

**CITY OF SAVANNAH
HISTORIC DISTRICT BOARD OF REVIEW
REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION - AMENDED

PETITIONER: Patrick Shay
Gunn, Meyerhoff, Shay Architects, PC
427 East York Street
Savannah, GA 31401

FILE NUMBER: H-120719-4727-2

ADDRESS: 600 East Bay Street
Hotel 1 – 610 East Bay Street or 611 East River Street

PIN: 2-0005-02-005

ZONING: B-B (bayfront business)

DATE: February 13, 2013

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting approval for new construction, **Part I Phase B, of Hotel One** on the property at 600 East Bay Street.

Due to the size and significance of this project, and upon conference with the applicant and the Board Chair, the Part I, Height and Mass review is considered in two phases. Phase A considered height, proportion of structure's front façade, rhythm of structures on the street (setbacks and any parking standards that affect setbacks), massing including recesses and scale. Phase B will consider proportion of openings, rhythm of solids to voids, entrances and balcony/porch rhythm, any parking standards that may affect these openings or entrances, walls of continuity, and roof shape. Directional character is considered by both the building form and openings, and applies to both Part I reviews.

BACKGROUND:

The Board approved Part I, Phase A, for five structures on the property at 600 East Bay Street on January 9, 2013 with the conditions. The applicant submitted plans to comply with the conditions for Part I, Phase A, for all five structures but is only seeking approval for Part I, Phase B, of Hotel One adjacent to the existing office building, formerly occupied by Georgia Power. The conditions of the Part I, Phase A, approval are summarized below:

Hotel 1: Explore the staircase between the existing building and Hotel 1 to mitigate the height; parapet heights are not to exceed four feet in height; and, the material standard must be met and the sustainable roof certified by the City Manager and submitted with the Part II Design Details application for the Certificate of Appropriateness for the additional story above the height map.

Parking Garage: Restudy the massing to mitigate the saw tooth design on the south façade; provide an entry point that has a better relationship with Hotel 1 for a gateway; the ground floor height (for the active ground floor uses) must be a minimum of 14 feet tall; and, ground floor active use standard is met and verified through submittal of entrances and openings with the Part I, Phase B application for the Certificate of Appropriateness for the additional story above the height map.

Hotel 2: Parapet heights are not to exceed four feet in height and ground floor active use standard is met and verified through submittal of entrances and openings with the Part I, Phase B application for the Certificate of Appropriateness for the additional story above the height map.

Retail Buildings 1 and 2: Parapet heights are not to exceed four feet in height, verify location and dimensions of stair tower on roof, and reduce height to the greatest extent possible.

The designs for all of the buildings have been revised to address these comments.

CONTEXT:

The property at 600 East Bay Street consists of two parcels in the northeast quadrant of the historic district, flanking River Street and abutting the Savannah River and Bay Street. The property maintains almost 600 linear feet of frontage along the Savannah River. The project area is outside of the Savannah National Historic Landmark District and the Savannah National Register Historic District but is within the local historic zoning overlay. Because of this, there is little immediate historic context. The Board has recommended that Factors Walk provide the primary context for compatibility.

Historically, this area was defined by an industrial character. The 1888 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map illustrates a number of buildings on the site with an active wharf, buildings engaging Bay Street, and paved areas internal to the site at the approximate location of River Street. Buildings were both wood frame and masonry, ranging from one to three stories in height.

SITE PLAN REVIEW (SPR):

The site consists of two parcels zoned B-B (bayfront business). A recombination subdivision plat must be recorded prior to or concurrent with issuance of a building permit. The General Development Plan (GDP) for the proposed new construction at 600 East Bay Street was submitted to the City for Site Plan Review on June 28, 2012 (Project No. AP-120628-48479). The revised GDP was submitted for SPR on January 28, 2013 and a summary of the comments posted comments at the time of this report are below:

Park & Tree: Approved.

Stormwater: Revisions needed to address existing stormwater systems, utility easements, and stormwater discharge pipes. U.S. Core of Engineers approval may be needed.

MPC: Approved with the following conditions:

1. Show the address of each structure on all future submittals as follows:
 Existing Office Building 600 East Bay Street or 601 East River Street
 Hotel 1 610 East Bay Street or 611 East River Street
 Commercial 1 602 East River Street
 Commercial 2 610 East River Street
 Hotel 2 620 East River Street
 Parking Garage 630 East River Street
 The primary orientation and entrance should determine the address of the structure.
2. Approval and acceptance of the additional East River Street right-of-way by the Mayor and Aldermen. This will be a requirement of the Specific Development Plan.
3. The threshold for submitting a Development of Regional Impact (DRI) to the State is 400 rooms. If the proposed General or Specific Development Plan exceeds 400 hotel rooms, a condition of approval will be the approval of a DRI.

FINDINGS:

Part I, Height and Mass, Phase B

Hotel 1 – 610 East Bay Street or 611 East River Street

The proposed building varies in height from two to nine stories with a footprint exceeding 9,000 square feet. The project meets the definition for large-scale development. The property is within the Factors Walk Character Area. New construction on Factors Walk is exempt from commercial and large-scale development standards.

The following standards apply:

Standard	Proposed	Comment
Rhythm of Structure on Street: <i>The relationship of a structure to the open space between it and adjacent structures shall be visually compatible with the open spaces between contributing structures to which it is related.</i>	The building is triangular in form, echoing the triangular shape of the property. An eight foot wide stair separates the proposed building from the former Georgia Power Headquarters office building. The applicant was asked to explore this area to mitigate the height. Examples of similar staircase conditions within the Factors Walk Character Area were submitted. The applicant is proposing projecting bracketed light fixtures in a regular rhythm descending the staircase to help mitigate the height, provide a human scale, and retain as much natural light as possible.	Staff recommends approval.

Standard	Proposed	Comment
<p>Applicable Factors Walk Character Area standard: <i>New construction along Factors Walk shall front both Bay Street and River Street at their respective levels. Entrances to uses above River Street shall be from upper and lower Factors Walk or from private property; provided, however, entrances to end units may front onto the public ramps.</i></p>	<p>This property is not located on Factors Walk which ends at the East Broad Street Ramp. It does however transcend both Bay Street and River Street with fronts on both sides.</p>	<p>Staff recommends strengthening the presence of entrances along the Bay Street façade to meet the intent of the standard. Additional entry doors could be provided at the southwest corner. A secondary entry/exit is provided at the stairwell.</p>
<p>Rhythm of Solids-to-Voids: <i>The relationship of solids to voids in the facades visible from the public right-of-way of a structure shall be visually compatible with the contributing structures to which the structure is Visually Related.</i></p>	<p>The proposed building is triangular in shape and features three facades. Throughout, large openings containing multiple windows penetrate the solid masonry façade.</p> <p>South (Bay Street): the façade is approximately 207 feet long and architecturally divided into bays with two window groupings in the center and single bay groupings at the ends. The southeast corner is rounded with recessed balconies and larger openings for window groupings.</p>	<p>South (Bay Street): Staff recommends introducing voids within the western most bay over the entrance adjacent to Bay Street. The continuous glass curtain wall in the adjacent bay provides a strong contrast from solid to voids that is not present elsewhere on the same façade. Staff recommends providing greater balance between the two bays to be compatible with the façade. Provide greater architectural variation (texture, detailing, ornament) within the recesses and projections on the façade at the ground floor adjacent to the sidewalk where the solid wall has little or no voids. Consider more voids within the round corner to help balance the solid wall created by the adjacent internal stair. In plan, a secondary entrance/exit is shown at the stair on the south façade but not in elevation. Clarify.</p>

Standard	Proposed	Comment
Rhythm of Solids-to-Voids (continued)	<p>North (River Street): the façade is divided into three distinct sections united by a continuous base and top. The eastern most bay is an extension of the south façade anchored by the rounded corner. It features independent and grouped windows in columns extending from the ground to the top. The center bay is 96 feet wide. The bottom two-stories are at the zero lot line with the upper floors setback 25 to 80 feet. Two 18.6 foot wide voids for vehicular entry and exit are proposed in the ground floor. The western bay maintains a distinct five-bay rhythm with openings of similar dimension.</p> <p>West: the façade is mostly a continuous wall spanning 152 feet. It is partially obscured by the existing office building to the west. The façade features a regular rhythm of large picture windows divided by solid wall.</p>	<p>North (River Street): Within the easternmost bay, staff recommends increasing the amount of voids in the wall perpendicular to River Street, like those present in the western bay. Currently no openings are proposed for the five upper floors that extend approximately 25 feet into the site. For the center bay, staff recommends providing greater regularity to the placement and size of the voids. No apparent rhythm is established. This could be done by further refinement of the solid walls and establishing alignment with the vehicular openings in the ground floor. The vehicular openings are not typical along River Street. Large warehouse type openings exist but usually feature doors, shutters or gates. The Cotton Exchange features complete voids within the ground floor and adjacent buildings feature storefronts and openings within the side walls.</p> <p>West: staff recommends providing greater amounts of voids within the most visible sections of the west facade adjacent to Bay Street over the entrance and adjacent to River Street.</p>
<p>Proportion of Openings: <i>The relationship of the width of the windows to height of windows within a structure shall be visually compatible to the contributing structures to which it is visually related.</i></p>	<p>Three main size of openings are proposed: large window opening containing picture-type windows, metal screens, and a transom panel (9'-4" tall by 6' wide); independent openings (both doors and windows), metal screens, and a transom panel (9'-4" tall by 3' wide); and larger storefront/balcony door openings, sidelights, and transoms (9'-4" tall by 6' wide).</p>	<p>Within the ground floor of the north facade, staff recommends increasing the width of the independent openings in the ground floor or floors. Storefront, extending to the ground, appears within the ground floor but the openings are much narrower than typical storefront openings found in the historic district. Display cases could be increased to appear as storefront.</p>

Standard	Proposed	Comment
<p>Windows: <i>The centerline of window and door openings shall align vertically on the primary façade. Windows facing a street, exclusive of storefronts, basement and top story windows, shall be rectangular and shall have a vertical to horizontal ratio of not less than 5:3. The distance between windows shall be not less than for adjacent historic buildings, nor more than two times the width of the windows. Paired or grouped windows are permitted, provided the individual sashes have a vertical to horizontal ratio or not less than 5:3.</i></p>	<p>The centerlines of window and door openings align vertically on all facades. Windows are rectangular and exceed the 5:3 ratio. The distance between windows exceeds the width of the window in the facades perpendicular to River Street and within the rounded corner at the intersection of Bay and River Streets. Grouped and independent windows are proposed within openings with sashes exceeding the 5:3 ratio.</p>	<p>Staff recommends providing additional window openings within the facades perpendicular to River Street and within the rounded corner at the intersection of Bay and River Streets. Recesses and bay spacing within the south façade (Bay Street) provide breaks within the solid wall at points less than two times the width of the windows.</p>
<p>Rhythm of Entrances, Porch Projections, and Balconies: <i>The relationship of entrances, porch projections, and walkways to structures shall be visually compatible with the contributing structures to which they are visually related.</i></p>	<p>Awnings or canopies are proposed over entries and display windows along River Street. Entrances are recessed five feet – eight inches (5'-8") within the façade. Balconies are proposed on the upper floors of the north façade (River Street) within the recess and along the westernmost bay.</p>	<p>Staff recommends providing an entrance from Bay Street and further articulation of the exterior surrounding this entry. A canopy is shown in plan over the entrance on the west façade but not in side elevations. Clarify.</p> <p>As provided below in the parking area standards, the sidewalk must serve as a continuous uninterrupted pathway where intersected by a drive way. This should apply to the vehicular driveways off of River Street to enhance the pedestrian experience of this area.</p>
<p>Roofs shapes: <i>The roof shape of a structure shall be visually compatible with the contributing structures to which it is visually related.</i></p>	<p>The roof is flat with a stepped parapet. Recessed railings surround the rooftop elements. A dome is proposed over the cupola at the rounded entry point.</p>	<p>Confirm location of the railings shown in elevation. Staff recommends redesign of dome roof on the cupola. The design of the building is contemporary and the dome creates a classical juxtaposition that does not relate to other architectural features on the building.</p>
<p>Walls of Continuity. Appurtenances of a structure shall form consistent walls of enclosure along a street.</p>	<p>The building exterior extends to the lot lines forming consistent walls of continuity along the site.</p>	<p>The standard is met.</p>

Standard	Proposed	Comment
<p>Scale of a building. <i>The mass of a structure and size of windows, door openings, porches column spacing, stairs, balconies, and additions shall be visually compatible with the contributing structures to which the structure is related.</i></p>	<p>See descriptions above.</p>	<p>Staff recommends introduction of additional voids, increase in window widths in the ground floor, further exterior articulation of the façade especially around entrances and the ground level, establishing vertical breaks to sections in the north façade, and providing greater consistency of window rhythm on the north façade to have a scale that is compatible with contributing buildings in the historic district.</p>
<p>Directional Expression of Front Elevation. <i>A structure shall be visually compatible with the structures to which it is visually related in its directional character, whether this be vertical character, horizontal character, or non-directional character.</i></p>	<p>The hotel is a large structure within the district. The exterior façades balance both horizontal and vertical elements through window groupings, bay spacing and providing a base middle and top.</p>	<p>Staff recommends providing vertical divisions within the first two floors of the north façade (River Street) to clearly distinguish the two end sections of the building and provide subtle breaks within the horizontal base. Within grouped window openings staff recommends multiple double hung sashes to provide greater verticality to the larger picture-type window openings.</p>
<p>Parking Areas. <i>Access to parking shall be from lanes or north-south service streets. When a property does not front a lane or north-south service street, parking may be accessed from east-west connecting streets or trust streets.</i></p> <p><i>Structured parking within the first story of a building shall be setback a minimum of 30 feet from property lines along all public rights-of-way (not including lanes). Curb cuts shall not exceed 20 feet in width. Where intersected by a new driveway, the sidewalk shall serve as a continuous uninterrupted pathway across the driveway in materials, configuration, and height.</i></p>	<p>A vehicular drive-through entrance is proposed within the ground floor adjacent to River Street. This is not intended for parking but for loading and unloading. The curb cuts are approximately 18.5 feet and do not exceed 20 feet in width.</p>	<p>The sidewalk must serve as a continuous uninterrupted pathway across the driveway in materials, configuration, and height as required by the ordinance and to help reinforce and continue the pedestrian character of River Street present west of this property.</p>

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approval for Part I, Height and Mass with the following conditions as provided in the amended submittal packet:

- 1. Strengthen the presence of entrances along the Bay Street façade. Additional entry doors could be provided at the southwest corner.**
- 2. On the south façade (Bay Street), introduce voids in the westernmost bay over the entrance adjacent to Bay Street and redesign the adjacent glass curtain wall to be more compatible with other building fenestration on the same façade. Provide greater architectural variation within the recesses and projections on the ground floor adjacent to the sidewalk to break-up the large area of solid wall surface.**
- 3. Consider more voids within the round corner to help balance the solid wall created by the internal stair on the south façade.**
- 4. On the north façade (River Street), increase the amount of voids within the solid wall perpendicular to River Street. Provide greater regularity to the placement and size of voids within the center bay adjacent to River Street to establish a clear and apparent rhythm. Increase the width of independent openings in the ground floor or floors. Display cases could be increased to appear as storefront. Provide vertical divisions within the first two floors to clearly distinguish the two end sections of the building and provide subtle breaks within the horizontal base.**
- 5. On the west façade, provide greater amounts of voids within the most visible sections adjacent to Bay Street, over the entrance, and adjacent to River Street.**

For Part II, Design Details, staff recommends paired or ribbon window frames within the larger openings instead of center double-hung sashes flanked by sidelights and solid transoms as provided in the findings above. The sidewalk must serve as a continuous uninterrupted pathway across the driveway in materials, configuration, and height.

The material standard must be met and the sustainable roof certified by the City Manager and submitted with the Part II, Design Details, application for the Certificate of Appropriateness for the additional story above the height map as conditioned in the Part I, Phase A approval.

SPW:mem