

Week Six Discussion March 31, 2008

ISSUE: Parking

Structured parking built to the sidewalk creates 'dead spots' within the downtown streetscape. Interior uses at street level provide 'feet on the street'. Off-street parking for new construction should be looked at carefully if it necessitates curb cuts, sidewalk removal, and entire parcels on the street being used for surface parking.

Resources:

Downtown Master Plan Design Principle 8

Historic District Ordinance: Essentially not addressed; see page 19 for lanes and carriage houses
Chadbourne:

ISSUE: Paving

The Revisions Committee identified the preservation of historic street paving on the public rights-of-way as a topic to be added to the discussion. Currently, neither the Historic District Ordinance nor the Chadbourne guidelines address paving; this is a City streets maintenance issue and not a Review Board issue. Paving on private property is currently not reviewed by the Historic District Ordinance but staff has identified it as an item to be reviewed for visual compatibility in the updated ordinance.

ISSUE: Utilities and refuse

Refuse equipment is visually incompatible when it is unscreened and obstructs public rights-of-way. This is a problem for commercial as well as large scale development. Developers often do not account for utilities in new construction by not leaving enough room on private property to accommodate the utilities, resulting in poles with multiple transformers on public streets or ugly meters prominently placed in view of the public.

Resources:

Downtown Master Plan Principle 9 – Services

Historic District Ordinance: Page 20 section (l) (15) Utilities and Refuse

Chadbourne: States "Electrical vaults and meter boxes must be screened from view. Fire pipes and extinguishers must be visible and easily locatable but discreet." And "Refuse storage areas shall be located within a building or shall be visually screened from public streets and lanes."

ISSUE: Fences, walls, screens and trellises

The recent issue with fences etc. includes privacy fences that impact light and air from neighboring properties or that look like prison fences. Recent appeals have centered on definitions of fence, screen, wall and trellis.

Resources:

Downtown Master Plan does not deal with this design issue.

Historic District Ordinance: Page 19 section (l) (13) Fences and Garden Walls

Chadbourne: Pages 67-68

City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance: Sec. 8-3051 Walls and Fences

ISSUE: Lighting

This issue was added by the Revisions Committee. Public street lighting is not under the jurisdiction of the Review Board. Street lighting is under the jurisdiction of Traffic Engineering. The only section regulating lighting on private property in the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance is Section 8-3031 Specific Development Plan exterior lighting standards. This is to be addressed in the Unified Zoning Ordinance update. Lighting is not specifically addressed in the Historic District Ordinance and has not been perceived as a problem except perhaps in the scale of fixtures proposed or the illumination of parking structures.