

HISTORIC DISTRICT BOARD OF REVIEW

REGULAR MEETING  
112 EAST STATE STREET  
ARTHUR A. MENDONSA HEARING ROOM

JANUARY 14, 2004

2:00 P.M.

MINUTES

Members Present:

Dr. Gerald Caplan, Chairman  
W. John Mitchell, Vice-Chairman  
Dian Brownfield  
John Deering  
Ned Gay  
Eric Meyerhoff  
John Neely  
Swann Seiler  
Gwendolyn Fortson-Waring

Members Absent:

Dr. Lester Johnson  
Jay Turner

MPC Staff Present:

Beth Reiter, Preservation Officer  
Lee Webb, Preservation Specialist  
Christy Adams, Secretary

RE: Call to Order

Mrs. Fortson-Waring called the January 14, 2004 meeting of the Savannah Historic District Board of Review to order at 2:00 P.M.

RE: Election of Officers

**HDBR Action:** Mrs. Fortson-Waring stated the nominating committee at the last meeting submitted the report nominating Dr. Gerald Caplan, Chairman and W. John Mitchell, Vice-Chairman. Ms. Seiler seconded the nomination and it was unanimously passed.

RE: Welcome

Dr. Caplan welcomed new Board member Ned Gay.

RE: Sign Posting

All projects were properly posted.

RE: Consent Agenda

Ms. Brownfield requested that the Petition of Gottlieb's Restaurant, HBR 03-3139-2 be moved to the Regular Agenda.

**HDBR Action:** Mrs. Fortson-Waring made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Ms. Seiler seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

**RE: Amended Petition of Tom Hoffman & Gretchen Ernest  
HBR 03-3025-2 (Amended)  
500 Block of East Gaston Street  
Alterations**

**RECOMMENDATION**

Approval as submitted.

**RE: Amended Petition of Tom Wirht & Laura Potts-Wirht  
HBR 03-3110-2 (Amended)  
543/547 East Perry Street  
Alterations**

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval.

**RE: Petition of Jayesh Patel  
HBR 03-3133-2  
634 M.L.K., Jr., Blvd.  
Alterations**

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval. Any signage must come before Board for approval.

**RE: Petition of Kevin Rose  
HBR 03-3137-2  
3 East Gordon Street  
Alterations**

**RECOMMENDATION**

Approval as submitted.

**RE: Petition of Lott & Barber Architects  
Todd Naugle, Agent  
HBR 03-3140-2  
111 Barnard Street  
Alterations**

**RECOMMENDATION**

Approval as submitted.

**RE: Regular Agenda**

**RE: Amended Petition of Dawson & Wissmach  
Architects  
Neil Dawson  
HBR 03-3114-2 (Amended)  
13 – 17 East Bay Street  
Alterations**

Present for the petition was Neil Dawson.

Mr. Webb gave the following Staff report.

The petitioner is requesting approval to amend the original approved petition to include the following: replace existing four-over-four, double-hung wood windows on the front and rear façades with in-kind, replace storefront doors with wood doors to match existing, removal of 5' section of granite entry on the front for ADA ramp, install new decorative steel balcony and railing system on rear façade, and minor masonry and stucco repair.

### **FINDINGS**

#### Windows:

1. The petitioner is proposing removal of all existing four-over-four, double hung wood windows on the front and rear façades.
2. This project is also participating in the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Incentive program. The petitioner has agreed to restore some of the original windows on one of the upper floors on the front façade. Petitioner has not determined which floor will have the restored windows. All of the rear façade windows will be replaced since most appear to be beyond repair and not original.
3. The proposed replacement windows will be manufactured by Kolbe and Kolbe and will be insulated, wood, double hung, true-divided lite and will match the existing lite pattern and opening size. All replacement windows will have the arched top profile to match the existing.
4. The petitioner provided cut sheet, profile, and manufacturer information to Staff. Kolbe and Kolbe windows have been approved previously by Staff and Review Board for window replacement in rated buildings.

#### Doors:

1. The storefront doors will be replaced with new wood storefront doors to match the existing doors in size and lite configuration.
2. One of the new doors will be ADA accessible. This door will be on the left side of the front façade and will be modified to match the original height and account for the granite step removal.
3. A 5' section of the granite entry will be removed in order to install an ADA ramp.

#### Balconies:

1. The petitioner is proposing two new decorative steel balconies and railing systems for the rear façade.
2. A prior approval by the Board granted permission to construct a second story addition on top of the eastern section of the one-story rear building to allow for stair and elevation service to the top of the building.

3. As proposed, the two balconies will each project 3'6" from the rear façade of the building, and will be 16' in length.
4. The balconies will be constructed of a steel railing system and pressure treated wood decking, with a cedar top rail. The balconies will be supported by a metal bracket.
5. The railing will be 3'6" tall, with steel pickets and tube posts and a "star-burst" design.
6. To access the proposed balconies, two existing rear windows will be converted to doors. The removed windows and existing brick will be stored for possible reuse.
7. The new doors will be manufactured by Kolbe and Kolbe and be insulated wood doors. A transom will be installed above the doors.
8. Staff is concerned that the proposed balconies, in conjunction with the already approved addition, is altering the character of the rear façade greatly. While this is a rear façade, it has visibility from the lane. The approved addition will mostly obscure one of the balconies from site. However, Staff would recommend reducing the width of the balconies, to mitigate their visual impact on the rear façade. Staff suggests the balconies be reconsidered.

Rehabilitation:

1. The metal cornice will be repaired to match original profile.
2. Some minor masonry and stucco repair will be performed.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval of the window and door replacement, approval of granite removal and minor exterior repair, and reconsideration of the proposed balconies.

### **Petitioner's Comments:**

**Mr. Dawson** stated he talked with the owner and they agreed to Staff's comments to reduce the width of the balcony and that change was shown in the subsequent drawing.

**HDBR Action:** Ms. Brownfield made a motion that the Savannah Historic Board of Review approve the petition as amended. Mr. Meyerhoff seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

**RE: Petition of Capitol City Bank  
Ashmel Williams, Agent  
HBR 03-3136-2  
339 M.L.K., Jr., Blvd.  
Sign**

Present for the petition was Ashmel Williams.

Mrs. Reiter gave the following Staff report.

The petitioner is requesting approval of two principal use fascia signs located on the Northern end of the MLK façade (second story right hand side), and the Eastern end of the Charlton Street façade (Second story left hand side). The 15' wide signs are composed of plastic 3 – dimensional 9" and 4" letters per logo; in light tan with a burgundy stripe. Also a similar sign as a supplemental identification sign on the south façade (second story upper right hand side).

The petitioner is also requesting approval of an internally lighted entrance sign to the parking and outside deposit areas. Sign to be located on petitioner's property off of Charlton Street. Sign size 10 square feet and total height from ground is 4'. There is a small "Exit" sign beneath main logo.

**FINDINGS**

1. The property is zone BC. One principal use per street frontage is permitted not to exceed 40 square feet. The petitioner meets these requirements.
2. In addition one supplemental identification sign is permitted on a façade adjacent to a parking lot where the use occupies the entire ground floor. Such sign shall not exceed 9 square feet. The proposed sign will need to be reduced to 9 square feet.
3. Directional signs are not covered in the Historic District Sign Ordinance. Under the city-wide ordinance one directional sign per entrance or exit is permitted not to exceed 4 square feet in area nor exceed 5' in height from the ground. The location must be approved by the City Traffic Engineer. Bonus square footage does not apply to this sign due to the size of the lot, however an additional square foot might be recommended by the Board since the aggregate of the two frontages is about 180'.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Approval of the principal use signs for MLK and Charlton Street.

Approval of the supplemental sign for the south elevation with the condition that it be reduced to 9 square feet.

Approval of the internally lighted entrance sign with the condition that the size be reduced to 5 square feet.

**Petitioner's Comments:**

**Mr. Williams** stated they agreed to the recommendations suggested by Staff. However, he said he would hope that the Board grant extra footage if needed to allow them to get what they wanted.

**Mrs. Reiter** stated the 5 square feet would be extra.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** asked what was the square footage of the directional sign?

**Mr. Williams** stated it was supposed to be 4' x 5'.

**Mrs. Reiter** stated what she received from the sign company was 2' x 5'. She added that it was 4 feet from the ground, but the sign itself was 10 square feet.

**Mrs. Fortson-Waring** asked the petitioner if he was saying that he did not want the Board to take the Staff's approval that the sign be reduced to 5 square feet?

**Mr. Williams** stated no. He said whatever the Board recommends was okay. He said that he was told by the sign contractor to accept the recommendations that were stated in the Staff report.

**Ms. Seiler** stated she was concerned at the quality of drawings that were submitted by the signage company to the Board and Staff. She said the standards for signage in the Historic District were pretty specific. She said the submission to the Board from him was not quite sufficient.

**HDBR Action:** Mr. Mitchell made a motion that the Savannah Historic Board of Review approve the petition with the following conditions: (1) Approval of the principal use signs for MLK and Charlton Street, (2) Approval of the supplemental sign for the south elevation with the condition that it be reduced to 9 square feet, and (3) Approval of the internally lighted entrance sign with the condition that the size be reduced to 5 square feet. Mr. Gay seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

**RE: Petition of Lominack Kolman Smith Architects  
Jerry Lominack  
HBR 03-3138-2  
301 West Broughton Street  
Alterations**

Present for the petition was Jerry Lominack.

Mrs. Reiter gave the following Staff report.

The petitioner is requesting approval of a penthouse addition to the roof of 301 West Broughton Street. The penthouse consists of a bed, bath and sitting room for each of two units. The proposed structure will have a wood fascia and corrugated aluminum sides. Anderson wood windows with true divided lights will be used. Color – White Whisper. The structure is situated 11 feet from the east and west parapets and 13'-6" from the front parapet. The parapet is 8' tall. The tallest part of the structure would extend 5.5 feet above the top of the parapet.

### **FINDINGS**

1. The building is located in a 4 story height zone. The existing structure at 301 West Broughton Street is four stories.
2. The Historic District Ordinance states that "...penthouses used solely to enclose stairways or elevator machinery, ventilation or air conditioning apparatus shall not count as a story. Penthouses used other than to enclose stairways or elevator machinery shall count as a story."
3. The proposed construction is approximately 12% of the total roof area.
4. A Certificate of Appropriateness is required for "any new construction of a building or appurtenance or structure subject to view from a public street or lane."
5. The petitioner has submitted site lines which show that the top of the structure would not be visible until a viewer was at a minimum of 130' to 146' feet away depending on which direction. The National Park Service for corner buildings uses the opposite corners, which would be 50' and 75' respectively. The addition would not be visible from these vantage points.

### **DISCUSSION**

Under the Historic District Ordinance the addition would be a story and would require a variance. The Ordinance is silent about the vantage point for determining site lines. Since the addition would not be visible to a pedestrian until the pedestrian were roughly 150 feet from the

building and then only a small portion would be visible the Board could elect to find that the addition does not have an adverse visual impact and recommend the variance.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Board find that the addition is a story and requires a variance, however due to the fact that it can only be partially seen at the closest roughly 150' away, and is approximately 12% of the roof area it would not, in this instance have an adverse visual impact. Approval with a variance from the Board of Appeals for a fifth story.

**Petitioner's Comments:**

Mr. Lominack stated they agreed with Staff's comments.

**HDBR Action: Mr. Neely made a motion that the Savannah Historic Board of Review does hereby find that the addition is a story and therefore requires a variance, however due to the fact that it can only be partially seen at the closest roughly 150' away, and is approximately 12% of the roof area it would not, in this instance have an adverse visual impact. The Board recommends approval with a variance from the Board of Appeals.**

**RE: Petition of Gottlieb's Restaurant  
Stephen Buttimer, Image Signs, Agent  
HBR 03-3139-2  
1 West Broughton Street  
Sign**

Present for the petition was Stephen Buttimer.

Mr. Webb gave the following Staff report.

The petitioner is requesting approval of two principal use fascia signs on the Northern end of the Bull Street façade and the Eastern end of the West Broughton Street facade, for a new restaurant establishment, "Gottlieb's."

**FINDINGS**

1. The two fascia signs will be installed on the building's Bull Street and Broughton Street elevations, ending approximately 1' from the corner of the building each way.
2. The fascia area is approximately 40", between the window/storefront area and the beltcourse. The signs are 36" tall at the tallest point of the "G" and 16' wide.
3. The signs will be a silver-colored aluminum, reversed lit channel letters, with lighting in silhouette.
4. The signs will be mounted to the fascia using threaded rods and aluminum studs.
5. The sign will read "Gottlieb's" and will mimic the type style of the old "Gottlieb's."

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval.

**Board Comments:**

**Ms. Brownfield** asked if he could explain what it was that they were actually going to do? In addition, would it just be the name Gottlieb's.

**Mr. Buttimer** stated the sign would say Gottlieb's. He said it fitted the old motif of the Gottlieb's logo that was here years ago. He said Savannah Blue Print was a perfect example of what their sign was going to look like.

**Ms. Brownfield** asked if it would be polished aluminum with the backlighting?

**Mr. Buttimer** stated it would not be a high sheen polish. He said it would be more of a satin finish or brush look. He said it would not be a high polish like SunTrust Bank.

**Ms. Seiler** stated there were a lot of sign companies that submitted things to the Board. She said it was very helpful to the Board to see a little more besides a business card. She said in the future, the more he could give the Board the better it was for them to see it, as well as expedite the process.

**HDBR Action: Mrs. Fortson-Waring made a motion that the Savannah Historic Board of Review approve the petition as submitted. Mr. Meyerhoff seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.**

**RE:     Petition of Dirk Hardison  
          HBR 03-3141-2  
          542/544 East Harris Street  
          New Construction Part I & II**

Present for the petition was Dirk Hardison.

Mr. Webb gave the following Staff report.

The petitioner is requesting approval of Part 1 Height and Mass and Part 2 Design Details for the new construction of two, detached, two-and-one-half-story townhouses and a double carriage house on vacant lots located on the north side of the 500 block of East Harris Street Street.

### **FINDINGS**

The development standards state that each new structure shall not exceed 75% building lot coverage. Each lot is a total of 2700 square feet. Each townhouse is 1406 square feet and each carriage house is 480 square feet for a total of 1886 square feet. This total coverage is 69.85% building lot coverage and meets the coverage requirement.

Part 1: Height and Mass:

Visual Compatibility Factors:

1. Height: The maximum height for new construction in this area of the Beach Institute neighborhood is two-and-one-half-stories. The height for each of the proposed townhouses is two-and-one-half stories. The height of each townhouse is 23' to the eaves and 34' 8 5/16" to the roof ridge. The two-story carriage houses have heights of 20'8" to the eaves and 27'8 5/8" to the roof ridge. The building adjacent to the west of the proposed buildings is one-story. However, two-and-one-half-story structures are



located elsewhere on the street. The new buildings appear to be visually compatible with the adjacent buildings in respect to height.

2. Floor-to-floor heights: As proposed, the townhouses will have exterior expression of floors as follows: 11' first floors, and 10' second floors. The proposed floor-to-floor heights are visually compatible and meet the ordinance requirements. No information was provided on the carriage houses exterior expression of floor heights.
3. Widths: The townhouses will have street frontages of approximately 25' and the carriage houses will have lane frontage widths of 27' each. The proposed widths are visually compatible.
4. Street elevation type: The proposed street elevation type for the townhouses is a two-and-one-half story over a raised pier with a brick veneer curtain wall at the ground level, and a front porch, which is the recommended street elevation type for the Beach Institute neighborhood. The foundation is 2'6" off the ground.
5. Setbacks: As proposed, the new townhouses will have a 4' lot line setback from the existing sidewalk. The front porches will encroach on the sidewalk. The front porches will be in line with the adjacent porches to the west. The proposed setback is visually compatible.
6. Roof shape: A high pitched, side gable roof, running parallel to the street, is proposed for the townhouses. Two gabled dormer windows will be located on the top half story of the townhouses. The pitch will be 12:7. An intersecting side gable roof will project from the front of the house to the rear. The carriage houses will also have side gable roofs. The roof material will be composition shingles. The soffit will have a 6" overhang. The proposed roof shape is visually compatible.
7. Rhythm of solids to voids: The townhouses are proposed to have a three-bay rhythm, with the windows and doors aligned vertically on the front elevation. A three-bay rhythm is visually compatible.
8. Site plan: The site plan submitted shows the location of the proposed townhouses and carriage houses. The maximum building lot coverage is 75%. Each lot is a total of 2700 square feet. Each townhouse is 1406 square feet with a carriage house of 480 square feet for a total of 1886 square feet. This total coverage is 69.85% of the building lot coverage and meets the coverage requirement.

#### Part 2: Design Details

1. Exterior: The exterior façade of the proposed townhouses and carriage houses will be hardiplank with a 5" lap. The trim and soffits will be wood. A typical wall section was provided.
2. Roof: The townhouses will have a 12:7 high pitch gable roof of composition shingles. The soffit will have a 6" overhang.
3. Stairs/Stoops/Balconies: The main entrance to the proposed townhouses will be a front porch. Petitioner needs to provide more information on the proposed front porch, including a section, materials, and dimensions. From the submitted elevations, the front

porches will span two bays, have three columns supporting a hipped roof, and have straight picket handrail. Porches and balconies are also proposed for the rear elevation of the townhouses.

4. Windows/Doors: All windows on the townhouses and carriage houses will be “Ultimate” by Marvin and will be aluminum clad wood, six-over-six, double hung, simulated divided lites windows, with a white enamel finish. The front door will be a six panel solid wood door with finish to be determined. The French doors will be “Ultimate” by Marvin, aluminum clad wood doors with simulated divided lites. The petitioner needs to provide more information on the garage doors.
5. Colors: No proposed colors were provided by the petitioner. Proposed colors must be submitted to staff for review and approval.
6. Carriage Houses: The hardiplank, carriage houses have a 4’ setback from the lane. The garage openings will be 8’ wide and 10’ tall. No additional information was provided for the garage doors. Petitioner needs to provide information on garage doors.
7. Garden walls/fences: A 6’ wood fence is proposed for the eastern lot line, between the townhouse and carriage house. The petitioner provided a fence detail.
8. Utilities: No information was provided regarding placement of heating and air condition condenser units for the proposed townhouses and carriage houses.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

1. Petitioner provides a porch section and clarifies material and details.
2. Petitioner provides information on garage doors.
3. Proposed colors must be submitted for staff review.

### **Board Comments:**

**Dr. Caplan** stated that he would like the petitioner to address a few items. He stated that they were given a handout and unfortunately they received a handout before the meeting and felt that it was difficult to review everything at once.

**Mr. Hardison** stated the handouts that he provided before the meeting did not change anything on the drawings that he originally submitted. He said the handouts clarifies the garage doors, flush wood overhead doors, divided into three segments as shown on the drawings. The size will be 8’ wide by 10’ tall. The utility meters will be located on the lane side of the carriage house. The City trashcans will be kept in the court yard as there is no lane space for it. He stated that these are questions that did not come up, but he thought he would answer them beforehand. HV/AC units will all be located on the roof and not on the façade that is facing the lane or the street. The porch section outlines what was sent in earlier.

**Ms. Seiler** stated that the Board couldn’t approve something without color.

**Mr. Deering** stated that Staff can approve the proposed colors.

**Ms. Seiler** stated that she has to know color on this site.

**Mr. Deering** asked why are the garage doors ten feet tall.

**Mr. Hardison** stated at the request of the owner. He said it was needed to fit some sort of vehicle.

**Mr. Deering** stated that ten feet seems a little tall.

**Mr. Neil Cronk**, owner, of the lot stated that he does not have the color, but was under the impression that Staff could approve it.

**Ms. Seiler** stated, not always.

**Mr. Cronk** stated that he doesn't have the color right off, but it will be one off of the Historic color chart.

**Ms. Seiler** stated that the petition is for approval of Part I and Part II simultaneously. She stated that this is a lot to absorb in one meeting.

**Mr. Hardison** stated that the division of Part I and Part II is not mandatory.

**Ms. Seiler** stated that she felt it was a big project in a neighborhood and she wants to know.

**Board's Comments:**

**Mr. Mitchell** stated approving a ten-foot garage door opening would really be difficult for the Board. He further stated that the proposal seems somewhat commercial for a residential structure. Mr. Mitchell further stated that he is concerned about the ten feet.

**Mr. Deering** stated that he too feels the ten feet is a little tall. He stated that the newer carriage houses that have been built in the Beach Institute don't have ten-foot tall garage doors on this same block.

**Ms. Seiler** stated that she would feel more comfortable if the petitioner came back with a few more fine tuned details.

**Mr. Deering** stated that he feels that the Board has most of the details.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** stated that he is not sure what other details the Board would need. In regard to the garage doors, which are unusual, from the standpoint of the elevation it doesn't look like it's a detriment to the property. The garage doors are unique, but fit into the overall design.

**Ms. Brownfield** stated that she echoes Mr. Meyerhoff's comments, as she too does not have a problem with the design. She stated that the Preservation Officer has done a good job of helping to keep the colors in line. She further stated rather than have the petitioner come back with the paint choice at a later date, she would trust Staff's judgment.

**Mr. Mitchell** asked was there not an issue with a petitioner wanting a wider opening and he thought that the Board had denied the petitioner's request.

**Ms. Reiter** stated that the aforementioned petition was for a wider opening, not a taller one.

**Ms. Waring** stated that it is in the By-Laws and the Board always states that each individual project is looked on its own merits. She further stated that the Board does not set precedent and they don't go by what was done in a previous petition. Each individual project has its own merit. She stated that she feels that it is always bad when the Board reiterates what was done on a previous petition. They don't have to do the same thing every time, because each project is different.

**Dr. Caplan** stated that the guidelines only address the width of the garage doors and not the height. He further stated that he does not recall a ten foot door coming before the Board before.

**Ms. Waring** stated that the Board is not setting a precedent, they are identifying that in this new construction, if approved, that the ten-foot door is appropriate for this project. She further stated that it might not be appropriate for another project.

**Mr. Neely** asked if the reducing the height to nine feet still work for the petitioner.

**Mr. Cronk** stated, yes.

**HDBR Action:** Mr. Deering made a motion that the Savannah Historic Board of Review approve Part I and Part II of the petition with the details as provided by the petitioner and the following condition: that the garage door be no taller than nine feet and color to be submitted to Staff. Ms. Brownfield seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

**RE: Petition of Poticny Deering Felder  
John Deering, Agent  
HBR 03-3143-2  
209 West Charlton Street  
New Construction – Part I**

Mr. Deering recused himself.

Present for the petition was John Deering, Poticny Deering Felder, agent for the petitioner.

Mr. Webb gave the following Staff Report:

The petitioner is requesting approval to construct a one-story, two-car garage on the current parking pad located off Charlton Lane for 209 West Charlton Street.

### **FINDINGS**

1. The proposed garage will utilize two existing 8' masonry fence walls, to the east and north sides of the existing parking pad, for the right side and rear walls, and require adding a left wall, which will abut the neighbor's existing CMU garden wall to the left, and a new front wall.
2. The new front wall will include two overhead garage doors and a 3' entry door.
3. A gable end wall will be added above the existing right side fence wall.
4. Both gable end walls will have a small window and shutters. The windows and shutters will match the existing house in type, style, and color.

5. The proposed garage will be 17' tall to the roof-ridge line and will be 28'6" wide fronting Charlton Lane.
6. The garage doors and entry doors will be constructed of vertical wood plank, painted to match the existing door in the fence wall fronting the lane.
7. The garage doors will be 10' wide and 8' tall, which meet the ordinance and design manual standards.
8. All brick used in construction will match the brick of the existing house and garden wall. Petitioner provided wall sections and details.
9. The side gable roof will be asphalt shingle to match the type, style, and color of the existing house.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval.

**Mr. Neely** asked with regard to the existing walls that are there now, will the parking area be retained.

**Mr. Webb** stated that is correct, and that there will be additional wall space added to them.

**HDBR Action:** **Mr. Meyerhoff made a motion that the Savannah Historic Board of Review approve the petition as submitted. Ms. Brownfield seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.**

**RE:   Petition of Poticny Deering Felder  
      John Deering, Agent  
      HBR 03-3144-2  
      1 West Jones Street  
      New Construction – Part I**

Mr. Deering recused himself.

Present for the petition was John Deering.

The Preservation Officer presented the following Staff Report:

The petitioner is requesting height and mass approval of additions as follows:

1. Add three additional stories to existing one story non-historic structure on the west of 1 West Jones Street. This addition will extend an additional six or seven feet toward Jones Street, plus a four foot balcony and will extend back to the existing two story carriage house.
2. Add two and one half stories to existing one story addition on the south side of 1 West Jones Street. Create a recess of 8' deep by 16' wide to accommodate recessed porches.

### **FINDINGS**

**Model:** The model's proportions do not appear accurate, particularly with regard to the height of the carriage house. Also, the model does not correspond with the site plan with regard to proposed light wells etc.

**Height:**

The Historic District Ordinance states that secondary structures which front a lane shall be no taller than two stories.

The proposed 3½-story structure on the corner of Bull Street and the lane is not permitted by the Historic District Ordinance and is contrary to the historic patterns in the residential wards. The project proposes to use the typology of a primary structure on the lane. The lane mass is almost equal to the main mass, rather than being secondary. The gable roof and dormers on a structure this high are also uncharacteristic of this neighborhood.

**Proportion of front façade and proportion of openings and rhythm of solids to voids**

The general pattern of openings in this neighborhood is a three bay rhythm. Occasionally a wing is set back with a garden in front which may have a different rhythm of openings. The proposed addition covers many existing windows on the west elevation and many openings on the adjoining property are covered as well. The four bay rhythms on the Jones Street addition elevation differs from the predominant rhythm of three bays on the street.

**Rhythm of structures**

The existing building coverage is approximately 90%. The proposed building coverage is 88.5%.

In the residential wards of the Historic District there is a consistent pattern of rhythm and scale for the titling lots. Approximately one half the lot is covered with a townhouse and the rear quarter of the lot has a two-story carriage house. Behind that is a narrow service lane. Where this rhythm is broken the historic pattern is adversely affected, creating loss of light and air and congestion.

One West Jones Street originally was a free-standing townhouse with side garden and two story carriage house at the rear of the garden. When the building was converted to a funeral home additions created the adverse condition of a nearly 90% building coverage. The proposed additions do not mitigate this condition, but rather, compound it with greater vertical density and mass. The whole envelope is going up which creates a commercial building pattern on the site.

The sitting of the addition to the west is an anomaly in the block. It is neither flush with the main house as a row house would be or set back the depth of a traditional “L” (See the corner of Taylor and Bull Street. It would appear in comparing the model to existing conditions that there will be a good deal of demolition of the non-historic additions to create the light well and recess. It would be desirable to continue that demolition in order to create enough open space to bring the site back into compliance with the 75% lot coverage requirement.

**Roof shape**

See comments on lane structure.

**Scale**

The height of these additions combined with the nearly 90% lot coverage is of great concern. The scale is commercial rather than residential.

### **Balconies**

The ordinance states that residential balconies shall not extend more than three feet in depth from the face of the building. The desire for a broader porch might be accomplished by piers, however the Jones Street porch does not overlook a garden. A front porch on the street is an anomaly.

### **General**

While a precedent can probably be found for each of the concerns raised above (ie there is a main house setback on Taylor between Bull and Whitaker, there is a ground supported front porch on Taylor in conjunction with front stairs etc.) the number of anomalies with this proposal is problematic and creates an adverse visual impact on the neighborhood.

### **Other concerns:**

Section 8-3025 (c.1) of the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance states that “A lot 3,500 square feet or larger and containing a structure originally designed as a single-family dwelling, shall maintain not less than nine hundred (900) square feet of lot area per dwelling unit. These provisions shall include lots containing such structures which have been converted into a multi-family use, providing such structure...has remained vacant for twelve (12) months or more...” This would suggest that only a certain number of units would be allowed on this lot. This would need to be addressed with the Zoning Administrator. The number of proposed units has a direct impact on the mass of the structure.

Parking and its accommodation are another concern. Garage openings are part of solids and voids, which have not been shown.

Location of HVAC units, meters and trash containers has not been addressed. These also have potential to effect the massing.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The proposed height and mass is based on a non-conforming situation. Redesign the project to conform to the Ordinance standards, including the 75% building lot coverage.

### **Board's Comments:**

**Dr. Caplan** stated that although some of the conditions mentioned were not within the purview of the Board, he stated since they were mentioned and a copy distributed to the Board that the public deserves to know what the letter says. He asked the letter be read into the record.

**Mrs. Reiter** stated that the letter is from Tom Todarro in an e-mail addressed to her. The issue is Section 8-3025.1 of the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance states: That a lot 3,500 square feet or larger in obtaining a structure originally designed as a single family dwelling shall maintain not less than 900 square feet of lot area per dwelling unit. These provisions shall include lots containing such structures which have been converted into multi-family use provided such a structure has remained vacant for 12-months or more. This would suggest that

only a certain number of units would be allowed on this lot. She further stated that this issue needed to be addressed with the City Zoning Administrator.

**Mr. Todaro** replied, “I discussed this matter with the proposed developer prior to him entering into a contract to purchase this property. I informed him that this section did not apply and that the density would be computed at 600 square feet per dwelling unit. If you refer to the working of the section this property does not consist of a single structure, originally designed as a single-family house. The property has several dwellings an embalming room, a carriage house and an antique shop. From an off-street parking standpoint, the conversion of these structures into eight dwelling units will result in a reduction of intensity. The property is considered grand fathered regarding off-street parking. If the property is converted into eight dwelling units no additional off-street parking will need to be provided.”

**Dr. Caplan** stated that he wanted to reiterate that the Board was dealing with visual compatibility factors.

### **Petitioner’s Comments:**

**Mr. Deering** stated that they initially wanted to bring the project before the Board as a discussion item, but felt it would be easier if it was dealt with as a real petition as a Height and Mass submittal and not get into details. He stated that the Board knows that he loves the Historic District as much as everyone in the room. He would never propose a project that would have an adverse impact, certainly not as much as the Staff Report indicated.

**Mr. Deering** stated that the project is a positive one. There are several positives associated with this project. The main house will be restored and the stoop and shutters replaced on the house. The building has existed for 25 years as a poorly maintained example of a once handsome townhouse. The building has been on the market for approximately two years and no one has been beating the door down to restore it to a single-family house with a garden. Unfortunately, he feels that if it is purchased by someone else, it would go back to commercial property. He said there is a contract that is willing to follow up the proposed project, if this one doesn’t go through that would return it to commercial property. Despite the Preservation Officer’s report, the project does conform to the Manual for Development and the Historic District Ordinance.

The carriage house and the model were incorrectly built too tall and he would like to apologize for that. The Preservation Officer did not provide the Board with floor plans that were submitted that do show the light-wells at a larger scale than the site plan. He stated that they thought this was the easiest way in which to do this. The light well cannot be seen from the public right-of-way so it really is a moot point. In their design, they have not proposed a structure that fronts the lane. The elevation is an addition to the 1 West Jones Street building, but is designed with a recess that will go back eight feet. This is a three-story structure, but it does not front the lane, it actually fronts Bull Street. There are many examples of this in adjacent wards within two blocks of this neighborhood.

**Mr. Deering** presented photographs of the surrounding area to the Board. One property is located at Abercorn and Charlton Lane and is an early 19<sup>th</sup> Century structure that was built behind a 19<sup>th</sup> Century building, right up against it with no recess. This too is a three-story structure fronting on a through street with the side elevation on the lane. There is another example on Bull Street, at Perry Lane right behind a four-story building. There is another building that is higher than the historic structure. This building fronts Bull Street and has its side



elevation on the lane. The Henrietta Apartment Building was built right behind this 19<sup>th</sup> Century townhouse with an approximate 12-foot separation between the two and it fronts onto Abercorn Street and not the lane. It too is three stories. At the corner of Abercorn and York Lane, located behind an 1870's townhouse, another structure that is taller than the older structure on the left. Mr. Deering further stated that on Barnard Street, at Charlton Lane, there is a 19<sup>th</sup> Century townhouse in front and it is connected to a 2½ story structure that fronts Barnard Street but has a side on the lane. At Bull and Perry Lane there is a structure that is three-stories if you include the mansard roof. The side of the property is on the line, but it fronts Bull Street and is located behind a building that is on a tithing lot and would normally have its address on Perry Street, but this building is actually shorter than the building located behind it.

**Mr. Deering** stated that what has been presented and is being proposed is really a common building pattern in the historic district. This is not something that is an anomaly. When the Preservation Officer speaks of height she speaks to the gable roof and the shed dormers on the side. Located right behind this project there is a gable roof, although it is Dutch gable, and has dormers down each side of it. On the back block there is another gable roof structure that is, again, setback from the street, but it is a three-story structure with a gable roof located right in the same block. He stated that the building pattern is pretty well established. Right across Bull Street, next to the old Wactels, which is now Arthur Smith's Antiques store, is a three-story structure with a gable roof and a dormer. Right next door to this is a scudder built house that has a low basement, two-stories, two dormers and a gable roof that you can actually see from the proposed project site. Mr. Deering stated that what is being proposed is a historic building pattern in the Historic District and is not unusual and happens within a couple of blocks in every direction. The rhythms of the buildings on this street in this ward and the adjacent wards follow similar patterns and they really haven't done anything out of the ordinary. He feels that the proposal is quite common and is not a commercial size development. The lot coverage was about 90% and they have reduced it to 88.5, which is one and one half percentage points. He stated that he knows that it is not a big deal, but it is being reduced. On the Jones Street addition, the rhythm of solids to voids is pretty much an established pattern. Going towards Barnard Street there is a house that has a balcony setback addition that is three-stories tall. They are proposing four stories, but they are proposing that it be below the Cornish line of the historic house.

**Mr. Deering** stated that he thinks that this is actually a better solution than having a one-story addition to what was once a very handsome historic house. These one-story additions that were put on in the early twentieth century are actually nonconforming and more of an adverse effect that what is being proposed. What are being proposed are three and four-story additions in a three and four-story neighborhood. All of the buildings that surround the site are three and four-story with the exception of Wactels or what is now on the southeast corner of Bull and Jones Street. The balconies were drawn at four-feet deep, but they are happy to reduce them to three feet deep. The Preservation Officer stated that this project has many anomalies in it. He stated that anomalies exist in many of the other wards. You can walk around this one block and see many of the anomalies that are included in this project. They feel that this actually works well with the historic neighbors because there are a lot of different things that happen in these neighborhoods.

**Mr. Deering** stated that under other concerns, the City Zoning Administrator's position on the project has been discussed with regard to the parking and per square foot requirements for units on the lot. They are providing five spaces of parking within the building. If this goes forward, there will be five spaces in the building for parking. He stated in his recollection he doesn't remember HVAC units, meters and trash containers in a height and mass submittal and

he doesn't know that they need to be addressed right now. He stated that they are in the very early stages as shown on the drawings. These are basically discussion drawings. He stated that they would be happy to discuss all of the other issues in design review, the window openings and the trash containers, meters, and garage door openings.

**Mr. Deering** stated that he would address each of the visual compatibility factors. The height should be compatible with historic structures and those to which it is related. The height of the proposed structures is compatible to the structures that surround it and exist in that ward. With regard to the width to height proportions, actually the width of the existing house is 32' and the proposed is 28' and there are townhouses 27' and 30' wide all through the district. The proposed structure is four-stories and they feel they have meet this condition. With regard to openings, windows and doors are usually reviewed at the design review meeting so he did not go into that. That have already discussed the rhythm to solids and void with the proposal being setback is an established pattern within a one-block radius of this project. Rhythm of structures on the street, what has been designed and is proposed is a very common historic building pattern and shown in the earlier photographs. With regard to the rhythm of porch projections they are going to restore the stoop on this building. The balconies are an established pattern in the historic district. This is not a porch, the piers as shown are actually piers for a stucco-based wall that will enclose a garden. They didn't draw this so that it would be clear what was behind it at this point. Materials, texture and color are usually reviewed at the design portion of a meeting. The roof shapes that are being proposed and the parapet, gable with dormers are common within two to three houses of this project. Therefore, they find it to be visually compatible. Wall of continuity is being maintained in this project. All of the elements in this design can be found within the block or a couple of blocks or adjacent wards to the adjacent project site. The directional expression is pretty much the same as the directional expression and is a contextual design response to the buildings around it. This goes beyond visual compatibility factors and other things in the ordinance than they would be concerned with in this height and mass submittal. Within design standards the height the Preservation Officer stated that there could be no three-story structure that fronts on the lane. He stated that this addition actually fronts the lane with a door on the Bull Street side. He stated that it fronts Bull Street and the lane side is simply a side elevation.

**Mr. Deering** stated that the photograph of 120 West Jones Street with the recessed "L" with the garden in front is exactly what is being proposed for this façade. He stated that it would be nice to have a garden rather than parking spaces that have been there for 25-years that he knows of. The proposed roof pitch is between four and twelve and eight and twelve. He believes it is a seven and twelve roof pitch. They will happily reduce the balcony to a depth of three feet. Just today this board approved a balcony that was 3' x 6' deep. The piers that support the portico are stucco over masonry. The fences will meet all of the criteria set forth in this particular section when they get to design the fences. Mr. Deering stated that he is begging the board to consider this project as it was thought out a lot and is very important to the developer. It would be nice to see something developed on this corner that is really something attractive and not necessarily a commercial use. The commercial use has moved into a more appropriate commercial building across the street and this building can go back to being a residential building. He stated that he has covered all of the points in the ordinance that actually apply to this project and not just design this on any whim or arbitrary notion. There are historic precedence and examples very close to this for everything that is being proposed.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** asked how many condo units are in the total package.

**Mr. Deering** stated eight units.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** stated that it was mentioned that the Jones Street elevation would have a garden with a low wall. The floor plans shows openings as if it were a garage.

**Mr. Deering** stated that they talked about this, but decided to go back to putting a garden in front of it and not having the parking space. They thought they would bring this back to the Board during the design review portion of the project.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** stated that the biggest thing that bothers him is this is a building of some importance on an important corner and only two elevations have been submitted. There is no elevation for the lane or a west elevation, granted part of it is hidden yet visible.

**Mr. Deering** stated that all of the west elevation is hidden. He further stated that they did submit a model on this project, as it is an addition project. They felt that this would be sufficient for height and mass.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** stated that the elevations show indents and so forth, but don't tell what the relationship of the openings is.

**Mr. Deering** stated that openings are not typically reviewed at this particular stage.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** stated that this is part of mass.

**Mr. Deering** stated that the Board argues this every time, but he doesn't feel that openings are a part of mass.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** stated that he does. He further stated that openings and voids and solids are a part of the mass. He stated that the Board should have a rear and west elevation. The requirements stated that there should be four elevations, even for the height and mass presentation. He stated that he would certainly defer until they at least see the other two elevations.

**Mr. Deering** stated that they really felt that by submitting a model that this pretty much covered it and they could go over the openings and garage door openings on the lane side of the project when that time came up.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** stated that the Board doesn't know if there will be a garage on the lane side or garage doors. He stated that you couldn't tell from the model. Rear elevations in this case are very important.

**Mr. Deering** stated that he understands. He further stated that on the front elevations with the four-bay rhythm after hearing the comments of the Preservation Officer they would probably change it to a three-bay rhythm. They did not want to bring the project to the Board with this sort of detail, as they really wanted a reaction and feedback on the design approach for Height and Mass and not necessarily fenestration and details.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** stated that he appreciates the fact that he tried to separate the additions from the main building and did show some voids on Jones and Bull Streets to reduce visually the massing. The scope of the project is just so big. While the Board has been shown many examples, each project was done long before there was a Review Board.

**Mr. Deering** stated that this establishes a historic pattern within an adjacent ward.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** stated that no matter what happens two blocks from the proposed site, they are talking about a block between Bull and Whitaker on Jones Street. In this case, this particular building anchoring the east end, mass wise, is way out of compatibility in this block.

**Mr. Deering** asked is it any different than the buildings at the end of Charlton at Abercorn Street.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** stated that the Board is not discussing Abercorn and Charlton Streets.

**Mr. Deering** stated that it is a similar row of buildings.

**Dr. Caplan** asked that there be a limit to the back and forth discussion.

**Mr. Gay** stated that he has lived downtown for over 35 years. He stated that he has always considered the photographs that were shown of the surrounding properties to be mistakes. He stated that this was his personal opinion, but he did not admire any of the sites.

**Mr. Deering** stated that some people might look them upon as mistakes, but they were mistakes made long before their time and are a part of the historic building pattern that exists in the district.

#### **Public Comments:**

**Mr. Ed Hill** stated that he is a neighbor of the project. Mr. Hill stated that he wanted to assure the Board that the property in question was a very fine single-family dwelling, which still exists. A prominent Savannah 19th Century Citizen, built the property in 1848. He was internationally renowned as the first American Autograph Collector and the founder of the Georgia Historical Society. The building was rated as excellent in the 1968 Historic Savannah Survey. The building has survived with only minor alterations. You can tell that the building per se is exactly as it was, with a minor fill in and the interior garden. They are talking about a project that should have followed the ordinance as pointed out by the Preservation Officer. This is a major situation and he thinks that the proposal may be the worst idea that he has ever seen. The proposed density level is going to be ungodly. Presently on Bull Street, there is the Eliza Thompson Inn with a 20 space parking variance, SCAD parking, and ordinary traffic. Mr. Hill stated that he is not sure what bearing this has on the proposal, but adding eight more families and putting those cars on the street with only five parking spaces, which is next to nothing.

**Mr. Hill** further stated what about the lane? The sheer bulk of the proposal is amazing and will fill up the entire margin. Basically, economics is driving the design of the historic district. He asked could that be allowed to happen? He stated some of the sites that were pointed out during the presentation were erroneously listed as residences. The petitioner stated that the Six Pence Lounge and the old Town and Country Building were residences. Mr. Hill further stated that this is a ridiculous situation and he is sorry to have to be here. He hopes that the Board in their wisdom will deal with the project in the manner in which it should be dealt with. He further stated that the project should have never gotten this far.

**Mr. Michael Sottile** stated that he lives diagonally behind the proposed structure. He stated that he is also the developer of the Brady Street project. This was a project outside the district where they struggled to maintain architectural integrity. This proposed project within the historic

district is a defilement of the whole concept of preservation. He stated that he vehemently dissent and hope that the Board does too.

**Ms. Jean Beardon**, stated that she is the Inn Keeper at the Eliza Thompson house, located adjacent to the proposal. She stated that she wanted to go on record as her main concern being that the proposal will block all of the lot that goes into the building. She stated that her building is just three-stories high and having a four-story structure right up to the wall on the side of her building is going to block any light she currently has. In their courtyard area, there is a beautiful area in the back that is used for weddings and lots of outdoor events. The proposed overpowering structure next door will take all of the beauty and joy out of her guest stay on their property.

**Ms. Joan Levy** stated that she lives at the other end of the block of Jones Street at Whitaker Street. She stated that she is concerned about the variance from character from this block of Jones Street. The sheer mass of this project is going to change the entire neighborhood. The proposal will not have the likeness or feel of the existing area. She asked that the Board consider not changing the residential character of the neighborhood.

**Mr. E. T. Smith**, of 5 East Gordon Street, located on Monterey Square, stated that if the Board converts this great home to condominiums in the monolithic style as proposed that it would ever be condemned to mediocrity and a lost sense of its history. He stated that he believes the logic that has been proposed is find all of the anomalies that exist in the City and put them all in one site and therefore it should be okay. Mr. Smith stated that he really disagrees with that and this is a means of restoration. He stated that the proposed structure would be out of place, out of character and out of its honored position as a historic building in Savannah.

**Mr. Dirk Hardison**, Historic Savannah Foundation, stated that the Architectural Review Committee was very concerned about the project as it seems so are the rest of the people in this area. He stated the simplest way to put it is that it is just too big. He presented pictures of the way the existing lane looked. The existing three-story building is quite jarring as it stands and to think that it would be continued at 3½ stories is kind of scary to say the least. It should be pointed out that the 3½ story building that would be on this lane is going to rival the house at the corner of Taylor and Bull Streets in height. The corner house that used to be owned by Mr. Lebay is two stories over a raised basement. It appears that the proposal would rival this very prominent residence, which is a big mistake.

Also, as it has been alluded to earlier, we have a bad habit of going anywhere and everywhere in the district and ignoring the fact that every ward has its own characteristics and atmosphere. This is one of the buildings that was brought up on Abercorn. If you stand near this building it is taller than the original house it sits behind. Most of these apartment buildings that were built in this area in this fashion behind these buildings were built in a different time. These people didn't have cars and there was no pressure from parking problems. He stated that he knows that parking is not under the purview of this Board, but it will make a huge difference in every other way based on the density of this property. The HSF was really impressed with the Staff Report and supports it wholeheartedly.

**Mrs. Waring** stated that she is always concerned when any member of the public brings in issues that do not concern the Board or are not under their purview, such as lighting, blocking out lighting and parking. If they make any decision with any of those considerations the decisions can be challenged. For the record, she asks that the Board limit itself to those areas that comply with the ordinance and not deal with lighting or parking issues.

**Mr. Neely** asked does the ordinance give any guidance as to the definition of a secondary structure. The petitioner is defining the proposal as the primary structure facing Bull Street. Originally the building was a secondary structure.

The Preservation Officer stated that in this neighborhood a carriage house was made secondary to the main house. Some of the buildings shown are in commercial districts and there are some three-story buildings in the commercial sections. Lafayette Square has an apartment building. It is inappropriate to go two to three wards away to look for an example. What is being proposed is generally a main house on the lane.

**Mrs. Waring** asked is a commercial structure currently inappropriate for this ward.

The Preservation Officer stated that it is not a nonconforming use. However, it is nonconforming visually.

**Mr. Gay** stated that the property may have been commercial but it is not 3 ½ stories covering an entire lot, which is what is being proposed. This does not seem compatible with the existing area.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** stated that he agrees with Mrs. Waring with regard to not discussing the lighting or the parking, which are not issues for the Board. He stated that the Board's issue is compatibility. Compatibility within the area of the building as being presented and not what is going on two blocks away. There is a differential in the historic district in height and mass and that is what makes the district interesting. The Board is discussing Jones and Bull the block of Jones Street between Bull and Whitaker. There is a historic building that is being girded on two sides by a new structure. He stated that to him the proposed addition is not compatible from a standpoint of height and mass for this particular area. He stated not to the entire historic district, but to this particular block in this particular area, it is overreaching in scope. While the architect has tried and endeavored to separate the new mass from the old mass with setbacks, the overall result is still a huge mass of a building almost of a commercial nature on this particular block.

**Ms. Brownfield** stated that she would like to state that she has a lot of respect for Mr. Deering and his capabilities. She further stated that she is concerned with the way the property looks right now, the massing of the building, as it exists today. She has always thought that there was too much building on that lot. She stated that she couldn't imagine adding all of the proposed stories to that entire block. She stated that she has a great deal of concern about that.

**Mr. Deering** asked is there any amount of mass on the property that the Board would think acceptable.

**Ms. Brownfield** stated 75% would be ideal.

**Mr. Deering** stated that it is already over that as far as lot coverage goes. He asked as far as height. In some discussions with the Historic Savannah Foundation the developer has discovered that they would support two stories along the lane. He asked what would be acceptable on the Jones Street side of the project. He asked what did the Board feel would work.

**Dr. Caplan** stated that the discussion was a little out of order. He asked if he was leading into asking for a continuance or guidance from the Board.

**Mr. Deering** stated that as a member of the Board he has heard a lot of people get up and talk about things at the wrong time and they do all that they can to keep that from happening. He stated that he was going to take advantage of the opportunity.

**Dr. Caplan** stated that he would afford him an opportunity to talk if he would just ask for a continuance or guidance.

**Mr. Deering** stated that he would like to ask for a continuance. This particular developer needs to have a certain amount of square footage to make the project work. Is it worth it for them to go back and rethink the design and come up with a new massing plan for the site. If the Board is really not going to entertain any more space on the site then there is really no point in them going on with the project. Mr. Deering further stated that he is being honest and blunt about it because it is only fair to the petitioner. If you read the ordinance and the guidelines there is really nothing that would prohibit this project from a legal standpoint. The developer thought that he could do this project. If the Board is going to say no, it will be a waste to change the plans. Mr. Deering stated that he is not asking for the Board to design the project, but he would like a story number.

**Dr. Caplan** asked is it the Board's desire to go into discussion about what's acceptable.

**Ms. Seiler** stated that Mr. Deering was asking the impossible of the Board at this time.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** stated that Mr. Deering knows that the Board does not design from the pulpit. He stated that there have been comments from the Board and the general public. Obviously the massing is of a scope that is not desired. He stated that he thinks that both the architect and the owner should get together and see how the scope can be reduced which in turn reduces the massing and bring it back to the Board. He stated that the Board should not get into the design aspect of the project. He stated that the petitioner knows what is considered to be the negative aspect of this particular project at this point.

**Dr. Caplan** asked if the petitioner would like to ask for a continuance.

**Mr. Deering** asked for a continuance from the Board.

**HDBR Action:** Mrs. Fortson-Waring made a motion to continue the petition as submitted until the next regularly scheduled meeting. Ms. Seiler seconded the motion.

**Discussion on the Motion:**

**Mrs. Waring** stated that she thinks it is a valid concern about whether or not the Board is concerned with the lot coverage. She asked is that something the Board wants to see go to 75%. She stated that this would not be designing the project. It is currently 90% and has been reduced to 88%. She thinks that is a reasonable request as to what the Board thinks the architect should design within the existing lot coverage. Mrs. Waring further stated that she does not think that this is unreasonable. However, it may or may not be unreasonable to tell the petitioner how many stories he should or should not have. It seems to her that people were concerned that it was greater than the 75% lot coverage of the guidelines of the ordinance.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** stated that currently the footprints of the existing buildings that are on the lot are greater than 75%. He stated that consequently the Board couldn't do anything about that. He stated if they build on top of the existing footprint the Board has no issue. It is a question of how much mass can you build on top of the current footprint and in what manner can it be built.

**Ms. Brownfield** stated that economically for someone to make this happen, if they went to 75% lot coverage they would be looking at five stories to get the eight condominiums.

The Preservation Officer stated they were trying to estimate the historic coverage and it appears to be 50/50. There is 50 % historic and 50% embalming room and this might be something to think about with regard to how much you can reduce the non-historic.

**Dr. Caplan** stated that he felt that some of the discussion was out of order. He stated that the petitioner should be looking at not what the Board can tell him he can have, but what he needs to have to be economically feasible and bring it back to the Board.

**Mr. Deering** stated that the lot coverage is grand fathered in and the height and visual compatibility factors are written in the ordinance, which is what they followed.

**HDBR Action:** The motion passed unanimously.

**Dr. Caplan** stated that with the audiences indulgence two members of the Board will need to leave and therefore the Board would like to take one item out of order.

**RE: Other Business**

**Board Retreat**

**Dr. Caplan** stated that Ms. Seiler has graciously agreed to host the retreat at Savannah Electric.

**Ms. Seiler** stated that their auditorium is available on the following dates: February 4, 5, 9, 16, 19, and 20.

The Preservation Officer stated that the City is closed on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Dr. Caplan** stated that if it were at all possible he would like to have the retreat prior to the next meeting. He further stated that he would ask Staff to contact the City Manager and the Mayor, as he would like for them to be present at the retreat. He stated that they would select a date and contact individual Board members to see what is more convenient.

**RE: Staff Reviews**

- Petition of Coastal Canvas**  
**Jim Morehouse**  
**HBR 03-3134(S)-2**  
**1 West Broughton Street**  
**Awning**  
**STAFF DECISION: APPROVAL**



**RE: Other Business**

- 1. Petition of Elaine Berk  
HBR 02-2913-2  
410 – 412 West Wayne Street  
Request for 1 Year Extension**

**HDBR Action: Mrs. Fortson-Waring made a motion to approve the petitioner’s request for a one-year extension. Mr. Meyerhoff seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

**Dr. Caplan stated that the Board will change the meeting format a little in the future, because right now the procedure manual is a somewhat different than what they’ve been doing. The Board will change a few words around. Also, they are working on changing the procedural manual, as it is a 1999 manual.**

**RE: Work Performed Without Certificate  
Of Appropriateness**

**Mrs. Waring** asked what is being done about Martin Luther King Boulevard.

The Preservation Officer stated that her report would cover some of what is being talked about.

The Preservation Officer stated that Beauty and Beyond was on the consent agenda and had been straightened out. She stated that in addition, they are having them remove the nonconforming sign painted on the building along the whole north façade. She stated that this would be coming off.

The Preservation Officer stated that staff was alerted to two demolition by neglect projects. These are carriage houses behind Gordon Row. She stated that 121 West Gordon Street is owned by Steven Berg. The roof has holes in it and the openings are not secured. In addition, 125 West Gordon Street is owned by Isabel Sprague Lamar, in care of Nations Bank that is now Bank of America. There is no roof on this particular structure. The pictures were taken to the Department of Inspections so that they can contact the owners or take them to court. In addition, staff was alerted to 116 East Oglethorpe Avenue where the windows have all been changed. The stoop has latticework that has been added to the front of it and the doors have been changed. Staff has been in touch with the contractor who will come in and explain what he is doing.

Today, Staff was alerted to a garden structure. Also, there was a penthouse being added to the Desoto Condominiums. Staff has been in contact with J. C. Turner who will have to come before the Board as well as the Zoning Board of Appeals.

**Ms. Brownfield** stated that she has five additional items of work performed without a Certificate of Appropriateness. The shutters on the townhouse on the corner of Tattnell and Taylor Streets are still attached to the building. She further stated that at 21 East Gordon Street there appears to be some wood decking over a concrete porch and it looks very unfinished at this point.

**Mr. Webb** stated that this is a Dawson Wissmach project so Staff will ask.

**Ms. Brownfield** stated there is a homemade freestanding sign on the corner of Gaston and Lincoln near the 509 shop. There is a banner in City Market advertising food.

**RE: Minutes**

1. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes – December 10, 2003

**Dr. Caplan** stated that **Mr. Mitchell** wanted to make a correction and since he is not here, he will make it for him. Under the report of the Nominating Committee, **Mr. Mitchell's** name was omitted as being on the Nominating Committee.

**Mrs. Waring** stated that she wanted to know when the Board members would have input on issues to discuss at the retreat. She further stated that the Board really needs to discuss whether or not windows are a part of height and mass. She stated that this issue came up again today and this is something the Board needs to clarify once and for all.

**Dr. Caplan** stated that this would be on the retreat's agenda.

**Mr. Webb** stated windows and openings.

**Mrs. Waring** stated, yes windows and openings.

**Mr. Deering** asked could it be handled tomorrow at the revisions committee meeting.

The Preservation Officer stated, no because tomorrow's meeting is not for procedures but strictly demolition, maintenance, and other design issues.

**Ms. Brownfield** stated that she knows that it is not within the Board's purview. The building is being demolished within five blocks of Forsyth Park. It appears to be a carriage house and some other building.

**Mr. Deering** stated that this is his new office building if this is where she is talking about. He stated that it was a part of the Richard Arnold Complex in 1953. He stated that they purchased the big house above it and then the carriage house was originally part of the main house that had a block one-story addition. He stated that they took all of this down.

**Mrs. Waring** stated that she always feel uncomfortable when nobody stands up and rebuts a petitioner who goes down the line with the ordinance. Nobody stood up and said anything. She stated that she could not find anything that rebutted what **Mr. Deering** said.

**Mr. Webb** stated that it is a finding of fact versus a subjective approach.

**Dr. Caplan** asked what does she suggest.

**Mrs. Waring** stated that **Mr. Deering** has asked for a continuance, but if the Board had denied the petition (it had established) no basis. The Board would have no teeth and the court is going to look (at the record) and see whether or not the Board was arbitrary.

**Dr. Caplan** stated that there are a lot of items that needed to be discussed. He asked if any member had an item that they would like to have placed on the agenda, they should submit it to

Staff. Dr. Caplan stated that the agenda and packages would be delivered to the Board members in plenty of time before the retreat.

**Mrs. Waring** stated that she has been to several seminars in the past years and there was always a section on legal issues. She stated that it would really help the Board to have a little bit on legal issues at the retreat.

**Mr. Webb** asked if she was suggesting having someone like a James Reap, an attorney.

**Mr. Webb** asked if the retreat last year was the entire day.

The Preservation Officer stated 9:30 AM – 4:00 PM.

**RE: Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Savannah Historic District Board of Review the meeting was adjourned approximately 4:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Reiter,  
Preservation Officer

BR:wd