Mankato stone, terra cotta, marble; cast and porcelain enamel and glass facing primary façades. Base stories are commonly faced or partially faced in granite. Materials utilized for window surrounds and frames are cast concrete, steel, aluminum, bronze and wood. Architectural embellishments tend to be in cast and carved stone, glazed terra cotta, Pewabic tile, and red sandstone. Common brick appears on side elevations that were not intended to be visible. Bronze grills, metal fire escapes, and aluminum and steel framing elements are also visible. In general, the district is rich in its varieties and relationships of materials.
- (2) *Relationship of Textures.* The smooth surfaces of glazed or painted brick, glazed terra cotta, polished marble, polished granite, and large expanses of glass contrast with the matte finishes of limestone and unpainted brick with mortar joints. Where the bases of buildings are rusticated, they contrast with the smoother wall surfaces above. Repetitive pilasters and ornamental detail in masonry, terra cotta or metal, primarily on belt courses and cornices, and the fluting of columns, contribute significantly to textural interest. Subdivided window sashes and treatments also contribute to textural interest, as do receding windows and wall planes, resulting in textural effects created by light and shade. Where those International style buildings have glass bases, a smooth, transparent textural effect results. In general, the district is extremely rich in textural relationships.
- (3) *Relationship of Colors.* Major materials of light colors, such as beige, white, and cream, dominate the district. The natural brick colors of red, orange, and buff are also contrasted with beige or light gray trim elements and details. Painted brick, where it exists on the east side of Woodward Avenue, is in dark red and cream. Granite bases, where they exist, are black, red or gray. Window surrounds and sashes are shades of green, black, cream or white. Window and curtain wall glass is either colorless or tinted in shades of light green, black or gray. Stainless steel and aluminum are silver in tone; grills and grates are green or black. The Guardian Building at 501 Griswold Avenue is a historic landmark featuring orange brick and colored tile. Light poles tend to be deep green, black or gray. Fire escapes, where they exist, are generally painted black. The original colors of any building, as determined by professional analysis, are always acceptable for that building and may provide guidance for similar buildings.

RECOMMENDATION

As previously noted, it is staff's opinion that the bridge is a significant structure and the steel panel exterior cladding is a distinctive material that characterizes the property. The applicant is seeking to paint a new mural at the stainless steel panels/underside of the pedestrian bridge. The work will also involve the removal of the existing latex covering at that location and priming the panels prior to the

installation of the mural. However, the current application does not provide the following information:

- The method which the applicant will employ to remove the existing latex coating
- The name/specs of the product which will be used to prime the steel panel
- The name/specs of the product which will be used to paint the steel panel

Note that it is staff's opinion that the proposed mural will not have a negative *visual* impact on the building or surrounding district as it will be located at the underside of the bridge. However, it is unclear to staff if the proposed installation/treatment (removal of the current coating, priming, and installation of the new material) is reversible/not likely to permanently damage the steel panel. Staff therefore refrains from proffering a recommendation re: the proposal until they are able to review the specs/details around the method for the removal of the existing coating and installation of the mural.

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION PROJECT REVIEW REQUEST

CITY OF DETROIT

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

2 WOODWARD AVENUE, ROOM 808, DETROIT, MI 48226

DATE: 7-12-19

PROPERTY INFORMATION

ADDRESS: 607 Shelby St. Detroit, MI

48226 AKA: "The 607" aka 601 Shelby
St. Detroit, MI 48226

HISTORIC DISTRICT: Historic Detroit Financial
District

APPLICANT IDENTIFICATION



Property
Owner/
Homeowner



Tenant or
Business
Occupant



Architect/
Engineer/
Consultant



Contractor

NAME: Tyson Gersh

COMPANY

NAME: Basco

ADDRESS: 607 Shelby St CITY: Detroit STATE: MI

ZIP: 48226

PHONE: 313-502-5117

MOBILE: 313-727-1733

EMAIL: tysong@bascomi.com

PROJECT REVIEW REQUEST CHECKLIST

Please attach the following documentation to your request:

X **Photographs** of ALL sides of existing building or site

X **Detailed photographs** of location of proposed work (photographs to show existing condition(s), design, color, and material)

X **Description of existing conditions** (including materials and design)

X **Description of project** (including an explanation as to why replacement--rather than repair--of existing and/or construction of new is required)

NOTE:

Based on the scope of work, additional documentation may be required
See www.detroitmi.gov/hdc for scope-specific requirements

SUBMIT COMPLETED REQUESTS TO:

HDC@DETROITMI.GOV

X **Detailed Scope of Work** (formatted as bullet pointed list)

X **Brochure/cut sheets** for proposed replacement material(s) and/or product(s)

Photographs

Photographs of ALL sides of existing building or site

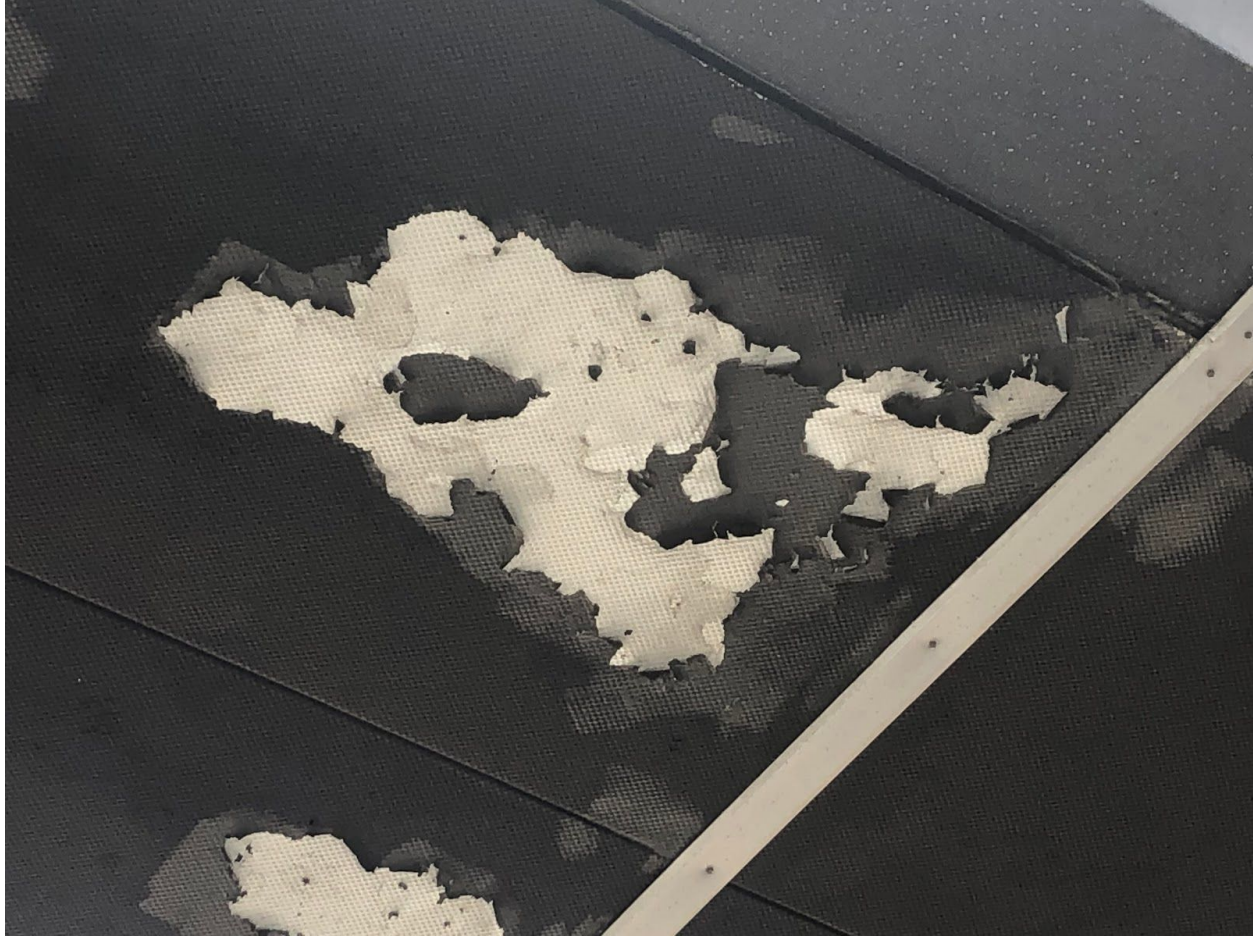


Detailed Photographs

Detailed Photographs of location of proposed work (photographs to show existing condition(s), design, color, and material).







Description of Project

Description of Project including an explanation as to why replacement--rather than repair--of existing and/or construction of new is required

We (Basco, owner of 607 Shelby and the Bridge in its entirety) propose removing the black latex coating and adding new waterproofing and color to the existing grid panels. The grid pattern already exists on the underside of the bridge today. This art installation is intended to not only acknowledge the architectural detail of the original design, but to amplify it as part of a historically respectful effort to add interest to the otherwise deteriorated and in poor condition underside of the bridge and activate the Shelby corridor.

The artwork has been intentionally designed to target those standing under the bridge, and add interest without disrupting the original architecture. This is further achieved by respecting the existing grid and repetitive nature of the bridge as well leaving a consistent black border on the vertical portion of the bridge and underside creating a clean black frame around the new artwork.

Below, please see the rendering depicting the proposed mural, which captures the general spirit of the art installation (a modernist randomized color grid).

Please note that the rendering may appear much brighter than it would actually look in real life. The underside of the bridge is constantly shaded. The rendering otherwise captures the general spirit of the proposal, but the actual order of the colors, colors actually used, and dimensions could change.

607 Shelby Bridge Artwork
Historic District Commission
Project Review Request



Detailed Scope of Work

Detailed scope of work formatted as bullet pointed list

- Remove the black latex material (non original to the structure) from the undercarriage of the bridge
- Prime the area from which the black latex was removed
- Paint the the primed panels with different colored squares

Brochure/Cut Sheets

Brochure/cut sheets for proposed replacement material(s) and/or product(s)

The six most popular colors of the 1960s are featured below will inform our color choices:

