
Historic Main Street Alliance

Rear Building Entrance Survey Report

(March-2012)

Downtown Alliance, Nebraska has plans for reconstruction of downtown sidewalks which may temporarily affect the access to front doors of businesses in downtown along Box Butte Avenue. The Historic Main Street Alliance Design and Economic Restructuring Committees are looking at the potential for simple improvements to back entrances. While the intent of the improvements is for the short-term is access during construction, the long-term vision is to clean up the alleyways and make rear entrances safe, attractive and accessible to pedestrians and customers of the businesses in the district.

Rear entrances are important and should be clean and visually attractive but the design should never surpass the design of the main or front entrance to the business or building. These recommendations were developed by the Nebraska Main Street program and are for information only. The recommendations are based on photographs provided by Historic Main Street Alliance. It is advised that a design or construction professional be consulted for complicated building condition issues. Professional sign companies should be utilized for signage design and construction. Alley clean up and painting projects could be done by Main Street volunteers with direction and supervised guidance. Make sure proper insurance and safety guidelines are in place for volunteers before beginning any work.

General Considerations

Design

You do not want to make rear entrances more important than the main or front entrance on Box Butte Avenue. Keep improvements very simple—business address, simple signage, neutral paint colors, keep plantings and landscaping at a minimum. Consult the City of Alliance sign code to determine allowable sign types in the alley, size, scale and placement. While blade signs are attractive and helpful to pedestrians, the public right-of-way as well as safety and clearance concerns may exist especially with vehicular traffic (trucks) through the alleys.

Design is important. Just because it is the rear entrance and considered secondary to the front entrance does not mean you should sacrifice quality. Design, good construction and quality materials is as important for the rear façade and rear entrance of a building just as it is for the main or front facade. Avoid handmade signs and store bought DIY lettering and numbering. Flat mounted wall signs or custom vinyl signage installed on rear doors would be appropriate for downtown Alliance. Typically the custom vinyl signage includes the name of the business and/or logo as well as street address. Other pertinent information can be included such as “store hours” or information directing users to “use the front door” or “deliveries only.” Consider how the rear entrances will be used before adding additional information beyond the name of the business and business logo. The construction project Alliance will be undertaking is short-term and temporary. If the rear entrance will only be used by pedestrians and customers for a short period of time, you don’t want to do anything that would indicate to customers that the rear entrance situation will be permanent beyond the construction unless you are planning on it.

Remember that all physical improvements require ongoing maintenance and upkeep over time. Building owners need to be aware that in order to keep the alleys looking nice they need to make an effort to keep their buildings in good condition, front door to back door. Keeping the alleys trash and vegetation free will be an ongoing battle but as important as the private property upkeep nonetheless.

Security

There are some businesses in downtown Alliance with the need for a high level of security or who do not want customer access through the back entrance. Financial institutions, professional service businesses and jewelry stores in particular. If you have a business that is unable to utilize their back doors for customer access the design improvements may need to be more subtle (no signage, no address). Perhaps investment in further security enhancements could be made because of the increase in potential pedestrian traffic through the alleyway with the other businesses using their back entrances during the construction project. For those businesses that prefer not to have customer access through the rear entrance, improvements are still valuable for the overall district and therefore are encouraged. Help those particular businesses find individualized access solutions for their customers during the construction project.

Dumpsters

Work with the trash hauling company or companies, the City of Alliance and property owners to discuss the issue and figure out a way to place trash dumpsters so they don't obstruct traffic or become a nuisance for pedestrian users of rear entrances. Look at placing multiple dumpsters in a centralized multiple shared waste enclosure. Determine if there are areas in the alleys where a simple built enclosure can be placed for this purpose. Make sure when liquid spills from dumpsters it is cleaned up as soon as possible to alleviate unpleasant smells that would detract from the pedestrian users of the alleys and rear entrances.

Observations and Recommendations

Chamber/BBDC/Main Street

- *clean and kempt as is*
- *replace back door*
- *signage*
- *scrape and repaint window frames/sashes*
- *new door mat*
- *electrical cords*
- *get rid of the pop machine or move indoors*

Jerry's Western

- *clean and kempt as is*
- *AC unit drainage—water is pooling on the concrete rather than draining away from the units and it creates mud that people will track into the store*
- *signage on the door—vinyl window signage would be appropriate on the glass door*

Sportswear & Design

- *repair brick and stucco (consult Preservation Briefs #2 <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief02.htm> and #22 <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief22.htm>)*
- *look for moisture problems that are causing damage to the brick*
- *repair gutter and downspouts*
- *paint*
- *signage*
- *relocate dumpster*

Just Shoot Me

- *clear vegetation from roof and wall*
- *move trash receptacle*
- *look for moisture problems that are causing damage to the brick*
- *repair brick (consult Preservation Brief #2 <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief02.htm>)*
- *signage*

Heartland Cash Advance

- *clear vegetation and trash*
- *signage*
- *move trash receptacle*

Williams Jewelers

- *repair any damaged stucco (consult Preservation Brief #22 <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief22.htm>)*
- *paint transom covering to match wall color*
- *consider a more secure storm door*

Dollar General

- *clear vegetation and trash*
- *scrape and repaint wood door*
- *signage*
- *move collapsible bins*

Simplee Lil Bit

- *scrape and repaint wood door*
- *signage*

State Farm Insurance

- *scrape and repaint wood door and frame*
- *keep vegetation cleaned up*

Sandhills Bank

- *clear vegetation and trash*
- *install a more secure door*
- *look for moisture problems that are causing damage to the brick*
- *repair damaged brick/tuckpoint (consult Preservation Brief #2 <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief02.htm>)*
- *remove ladder (safety and security concern)*

Roller Hardware

- *clean and kempt as is*
- *apparent that the back door is already being used by customers*
- *signage—you can't tell what business it is—there is not a name on the door*
- *leave metal sign alone (consult Preservation Brief #25 <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief25.htm>)*

Alliance Theatre

- *clean and kempt as it is*
- *watch leakage from dumpster*
- *leave FOX ghost sign alone (consult Preservation Brief #25 <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief25.htm>)*

Rock Paper Scissors

- *clear vegetation and trash*
- *look at safety concerns with the sidewalk*
- *signage*
- *repaint back wall*

Newberry's

- *clear vegetation and trash*
- *signage*

Heritage VI Mall

- *look for moisture problems that are causing damage to the brick*
- *repair damaged brick/tuckpoint (consult Preservation Brief #2 <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief02.htm>)*
- *scrape and paint back doors*
- *replace door threshold—it looks like the gap is huge and lets in air and other elements*
- *signage*
- *make sure water is draining away from the building*
- *clear trash and vegetation*
- *fix mess of loose wires wrapped around the access ladder*

Secret Treasures

- *signage—replace sign to reflect current business?*
- *look for moisture problems that are causing damage to the brick*
- *treat exterior efflorescence (consult Preservation Brief #2 <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief02.htm>)*
- *consider repainting the door to a more subtle color—otherwise it is in good shape*

CDS Financial

- *clean and kempt*
- *signage*

Centsible Shop

- *clean and kempt*
- *more visually appealing signage*

Redman's

- *look for moisture problems that are causing damage to the brick*
- *repair damaged brick/tuckpoint (consult Preservation Brief #2 <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief02.htm>)*
- *signage—change out the backlit plastic box signs for a mounted flat wall sign*
- *keep historic painted door sign (consult Preservation Brief #25 <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief25.htm>)*
- *scrape and repaint door frame*

Thiele's

- *signage*

Workforce Development

- *clear vegetation and trash*
- *signage*
- *look for moisture problems that are causing damage to the brick*
- *repair damaged brick/tuckpoint (consult Preservation Brief #2 <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief02.htm>)*

Bank of the West

- *clean and kempt*

Beauty on the Butte

- *opportunity for additional landscaping closer to back door (see images of rear entrances from Wayne, NE)—create an attractive outdoor space*
- *repair any damaged stucco (consult Preservation Brief #22 <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief22.htm>)*
- *scrape and repaint wood window and door frames*
- *paint the rear façade a warmer color—the bright white really stands out*
- *signage*

Print Express

- *scrape and repaint*
- *more visually appealing signage*

New Horizons & Clarus Corporation

- *clean and kempt*
- *signage*
- *paint the rear façade a warmer color—the bright white really stands out*

Steph's Studio

- *repair broken glass in the storm door*
- *relocate dumpster*

Mission Store

- *clear vegetation and trash & keep trash cleaned up*
- *signage*
- *check safety of loading dock and consider repair or replacement to bring up to code*
- *scrape and repaint window and door frames*

Sandhillers Bar and Oasis Music

- *clean and kempt*
- *signage*

Players Bar

- *scrape and repaint doors and wood covering the windows, all one color—better yet uncover the windows!*
- *repair damaged brick/tuckpoint (consult Preservation Brief #2 <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief02.htm>)*
- *signage*
- *leave painted sign on door alone (consult Preservation Brief #25 <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief25.htm>) or have it repainted when door is repainted*

Gathering Spot

- *clean and kempt*

OK Barber Shop

- *clear vegetation and trash*
- *remove junk car?*
- *signage*

Main Street Studio

- *repaint door*
- *signage*

Health for Life

- *clear vegetation and trash*
- *signage*
- *scrape and repaint door and facade*

Radio Shack

- *clear vegetation and trash*
- *signage*
- *scrape and repaint door and facade*

Chamber/BBDC/Main Street



Chamber/BBDC/Main Street (2)



Jerry's Work & Western



Sportswear & Design



Just Shoot Me



Heartland Cash Advance



Heartland Cash Advance (2)



William's Jewelers



William's Jewelers (2)



Dollar General



Simplee A Lil' Bit



State Farm Insurance



Sandhills State Bank



Roller Hardware



Roller Hardware (2)



Alliance Theater



Alliance Theater (2)



Alliance Theater (3)



Leaking Dumpster in Alley Behind Theater



ROCK.Paper.Scissors Hair Studio



Newberry's



Heritage Mall



Secret Treasures



CDS Financial Services



The Centsible Shop



Redman's Shoes



Redman's Shoes (2)



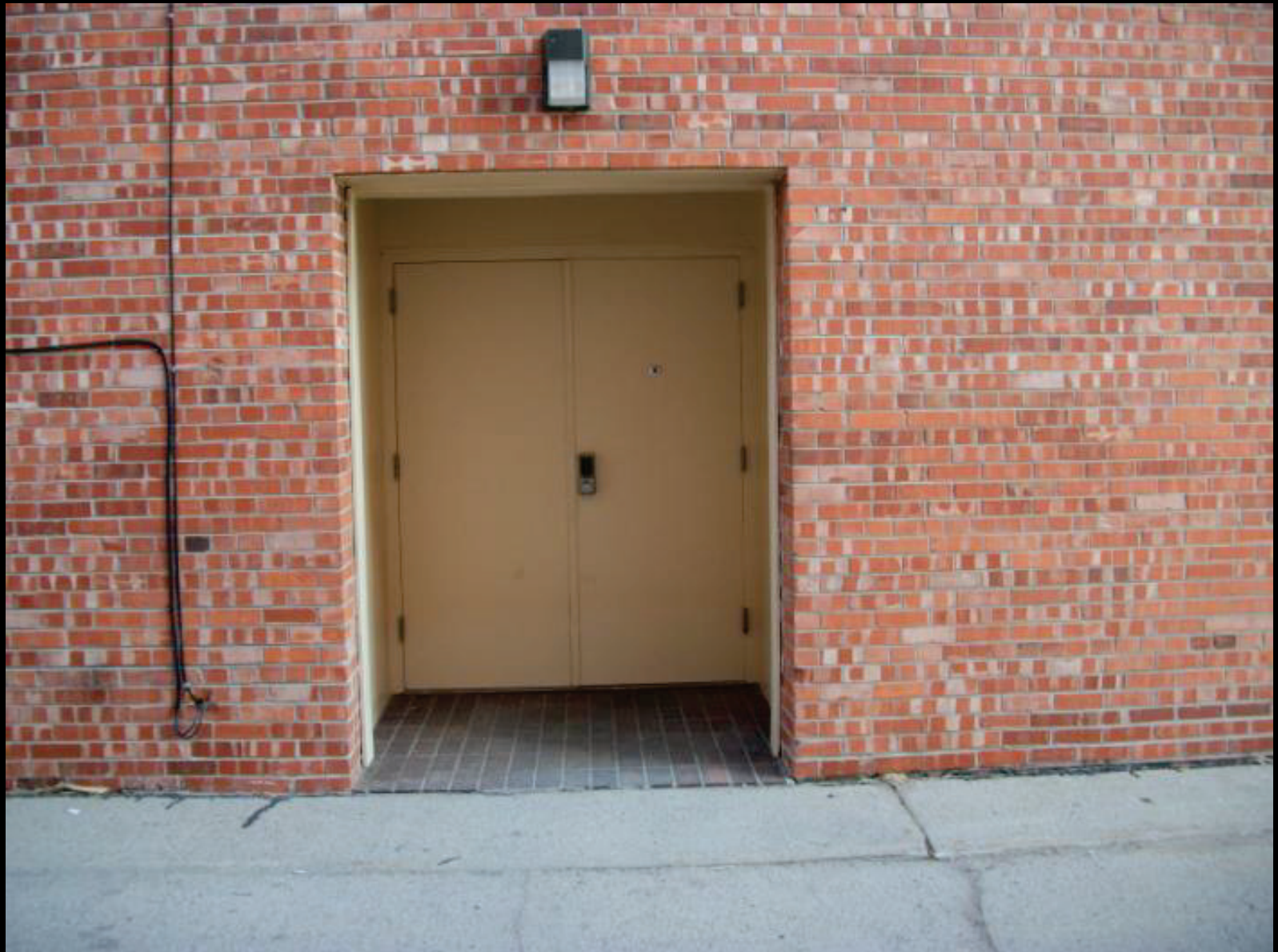
Thiele's Pharmacy & Gifts



Workforce Development



Bank of the West



Beauty on the Butte



Beauty on the Butte (2)



Print Express



New Horizons (L), Clarus Corp. (R)



Steph's Studio



The Mission Store



The Mission Store (2)



Sandhillers Bar (L), Oasis Music (R)



Players Sports Bar



Players Sports Bar (2)



The Gathering Spot



OK Barber Shop



Main Street Studio



Health 4 Life



Radio Shack



Rear & Alley Main Street Building Façade Designs

A compilation of images from state coordinating Main Street® program design staff





Farmersville, TX
Sarah Blankenship, Texas Main Street



Winnsboro, TX

Sarah Blankenship, Texas Main Street



 TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION The State Agency for Historic Preservation		BUILDING: 205 S. Cage - Rear
		CITY: Pharr, Texas
		DRAWN BY: Ellie Elbin
		DATE: June 29, 2006
Preliminary - Not for Construction. Photocopying is permitted.		

Pharr, TX

Sarah Blankenship, Texas Main Street



Searcy, AR

Nancy Lowe, Arkansas Main Street



Unknown Community, WI
Joe Lawniczak, Wisconsin Main Street



Osceola, WI

Joe Lawniczak, Wisconsin Main Street

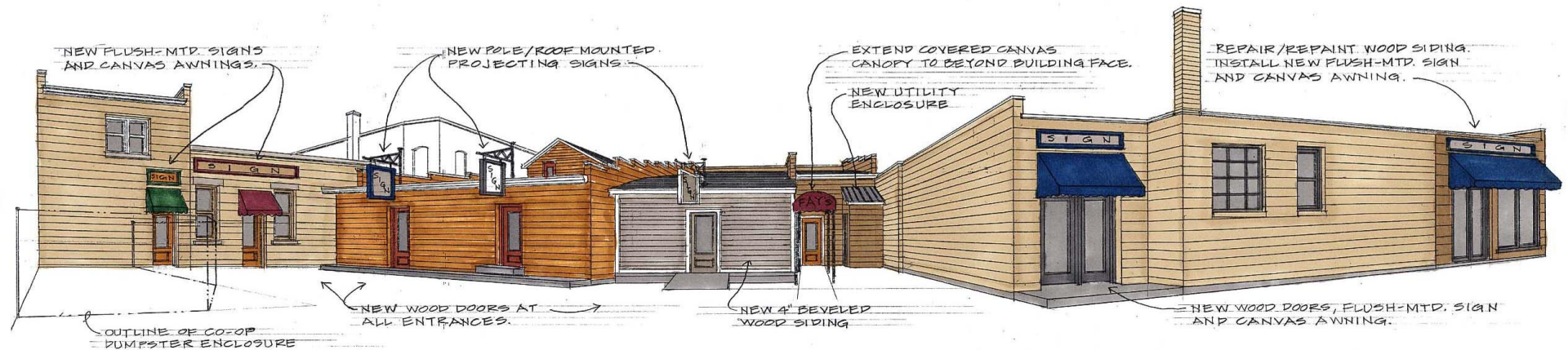


Osceola, WI

Joe Lawniczak, Wisconsin Main Street



Wausau, WI
Joe Lawniczak, Wisconsin Main Street



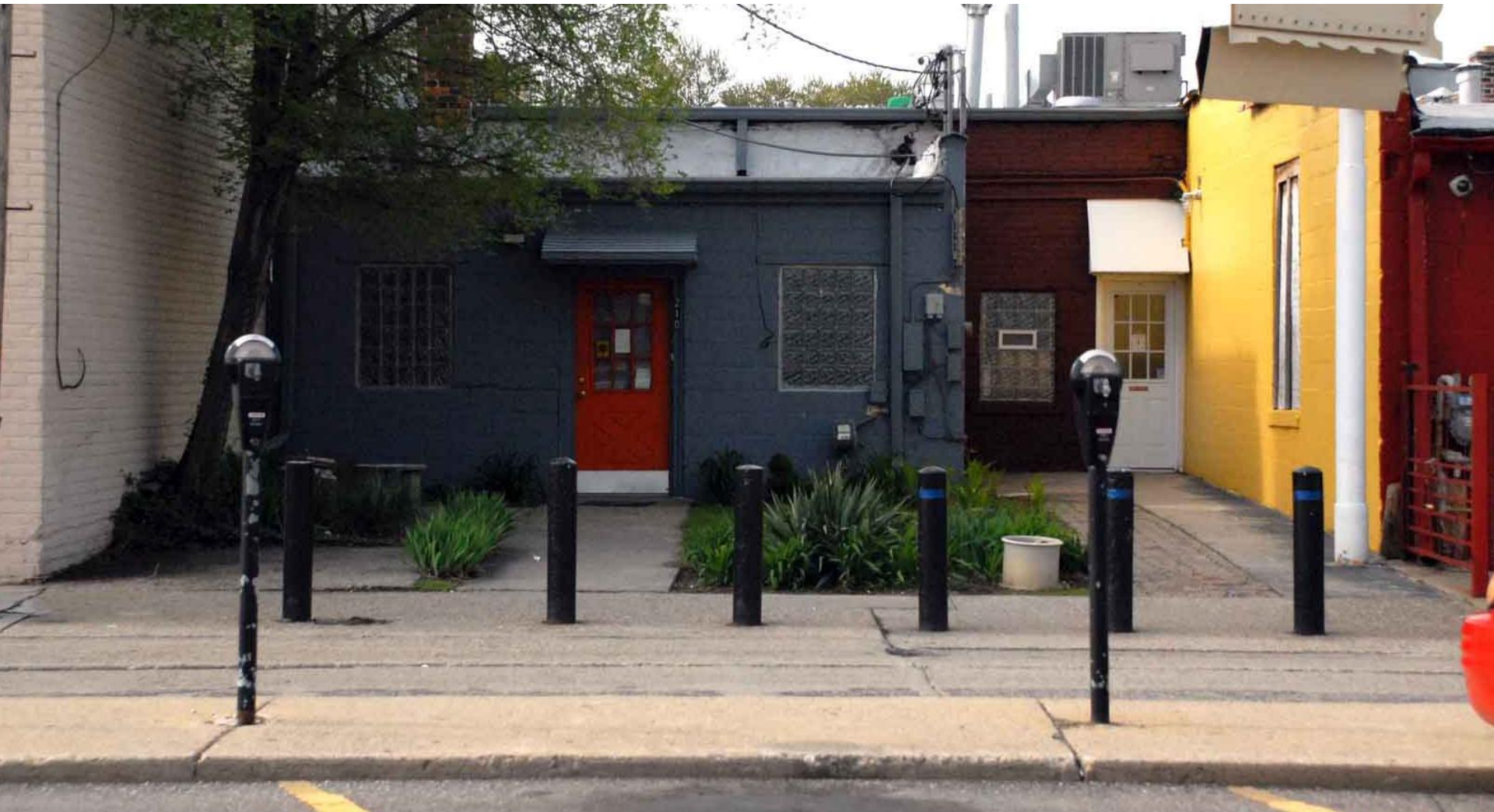
Eagle River, WI

Joe Lawniczak, Wisconsin Main Street



Unknown Community, GA

Unknown



Ferndale, MI

Ron Campbell, Main Street Oakland County (Michigan)



Ferndale, MI

Ron Campbell, Main Street Oakland County (Michigan)



Greenville, SC

Randy Wilson, South Carolina Main Street



Greenville, SC

Randy Wilson, South Carolina Main Street

Greenville, SC
Randy Wilson, South Carolina Main Street



Greenville, SC
Randy Wilson, South Carolina Main Street





Unknown
Unknown





Wayne, NE

Elizabeth Chase, Heritage Nebraska Main Street

Lincoln, NE
Elizabeth Chase, Heritage Nebraska Main Street



Wayne, NE
Elizabeth Chase, Heritage Nebraska Main Street





Omaha, NE (Benson Neighborhood Commercial District)
Elizabeth Chase, Heritage Nebraska Main Street



New Bern, NC (alleys)

Lauren Malinoff, North Carolina Main Street Program



Salisbury, NC (alleys)

Lauren Malinoff, North Carolina Main Street Program



Valdosta, GA (alleys)

Carmine Fischetti, Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Office of Downtown Development



Valdosta, GA

Carmine Fischetti, Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Office of Downtown Development



Oklahoma City, OK
Alleyway Downtown



Lincoln, NE

Passageway Havelock Business District