

HP012

Office/Retail renovation, Baldwin Avenue, DeFuniak Springs, FL

Original build 1920's, Addition/Renovation 2018

The historic renovation of one building can ignite a movement.

Our client tasked us with overseeing the historic renovation of a one-story building located in the historic town square of DeFuniak Springs. The town square has seen its ups and downs, but the demise of the railroad and the expansion of I-10 have drastically impacted the commercial success of this area. Ironically enough, Tesla's new Supercharger station is now breathing renewed interest and life into the downtown. Our client wants to take advantage of this renewed need for places to shop and eat while cars charge and purchased a storefront.

The building (and the entire streetscape) had been dramatically altered during the 1980s. Storefronts were changed or completely removed. In many cases the old brick was covered with stucco and the interior had been changed from a traditional mercantile to small office spaces connected by a hallway and drop ceilings.

Historical documents dating as far back as the 1920s and 1930s revealed metal roofs with columns that lined the street, which was a practical design. It would protect shoppers from sun, rain and the dust from the streets. Once we began implementing this design into the building we were delighted that it became the prototype for the entire streetscape. Because of the progress and ongoing improvements being made to these buildings, a Main Street Association and Design Review Board have now been created. We are working closely with the association and the DRB which are now working with the DeFuniak Springs city to create design & preservation standards for the downtown and the adjacent historic residential neighborhoods.

Ultimately the goal is for this intervention to fade into the fabric of this historic street. The adjacent renovation will be completed within the next 2 months and the 3 on the East side of that will be completed before the end of the year. Another building located directly across from the Tesla charging station is also underway. It will be retail on the ground level and offices above. We are happy to say that part of that office space will be occupied by our firm on a full-time basis.

