

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

FEBRUARY 8, 2006

2:00 P.M.

MINUTES

Members Present:

Joseph Steffen, Chairman
Swann Seiler, Vice Chairman
John Deering
Ned Gay
Gene Hutchinson
Gwendolyn Fortson-Waring
Eric Meyerhoff
W. John Mitchell
John Neely

Members Absent:

Dr. Gerald Caplan (Excused)
Dr. Lester Johnson (Excused)

MPC Staff Present:

Beth Reiter, Preservation Officer
Sarah Ward, Preservation Specialist
Christy Adams, Administrative Secretary

RE: CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Steffen called the February 8, 2006, meeting of the Savannah Historic District Board of Review to order at 2:00 p.m.

RE: REFLECTION

RE: WELCOME

Mr. Steffen welcomed Professor Casey Greer and her Preservation Law class from Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) to today's meeting, as well as Professor Robert Allen and his Preservation Law class.

RE: SIGN POSTING

Mr. Meyerhoff stated on the Regular Agenda he did not see a sign posted for the Petition of Josh McIntosh, HDBR 06-3526-2.

HDBR ACTION: Mr. Meyerhoff made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review to continue the petition until the next meeting because it was not properly posted. Mrs. Fortson-Waring seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

RE: CONSENT AGENDA

RE: Petition of Dirk Hardison
HDBR 06-3528-2
17 Price Street
Alterations

The Preservation Officer recommends approval.

RE: Petition of Dirk Hardison
HDBR 06-3529-2
508 East State Street
Fence

The Preservation Officer recommends approval.

RE: Petition of Viet T. Hoang
HDBR 06-3531-2
220 West Bay Street & 219 West River Street
Sign

The Preservation Officer recommends approval.

HDBR Action: Mrs. Fortson-Waring made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the Consent Agenda as submitted. Mr. Deering seconded the motion and it was passed. Ms. Seiler recused herself from the Petition of Dirk Hardison, HDBR 06-3529-2.

RE: REGULAR AGENDA

RE: Amended Petition of Dawson &
Wissmach Architects
Neil Dawson
HDBR 05-3494-2
100 Block – West Bay Street & Bryan Street
New Construction

Present for the petition was Neil Dawson.

Mrs. Reiter gave the following Staff report.

The petitioner is requesting approval of alterations as follows:

1. Courtyard screen wall design.
2. Design of east wall and balconies of new construction condo building

Courtyard Screen Wall Design:

A 12-foot - 3 inch cast-stone wall with decorative iron insert and cast stone cap and base. On either side of the entryway are 14 feet - 8" high 2 feet by 2 feet posts capped with a sphere. The entryway is spanned by a decorative iron cartouche.

DISCUSSION:

The fence helps to maintain the wall of continuity along Bay Street, however the ornate ironwork on top of the opening is not compatible with the rest of the development, nor is it typical of any historic development in the National Historic Landmark District. Staff recommends that the applicant consider a pair of gates to continue the wall of continuity without the cross piece and if any ornament is to be included in the gate that something related to the news-press theme be considered such as the pen ornament on the old News Press building.

Six-Story Infill Building East Elevation and Balcony Design:

Concrete balconies with cast stone face trim supported by painted steel brackets; painted steel handrails; 8-inch square posts made of zinc or lead coated copper to match cornice material. Clear, anodized aluminum storefronts at ground level with fabric awning stretched over metal bracket. Color and materials to be brought to Staff. Aluminum louver over lower balcony. 42-inch high railings.

DISCUSSION:

The alterations appear to reflect the board's comments from the previous meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval of the wall and east elevation changes. Denial of the decorative iron cross piece and continuance for reconsideration of a gate design to complete the wall of continuity.

PETITIONER'S COMMENTS:

Mr. Dawson stated in response to Staff's comments they will be using a zinc material. He said with regard to the decorative wrought iron over the entry gate they felt that there should be a connecting element to tie the posts together. However, they will agree to delete the more decorative elements on the top, but keep the element in the center as a signage band. He said they would bring back wording to Staff at a later time. He said they also agreed that the gates would be a fine substitution and they would propose to emulate the Greek cross pattern that was in the adjacent sidelights.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Mr. Deering stated he felt the element over the passage way added something to it. In the 1920's when they built a lot of these things throughout the country there was a lot of that sort of thing happening and the new building on the right looked as though it had that sort of inspiration. He said he felt it was important to have. However, he agreed with Staff that it would be nice to see an emblem that was taken from a 1920's building or the News Press building.

Mr. Meyerhoff asked if they thought about a less usually prominent roof over the top balconies.

Mr. Dawson stated yes. He said his client's preference would be to have something that was covered like a porch, like the ones below. He said they felt like at the top level the airiness of a trellis would break up the overall mass. He said if they did a roof on top, they felt like it made it too heavy. He said he has convinced his client's that the trellis treatment would lighten the top.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Mr. Joe Sasseen asked if it was because of aesthetics that they did not have the same thing on the other end (walkway or breezeway), or would it be left opened?

Mr. Dawson stated they laid out a conceptual plan that included some type of rear wall. All of the approvals of this courtyard would come back to the Board at a later time.

HDBR Action: Mr. Deering made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the petition with the condition that the cartouche element be redesigned and resubmitted to staff for approval. Mrs. Fortson-Waring seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

RE: Continued Petition of Gunn, Meyerhoff, & Shay
Patrick Shay
HDBR 05-3503-2
544 East Liberty Street
New Construction

Mr. Meyerhoff recused himself from the petition.

Present for the petition was Patrick Shay.

Mrs. Reiter gave the following Staff report.

The applicant is requesting Part I Height and Mass for a four-story mixed use structure at the Northeast corner of Liberty and Houston Streets.

FINDINGS:

In 2005, this property was rezoned from a P-B-G-2, Planned General-Business Transition zone to R-I-P-B, Residential-Medium Density. Design standards for the RIP-B zone include a maximum 75 percent building lot coverage and a minimum of 600 square feet of lot area per dwelling unit. The petitioner is requesting a building lot coverage variance citing that *in the Tricentennial Plan the proposed land use character area designation is "Traditional Commercial" and that the 75 percent maximum coverage requirement is to be done away with..* This is a proposed land use designation. No zoning standards have been developed or adopted for this designation. It is inappropriate to hypothesize what the standards will be. The standard in effect today and when the property was rezoned is a maximum 75 percent building lot coverage. The site is adjacent to a traditionally residential area with both historic and new residences.

At their request staff met with a number of residents of Crawford Ward who presented a list of concerns. See attached letter.

The following standards apply:

Standard	Proposed	Comment
<p>Section 8-3030 (l) (1) Height The exterior expression of the height of residential raised basements shall not be less than 6’-6” and not higher than 9’-6”.</p> <p>The exterior expression of the height of the ground floor of a commercial building shall not be less than 14’-6”.</p>	<p>The building with a total footprint of 151 feet by 90 feet has been designed to resemble three buildings. The corner portion of the building has a first floor height of 12 feet, a second floor height of 10 feet, and 3rd and 4th floors of 10 feet each with a corner tower element of an additional 7’-4”.</p> <p>The interior block portion is designed to resemble two attached high stoop townhouses. The stoop is at 9 feet. The second floor at 13 feet and the remaining two floors at 10 feet each.</p>	<p>Historically, from the Sanborn maps, it can be seen that Crawford Ward had a number of smaller frame and brick houses with courtyard space. While some of these were supplanted by large footprint heavy commercial structures or were lost through fire and demolition to vacant lots, recent construction has been primarily residential. What is proposed with its almost 100 percent lot coverage is the most massive construction in the ward. The construction would require a building lot coverage variance. A five-eleven foot height reduction has been proposed for the corner building, however the height of the high stoop portion has been increased.</p>
<p>Section 8-3030 (l)(2) Street Elevation Type. A proposed building on an east-west through street shall utilize a historic building street elevation type fronting the same street within the same ward or in an adjacent ward.</p>	<p>A mixed use condominium structure is proposed that crosses lot lines and cannot be subdivided in the future along traditional lot divisions. The building is designed to resemble three adjacent buildings.</p>	<p>High stoops are found within this ward. The height of the high stoop portion needs to be reduced. The bay rhythms of the remainder of the block do not follow traditional lot division rhythms within the Oglethorpe Plan. The nearest large building is the old railroad office building across East Broad. Staff recommends looking to this structure for inspiration. The corner element needs to be revisited. The overhang adds to the sense of mass of this building.</p>
<p>Entrances</p>	<p>A recessed entrance with a courtyard has been proposed along Liberty as well as two high stoop entrances. Also several retail entrances are proposed along both street frontages.</p>	<p>Has the applicant considered enlarging the courtyard and placing the entrance to the condominiums in a more central location with retail on either side.</p>
<p>Garage entrance</p>	<p>The garage entrance has been placed in the middle of the block on the lane.</p>	<p>Has the applicant met with Traffic Engineering? The residents have a concern about the garage entrance. Has another location been considered, perhaps nearer Houston Street.</p>

FINDINGS:

The project as proposed in terms of mass and scale is still not compatible with the historic development of Crawford Ward. With a reconfigured building to include a larger courtyard for entry to the condominiums and lowering of the height and simplification of the elements it would appear that the project could be achieved without variances.

At 600 square feet of lot area per dwelling unit it would appear that only 23 units could be built. What are the total number of units proposed?

RECOMMENDATION:

Continuance for reconsideration of Height and Mass. Denial of a recommendation in favor of a lot coverage variance.

PETITIONER'S COMMENTS:

Mr. Shay stated that the building height has been significantly reduced. He said there was also concern by the Board with regard to the shadow. The drawing indicated what a winter solstice shadow would cast from this building onto the carriage house. He said the summer solstice would be almost straight up and down. Any shade that was in the courtyard of the adjacent buildings would be caused by the carriage house and not by the proposed building.

He also stated that the building mass has been reduced. He said they eliminated the projecting balconies. He said they created deep recesses in the massing of the building inset. He said they also made a deeply recessed courtyard entrance in response to one of the comments from the Board. At the Board meeting it was stated that they did not have to make the courtyard go all the way through the building. He said it was now approximately 40 feet deep. He said also the lot coverage has been reduced. He said the standard that applied to the building before they sought to have it rezoned would have allowed 100 percent lot coverage. He said when they presented their concept for the development of the building at a pre-design meeting, he was advised that an RIP-B zone would be the appropriate zoning. The RIP-B standard would allow commercial development and they felt that there was the opportunity for commercial development to be successful on the corner of Liberty and Houston Streets. He further stated that the Tricentennial Plan recommends that the whole length of Liberty Street within the Historic District would be encouraged to have traditional commercial developments.

He said what they also did to make the project more successful was to create as many entrances at street level as possible. He said the RIP-B zone allows for commercial development. When they went to the Metropolitan Planning Commission and then City Council (for the rezoning), they were enthusiastic about what they were proposing and there was not one dissenting vote in front of either body. He said what has been published in the Tricentennial Plan to date made it clear that higher lot coverage buildings and limited setbacks from the property line were encouraged.

He stated that he did not get a copy of the letter from the residents, but they had a meeting with some of the residents from the area to address their concerns. With regard to the standards the Board recommended the 12:10:10:10. The standard for the high stoop townhouse at 9:13:10:10 also met the standards. The Staff report says that this is a mixed-use condominium structure that crosses lot lines. He said as a point-of-clarification this was all one piece of property. He said he felt it was interesting that Staff recommended that they look to the nearest larger building in the area which would be the old railroad building. He said their proposed building was more articulated and more closely fit the standards than the railroad building.

With regard to the entrances, he pointed out that they exceeded the standards although there was some criticism. He said the garage entrances, on the lane, which was in keeping with the Historic District Zoning Ordinance and the general practice in the downtown area. However, there was some concern by the residents that the number of cars that this project would serve might have some traffic impact on the lane. He said he felt that 35 cars a day was not a heavy load, but they have figured out a way where they could have two garage entrances. One would be where it was proposed in the plans. He said that entrance would serve only the surface

parking underneath the building mass that was articulated as a pair of townhouses on Liberty Street. He said another garage entrance could be placed close to Houston Street and the ramp reversed. He said the residents were concerned about all the cars dumping in the middle of the lane would somehow impact the traffic flow, but he felt they would be able to mitigate that concern. Another concern, was where the trashcans would go. Again, they felt like they could create an area inside of the door in the middle of the lane where the trashcans could be during the week. He said he did not know how this anomaly occurred in the Oglethorpe Plan, but for some reason the lane in this area were 30 feet wide and not 20 feet wide.

With regard to the lot coverage, these were the areas that were opened at street level and not at the property line. He said the total lot coverage would be approximately 90 percent. He said this was not an uncommon situation in the RIP zone that lot coverage variances were routinely granted. The lot coverage of the buildings that are across Perry Lane and facing Perry Street their courtyards by their measurements would be approximately 20 percent and their lot coverage would be approximately 80 percent. There was at least one structure where that was reduced to 17 percent. He said they were willing to do what they needed in order to address the Board's concerns about lot coverage. However, he also felt that in fairness they needed to point out that it was a standard that variances were routinely granted. He said they were encouraged when they came before the Metropolitan Planning Commission and City Council that this was a standard that they felt like would be possible to get relief from. He said he supposed the worse case scenario would be if they were denied they would have to go back to the Metropolitan Planning Commission and City Council and request that it be zoned back from RIP-B to the zone that they had before which would allow 100 percent lot coverage.

In closing, he said they felt like they have presented a design that addressed the concerns they heard from Staff when they made their first design and the concerns they heard from the Board at their last presentation.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Ms. Carmen Redmond (537 East Perry Street) stated there were a number of neighbors who were concerned about this project. She said they have had three meetings of approximately 30 homeowners that voiced their concerns. She said a delegation also met with Mr. Shay in an attempt to get some of their questions answered. She said there were many neighbors present today that each will speak on a different topic, but all of them were concerned about the same thing.

She stated the new proposed construction would be directly behind their carriage houses and seven townhomes on Perry Street. Although their homes were new construction there were approximately twenty historic structures within two hundred feet of this lot. She said they were concerned about the type of construction that may have to go on because of the underground proposed garage. She said the neighbors would like to know what method of installing pilings would be used. There have been numerous articles in the newspaper about the damage done to adjacent structures due to pile driving. She said they knew that the Board and the City were aware of these problems because of the special care that has been taken in a requiring drilling, not pounding, at Ellis Square.

Mr. Steffen stated the Board could only consider the design of the projects and whether or not they were compatible with the neighborhood. The question of how projects are constructed and engineering and those types of things were best addressed to Parking or to the City Engineering department. He said the Board does not have any jurisdiction on those issues.

Ms. Redmond stated in talking with the Historic Savannah Board for research she became aware of the Chadbourne Guidelines. She said she got a copy and read it. It was her understanding that it was initiated by the Savannah Historic Board and approved by City Council.

Mr. Steffen stated if she wanted to address something in the Chadbourne Guidelines that was in order. However, the Board could not deal with the construction itself.

Ms. Redmond stated in researching this she realized that there was nothing about the method of construction in the guidelines. The residents of Crawford Square were in a unique position because they had a lot of vacant property around them. She said with lots and property escalating in value, contractors and owners want to maximize their profits of these spaces. She said underground parking was very attractive to buyers. She said they felt this will be happening more. She said she was here today to ask the Board if they could consider doing an ordinance that would require the drilling in the Historic District rather than pounding.

Mr. Steffen stated the Board does not have legislative authority what-so-ever. He said the Board has a very difficult time some times getting the City to give them the enforcement power they need. Not saying the City won't cooperate. But, basically saying that was not the Board's function. He said if they want to see a change in the law in Savannah as it deals with construction or underground parking they have a wonderful City Council that would be glad to hear from the public. He suggested that they take those concerns to them, to Mr. Blackburn, City Attorney because those are people who citizens have elected to take care of those issues. He said the Board could only do what they were charged to do and that was not within their jurisdiction. He said the Board wished they could help them, but they could not.

Ms. Redmond stated in response to Mr. Shay saying that Liberty Street was so commercial, to the west of this property there was almost three straight blocks of residential townhomes. She said they felt it was not an area of large-scaled commercial buildings. She said they were happy with Crawford Square and the improvements that have been made. She said they were in a unique opportunity to be able to construct the look and feel of it. She said they would like to see a smaller project there.

Mr. Ken Barthels (535 East Perry Street) stated he lived behind the proposed construction. He said that was going to be a big building when it is built. He asked where would the drain water go when it rains. He said he has lived in the area for five years and on a couple of big downpours, there have been instances in the lane where the manholes boil over. He said he felt with such a huge project there would not be any dirt to absorb the rain, so the water has to go somewhere and will there be a provision built so that the residents do not end up with six inches of water in their garages.

Mr. Steffen stated he would interpret his comment very liberally and say that he was talking about lot coverage because that was the only thing the Board could address. He said the Board could not address drainage or any of the engineering issues. He said he felt the Board heard his comment on the lot coverage.

Mr. Barthels stated okay. He stated if you walk from Houston Street towards the DeSoto Hilton and Drayton Towers all those properties have tree lawns. He asked if there would be a tree lawn or cement from the building to the curb?

Mr. Deering stated the tree lawn was shown on the drawings.

Ms. Laurie Swanner (516 East Perry Lane) state the City Ordinance says that new construction must be in proportion, mass, configuration, structural material, texture and talks about color and location in the Historic District, particularly nearby structures. She said the structures that it was designed to go nearby were brick, stucco, and wood. She said she felt the windows did not match anything in Crawford Ward that was visible from this building. She said there was some modern roofing material. She said everything else seemed reasonable. However, this project seemed too modern. She said they make a lot of sacrifices to live downtown. She said she did it because she liked to walk out of her door and it was a very serene, comfortable, historical place to be. She said from her door she would be walking out and seeing that end unit which she felt would take away from all of the reasons she chose to live downtown.

She said the waiver from the lot coverage at 75 percent was offensive. She said when you walk out you would immediately see this huge building in an area where the majority was residential. She asked what was proposed to go on top of the roof. She said if something is planned to go on top of the roof then how high would that raise the wall.

Mrs. Fortson-Waring stated since the ordinance was changed in February 2005, the Board absolutely has no discretion as to height. If the height map says that they are allowed a certain height then they shall have whatever the maximum height is under the new ordinance that was passed by City Council in 2005. She said she would like the public to understand that the Board does not have control over height, parking, and construction.

Ms. Beatrice Archer (Houston Street) stated she was the Ward Captain for the ward. She said she was concerned about the trash and where would everyone put their trash.

Mr. Steffen stated that was not within the Board's jurisdiction as to where people put their trash.

Ms. Archer stated it would smell bad unless there is a room proposed that would contain the trash.

Mrs. Fortson-Waring stated the petitioner addressed the trash issue in their design and talked about it in his presentation.

Mr. Deering stated that Ms. Archer's letter had some very good points and were well taken.

Mr. Tom Wert (543 East Perry Street) stated they all realized that Crawford Ward was an underdeveloped ward in the City. He said they hoped that it could stand to be an example of what new construction could do to enhance the vitality and the uniformity of the ward. He said they would like to see this building become part of that ward and be considered part of the ward. He said he was concerned about the top floor because it appeared to him that there was access to the roof and he heard that there were plans to develop it with a pool or other facilities. He said they felt that would create a fifth floor. He said they felt that it would also provide light and sound pollution and be visible from the ground. He said he put together some pictures that had roof terrace gardens that he would like to show to the Board. He said he would like to point out that the use of the roof could change the overall look of the place.

Ms. Laura Pottswert (543 East Perry Street) stated they were in agreement that development was good and did not want to discourage that. She said they were concerned about how compatible it would be and how it would add to the ward. She said they were concerned about the garage entrance. The proposed project would have 23 or 25 residential units, three retail units, and 32 parking garage spaces. Only one entrance, possibly two entrances have been designated on the lane for the parking garage. She said her house was on the other side the lane and they had 16 parking garages for sixteen parking spaces. She said their concern was

the large amount of traffic that would be going out of one or two parking garages for the 32 spaces. She said they were concerned that this would turn the lane into a congested thoroughfare. She said they understood that having a lane entrance for parking was standard, but having such a high density of traffic was not standard. Also, of concern was the garage door had a width that was greater than 12 feet for the proposed project. She said per the ordinance for the Historic District it says that garage openings shall not exceed 12 feet in width. She said she knew from having a garage door that was less than 12 feet you could not pull in because it was too narrow. You have to stop, backup and then pull in which would increase the congestion because you would have 32 cars for two doors and if they go less than 12 feet it would add to the congestion. However, the ordinance says it needed to be less than 12 feet.

She also stated that the Tricentennial Plan for commercial areas which Mr. Shay referred to his documentation states that an appropriate development pattern was most desirable if it has a pedestrian orientation. She said it did not seem that 32 parking garage spaces were promoting a pedestrian orientation. It seemed to be promoting a greater automobile traffic orientation and presenting more of a traffic hazard for those who choose to walk.

She said also of concern was the zoning for height and mass. She said one of her concerns was that the exceptionally large mass of this project would be four stories on the lane. She said she has found no example of four stories on the lane, which she felt, was a huge mass. She said she felt having four stories on the lane contributed to the exceptional height and mass of the project. She said she had a couple of pictures of new construction in Crawford Ward that was exceptionally large and not compatible with adjacent buildings. In the ordinance, she found references to visual compatibility factor and for height, "the height of proposed structures shall be visually compatible with adjacent structures." She said the proposed project did not seem visually compatible. She said in these two projects the new construction was more massive than the existing structures. She stated another consideration was the proportion of the structures front façade. "The relationship of the width of structures to the height of the front elevation shall be visibly compatible to structures, squares, and places to which it is visually related." Also, the rhythm of structures on the street. If you came upon this large project, it stops the rhythm because it was so massive. So, it was the relationship of structure to open space between it and adjoining structures shall be visually compatible to structures, squares, and places to which it is visually related.

In closing, she asked the Board to please take these concerns into careful consideration. She said from a lay person's point-of-view this type of construction was like big-box construction. She said it seemed to be trying to pack in as many units and as much square footage as possible without regard to those architectural aspects which makes the Historic District special.

Ms. Cassie DeLuckie (Historic Savannah Foundation) stated HSF supports the Crawford Ward Neighborhood Association, particularly the comments related to height and mass, as well as the City Preservation Officer's comments. She said HSF would like to reiterate Staff's comments that at this time, the Tricentennial Plan has not yet been adopted, therefore it could not be cited as a condition for a variance.

Mr. Shay stated with regard to rainwater the structure that is proposed would have to have a storm water detention strategy. He said the rainwater situation would be better after the construction than what it was right now. He also noted that the building that was there until five years ago was 100 percent lot coverage and had no storm water detention on it. With regard to the tree lawns in the area it would be the ones that are there now. He said they did not propose encroaching on any of the tree lawns on the adjacent streets. With regard to commercial within the ward itself, he felt that it was fair to point out that there was more square feet of commercial buildings on the ground floor in the ward now than there were residential. He said the zoning that was in place for use in this area was all commercial. He said they felt commercial in

residential mixed-use buildings in the urban area was a good thing. With regard to trash they would create a trash room on the inside of the building for trash pickup. He said the roof would not be habitable. However, the ordinance allows for elevator penthouse, stair penthouse, and things that screen mechanical units which did not count as a story. He said they also presented the second garage entrance which mitigated the concern that was not a Historic Review Board concern. He said he was certain when they got around if they are allowed to do construction documents they would use a piling system that was as friendly as they could make it. He said the idea of underground parking which was an expensive solution conserves urban land and reduced urban visual blight of surface parking lots.

Mr. Steffen asked if he could address the issue raised by the citizens with regard to it being four stories facing the lane issue.

Mr. Shay stated it was not as uncommon as one might think. He said it may be uncommon in Crawford Ward. He said there was another project he did that was a tall building that went all the way thru, 100 percent lot coverage and backed to the lane that was next door to a two story wood frame house. Also, the Lafayette Condominium is a four-story building that was property line to property line that was across the street from smaller residential structures, as well the Griffin Tea Room.

Mr. Steffen stated he felt that he (petitioner) was hearing the Board had some decision to make as far as whether this was residential or commercial. He said the Board does not. He said that was a zoning decision. He said all the Board could determine was whether or not the structure was compatible from an architectural standpoint.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Mitchell stated he felt this was a huge building. Some of the examples shown by Mr. Shay were in more of a commercial area where it was not a big problem. He said he felt the proposed project dwarfed the buildings around it.

Mrs. Fortson-Waring stated she did not find that the corner section was visually compatible with the historic neighborhood. She said she would not recommend that the Board suggest a variance as to lot coverage.

Mr. Gay stated regarding four stories on the lane, while he understood the economic need for it, he felt it was hard to find that in too many places, which added to the mass.

Mr. Deering stated he felt the Board should stick to the 75 percent lot coverage if the petition is granted. He said the Tricentennial Plan has not been adopted. He said four stories on a lane was an anomaly in Crawford Ward. He said the Board is charged with what was visually related to this project and not what was visually related to something three wards away. He said he felt it was too massive and also felt the corner tower was inappropriate.

Mr. Steffen stated the Board could entertain a motion or hear from the Petitioner as to whether it was their desire for a continuance. He said he was just giving them that opportunity based on the comments they have heard so far from the Board.

Ms. Seiler stated she felt the square and ward has enjoyed too much of a renaissance to let something this big overwhelm it at this point. She said she felt the residents all made very valid points.

Mr. Shay stated the last time they were here they heard what the Board's comments were and they addressed those and brought it back. He said they were hearing a different set of comments today, which was their prerogative. He said he did not know that at this point he had a clear understanding as to what to do next. It would not be a problem to change the fenestration of the corner element. But if, at the end of the day, the standard of the Board was that even though variances were routinely granted to other people, that this was an example of where they would draw a line, it did not matter if he got a continuance or not, because they would probably have to seek a rezoning of the property and put it back to what it was before.

Mrs. Fortson-Waring stated the Historic Review Board does not grant variances.

Mr. Shay stated Staff has made a recommendation of denial.

Mrs. Fortson-Waring stated correct, but the Board does not grant them or deny them. He said all the Historic Review Board does was determine whether or not a project was in accordance with the ordinance or visually compatible. She said she felt what the Board has said was as far as they were concerned they did not see that this project warranted a recommendation to have a variance. She said the Board could only make a recommendation but they could not grant one. She said she felt that some of the Board has expressed a reluctance to make that recommendation.

Mr. Steffen stated the Board appreciated some of the changes that have been made in this project regarding the comments that they made last month. He said the difference was that this month they have comments from the public which they have to take into consideration in this process. He said what he was offering to him was that what he was hearing from the Board was that if the matter is voted on today it would probably be denied. He said he did not know that but that was what he was hearing. He said he was giving him the option to ask the Board for a continuance and seeing if some of the issues that the Board has articulated could be worked out with his client.

Mr. Steffen stated he would like to welcome Tom Thomson.

Thomas L. Thomson, Executive Director, Metropolitan Planning Commission – I know it's somewhat unusual that I'm here at your meeting, you have such a fine Staff that serves you well without my help. But I feel compelled because of my early involvement with the applicant on this particular project to share with you my perspective and the perspective that I shared with the applicant at the time. This – I am not really speaking to the height and mass decision that you have to make. I am mainly addressing the, the lot coverage issue. Mr. Wilson and Mr. Shay sought Staff's advice through Charlotte Moore on this (our Chief zoning person) about the zoning on the property and the potential uses. And not belabor all the individual points, the specific issue of lot coverage came up in our discussion. And, it was recognized that the previous zoning or the zoning that was on the property at the time we talked about this allowed 100 percent lot coverage and that – the discussion was about the economics of land in downtown and what it requires in order to get a return. I think some of you know that business yourselves. And the issue about lot coverage came up as potentially something that they would need a variance on. And we indicated and I know this may be getting ahead ourselves but we are headed in the direction with proposals for – under the Tricentennial Plan that recognize some of the economics and the patterns and try to keep with the – historical patterns in the downtown area. But recognizing the economics and allowing more building coverage than perhaps was traditional in the area. And that's where we think we need to head to ensure that continued investment to maintain and to continue the direction that downtown is going in terms of development and redevelopment. But that aside we had that discussion and I encouraged the owner or potential owner at that time Mr. Wilson the idea of increase of lot coverage would be something that Staff could support at the time it comes up. So, that was the discussion then.

I don't interfere with these folks recommendations to you and so they have made their best recommendation. I am just offering you the history that up to now and I understand the one – well there is really two parts to this today both of which could be continued. One is your recommendation on lot coverage and the other is the continued review of the Height and Mass, which I am not addressing at all.

Mrs. Fortson-Waring stated the petitioner could still go and apply for a variance and if it is granted, the Board has nothing to do with that.

Mr. Thomson – and I understand that – I am just giving you a perspective of where...

Mrs. Fortson-Waring stated apparently there are members who are reluctant to put our stamp of approval on that.

Mr. Thomson – and that is fine. I just wanted you to understand a little more of the history of the discussion.

Mr. Steffen stated lot coverage was one of the issues the Board was dealing with. He said there were two others. He said one was the actual design of the corner element and the second was the 4 story on the lane. He said those were the issues he has heard from multiple Board members at this point.

Mr. Mitchell stated he has heard comments about because of the high cost of property in the area and to get a return it was being suggested that this was what you had to do to get a return. He said he was not convinced on that. He said it could be broke up to do some other things and still get a return. He said it was the massive coagulation of just putting everybody in one massive structure which did not necessarily need to happen.

Mr. Steffen stated the return issue was not an issue of the Board.

Mr. Deering stated projects like this that detract from the overall quality of the Historic District will undermine the economic drive of downtown. If more of this is approved, the less charming it is and the less the desirable it is to live and work in the Historic District. He said it also undermined the economic build of what has happened thus far in the past 50 years.

Mrs. Fortson-Waring stated the question is whether or not if the petitioner would like a continuance or a motion.

Mr. Shay stated they will seek a continuance.

HDBR ACTION: Mrs. Fortson-Waring made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review continue the petition until the next meeting. Mr. Mitchell seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

**RE: Continued Petition of David Connors, For
Tony Roma's
HDBR 05-3517-2
7 East Bay Street
Sign**

Present for the petition was Darrell Cook.

Mrs. Ward gave the following Staff report.

The petitioner is requesting approval to install a 12-foot neon projecting sign at 7 East Bay Street. The sign is for the restaurant Tony Roma's, who currently occupies the building.

1. **Size:** The sign is 12 feet tall and 2 feet wide. It is 24 square feet and is 1-foot' by 8 inch deep. The size of the sign has increased by approximately 5 feet in length (was 7 feet - 1½ inches), 8 inches in depth and 6.5 overall square feet.
2. **Illumination:** The proposed sign will feature exposed red neon 1-foot – 4-inch letters for "Tony Roma's" spanning approximately 10 feet. The size of the letters has increased from 8 inches and the previous letters spanned only 4 feet-5 inches. The marquee element has been deleted.
3. **Materials:** The sign is aluminum.
4. **Colors:** Background – white
Neon Letters – Ruby Red exposed neon backed with vinyl
Additional signage – "Ribs Seafood Steaks" black vinyl lettering on white acrylic background (15 inches by 21 inches for tagline with 2 inch letters).

FINDINGS:

The building is a rated structure within Savannah's Historic District and the property is zoned B-C-1, Central Business. A 40-square-foot neon projecting sign is located on the same block at 7 Drayton Street for Outback Steakhouse. This is the only other neon sign in the vicinity and it appears too large and staff has received numerous complaints regarding the sign. The large white background creates a "milk bottle" look and it is out of character with the National Historic Landmark District and surrounding historic structures with which it is visually related, including The Customs House and City Hall.

The following Historic Sign District Standards (Section 8-3121) apply:

1. **Sign Clearance and Height** (Sec. 8-3121 (B)(2)) minimum clearance shall not be less than 10 feet above pedestrian ways. Projecting signs shall be erected only on the signable area of the structure and shall not project over the roofline or parapet wall elevation of the structure.

No information regarding the clearance was provided; verify with petitioner. The proposed sign is not located in the "signable area" as it projects over the first floor cornice/storefront, obscuring the distinctive architectural detailing of this historic commercial structure on Bay Street.

2. **Lighted Signs** (Sec. 8-3121(B)(3)) shall be in scale and harmony with the surrounding structures and open spaces.

The proposed sign appears out of scale with the surrounding commercial establishments along Bay Street. The proposed lighting is not in keeping with the surrounding businesses which generally limited neon to the interior at the windows, with the exception of the Outback Steakhouse.

3. **Principal Use Sign Requirements** (Sec. 8-3121 (B)(11)) for each non-residential use, one principal use sign shall be permitted. Such sign shall not exceed a size of more than 1-square-foot of sign area per linear foot of frontage along a given street or shall meet the following, whichever is the most restrictive: maximum of 30 square feet for a projecting sign where the outer edge of the projection extends no more than 6 feet from the face of the building provided that no portion of a sign shall be erected within 2 feet of a curb line.

The proposed sign is approximately 24 square feet. This appears to be in keeping with the above requirements however, the linear footage of the building façade was not provided. In addition, no information regarding the projection or height placement within the building was provided; verify with petitioner. Although the size of the sign meets the zoning requirements it appears out of scale with the appropriate “signable area” which would be on the fascia or as a projecting sign below the first floor cornice (as they currently have installed).

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends **denial**. The proposed neon sign is not visually compatible in scale and harmony with the surrounding historic structures and it obscures the architectural detailing of the storefront that is a character defining feature of this historic structure.

PETITIONER’S COMMENTS:

Mr. Darrell Cook stated the comments were noted and well taken. He said he was not at the last meeting. The marquee lamps were requested by the owner of Tony Roma’s in order to attract some attention. He said it was related to him that at the last meeting, it was asked to remove that, but he asked as a trade off to present to the Board an increase in the size of the sign so that the letters were more readable. He said they were also at a disadvantage for presentation purposes, the photograph that was provided to him by the owner did not give them a good shot of where the sign goes. He said the sign would be located above where the pink was and between one of the windows that may be a little off-set. He said they will have the wall surveyed and then fit the sign. He said what they were trying to do here before the owner went to the expense of having a site survey performed by an engineer was to get a concept design because the Outback had an exposed neon sign. The Tony Roma’s sign currently in place was low key and they were looking at it from the standpoint that it did not attract attention for their customers and that their business could be increased by going to a neon sign. He said it looked out of proportion in the photograph. The sign was two feet wide which was a little more than the overall width with the marquee arrow. The height has increased and the sign will be moved up. He said if it was determined once the building survey is performed by an engineer that the sign needed to shrink down in height so that it was in proportion with the building it will be.

Mr. Steffen stated he would suggest that he request a continuance and spend some time with Staff to work out the details of the sign to get it right. He said he sensed from his fellow Board members that it was not right now.

Mr. Mitchell stated he felt may not have a problem with structurally the way the sign was positioned and understood they would like it this way so that people could see it from up the street.

Mr. Gay asked if the owners considered instead of having the name going up as they show it on the picture to have come down vertically instead.

Mr. Cook stated that was presented in both schemes. He said they were requested by Roma's Corporation to do what the Board was looking at.

Mr. Meyerhoff stated as a resident in the Historic District he ate at Tony Roma's often and felt that it did not need this kind of advertising.

Mr. Steffen asked the petitioner if he would like to have a continuance so they could get with Staff to get this right.

Mr. Cook stated yes.

HDBR ACTION: Mr. Deering made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review defer the petition until the March meeting for the applicant to simplify the design of the illuminated sign and reconsider its location on the building. Mr. Meyerhoff seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

**RE: Petition of Lominack Kolman Smith Architects
Anne Smith
HDBR 06-3521-2
418 East Bryan Street
New Construction – Part I & II**

Present for the petition was Anne Smith.

Mrs. Ward gave the following Staff report.

The applicant is requesting approval for New Construction, Part I and II, of a carriage house at 418 East Bryan Street. The two-story structure will be located at the rear of the property, fronting East Bay Lane. Savannah Grey brick will comprise the first floor with a Hardi-Plank exterior on the second floor.

FINDINGS:

The residence at 418 East Bryan Street, constructed ca. 1898, is a contributing structure within Savannah's National Landmark Historic District. The property is zoned RIP-A, Residential, Medium-Density). The following standards from the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance pertaining to the Historic District (8-3030) apply:

The following standards apply:

Standard	Proposed	Comment
Lot Coverage: There is a maximum 75% building lot coverage. New carriage houses may provide up to a 4' setback to allow a turning radius into the garage on a narrow lane.	The lot is 2,700 square feet. The proposed footprint, including the existing building and garage, is approximately 1,554 square feet for a 58% building lot coverage. There are no rear setbacks for the proposed garage.	The standard is met.
Height: Secondary structures which front a lane shall be no taller than two stories.	A two-story carriage house, 21' tall is proposed.	The standard is met.

Scale: 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 visually related.	The carriage house is subordinate to the main residence in height and mass. There are other one-story garages on the lane.	The standard is met.
Site: Carriage houses, garages, and auxiliary structures must be	The proposed carriage house is at the rear of the property facing	The standard is met.
Standard	Proposed	Comment
located to the rear of the property. Overhead garage doors shall not be used on street fronts, adjacent to sidewalk, unless they are detailed to resemble gates.	the lane. Overhead garage doors front the lane and will have a solid wood overlay with a barn-like appearance.	
Openings: Garage openings shall not exceed 12' in width.	The north elevation features two 8' wide garage openings.	The standard is met.
Roofs: Roofs shall be side gable, hip with parapet, flat or shed hidden by parapet.	A side gable roof surfaced in galvanized 5V crimp roofing is proposed.	The standard is met. The edges and ridge line should be sealed with a drip plate or metal finish piece.
Exterior Walls: Residential exterior walls shall be finished in brick, wood, or true stucco.	Savannah Grey brick is proposed for the ground floor with Hardiplank lap siding on the second floor.	The standard is met.
Windows: Double glazed windows are permitted on new construction, provided, however, that the windows meet the following standards: the muntin shall be no wider than 7/8"; the muntin profile shall simulate traditional putty glazing; the lower sash shall be wider than the meeting and top rails; extrusions shall be covered with appropriate molding. In new residential construction windows shall be constructed of wood or wood clad.	Weather Shield HR 175, two-over-two, true divided light, single-hung sash, wood frame windows are proposed.	The standard is met. These windows have been previously approved in the historic district and meet the design standards in the ordinance.
The centerline of window and door openings shall align vertically.	Although, the window and door openings do not align vertically, their proportions within the façade are correct.	Staff recommends approval.
Shutters Sec. 8-3030 (1)(9): Shutters shall be hinged and operable and sized to fit the window opening. Shutters shall be constructed of durable wood.	Operable wood plank shutters, sized to fit the window opening, are proposed.	The standard is met.
Colors:	Body (HardiPlank): warm gray to match the existing residence. Trim, windows, fascia: Bright White Shutters, doors and door frame: Charleston Green	Staff approval; the colors are visually compatible.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval as submitted.

HDBR ACTION: Mr. Deering made a motion that and seconded by Mr. Meyerhoff, the Savannah Historic Board of Review approve the petition as submitted. Mr. Meyerhoff seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

**RE: Petition of R K Construction & Development
Ramsey Khalidi
HDBR 06-3522-2
318 West Broughton Street
Sign**

Present for the petition was Ramsey Khalidi.

Mrs. Ward gave the following Staff report.

The petitioner is requesting approval to install a illuminated projecting blade sign on the building at 318 West Broughton Street. The sign is for the retailer, American Apparel, who currently occupies the building.

1. **Size:** The sign is 13 feet tall and 1-foot – 8 inches wide. It is 21.7 square feet and is 8 inches deep.
2. **Illumination:** The proposed sign will feature laser cut letters with backlit acrylic infill. Staff requests further explanation of the letter appearance.
3. **Materials:** The sign is aluminum with a baked-on enamel finish.
4. **Colors:** Background – gloss white enamel
Letters – No color submitted

FINDINGS:

The building was constructed in 1891 and is a rated structure within Savannah's Landmark Historic District. The property is zoned B-C-1, Central Business, and consists of two commercial storefronts within one large masonry structure. Sears Roebuck & Company maintained a projecting blade sign in the approximate location of the proposed sign in 1931. Neighboring buildings also featured projecting blade signs at this time and Broughton Street currently features a number of illuminated signs, serving as one of Savannah's most commercial boulevards.

The following Broughton Street Sign District Standards (Section 8-3119) apply:

1. **Principal Use Signs** (Sec. 8-3119 (2)(c)) One principal use sign shall be permitted for each business establishment. One such sign may be erected as a projecting sign. The copy area shall not exceed 40 percent of the display area of a principal use sign.

The standard is met. A projecting blade sign principal use sign is proposed to be located above the commercial storefront at the second and third stories. The text on the sign comprises 29 percent of the overall sign.

2. **Size, Height, and Location** (Sec. 8-3119 (2)(c)) of projecting signs, for all principal uses occupying 125 or less linear feet of street frontage, “projecting” signs shall be permitted one-square-foot of display area per sign face per linear foot-of-frontage occupied by each principal use; provided, that a maximum sign area of 45 square feet shall be permitted per sign face for each projecting principal use sign allowed. The outer edge shall not extend more than 6 inches from the building to which it is attached. The height shall not extend above the parapet wall of the building, and the lowest point of the projecting sign shall not be less than 10 feet above the established grade.

The standard is met. The occupant of 318 West Broughton maintains approximately 32 linear feet of frontage for the American Apparel retail establishment. The sign face is 21.7 square feet. The outer edge projects 2 feet – 4 inches from the face of the building and is 18 feet above the sidewalk. The sign is located below the parapet. There is a narrow space between window details, with which to locate the sign and staff would like to stress caution with the applicant not to cause harm to historic fabric on the exterior of the structure.

3. **Restricted Signs** (Sec. 8-3119 (2)(g)) signs placed upon a structure in any manner so as to disfigure or conceal any window opening, door or significant architectural feature or detail of any building.

There is a narrow space between window details, with which to locate the sign and it does not appear accurate in the elevations. Staff requests that the application proceed with caution and not cause damage to the brick window hoods.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval upon verification of letter appearance and color.

PETITIONER’S COMMENTS:

Mr. Khalidi stated from the old photographs he felt that blade style signs showed historic precedence on the street. He said he will check with his client with regard to the graphics going vertically rather being read as the Tony Roma’s sign that was talked about earlier. He said they installed a backlit sign that sat back behind the glass. He said it was a white background with illuminated lettering.

Mrs. Reiter stated since she knows it is a white background that is what they have been trying to get away from. She said they felt color would be better than white.

Mr. Khalidi stated okay.

Mr. Meyerhoff stated he felt changing the lettering vertically would be a vast improvement. He asked if they have considered moving the sign to the left or right pilaster at the end of the building so that the dentil design of the narrow windows remains intact.

Mr. Khalidi stated he the intent was to go back to the way Sear’s had it originally. He said there were a number of things they wanted to do and they will get with Staff on the graphics and color.

Mr. Deering stated he felt the petition needed to be continued because he felt the internally illuminated light was of concern. Also, he would like the petitioner to ask his client about orienting the lettering in the other direction.

Mr. Steffen asked the petitioner if he would like a continuance until the March meeting.

Mr. Khalidi agreed to a continuance.

HDBR Action: Mr. Deering made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review continue the petition until the next meeting. Ms. Seiler seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

**RE: Petition of Gunn, Meyerhoff, & Shay
Patrick Shay
HDBR 06-3523-2
320 Montgomery Street
New Construction**

Mr. Meyerhoff recused himself.

Present for the petition was Patrick Shay and Al Jassar.

Mrs. Reiter gave the following Staff report.

The applicant is requesting approval to demolish an existing non-historic concrete block building and approval of Part I Height and Mass for a hotel located within a four-story height zone in the Savannah National Historic Landmark District.

FINDINGS:

Height:

The five-story portion of the building has been reduced to four stories. This section is now 61 feet tall to the peak of the roof. The rest of the mass is approximate 53 feet tall with the exception of two corners at 43 feet.

The height steps down 10 feet on Harris Street creating a 10-foot by 30-foot terrace at the fourth level adjacent to the two-story townhouse structure next door.

On Charlton Street a similar terrace is created next to two new townhouses.

Storefront windows have been utilized on the Montgomery and Harris Street elevations.

The entry has been recessed between bays topped with a pedimented parapet.

The applicant notes that the bay spacing is driven by the width of the hotel rooms, approximately 13 feet wide.

The parking garage entry is located on Harris Street and is 24 feet wide.

The dumpster is located on the Charlton Street side.

COMMENTS:

The site is a challenging transitional site located between historic and modern residential and large scale commercial uses. It is a site located in a ward that never had a square and lanes and hence the discipline of the Oglethorpe ward plan with its public and private faces. This site is all public face. Historically, the block was comprised of six lots, which were subsequently

subdivided into a finer grained texture of many lots with structures facing all four street frontages. This fine grained texture helped integrate the block into the overall texture of the historic district.

The Chadbourne Guidelines state that “Today’s office buildings, hotels, retail centers and apartments seek larger footprints. The consequence is that assemblage, not subdivision is the rule and a spate of buildings has been built that ignores the 60-foot-module and are changing the scale of the city. At issue is not whether assemblage is allowed but whether buildings can be made that are good neighbors – that conform to the scale of their predecessors. The guidelines seek to restore traditional massing to large scale developments...”

Therefore, in the light of the Chadbourne guidelines, it should not be the width of a motel room that drives the massing of the building, but rather how can that massing reflect the traditional subdivision of the Oglethorpe plan. Both the Montgomery Street and Harris Street elevations have a number of recesses and projections that follow the motel room divisions rather than dimensions reflective of historic development patterns. In this case, it may be well to study eliminating the southern recess on the Montgomery Street elevation and the center recess on the Harris Street elevation to “calm” the exterior of the building and let the window openings make the rhythms. More windows might be introduced into the corner element on the Montgomery Street elevation to further define a rhythm of solids to voids.

The corner element of three masonry stories resting on a post with a recessed corner is incongruous and out of balance at this location. There is no corner entrance at this location.

On the Harris Street elevation the 24-foot wide garage opening creates a huge void which dwarfs the adjacent historic property.

The dumpster is located within a gated trash enclosure on the Charlton Street elevation across from the new row of condominiums. This is a problem of a site with three “public” faces. It would seem a better solution to place this on the side facing the parking garage. The question arises regarding where the utilities will be placed?

Finally, regarding voids and the three “storefront” windows on the southern portion of the Montgomery Street elevation. These windows are a part of the mezzanine rooms here – what will be the appearance from the exterior of these windows and are PTAC systems installed at ground level? Perhaps spaces could be switched internally that would create more public uses for this corner, moving the three rooms elsewhere eliminating the mezzanine incorporating these windows.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is a difficult site with many challenges. The revised plan has many positive changes that help the building transition to the surrounding residential. Staff recommends that additional consideration be given to staff comments in preparing the Part II design submittal.

PETITIONER’S COMMENTS:

Mr. Al Jassar stated with regard to the context they felt the buildings on the north, parking garage and the Marriott Hotel which were five-story, the box they added felt responded to the context. He said the building carried on with the same similar materials. On Harris Street, out of the three buildings, two of them were commercial and in the back was commercial as well. The Tricentennial plan showed it as traditional commercial.

He said the arcade was canceled, however the round feature they felt it was a change but if it was going to be another 90 degree corner it would be massive in context with the four buildings that surrounded it, but the round feature was still there. He said they got inspiration for the round feature from the old DeSoto Hotel that was demolished. With regard to the mezzanine floor the total floor area was over 15,000 and they were using 1/3 of that to be mezzanine which was 5,000. With regard to the comments about the modular buildings, he felt the plans were clear showing how some of the rooms will be in/out including the ground floor. In the floor plan they showed a recessed entrance with a canopy. He said the module was normally a bedroom that was about 13 feet and that was why there were bays, which was going to give that impression. This was also a typical second, third, and fourth floors. He said they have recessed the massive wall, added windows, and added another entrance. He said they also invited the neighbors to come and look and appreciated their comments as well. He said they incorporated the neighbors' suggestion to trash collection which was shown on the ground floor. He said they did not have a restaurant but they did have a breakfast room. On the fifth floor, which they were also requesting a variance because the building steps. On the south side they added an entrance with glazing and added more glass to the staircase. He said they wanted to emphasize that what they were doing was adding one floor at the top (fifth floor) and stepping to the south and east.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Mrs. Fortson-Waring stated they had extensive public meetings about the height requirements. She said anyone who projected that they might need a higher height requirement was encouraged to submit for review. Once the height requirement was passed because they spent a lot of time reviewing it, the change was final. She said she could not understand why they did not bring their plans forth for consideration.

Mr. Patrick Shay stated they represent the owners of the property that did not own the property then, therefore, they did not have the opportunity to come forward. He said what they were trying to present was what they felt was a sound architectural argument for why the corner wants to be at least as high as the parking deck that was next door. He said he disagreed with Staff that it appeared as a seven-story building. He felt when you looked at in context with the existing parking garage next door their cornice was approximately aligned with it. He said what they have done was presented a way where by they could address the corner and at the same allow them to present a tall mostly glass façade along the street level. He said the comparison of this to a seven-story building was not so because this element was exempted from being considered as a story. He said they were asking the Board to consider a fifth-story on the corner, but not asking them to consider a seven-story building.

Mr. Deering stated the graphic scale on their overall streetscape drawing indicated that their building was 75 feet to the cornice of the round element and that the parking garage across the street was about two or three feet taller.

Mr. Shay stated what it was 63 feet to what was the parapet height. The existing building across the street varied from 61 feet to 67 feet high. He said they deliberately wanted to make the building only at this corner because it related nicely to the other two buildings. He said they felt like having an element at the corner that was taller to hide the mechanicals.

Mr. Deering stated the graphic scale was about 12 feet off.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Ms. Cassie DeLuckie (Historic Savannah Foundation) stated HSF felt that although the Height and Mass of this building was similar to the recent new construction on Montgomery Street there was no relationship to the smaller buildings on Charlton, Harris, and Jefferson Streets. She said the project's proposed Height and Mass was related to the new structures on Montgomery Street. She said HSF agreed with Staff and reiterated that it has been adopted that the height map in the area around Harris, Charlton, Montgomery, and Jefferson Streets was reduced from five-story to four-story to reflect the historic residential building patterns in the neighborhood and to provide a gradual transition between Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Pulaski Square.

Mr. Walter Hartridge, Attorney, (Representing Owens Schuler) stated his client lives and owns 310 West Charlton Street. He said under the ordinance this project could not be granted because the ordinance provides visual compatibility factors: height (6 A) new constructions or additions – existing structures shall be within the height limits as shown on the Historic District height map. He said “L” – Design Standards with respect to height adopted February 2005 says that all new construction or additions to existing structures shall be within the height limits as shown on the Historic District height map.

He further stated that in the definitional section of the ordinance “M” – shall is always mandatory and not merely discretionary. Finally, if a variance were to be sought from the design standards there would have to be a finding by the Historic Review Board that such variance would result in a development which was consistent with the visual compatibility factors as set forth in subsection K 6 which was the first one he read to the Board. He said within the framework of the ordinance that was adopted he respectfully submit that the Board could not grant this variance because that what it says.

Mr. Mark Marshalok stated he felt they were presented with relatively uninspired architecture and changes were made based on community participation, Board, and other individuals. Yet, he felt there was still a round peg being put in the square. He said not every site may be appropriate for a hotel. He said he would like to submit that the recommendations of the Board that some terrace thing and some attempt to continue the rhythm and the participation of the building to the adjacent structures be considered. He said he would like to see the petitioner's fine-tune the project with a vision towards compatibility to what exists there.

Mr. Arnold Schillinger (Charlton Street) stated he lived across the street from the proposed building. He said he was pleased to see the changes with the blank wall that faced Charlton Street, but felt more could be done. He said he was unclear about where the garbage dumps would be and how that would be handled.

Ms. Dale Brant (337 West Charlton Street) stated her condo faced the south elevation. She said she also appreciated the improvements. However, she felt the improvements did not come up to standard in terms of a front facing a side. She said her observation was that everything in the area that was new construction maintained old construction or restored old construction faced Charlton, Harris, Jones Streets, etc. and virtually nothing faced Montgomery Street. She said she understood that because of the shape of the lot, but felt it was inconsistent with the way everything else faced in that area which made the side of the building less attractive. She said she was also concerned about the garbage.

Paul Morgenthal (309 and 311 West Harris Street) stated this is a four-story zone. He said he felt 75 feet was seven stories regardless of how you looked at it. He said he felt it was disingenuous to use as the model for visual compatibility a five-story parking garage and a hotel that was not in the Currytown Ward. He said the proposed structure in Currytown Ward was approximately 30 feet tall. Yet, you have a first level at 20 feet followed by three other 10-foot levels. He said he did not see how the proposed project was visually compatible with the two contiguous historic structures on Harris Street. All of the drawings seemed to be looking at Montgomery Street to the west and Charlton Street to the south and little was known about what would happen to the eastern face of the structure except to note that it would be on the property line. He said to build the proposed structure would be a blight of Currytown Ward. He said he felt there was no visual compatibility. He said he would also like to know the depth of the proposed parking garage.

Mr. Shay stated as a point of clarification the building was not hard to the adjacent property. He said their intent was to stay away from that by several feet which was also shown in the elevation. He said the adjacent structure would also be setback 9 to 14 feet from that structure so there is visual separation. With regard to the garbage, he said the idea was that there would be an interior room inside the building for the storage of trash that's accumulated.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Mitchell stated he felt the Board seemed to be getting these applications that really push the limits. When the Board made the height recommendations some of the architectures who are present today were also present during that process. He said he felt they seemed to repeating this thing again over and over of having to get things that are pushed to the limit. He said when the Board adjusts marginally it still ends up being more than what should be acceptable.

Mr. Shay stated they understood that they were asking for more than what the four-story required. He said they felt they had an architectural argument for it and if it failed muster you do not think that there is a valid reason why there should be an element on that corner that was as tall as the two other buildings that were on the corner. He said that was something that they could go back to their client and figure out how they could squeeze down. He said there was a certain amount in the program that they have to get to. If, on the other hand, they are able to make a successful architectural argument for why the corner should be allowed to be the same height as the two other corners then they have the ability may be to fritter down the edges to make some of the transitions to the adjacent properties, but they could not give up everything.

Mr. Neely stated he could see how the petitioner would want to relate the Montgomery Street façade to the taller buildings to the north and south. He said he applaud their efforts to step down (terrace) Harris Street east façade. He said he would like to see the same concept used for Charlton Street façade, so it would not overpower the two-story residents.

Mr. Deering stated he felt that if they went through public hearings to have the height map revisited and set and they changed the ordinance to be worded "shall" as mentioned by Mr. Hartridge that after all that work that they should adhere to what they have adopted. He said he also felt that the corner element did not do anything for this building. He said he felt that it made it not as good a building as it could be if it just had some other squared or angled off thing at the corner. He said he felt the round element detracted from the building and was not suited to that corner.

Ms. Seiler stated this was the second time today that it has come up and it comes at least once at every meeting where they want to make an allowance to go up higher, wider, bigger, more lot line, etc. because the owner has to recoup their investment so it would be a financial investment with them. She said she wondered if the Board was always willing to forget that for the integrity of the neighborhood or a ward. The answer has to be no. She said she felt if they could not afford to do it then may be they need to build a smaller project. She said she felt the Board was constantly seeing petitioners come before the Board and saying they have to go up an extra floor for various reasons.

Mr. Shay stated from a designer's perspective all of this was a bit of negotiation. He said what they were trying to do was find flexibility so they could affect trade offs. He said earlier today they heard even though the maps says "shall," "for," backed up to the lane that it must want to be something else. He said shall does mean shall. But when they went through the process there was expressed at that time by the members of the committee and City Manager that there occasionally going to be opportunities when it was the right thing to do but it would be a trade off for something else that was gained. He said they were trading off all the hotel rooms on the front of the building on Montgomery Street so they could have a major high ceiling architectural space facing Montgomery Street.

Mr. Steffen stated he was hearing a strong consensus on the height issue. He said he also heard Mr. Deering's comments about the circular tower element. He asked the rest of the Board if they would to also weigh in that issue because he was not sure if that was a unanimous consensus and felt the petitioner needed guidance. He said he did not have a problem with it.

Mr. Neely stated he was okay with the circular tower element.

Mr. Gay stated he did not care for the circular tower element.

Mr. Hutchinson stated he liked the circular element.

Ms. Seiler stated she also was okay with it.

Mr. Steffen stated the reason he asked that was because he felt people leave a lot of times for the next continuance without knowing how the Board feels. He said he felt at least the petitioner had a sense that there were varied opinions on that element.

Mr. Shay asked if they eliminate the hotel rooms on the fifth floor if there was objection to them having the element on the corner reaching up approaching the same height? He asked if the corner element would also have to shrink.

Ms. Seiler stated she felt yes, because it was still a part of the height.

Mr. Neely stated he felt it could come up some as a single smaller element.

Mr. Deering stated as an element, but he did not see it as a full-story.

Mr. Steffen asked the petitioner if he would like a continuance.

Mr. Shay stated yes.

HDBR ACTION: Mr. Mitchell made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review continue the petition until the next meeting. Mr. Deering seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

**RE: Petition of Rubi McGrory & William McGrory
HDBR 06-3524-2
441 Barnard Street
Alterations**

Present for the petition was William McGrory.

Mrs. Ward gave the following Staff report.

The applicant is requesting approval for exterior alterations and additions to the rear of the building and garage at 441 Barnard Street. This building is located on a corner lot at Barnard Street and West Gordon Lane. Alterations and additions include:

1. **West Elevation:** Remove non-historic bay window and enclose porch with stucco wall to match neighboring buildings and to be flush with existing rear wall. Install 6-over-6 windows to match those on the existing building.
2. **Deck:** Replace non-historic deck and privacy fence to existing dimensions.
3. **Garage:** Replace two non-historic garage door openings with a single 16-foot garage door.
4. **Windows:** Replaced non-historic rotted windows with custom 6-over-6 and 9-over-9 (both currently exist within the building) single-pane glass, true-divided light, double-hung sash, wood frame windows.

FINDINGS:

The building at 441 Barnard Street was constructed in 1882 as part of a masonry row-house with five units. The property is a rated structure within Savannah's National Landmark Historic District. It is zoned RIP-A, Residential, Medium-Density, and currently has a building footprint which comprises 100 percent of the lot.

1. **West Elevation:** The neighboring buildings have rear walls which are consistent with the proposed plans and will create a unified appearance along the rear of the row house. It is unclear what the canopy appearance will be from the side facing Gordon Lane.
2. **Deck:** It is unclear what the new deck and fence will look like.
3. **Garage:** Although this structure is not a traditional carriage house, the intent of the ordinance was to prevent the installation of large garage door openings typical of more suburban settings and not a historic urban neighborhood. The Historic District Ordinance states (Section 8-3030 (l)(14)) that **Lanes and Carriage Houses** shall comply with the following: garage openings shall not exceed 12 feet in width.
4. **Windows:** The replacement windows will match the existing and meet the historic district standards.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval of exterior alterations to the rear of the building, replacement windows, and deck upon verification of design and appearance from Gordon Lane. **Denial** of 16-foot garage door opening.

PETITIONER’S COMMENTS:

Mr. McGrory stated the 16-foot garage door was convenient and fit the hole and they felt it was not visible. He said there were lot restrictions in terms of the placement of the electricity box and Savannah Electric has been obstinate about moving it.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Mr. Deering stated the Board has not granted a wider than 12-foot garage door in many years.

Mr. Mitchell asked if he could talk about the wall in the lane.

Mr. McGrory stated it was a small brick wall that had a flower garden behind it.

HDBR ACTION: **Mr. Mitchell made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the petition for the addition with the condition that the south elevation (including fence/decking) be submitted to staff for approval and that the garage door not exceed 12 feet in width. Ms. Seiler seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.**

**RE: Petition of Poticny Deering Felder
Pete Callejas
HDBR 06-3525-2
424 Barnard Street
Alterations**

Mr. Deering recused himself from the petition.

Present for the petition was John Deering.

Mrs. Reiter gave the following Staff report.

The applicant is requesting approval of alterations as follows:

1. Add a rear addition.
2. Renovate the stoop steps, columns and rails.
3. Re-stucco to match sample of existing original stucco finish.
4. Add louvered shutters.

FINDINGS:

The following standards apply:

Standard	Proposed	Comment
Additions: Additions shall be located to the rear of the structure...Where possible, the addition shall be sited such that it is clearly an appendage and	A two story rear addition on piers is proposed. The addition is 33’-8” wide by 9’ deep and has the appearance of an infilled rear porch.	The intent of the standards have been met.

<p>distinguishable from the existing structure.</p> <p>Additions shall be constructed with the least possible loss of historic building material and without damaging or obscuring character-defining features of the building, including, but not limited to, rooflines, cornices, eaves and brackets.</p> <p>Additions shall be subordinate in mass and height to the main structure.</p>	<p>The rear addition does involve the removal and extension of the rear wall, however there are no unusual character defining features on the rear.</p> <p>The cornice of the rear addition is differentiated from the historic parapet and does not conceal any cornice detail.</p>	
<p>Windows/Shutters</p>	<p>Add wood operable louvered shutters to West and North Elevations.</p> <p>Install Kolbe and Kolbe wood Ultra Series true divided light windows on existing south addition and in new rear addition.</p>	<p>The window and shutter standards have been met.</p>
<p>Stoop</p>	<p>Add new wood entablature mouldings. New metal railing to match iron at landing. New wood stair.</p>	<p>Sections provided. Standards have been met.</p>
<p>Stucco</p>	<p>Remove 20th century stucco coating and replace with stucco to match existing sample. Score to match existing scoring remnant.</p>	<p>All colors to be submitted later.</p>

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval.

PETITIONER’S COMMENTS:

Mr. Deering stated his client was requesting that they ask permission to change the vertical siding in the recess area to horizontal clapboard siding. He said his client also would like to put in a 10-foot-wide carriage gate and a gate for a service enclosure.

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

**RE: Petition of Lee Meyer, A.I.A
HDBR 06-3530-2
417 Jones Street
Garage Door**

Present for the petition was Jamie Albright.

Mrs. Reiter gave the following Staff report.

The petitioner is requesting approval to alter an existing historic carriage house to add an eight-foot-wide opening.

FINDINGS:

The petitioner has agreed to place the apron within the confines of his property so that it will not encroach into the lane.

Petitioner is asking for staff approval of an alternate barn door overhead garage door design.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff changed the recommended approval in the staff report to denial based on the receipt of new information regarding the historic use as servant's quarters rather than a carriage house, its small size and connectivity to the adjacent twin servant's quarters.

PETITIONER'S COMMENTS:

Ms. Jamie Albright stated her client would prefer a door that was more congruent with the other garage doors in the lane. The building under construction was never used as a carriage house or housing animals. She said it was servant's quarters. She reiterated that they would like to find a garage door that was congruent with the other garage doors in the lane.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Mr. Deering stated he has always admired the carriage house and thought it was charming. He said he really hated to see it go away from a historic standpoint because it was unusual.

Ms. Albright stated they would like to maintain the exterior as the same look but put a new garage door on.

Mr. Deering stated it would really change the character.

Mr. Meyerhoff stated when you look at the site you see that it is a twin structure with a chimney in between. He said the drawings show that there is a continuance but did not show the full structure. He said when you see it as a full structure of two units that were servant's quarters he felt it would be a wrong thing to put a garage door in there because it did not seem to fit.

Mrs. Reiter stated with regard to the chimneys if there were fireplaces on both sides and you removed the chimney and fireplace from one side what would happen to the other person's fireplace.

Ms. Albright stated they would like to request a continuance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Mr. Charles Sawyer (Jones Lane) stated 417 East Jones Lane has never been a real carriage house. He said it was the right hand side of a symmetrical little double house. The other side being 415 East Jones Lane, which was restored. Lanes contain actual carriage houses, modern garages, reprocarriage houses and some small houses generally referred to as servant quarters. An actual carriage house by virtue of its wide opening invited being a working garage. He said turning half of this small house into a viable garage seemed an inappropriate stretch. He said more appropriate would be to restore it to match its twin. He said if this little double

house were on a street it was unlikely that this drastic of change, its façade, and its use would be considered.

HDBR Action: Mr. Deering made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review continue the petition until the next meeting. Mr. Meyerhoff seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

RE: STAFF REVIEWS

1. Petition of Amidon Building Restoration
Mitchell Amidon
HBR 06-3527(S)-2
216 Houston Street
Color
STAFF DECISION: Approved

2. Petition of Allan Drummond
HBR 06-3532(S)-2
15 East Gordon Street
Shutters
STAFF DECISION: Approved

3. Petition of Sam Carroll
HBR 06-3533(S)-2
15 East Jones Street
Color
STAFF DECISION: Approved

4. Petition of Coastal Canvas
Jeff Bradtmiller
HBR 06-3534(S)-2
105 Whitaker Street
Awning
STAFF DECISION: Approved

RE: OTHER BUSINESS

1. Petition of Dawson Wissmach Architects
Neil Dawson
HDBR 05-3398-2
455 Montgomery Street
Enlargement of Parking Gate

Mrs. Reiter stated the previously approved design for the condos on Montgomery Street were subsequently sent to the City Traffic Engineer for review of the ingress/egress of the parking lot that was under the building. She said it was at 12 feet and Mike Weiner will not accept that for this particular location and it is coming back for 14 feet and Staff recommends approval.

HDBR ACTION: Mr. Meyerhoff made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the petition as amended. Mr. Gay seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

2. Fines & Penalties

Mr. Steffen stated he and Mrs. Reiter talked about this quite a bit and this stemmed from the retreat where ways were discussed about how the Board could increase their enforcement powers. He said he would like to suggest that the Board gain agreement to present this to the City Manager and City Attorney as a request from this Board and then they engage into some discussion as to whether or not they could get this authority. He said he was not implying that it would be easy because it would not. However, he felt if they were going to be serious about their desires to enforce everything that the Board does then they have to stand up and say this is what they would like.

Mr. Meyerhoff stated he was glad to see this.

Mr. Deering stated he would support it and felt that it was reasonable enough for even the smaller property owners to understand.

Mr. Steffen stated if the Board supports it they would need to have a vote on it. He said he would also ask that members of the Board who have contact with individual members of Council, City Manger or City Attorney to let them know that they are serious about this and would like to work cooperatively with them to give the Board some power as a way to keep things out of their backyard as often as they could.

HDBR ACTION: Mr. Meyerhoff made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review forward the draft on fines and penalties into a formal request to City Council. Mr. Mitchell seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

**RE: WORK PERFORMED WITHOUT CERTIFICATE
OF APPROPRIATENESS**

1. 528 East Jones Street – Addition

Mrs. Reiter stated it was an addition on the rear of the property that was totally inappropriate.

2. 422-24-26 Price Street – Alteration on rear

Mrs. Reiter stated they were currently pursuing it and it appeared to be some kind of shaft that went up to the roof.

3. 122 East Liberty Street – Sign/Awning

Mrs. Reiter stated they also were currently pursuing this.

RE: MINUTES

1. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes — December 14, 2005
2. Distribution of Regular Meeting Minutes — January 11, 2006

HDBR ACTION: Mr. Meyerhoff made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the minutes of December 14, 2005, as submitted. Mr. Gay seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

RE: ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Historic District Board of Review the meeting was adjourned approximately 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Reiter,
Preservation Officer

BR:ca