



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

BUILDING | HISTORIC PRESERVATION | PLANNING & ZONING

SITE PLAN REVIEW AND APPEARANCE BOARD STAFF REPORT

Gesto Restaurant

Meeting		File No.	Application Type
December 11, 2024		2025-043-COL-LV1	Level 1 Site Plan
Property Owner		Authorized Agent	
Atlantic Avenue Promenade LLC		Nicolas Kurban, Kurban Hospitality LLC	

Request

Consideration of a Level 1 Site Plan Application for a color change from a soft yellow to black on the wood cladding façade, a dark gray to red along the trim and window openings, and replacement of the black canvas awning to a black and white striped canvas.

Site Data & Information

Location: 522 East Atlantic Avenue

PCN: 12-43-46-16-01-109-0050

Property Size: 0.28 acres

LUM: Commercial Core (CC)

Zoning: Central Business District – Central Core Sub-district (CBD)

Adjacent Zoning:

- **North, South, East, West:** Central Business District (CBD)- Central Core Sub-district

Existing Use: Restaurant

CBD Central Core Sub-district

- **Atlantic Avenue:** Primary Street
- Atlantic Avenue Parking District
- Required Retail Frontage
- Atlantic Avenue Limited Height Area

For Reference: [LDR Section 4.4.13, CBD](#)





Background

The subject property contains a 2,481 square-foot single-story commercial building, originally constructed in 1938, and consists of seven bays. The bay seeking a color change was formerly occupied by the Amar restaurant. On September 23, 2020, the Site Plan Review and Appearance Board (SPRAB) approved the below color change of a soft yellow on the wood cladding and a dark gray along the trim and window openings for the existing Amar restaurant.



Existing Colors

Description of Proposal

The applicant is requesting approval of a color change from a soft yellow to Benjamin Moore Black Iron on the wood cladding façade. Along the base and around the openings, the previous dark gray highlighting the entrance will also be painted the Black Iron color, blending with the rest of the façade. The top trim and window trims are proposed to change from a dark gray to Benjamin Moore Ladybug Red. The modification also includes the replacement of the black canvas awning above the main entrance to a black and white striped canvas.



Proposed Colors



Review & Analysis

LDR Section 2.4.10(A)(1)(a), Level 1.

Level 1 Site Plan applications include improvements or modifications to existing development that do not increase building square footage and are generally limited to landscaping, hardscaping, architectural elevations, materials, and colors.

Based on the scope of work, the subject application is classified as a Level 1 Site Plan.

LDR Section 2.1.1(B), Director: *Responsibilities of the Director include, but are not limited to, the following:*

- (4) Approving Level 1 and Level 2 Site Plan applications and Zoning Certificates of Use, with the sole discretion to elevate applications to board review with a written determination for the action.*

LDR Section 2.1.6(E)(1), Board Action: *The SPRAB has the authority to take action on the following items pursuant to the procedures and standards of the LDR, except where authority is granted to the Historic Preservation Board:*

- (c) Appeal of an administrative interpretation or decision associated with the following:*
 - 1. Section 4.6.7, Signs*
 - 2. Section 4.6.16, Landscape Regulations*
 - 3. Level 1 Site Plan Applications*
 - 4. Level 2 Site Plan Applications*

Level 1 Site Plan Applications are typically subject to administrative review; however, pursuant to the Land Development Regulations Section 2.1.1(B), the Director retains the authority to elevate such applications to Board review. In this case, the Director has determined that the proposed color change to black is inconsistent with the surrounding context and fails to maintain harmony with the overall architectural design of the building. Therefore, the Site Plan Review and Appearance Board shall assume jurisdiction to render a final decision on the application.

LDR Section 2.4.10(A)(3)(d), Findings

Architectural Elevations, including modifications to existing building facades, require an overall determination of consistency with the objectives and standards of Section 4.6.18, Architectural Elevations and Aesthetics, and any adopted architectural design guidelines and standards, as applicable.

LDR Section 4.6.18, Architectural Elevations and Aesthetics

(A) Minimum Requirements

- 1. The requirements contained in this Section are minimum aesthetic standards for all site development, buildings, structures, or alterations except for single family development.*
- 2. It is required that all site development, structures, buildings, or alterations to same, show proper design concepts, express honest design construction, and be appropriate to surroundings.*

The overall composition and style of the building aligns with the Main Street Vernacular style. Aside from the proposed color modifications, the design of the façade is to remain the same. A detailed review of the Main Street Vernacular style is provided within the CBD evaluation.

(E), Criteria for board action

The following criteria shall be considered, by the Site Plan Review and Appearance Board or Historic Preservation Board, in the review of plans for building permits. If the following criteria are not met, the application shall be disapproved.

- 1. The plan or the proposed structure, is in conformity with good taste, good design, and in general contributes to the image of the City as a place of beauty, spaciousness, harmony, taste, fitness, broad vistas, and high quality.*
- 2. The proposed structure, or project, is in its exterior design and appearance of quality such as not to cause the nature of the local environment or evolving environment to materially depreciate in appearance and value.*
- 3. The proposed structure, or project, is in harmony with the proposed developments in the general area, with the Comprehensive Plan, and with the supplemental criteria which may be set forth for the Board from time to time.*

The proposed façade utilizes a dark color palette, with black as the primary base color. Given the lighter, coastal color scheme of the surrounding storefronts, the extensive application of black across most of the elevation does not conform with the contextual harmony anticipated along the East Atlantic Avenue streetscape. The predominance of black as a singular, uninterrupted color creates a stark



and overly modern aesthetic, sharply contrasting with the softer, historically rooted tones of adjacent facades. Therefore, the Board should consider whether the heavy use of black is appropriate in the downtown, which prioritizes contextually sensitive and climate-conscious designs. Although contemporary interpretations are not prohibited, they must be thoughtfully integrated with the surrounding architectural vernacular to preserve the main street's character as the "Village by the Sea".

The red accents, while seemingly intended to provide contrast, heighten the starkness of the black façade rather than softening it. These bold accents clash visually with the adjacent storefronts, which feature lighter and more inviting tones such as beige, cream, and pastel hues. Together, the black and red may draw attention away from the cohesive rhythm and balance of the surrounding streetscape and create a visual void. Although the structure places certain constraints on design flexibility, the proposed color scheme must still adhere to the aesthetic principles outlined in Section 4.6.18(B). The relationship of materials, textures, and colors shall establish a "harmonious whole".

Primary black buildings have been previously approved within the CBD when deemed appropriate to the site and structure. For instance, the color black can be found based on the proposed type of restaurant (ex. smokehouse). However, due to the existing composition of the building and the series of bays that exhibit a softer color palette, the Board should consider whether the proposed color is inappropriate given the context of its surroundings.

LDR Section 4.4.13(F), Architectural Standards, *to ensure high quality architecture in the downtown area, the following architectural standards apply to all buildings in the Central Business District Sub-districts and in the OSSHAD with CBD Overlay. In addition to the standards in Section 4.6.18, the following standards apply in all CBD Sub-districts.*

LDR Section 4.4.13(F)(3) Appropriate Architectural Styles, *the adopted "Delray Beach Central Business District Architectural Design Guidelines", as amended, identifies architectural styles as appropriate for downtown Delray Beach, based on historical precedent, climate, and building scale. Defining characteristics and character examples are provided for each of the styles as guidance.*

The Delray Beach Central Business District Architectural Design Guidelines provide defining characteristics for seven architectural styles deemed appropriate for downtown Delray Beach, based on historical precedent, climate, and building scale: Florida Vernacular, Anglo-Caribbean, Mediterranean Revival, Classical Tradition, Art Deco, Masonry Modern, and Main Street Vernacular. These styles are purposefully broad to allow architects a wide range of detailing and design options. The guidelines also provide general composition and storefront design direction.

Delray Beach Central Business District Architectural Design Guidelines

The Main Street Vernacular is a style of architecture that encompasses the traditional commercial and mixed-use buildings that have shaped successful main streets throughout the region since the 1900s. Storefronts line the sidewalk and frequently, one or two upper stories contain offices or residences. The buildings are structurally simple, comprised of a bay or series of bays and openings that are aligned over each other. Depending upon the era of construction, the buildings may have only simple cornice lines at the top of the first story and on the parapet or may incorporate ornamentation in the form of friezes, gilding, keystones, and quoins.

The building is located within the CBD, which defines the allowed architectural styles and their associated color schemes typical of the style. The style of the building is Main Street Vernacular, which – given the era of construction - is typically simple and void of ornamentation. The colors associated with the style vary based on the location and time period that is represented. Main street vernacular buildings have been found throughout time to include a variety of colors on the exterior, depending on the time and location of the buildings; the varied color palette has historically also included darker colors. However, given the existing context of the site, the dark color may split the building rather than unify the building. The site is more suitable to pastel or warm tones as seen below.



Optional Board Motions

- A. Move **approval** of the Level 1 (2025-043) Site Plan Application for a color change from a soft yellow to black on the wood cladding façade, a dark gray to red along the trim and window openings, and replacement of the black canvas awning to a black and white striped canvas, located at **522 East Atlantic Avenue**, by finding that the request is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and meets criteria set forth in the Land Development Regulations.
- B. Move **approval, as amended**, of the Level 1 (2025-043) Site Plan Application for a color change from a soft yellow to black on the wood cladding façade, a dark gray to red along the trim and window openings, and replacement of the black canvas awning to a black and white striped canvas, located at **522 East Atlantic Avenue**, by finding that the request is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and meets criteria set forth in the Land Development Regulations.
- C. Move **denial** of the Level 1 (2025-043) Site Plan Application for a color change from a soft yellow to black on the wood cladding façade, a dark gray to red along the trim and window openings, and replacement of the black canvas awning to a black and white striped canvas, located at **522 East Atlantic Avenue**, by finding that the request is inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and does not meet criteria set forth in the Land Development Regulations.
- D. Move to **continue with direction**.