

**HISTORIC DISTRICT BOARD OF REVIEW**

**REGULAR MEETING  
112 EAST STATE STREET**

**ARTHUR A. MENDONSA HEARING ROOM**

**MAY 10, 2006**

**2:00 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

**Members Present:**

**Joseph Steffen, Chairman  
Swann Seiler, Vice-Chairman  
John Deering  
Mr. Ned Gay  
Eric Meyerhoff  
Gene Hutchinson  
John Neely  
Dr. Lester Johnson  
Dr. Gerald Caplan**

**Members Absent:**

**Gwendolyn Fortson-Waring**

**HDBR/MPC Staff Present:**

**Beth Reiter, Preservation Officer  
Sarah Ward, Preservation Specialist  
Dewayne Stephens, Historic Preservation Intern  
Janine Person, Administrative Assistant**

**RE: CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

**RE: REFLECTION**

**RE: SIGN POSTING**

**RE: CONSENT AGENDA**

**RE: Amended Petition of Gunn, Meyerhoff, & Shay  
Patrick Shay  
H 04-3317-2  
11-21 West York Street  
Exterior alteration to windows**

The Preservation Officer recommends **approval**.

**RE: One-Year Extension of the Approval of Petition of Gunn, Meyerhoff & Shay  
Patrick Shay  
H 05-3327-2  
Northwest Corner of Bryan and Barnard Streets  
New Construction of Hotel**

The Preservation Officer recommends **approval**.

**RE: Amended Petition of Poticny Deering Felder  
John Deering  
H 06-3438-2  
Corner of Jefferson and West Hall Lane  
New Construction – minor revisions to  
previously approved plan**

The Preservation Officer recommends **approval**.

**RE: Petition of Doug Bean Signs, Incorporated  
For Donna Swanson  
H 06-3577-2  
405 East Perry Street  
Sign**

The Preservation Officer recommends **approval**.

**RE: Petition of Robyn Reeder, For  
Civvies  
H 06-3578-2  
35 Montgomery Street  
Sign**

The Preservation Officer recommends **approval**.

**HDBR ACTION: Ms. Seiler made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the Consent Agenda as submitted. Dr. Johnson seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously. Mr. Deering recused himself from HDRB 06-3438-2.**

**RE: REGULAR AGENDA**

**RE: Amended Petition of Poticny Deering Felder  
Pete Callejas  
H 05-3436-2  
20 West Gaston Street  
Alterations and Addition to previously approved  
plan**

The Preservation Officer recommends **approval**.

Mr. Deering recused himself.

Present for the petition was John Deering

Ms. Ward gave the Staff report.

**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

The applicant is requesting to amend a previous approval for exterior alterations and an addition to 20 West Gaston Street as follows:

1. Addition of a third-story side porch on the east elevation.
2. Alterations to the existing side porch include removal of the non-historic metal louvered shutters and the 3 feet high non-historic stucco wall between the columns. New railings are comprised of a wood louvered panel system.
3. Deletion of the approved roof garden addition on the northeast portion of the residence.

**FINDINGS:**

The historic structure at 20 West Gaston Street was designed in 1857 by John S. Norris. The building, which contributes to Savannah’s Historic Landmark District, is significant for its architecture and retains a high degree of historic integrity. The property is zoned RIP-A, Residential, Medium-Density, and received approval from the Historic Board of Review for a series of two-story additions on the rear, a privacy wall, and new garage openings on the carriage house in August 2005. The roof garden element is being eliminated due to its complexity and possible threat to the historic plaster ceiling below. The proposed side porch would provide additional outdoor space which is being lost due to the deletion of the roof garden.

The following standards from the Historic District Ordinance (Section 8-3030) apply:

Standard	Proposed	Comment
<i>Additions (1)(12):</i> shall be constructed with the least possible loss of historic building material and without damaging or obscuring character-defining features of the building. Additions shall be designed to be reversible with the least amount of damage to the historic building.	The proposed side porch extends above the existing side porch with a continuation of the stucco columns and standing seam metal hip roof. The proposed slope (1.5:12) matches the existing slope on the porch. All of the original window openings and details will be retained and visible within the open porch.	The standard is met.
Additions, including multiple additions to structures, shall be subordinate in mass and height to the main structure.	The porch is located directly above the existing two-story verandah and extends four bays to the rear of the building.	The standard is met.
Designs for additions may be either contemporary or reference design motifs of the historic building. However, the addition shall be clearly	The proposed porch addition does not include brackets at the cornice to delineate that it is a modern addition.	The standard is met.

differentiated from the historic building.		
<i>Side Porches (I)(11):</i>	<p>Stucco columns will divide the porch addition into four bays and are located directly above the existing stucco columns below.</p> <p>A 3' tall wood louvered railing system is proposed for the porches.</p>	<p>Staff recommends approval.</p> <p>Staff recommends approval. The original design for the balustrade is unknown and the proposed design is simplified and is compatible with the historic residence.</p>

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Approval as submitted.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**Mr. Mark McDonald (Historic Savannah Foundation-HSF)** stated that they hold a preservation easement on the property because it was one of HSF's revolving fund properties from the 60's, and they have reviewed and support the application.

**HDRB ACTION:** Ms. Seiler made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the petition as amended. Mr. Gay seconded the motion and it was passed. Mr. Deering recused himself.

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

**Mr. Steffen** stated that the Savannah College of Art and Design Preservation Law class was present and asked them to stand and be recognized

\*(Mr. Hutchinson arrives at approximately 2:15 pm.)

Present for the petition was Chris Ogden

Ms. Ward gave the Staff report.

**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

The petitioner is requesting approval to install a 13-square-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 26 inches tall and 6 feet wide. It is 13 square feet and is 12 inches deep. The size of the sign has decreased by 9 overall square feet; previously the proposed sign was 12 feet tall by 2 feet wide.

2. **Illumination:** The proposed sign will feature exposed red neon 10-inch letters for “Tony Roma’s” spanning approximately 6 feet. The size of the letters has decreased from 1-foot-4-inches and the previous letters spanned approximately 10 feet. Three-inch letters are located at the bottom of the sign with the text “Ribs Seafood Steaks”. These will be illuminated by an internal fluorescent tube.
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 routed lettering on white acrylic background (tagline with 3-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 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 pedestriaways. Projecting signs shall be erected only on the signable area of the structure and shall not project over the roof line or parapet wall elevation of the structure.

No information regarding the clearance was provided; verify with petitioner. The proposed sign has been relocated to the main body of the building between the two central windows and above the first floor storefront.

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

The proposed sign has been significantly reduced in size and appears more in scale with the surrounding commercial establishments along Bay Street. The surrounding businesses generally limit 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 one-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 curbline.

The proposed sign is approximately 13 square feet. This appears to be in keeping with the above requirements however, the linear footage of the building façade was not provided. The sign itself is 6 feet wide and with the installation hardware may prove to extend beyond 6 feet from the face of the building. Information indicating the sign projection in relation to the curb should be provided to staff.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the sign submitted upon verification of the linear footage of the building frontage along Bay Street and the proposed clearance from the sidewalk, projection from the building and curblines with the condition that the width be reduced to five feet, and the white background color be changed to possibly a grey or black to eliminate the “milk glass” effect. Verify that the existing projecting sign will be removed upon installation of the new sign.

However, staff strongly recommends rotating the sign to be a blade sign as previously submitted but incorporating the reduced size which will meet the projection requirements and fit more appropriately on the signable area of the building, provided that no architectural detailing on the windows or cornice are obscured or compromised. The text should read from top to bottom.

Mr. Steffen restated the conditions for the Petitioner to address. He reiterated that the size be reduced to five feet, the background color be changed to grey or black, the projecting sign that was currently there be removed, and that the sign be changed to up and down instead of projecting. He stated that Staff also needed verification that the linear footage requirement was met.

**PETITIONER’S COMMENTS:**

Mr. Chris Ogden stated that the building was approximately 40 feet of frontage. He asked to be allowed to keep the sign where it was unless it infringes on any rules regarding signage or that the Board had. He stated that it was allowed to be six feet from the building and wanted to hang the sign where it doesn’t infringe upon the distance. The color could be worked out by meeting with the sign company and he would remove the existing projecting sign. He stated that he was not in favor of the blade sign, that they were originally going to do a larger sign.

**HDRB ACTION:** Dr. Caplan made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the petition with conditions that the size be reduced to five feet, the color changed to grey or black, the existing sign be removed, and that the sign be changed to up and down instead of projecting. Mr. Deering seconded the motion and it was passed. Dr. Johnson was opposed.

Mr. Steffen stated to Mr. Ogden that the last suggestion regarding going vertical was in his discretion because it was not addressed.

**RE: Continued Petition of Gonzalez Architects  
Jose Gonzalez  
H 06-3550-2  
304 East Bryan Street  
New Construction Part I Height and Mass Four-  
Story Hotel**

**RE: Continued Petition of Gunn Meyerhoff & Shay  
Patrick Shay  
H 05-3503-2  
544 East Liberty Street  
New Construction Part I Height and Mass  
Mixed-Use retail/residential**

**Continued to June 14, 2006, at the Petitioner’s request.**

**RE: Continued Petition of Lee Meyer, AIA  
H 06-3530-2  
417 East Jones Street  
Alteration to Lane Building**

**Continued to June 14, 2006, at the Petitioner’s request.**

Present for the petition was Jose Gonzalez.

Ms. Reiter gave the Staff report.

**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

The applicant is requesting Part I Height and Mass approval of a proposed four-story extended stay hotel on the lots between 304 East Bryan Street and 324 East Bryan Street.

**FINDINGS:**

The site is zoned R-B-C, Residential-Business-Commercial, and adjoins a R-I-P-A, Residential-Institutional-Professional-Amended, zone in Warren Ward. An existing one-story historic building at the corner of Bryan and Lincoln Streets is also to be renovated.

The development has a footprint of over 11,000 square feet and, therefore, meets the definition of large-scale development. The footprint of the two buildings is 180.75 by 90 feet. The Chadbourne Guidelines state, “Today’s office buildings, hotels, retail centers and apartment houses 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 could be made that are good neighbors...the guidelines seek to restore traditional massing to large scale developments.”

The maximum building lot coverage in an R-B-C is 50 percent. A variance is required from the Board of Appeals for 100 percent lot coverage.

Staff met with the applicant on-site prior to the first submittal and urged that the design provide pedestrian access to Bryan Street and respect the residential character of Warren Ward.

The following Part I Height and Mass Standards apply:

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Setbacks: No setbacks are required in RIPA zone.	A ten foot setback is proposed between the structure and the neighboring fence.	The standard is met.

Dwelling Unit Type	This is a suites hotel in the form of a row of townhouses.	
Street elevation Type	The high stoop form has been chosen.	
Entrances	There are three pedestrian entrances at ground level to the parking garage on Bryan Street and three entrances at the second level from high stoops on Bryan Street.	This standard has been met.
Building Height:	The overall height is 43.25 feet. Some sections are about three feet lower. The existing historic building is one story.	The floor-to-floor heights meet the intent of the ordinance.
Tall Building Principles and large scale development	Tall building not applicable. Large scale development: No wall plan exceeds 60 feet without a change in height, setback and/or material. Primary entrances do not exceed 60 feet.	This standard has been met.
Proportion of structure's front façade	The divisions appear taller than they are wide.	The divisions appear compatible.
Proportion of openings	No dimensions given on the windows.	The use of transoms over standard windows to elongate them does not appear appropriate. Windows should be at least 3:5 proportion unless an accent window. These need to be checked and dimensioned for Part II submittal.
Rhythm of solids to voids	A three bay rhythm is utilized which reflects the neighborhood.	This appears compatible.
Rhythm of structure on street	The different sections of the building now have a 30' rhythm or close to it	This appears compatible.
Rhythm of entrances, porch projections, balconies		Submit sections and details of stoops in Part II
Walls of continuity	N/A	

**RECOMMENDATION:****Approval of Part I Height and Mass.**

**Mr. Steffen** asked if Staff was reserving approval of the actual nature of the windows to Part II.

**Ms. Reiter** stated yes because there are no dimensions on the drawing.

**PETITIONER'S COMMENTS:**

**Mr. Gonzalez** stated they had made the changes and they are pleased with the outcome. They hope that the Board will give their approval for Part I. He stated that they would bring back the details as requested by Staff for Part II.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** asked if the setback portions were intended to be stucco.

**Mr. Gonzalez** stated that they were.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**Mr. Mark McDonald (Historic Savannah Foundation)** raised a legal objection to the application being reviewed. He said that it clearly stated in the Staff report that the maximum building lot coverage in the zone was 50 percent and that a variance was required from the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) for 100 percent lot coverage. He stated that he did not believe the Board had the authority to review the petition, or to grant an approval that was not allowed by the Zoning Ordinance. He said that this issue came up at the last meeting and the Board ruled that the petition should be delayed until the BZA acts on the variance request. He asked the Board to be consistent and not review the variance until it had been approved.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that they had gone in both directions as to whether the Board could approve things in an advisory capacity, and then allow the second approval to go through. He asked Mr. McDonald if he was aware of any authority that could be cited.

**Mr. McDonald** stated that he did not have a case law today. He stated that in his career with Administrative Law that it had been the rule. The Board which does not have the authority to make a ruling cannot grant permission. He stated that the practical situation was made worse if the Review Board approved the petition, then the applicant would go to the BZA and state that the Review Board liked the project. He stated that it made the issue very unclear for the BZA, and deprived the surrounding property owners of a right to raise objections regarding lot coverage because the Review Board had already ruled on the issue. He stated that there was no sign posted regarding a variance and the Review Board was giving the applicant a conditional approval to exceed the lot coverage. He said that it violated the public's right-to-notice.

**Mr. Gonzalez** stated that in other communities, and in ours, that you read in the ordinance that this or any project must meet the legal requirements or test that would allow the project to have a variance. Whether the Review Board did or did not approve the petition, if it did not meet the legal test when the BZA reviewed it for a variance, then it did not have a right to have a variance. He stated that here in the past, the Review Board had approved a petition so that when it was presented to another Board, the other Board's ask does the Historic Review Board like the building and does it work. He stated that if they met the test, they did not want to have something approved by the BZA that didn't have any approval from the Review Board. He stated that the two Boards' are independent but this practice was what he found across the board in other states and municipalities. He stated regarding this project that the pool deck is the only area that increases the lot coverage of the project. He argued that the pool deck area was the equivalent area that fits over the historic Building, and if the historic building weren't there that they would be building on the same equivalent area which is what they are requesting a variance for. He stated that if the Review Board approved the massing that it would not

change. That they would not have the pool deck and the buildings would remain the same. He stated that there would be no massing change, and if the variance was denied, that the same building will be seen because they would not change the massing. He said that they designed the massing into the project because, if they were not granted a variance, it would not alter the operation of the building. They would deal with that issue separately because it did not alter the parking lot, the floors, or the building. He stated that he would not have a problem caveating the fact, that an approval by the Board, would not in any way constitute an approval for a variance. This was a public hearing that was advertised and the BZA was a public hearing that would be advertised. If it failed, he would come back with Part II with the same building without the pool.

### **DISCUSSION:**

**Mr. Steffen** stated that it wasn't a matter of whether the Review Board could or could not, but whether the Review Board should. He stated that Mr. McDonald was correct in stating that when the Review Board made a decision, there was the potential of influencing the BZA by a petitioner telling them that the Review Board was in agreement with the issues that the BZA doesn't address under their rules. He said he thought that Mr. Gonzalez was correct in saying that there were two totally independent boards that function independently of one another. The Review Board could make it a policy to defray decisions on projects until the BZA decided on lot coverage when it is an issue, or, the Review Board could approve projects specifically subject to the BZA granting the lot coverage changes. He stated that it was within the Review Board's authority to do one or the other and that he would urge the Review Board to be consistent.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** stated that they have gone both ways and have had projects presented where someone had said that it would not meet the building code. He stated that if the BZA denied the project, it had to come back to the Review Board and that the Review Board had gone both ways. He stated that Mr. Gonzalez explained that if lot coverage was an issue that was denied, that the coverage to gain was the pool area so that the Bryan Street elevation would not be affected. He stated that it would be his feeling that the Review Board could approve the Height and Mass with a condition that if Mr. Gonzalez was denied by the BZA because of lot coverage, it would come back to the Review Board again.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that if it were going to be the Review Board's policy when the approvals are made, that they specifically say the project was approved subject to the rulings of the BZA on which the Review Board takes no position. He stated that Mr. McDonald was very correct in saying that the Board could be seen as influencing the other BZA and, saying that it was all right with all of the other items, that it must be all right with lot coverage.

**Mr. Mitchell** agreed with Mr. Steffen's position that the Review Board would have no position, and that it was not within the Review Board's purview to approve or deny anything based on what might happen with another authority.

**Mr. Neely** stated that the Review Board might be getting hung up on legal issues.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that Mr. Neely was correct and that they were jumping ahead because he first had to decide as a Board whether they want to agree with Staff's recommendation and that it should be discussed. That they had jumped into a second issue.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**Mr. Patrick Shay** stated that he didn't have anything to say about the merits or demerits of the argument, but that it was necessary to point out that at the last meeting he had a petition the

Review Board would not hear because he had to go to the BZA first. He stated that he begged for the Review Board's input in regard to Height and Mass and he was told that he had to go to the BZA before he would hear any feedback from the Review Board.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that was the reason why he specifically made the comment about the fact that the Review Board had been inconsistent, and if they continue to be inconsistent they leave themselves open for legal challenges. He said that the Review Board needed to be consistent today.

**Mr. Joe Sasseen** stated that this was the second or third time that Mr. Gonzalez had appeared before the Review Board, and by giving approval today on the Height and Mass, that the Board was saving him another month. He said that if the Board bypasses the petition today and gets a variance from the BZA, that Mr. Gonzalez had to come back on Height and Mass and asked if that was correct.

**Mr. Deering** stated that if the Board did not vote on the petition today that, yes, Mr. Gonzalez would have to come back for Height and Mass.

**Mr. Sasseen** stated that Mr. Gonzalez would then have to come back on the design of Part II. Then, the Board may not like it and Mr. Gonzalez will have to come back again and again. He said what the Board had done was thrown in an extra month, that these people are developers, and it would appear to him that by putting an addendum on the vote that it would be saving Mr. Gonzalez a month of construction time.

**Dr. Caplan** stated that he wanted to point out something in reference to Mr. Shay's comment, that when the Board usually allowed a project to go through that was above the 75 percent requirement, that it was by a small amount. He said that in Mr. Shay's instance it was 100 percent and that he was right in that it was 100 percent. However, everybody was right with what had been said, including those with a solution to caveat about how the Board's are independent, and this was not an endorsement of the variance. He stated that he felt Mr. Gonzalez had been before the Review Board a lot and that he had done a wonderful job. He thanked Mr. Gonzalez because he wanted the Board to maintain the integrity of Warren Square. He suggested that the Review Board help to keep him from having an unnecessary delay.

**Mr. Deering** agreed with Dr. Caplan on several things. He stated that when the Review Board reviewed a project for a visual compatibility and it was over the required lot coverage, that it was two or seven percent over the required coverage. He said that this project was 50 percent over and the Review Board should uphold what had been done before in the past by saying that the petition needed to go back to BZA before being approved. He stated that he did not think that one month the Review Board should do one thing and another month do the next. That there was no consistency and how could the public know what to expect from the Review Board. He said that it was zoning law and not just visual compatibility.

**Dr. Caplan** stated that the Review Board needed to establish a policy at another forum.

**Mr. Deering** stated that they had the petition now.

**Dr. Caplan** stated that was correct, but, if the Board acted with the understanding, that Mr. Steffen outlined, that the Board may be all right. He said that he was sorry it was not done previously with the matter of a large lot coverage and a large variance, but the applicant needed direction and the Board could not keep bringing the petition back and forth. He stated that there was a rule on continuances if it was continued for a specific reason and those other areas were

not brought up. He stated that he did not know if this issue was specifically addressed the last time, but the applicant deserves some policy and the Board could make it happen.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that as Chairman he had two options. One was to approve the petition and offer no specific direction. The second option was to say, as Mr. Deering stated, that the Review Board would allow the BZA to decide first. He said that the Review Board could do either one but the point was that the Board needed to do be consistent because they had sent out mixed messages.

**Mr. Mitchell** asked if the applicant had the option to seek a variance before coming to the Review Board.

**Mr. Steffen** stated absolutely.

**Mr. Deering** stated the he believed the Review Board had an effect on the BZA, and that he had gotten approval as a petitioner for lot coverage that was two percent or seven percent over. He told the BZA that the Review Board said it was acceptable. That he was sure his comment influenced the people who sit on the BZA.

**Mr. Neely** asked what the Review Board thought about the merits of the project apart from that issue, and wanted to know if it was compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

**Mr. Deering** stated that he would rather not discuss it until the Board decided on the other issue.

**Mr. Gonzalez** stated that he thought he gave a solution to the Board's quandary to delete the pool deck, which does not affect the massing that was visible. The project would fully comply with lot coverage and, therefore, the Board did not have to deal with the issue today. Then, when he came back to the Review Board, if the BZA approved the pool it is there. If not approved the pool would not be there. He stated that it would not affect the massing at all. He said that he gave the Review Board a color graphic at one of the presentations. The court area where the pool had brought the project out of compliance was designed that way knowing that if they don't get the variance, it would not change the massing. If the Board wanted to put a condition on the approval, the deck would not be approved by the Board until it got BZA approval.

**Mr. Steffen** reiterated that Mr. Gonzalez was saying the Board could approve the rest of the project and not approve the pool deck, and that he would take the project to seek approval from the BZA for the additional lot coverage to be able to do the pool deck.

**Mr. Gonzalez** stated that Mr. Steffen was correct.

**Mr. Deering** stated that Mr. Gonzalez would then come back for approval of the deck.

**Mr. Gonzalez** stated that was correct and that the massing in no way affected the pool deck because it was behind the building, and could not be seen from the street, and it was the only thing that caused the violation of exceeding the zoning for the lot coverage. By deleting it, the project was totally in compliance. He stated that they designed it that way because clients don't have the luxury of redesigning projects when they don't get a variance, so they put it into the design.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that he would like the remainder of the Board who had not spoken on this issue to think real hard about the issue because of the Board being inconsistent and it did open it up to legal problems. He stated that the Board needed to be consistent one way or another. They did not necessarily have to agree, but the Board had to vote on a consistent basis. He would like to entertain a motion on the proposal to approve it without the pool deck and the Board could still discuss the question of whether or not they wanted to approve it at all.

**Dr. Caplan** asked if Mr. Steffen was dividing the motion.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that if someone wanted to make a motion to approve the Height and Mass of the project absent the pool deck that it would be in order. But, that the Board needed to discuss whether or not they were going to approve it at all because there had been some concern whether they should.

**HDBR ACTION:** Dr. Caplan made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the petition contingent upon removal of the pool deck.

**Mr. Mitchell** asked if the wording was correct in that it was contingent upon the removal of the pool.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that he was going to pause because some of the members of the public were cut off due to the legal discussion. He asked if there were any members of the public who wanted to address this issue.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**Kathy Ledvina (226 East Bryan Street)** stated that she lived across the street from the proposed project. She stated that her first issue was that she did not understand why she had just seen the project. She said she had called and talked to Staff who said that it had been to the Board three times. She stated that she didn't understand why it had been to the Board three times, and that it just so happened that none of the neighbors came to the Review Board meetings. She said that she went over to the property to figure out why she didn't know that it had been coming to the Review Board. She thought it was because the signage was at 304 East Bryan Street, which is a one-story historic structure. That on the signage it said alterations, and that alterations to her does not mean demolition as well as new construction. She stated that the new construction that was proposed was at 322 East Bryan Street where the mass is, and that she was confused about it and wanted to make it perfectly clear that the sign was deceptive to the public. She said that it was not an alteration at all but that it was a demolition/new construction project and that may be why there had not been a lot of neighbors input. She stated that she spoke to the next door neighbor and that he stated the reason he knew about it was because the superintendent from the previous job had come over and personally spoken to him. She stated that he lived in the duplex on Bryan Street and Habersham off the square, and that the superintendent had spoken to them personally and put the ten-foot buffer building to appease the neighbor.

Ms. Ledvina stated that her second issue was that she had a problem with the massing on the lane that faced Lincoln Street. It was four stories on the lane and had 100 percent lot coverage. She said the lots had not been assembled, the historic building in the parking lot are one lot, and that it was divided in the Sagis map, and that Mr. Gonzalez was asking for 100 percent lot coverage on that portion of the lot. He was going up four stories and she realized that it was allowed, but for that area it doesn't mean it was visually compatible. She stated that one building across the street was a two-story building and the other was a three-story buildings.

The four-story was not visually compatible with the historic buildings around it. She said that if you look up an down the Historic Districts on the lanes, you would never see a four-story building on the lane. There are three-story apartment buildings on the lane, however, they orientate themselves to the north-south streets and they had an entrance on those streets. She stated that the main building facing Bryan was a one-story building and the proposed building behind it was a four-story building and that was backwards. The four-story building should be on Bryan Street and the one-story building should be on the lane but, unfortunately, they were not lucky enough to have an empty lot in the front. The four-story massing looks like the back of a building but it was the side of a building with balconies, no door, was 32 feet across, and there was not a three-bay rhythm. She stated that the building was floating and that she realized it was a gray area because the Chadbourne Guidelines did not accommodate hotels in a residential area. She said that if the Board was going to go ahead with the massing, that she urged the Board to have them orientate the building toward the street and not toward the lane. That it did not define the street or the north/south access, and that the other building across the street on the lane did front Lincoln Street. She said that she was asking the Board that if they would not consider the signage to at least consider the four-story building on the lane that was 100 percent out of place.

**Mr. Bill Stuebe (Downtown Neighborhood Association)** stated that he was concerned about the three levels of balconies on the building which were not visually compatible with a typical three-bay rhythm historic building in the Historic District.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

**Dr. Caplan** stated that they needed to discuss compatibility, but that it was apparent that the Chairman felt that it wasn't time to do it or wanted another motion. That perhaps that was why it was rejected. He stated that the Board needed to do one or another. He asked if they were going to discuss whether or not it was visually compatible.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that they could and that they could have a motion on any subject related to the project for, against, or otherwise. That the petitioner could ask for continuance and those were the three choices.

**Mr. Neely** stated that the consensus may be for consistency to go to the BZA first.

**Mr. Deering** stated that he agreed with Mr. Neely that was important that it was in place especially since just a month or two ago they asked someone else to do the same thing and would not even talk about their project. He said that if the petitioner did want to remove the pool deck, then his submittal was not in compliance with the submittal criteria. He stated that either way that Mr. Gonzalez was going to have to ask for a continuance because the submittal was different. If he was removing the pool deck then neither the Board nor the public had seen the drawings.

**Mr. Gonzalez** stated that the Board allowed people to delete and add to projects. This was a simple deletion. He said that the pool deck was very clean, it was one level, and if it was deleted the massing would remain the same. He stated that he presented this project at the second meeting to make sure that the Board was aware that it was the only issue in regard to whether they needed a variance or not. He stated that they had no issue with deleting the pool, that it does not change the massing. He said that the Board might have other issues in regard to the massing but in regard to the question whether the petition should be heard or not, that the Board on many occasions had conditioned anything from removing a balcony to removing a window.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that there were three possibilities right now. There had been a motion made to approve the project without the pool deck and the motion died for the lack of a second, and that at maximum there was only one person who supported that motion. He said that he could not count himself because he did not vote unless there was a tie. He stated that the first possibility was that there could be a continuance on this item, the second possibility was that someone make a motion to approve the item as it was with the condition that the Board send no guidance to the BZA as he suggested as an earlier possibility. The third possibility was that he was denied and those are the only three options right now that are left because the option that Mr. Gonzalez suggested was made and no one seconded it. He stated that the Board could do one of the three things, but that they could only do the continuance with his acquiescence.

**Mr. Gonzalez** stated that they were all fully aware of the process and that a continuance was what they would like, and that an alternative of a denial was not what they are looking for. He stated that they had been coming in good faith and making modifications at the Board's request on different issues, and they were trying to respond to the different requests and concerns with massing. The issue of the pool was a benign issue in his opinion. They might have other issues and they were certainly open to them. If the Board would give him the other issues since he had come before the Board for a third time. He said that what he did not want to do, in the interest of fairness, was to have the project not heard simply because the Board did not want to deal with the issue, because of the fact that it had been done one way on some projects and another way on others. The Board had not been consistent. They were not going to challenge the Board on the inconsistencies because everyone knew the inconsistencies, and they deal with the inconsistencies everyday. He said that if it was the only thing that was keeping the Board from hearing it, then don't punish him for another 30 days by saying that the Board would not hear it because of the pool deck. However, if the Board had other issues that he could come back in good faith and make modifications that he would be glad to do so.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** stated that while the Board had been inconsistent on whether or not the item should go before the BZA for another reason, the Board had been very consistent that the drawing and models that are submitted were what the Board gauged the Height and Mass and compatibility on. For Mr. Gonzalez to say for the Board to consider the project without the pool deck was something that the Board could not do. He said that the Board needed drawings and models that showed the project the way it was going to be. He stated that he would suggest that Mr. Gonzalez accept the continuance and present the Board with new drawings without the pool deck so that it could be seen on the drawings and in mass. He said that the Board had been very rigid about having the correct submittal in keeping with what the owner or whoever presents the project showed the Board.

**Dr. Caplan** stated that while the Board was striving for consistency that he would agree with Mr. Gonzalez that the Board allowed for changes while discussing additions or deletions all the time on virtually every project. He stated that it was not a major thing that required another model. That they were just taking out a pool deck.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** stated that a pool deck was pretty major because they are talking about 60 by 40 feet.

**Dr. Caplan** stated that in terms of the massing you just delete the mass and the other mass was maintained. He stated that he agreed with Mr. Gonzalez that the Board was being unreasonable.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that the petitioner wished to have a continuance and that he would like to have a motion to that effect. If any of the Board members wanted to offer Mr. Gonzalez any more input on the general compatibility of the project, that they take the opportunity to do so.

**Dr. Caplan** stated that the rule was when the Board gives a continuance that they specify what the continuance was for. He stated that was the agreement the Board had with the architects that was done approximately over one year ago. He stated that the Board had an agreement with the architects, that he could show them in the minutes of the past meetings, that if there was a continuance that the Board says what the continuance was for and the discussion was limited to that. He said that the Board could make the motion any way that they want to, but it was unfair for the applicant to come and receive a continuance for one reason, and then next month the Board wants to continue it for something else.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that in respect to that he was going to go ahead and rule that the Board was not required to do that at this time. If between this meeting and the next one, it could be shown that he would be happy to abide by it. That it was not in the Robert's Rules and it was not in his packet and that he was going to allow a motion for a continuance to a date specific.

**Dr. Caplan** stated that all he was asking was that the Board be specific about the reasons for a continuance.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that he had asked the Board that after there was a motion and it was seconded, that if there are any comments to be directed to Mr. Gonzalez specifically that he does want them to do that. That he did agree with the fact that Mr. Gonzalez does not need to be coming back and hearing different things at different times.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** stated that as a specific that Mr. Gonzalez had told the Board that he would delete the deck. He said that if Mr. Gonzalez was going to delete the pool deck that the Board would like to see a presentation with the pool deck not in the drawings and in the model.

**Mr. Gonzalez** stated that he did present that to the Board in a public meeting and that there was not anything that the Board had that was new. He stated that he could produce the document and wanted to be clear on that.

**Mr. Gay** stated that if he doesn't get the variance that he will delete the pool deck as an option. He stated that Mr. Gonzalez still wants the pool deck to his understanding.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** stated that the motion was already made and that it wasn't seconded.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that the only motion that was in order right now was a motion for a continuance.

**HDBR ACTION:** Ms. Seiler made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review continue the petition until a variance is received from the Board of Zoning Appeals. Mr. Mitchell seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

**Mr. Gonzalez** stated that the motion just precluded them from simply not going after a variance and resubmitting it to the Board. He asked it to be clarified.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that he didn't think that it did and that Mr. Gonzalez could go ahead and submit something different.

**Mr. Gonzalez** stated that most communities recognized that the aesthetic component of a project was so significant that if massing was not appropriate for the neighborhood, it obviously was an overriding concern. Sometimes the Board's viewpoint on massing and aesthetic issues was so significant to the character of the neighborhood, that before any variance could ever be considered, the Board's was usually heard first. He said that he would urge the Board, that they be consistent, and that Mr. Shay was correct because he suffered the opposite at the last meeting. He stated that the Board should be able to caveat their approval to say this was our aesthetic review of the project in terms of appropriateness in community character. Whether it met other zoning issues that are subject to those hearings and its own set of rules, he didn't think the Board should dilute their opinion or that they should let their opinion be used, but that they should make the process very clear and definitive to the applicant.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that he was closing the subject by saying that the Board did need to be consistent because as long as the petitioners had to go through the Board's process, that the legal process takes far, far longer. That if they end up in a situation where they are not consistent then they invite that process.

**Mr. Seiler** stated that she was concerned about the resident's confusion over the signage and asked if the item could be put back on the agenda later to be discussed further.

**RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval.**

**RE: Continued Petition of Gunn, Meyerhoff & Shay  
Patrick Shay  
H 06-3566-2  
14 – 22 West Liberty  
New Construction Part I Height and Mass of a  
Five-Story Mixed Use Building(Hotel,  
Condominiums, and Retail)**

Continued at Petitioner's request

**RE: Continued Petition of Roy D. Ogletree  
H 06-3570-2  
543 – 547 McDonough Street  
New Construction of Part I Height and Mass of  
Eleven Townhomes to be Built in Phases.**

Present for the petition was Roy Ogletree

Ms. Ward gave the Staff report.

**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

The applicant is requesting approval for New Construction, Part I Height and Mass, of 11 three and one-half and four-story single-family dwelling units on the southeast Trust Lot facing Crawford Square.

**FINDINGS:**

The property is zoned RIP-A, Residential, Medium-Density. The development will be constructed in phases beginning on East Broad Street and working west toward Houston Street.

The following standards apply for Part I Height and Mass:

Standard	Proposed	Comment
<i>Building Coverage:</i> Maximum lot coverage of 75%. No setbacks are required in RIP-A zone.	The applicant is proposing 11 single-family townhomes on 11 lots. They maintain building lot coverages ranging from 50% to 75%.	The standard is met. A subdivision plat will need to be filed and recorded prior to issuance of a building permit.
<i>Setbacks:</i> There shall be no front yard setbacks except on a trust lot fronting a square, proposed buildings may establish a front yard setback not to exceed 20'.  A side yard setback is not required for buildings facing a square. Where a side yard setback is established, such side yard shall not exceed 20' nor be less than 5'.	The proposed building on the square will be setback from the street 12' to provide a sidewalk and street yard. This space is public right-of-way.  The dwellings on McDonough Street have a 15' setback. This is actually public right-of-way and will be used for greenspace.	Staff recommends approval. The front yard setback is consistent with the historic building on the northeast trust lot.  Staff recommends approval.
<i>Height:</i> New construction shall be within the height limits as shown on the historic district height map (4 stories).	East Broad Street: Three 3½ - story townhomes are proposed. They are 41'-10" tall.	The standard is met. The funeral home on the northeast Trust Lot is 44' tall and the new townhomes on E. Perry Street are 38' tall.
	East Perry Street: Four 3 ½-story townhomes are proposed. They are 42'-6" tall.  East McDonough Street: Two 3 ½ story dwellings are proposed, which are 42'-6" tall.  Houston Street: A four-story duplex is proposed facing Crawford Square. It is 43'-2" tall.	
<i>Residential buildings:</i> Raised basements shall be not less than 6'-6" and not higher than 9'-6". The first story or second story, in the case of a raised basement, shall be not less than 11', and each story above shall be not less than 10'.	E. Broad Street: the ground floor is approximately 10'-2" tall. The second floor exterior expression is 11'-6" and the third floor is 10'-6" with dormers above.  East Perry Street: the ground floor is approximately 10'-2" tall. The second floor exterior expression is 11'-6" and the third floor is approximately 10'-6" tall with dormers in the side gable roof.  East McDonough Street: The ground floor is approximately 10'-2" tall. The second floor exterior expression is approximately 11'-6" tall and the third floor is 10'-6" with dormers above.	The standards state that the ground floor shall be not higher than 9'-6" in height. The applicant needs to reduce the height of the ground floor by 8" to meet the standards. The ground floor has been elevated to mitigate drainage concerns in the parking areas within the ground floor.  Staff recommends approval of the 9'-1" fourth floor which indicates the hierarchy of the building façade and reduces the overall height of the building.

	<p>Houston Street: the ground floor elevation is approximately 10'-2" tall. The second floor is 11'-6", the third floor is 10'-6" and the fourth floor is 9'-1" tall.</p>	
<p><i>Proportion of structure's front façade:</i> The relationship of the width of a structure to the height of its front façade shall be visually compatible to the contributing structures to which it is visually related.</p>	<p>The E. Broad Street elevation consists of three 3 ½ story masonry townhomes, three bays wide and spanning 20', with high stoop entrances.</p> <p>The interior dwellings on McDonough Street are each five bays wide, spanning approximately 40', and 3 ½ stories tall with central high stoop entrances.</p>	<p>All of the proposed structures appear proportionate to neighboring structures which feature 2, 3, and 5 bays with high low stoop entrances and three and four stories tall. The overall height has been reduced by incorporating gable roofs with dormers; previously all buildings were 4-stories with parapeted roofs.</p> <p>Staff recommends simplifying the entrances on the McDonough Street elevation during the Part II design submittal. Currently, the buildings resemble two stately residences joined together, which would have typically been</p>
	<p>The four townhomes on Perry Street are approximately 20' wide containing three bays and are 3.5 stories tall with paired high stoop entrances.</p> <p>The Houston Street elevation consists of a four-story duplex, each with three bays approximately 30' wide with a paired high stoop entrance.</p>	<p>separated by some open space.</p> <p>Generally, paired stoop entrances within Crawford Ward are distinguished by individual porticos placed closely together. Staff recommends restudy of the entrances during the Part II submittal.</p> <p>See previous comments regarding paired entrances.</p>
<p><i>Proportion of Openings:</i> The relationship of the width of the windows to the height of the windows within a structure shall be visually compatible to the contributing structures to which the structure is related.</p>	<p>The proposed buildings will consume the entire block. Openings are comparable to neighboring buildings on Perry and McDonough Streets which feature duplexes and rowhouses (both masonry and wood frame) with high and ground level stoops.</p>	<p>The standard is met.</p>
<p><i>Rhythm of structures on streets:</i> The relationship of a structure to the open space between it and adjacent structures shall be visually compatible with the open spaces between contributing structures to which it is visually related.</p>	<p>The townhouses on E. Broad and Houston Streets span the entire 60' of the lot width with no open space. The dwellings on McDonough and Perry Streets have 20' of open space between them and the neighboring buildings to the east and west. A majority of the buildings within the immediate vicinity are</p>	<p>Staff recommends approval. The revised configuration was in response to the board's previous comments and the number of curb cuts have been dramatically reduced to only 2. The open space, while not typical of the area, breaks up the overall massing of the project. The garden wall</p>

	<p>adjacent to one another or are separated by 5' to 10' of open space. Pedestrian entrances into the interior of the lot are located along Perry Street and two automobile curb cut entrances are on McDonough Street.</p>	<p>connecting the townhomes provides a wall of continuity along the street level.</p> <p>If the applicant wishes to keep the more ornate entrances along McDonough Street, creating open space between the structures would be more appropriate since the dwellings are each 5 bays wide.</p>
<p><i>Walls of continuity:</i> Appurtenances of a structure such as walls, wrought iron, fences shall form consistent walls of enclosure along a street.</p>	<p>Ten foot garden walls with vehicular and pedestrian openings define the property and open space on Perry and McDonough Streets.</p>	<p>The standard has been met.</p>
<p><i>Rhythm of entrance and/or porch projection:</i> The relationship of entrances, porch projections, and walkways to structures shall be visually compatible with the contributing structures to which they are visually related.</p>	<p>All of the proposed dwelling units maintain high stoop entrances with portions of the ground floor dedicated to parking. Garage door entries on the front facades have been eliminated in response to the board's comments and are now contained within the interior of the block.</p>	<p>Staff recommends approval. The applicant has responded to both staff and board comments regarding the number of garage door entrances.</p>
<p><i>Roof Shapes:</i> The roof shape shall be visually compatible with the contributing structures to which it is visually related.</p>	<p>A flat roof with a simplified cornice is proposed for the building facing Houston Street. The remaining buildings feature side gable roofs with dormers.</p>	<p>The standard is met. The neighboring historic structure on the trust lot is 4-stories with a flat or parapet roof. Side gable roofs with dormers are present in the ward. Although they are typically on wood frame buildings, this roof configuration has reduced the overall height and mass of the buildings and can be found in other areas of the historic district (Davenport House).</p>
<p><i>Street Elevation Type:</i> A proposed building on an east-west connecting street shall utilize an existing historic building street elevation type located within the existing block front or on an immediately adjacent titling or trust block.</p> <p>A proposed building located on a trust block which fronts another trust block shall utilize a historic buildings street elevation type from the same trust block.</p>	<p>The masonry townhomes on Perry Street feature four units with paired high stoop entrances which are common in the ward. The dwellings on McDonough Street, are 5 bay residences with paired central stairs and entry porticos. Five bay buildings are present in the ward but are typically stand alone structures.</p> <p>A four-story masonry duplex with a paired high stoop entrance and a rusticated base is proposed to face Crawford Square. Each duplex is symmetrical with three bays. The neighboring masonry</p>	<p>The standard is met. As stated previously, staff recommends restudy of the entrances along Perry and McDonough for the Part II submittal and/or providing some open space between the 5-bay structures.</p> <p>The standard is met. Staff recommends separating the entrances during the Part II submittal.</p>

	<p>building on the northeast Trust Lot is four stories with high central covered stoop and has 5 bays. High stoop duplexes and rowhouses are found throughout the ward.</p>	
<p><i>Entrances:</i> A building on a trust lot facing a square shall locate its primary entrance to front the square.</p> <p>A building on a trust lot not facing a square shall locate its primary entrance so that it fronts the same street as the other historic buildings on the same block.</p>	<p>A paired high-stoop entrance is proposed in the center of the building.</p> <p>The interior townhomes front both McDonough and Perry Streets.</p>	<p>The standard is met.</p>

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**Approval for Part I, Height and Mass with the condition that the ground floor exterior expressions meet the 9-foot - 6-inch maximum height standard and that the dwellings on McDonough Street be separated by open space if the five-bay Davenport House model is to be used.**

**Considerations for Part II, Design: restudy the paired entrances along Perry and Houston Streets, and simplify the McDonough Street entrances if using the model submitted.**

**PETITIONER’S COMMENTS:**

**Mr. Ogletree** stated that at the last meeting there were a lot of comments regarding scale of the buildings, the open space between the buildings, the slenderness of the buildings, and the amount of curb cuts catering to the automobile on the site. He stated that they went back to the drawing board and tried to come up with a different approach to the same basic development. He said that they still had a similar number of townhomes, but there was more diversity now than before. He said that they reduced the apparent heights of the buildings from the street by doing a three and one-half-story versus a full four-story façade. He stated that they maintained four stories on the square because he felt that it was appropriate and it helped to create consistency with the historic structure (funeral home) on the other trust lot. He said that he respected the comments from the Staff about the stoops and would like the Board to consider what they are proposing because they are paired stoops with many precedents within the Historic District with paired stoops.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that the paired stoops will be discussed with Part II and that the only thing that the Board needed to hear was whether he was in agreement with the two Staff conditions. He said that one was meeting the nine-foot six-inch maximum stoop height standard and, two, that on McDonough Street the units be separated by open space if the five-bay Davenport model was used.

**Mr. Ogletree** stated that he thought they could work easily with the eight-inch difference on the height. He stated that the actual stoop expression was nine-foot six, and that the ten-foot two

was truly from grade. He stated that the true expression was not a full ten-foot two, but that he could work with Staff on getting it to be acceptable and that it was not a problem. He said that the separation of the two buildings on McDonough also had to do with the stoop question. There are two residences that actually had 22 feet from the curb to the property line, an extremely wide right-of-way. He stated that he felt that an expression of a more elaborate stoop on that side created a nice expression on that large front yard.

**Mr. Deering** stated that he commended Mr. Ogletree for going back to the drawing board and coming up with a solution that was superior to what the Board saw last month, and that he had done a good job in separating the buildings, especially with the garage doors and the driveways fronting the two streets. He said that he didn't have a problem with the East Broad Street townhouses, but that he did with the McDonough side. There are five bay houses in the district that had simple stoops and they butt right up against something else. He might use them as an example. He stated that he agreed with Staff that the imagery of the Davenport house pushed right up against something else doesn't work. He stated that he might think about increasing the roof slightly and making the dormers not quite so compressed.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**Cassie Dolecki (Historic Savannah Foundation)** stated that the Architectural Review Committee felt that this new submission was much more in keeping with the rhythm and scale of the Crawford Ward rather than the prior one. They agreed with Staff that the dwellings fronting McDonough Street should be separated by open space because of the five-bay rhythm or the entrances should be simplified.

**HDRB ACTION:** Mr. Deering made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the petition with a restudy of the stoop massing on McDonough Street, to restudy issues with the Part II design, and to reduce the first floor height by eight inches. Mr. Meyerhoff seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval with conditions.

RE: Petition of DPK & A Architects, For  
Savannah College of Art & Design (SCAD)  
H 06-3580-2  
227 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard (Kiah Hall)  
Rehabilitation/Addition/Alterations

Withdrawn by SCAD

RE: Petition of Ronald W. Erickson  
H 06-3583-2  
308 – 310 West Taylor Street  
New Construction of a Three-Story Duplex Part I  
and II

Present for the petition was Ronald Erickson

Ms. Ward gave the Staff report.

**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

The applicant is requesting approval for New Construction, Part I Height & Mass and Part II Design, of two semi-attached townhouses on the property at 308 and 310 West Taylor Street. The applicant is also requesting to demolish the non-historic three-bay garage/shed structure which is currently sited on the property.

**FINDINGS:**

The property at 308 through 310 West Taylor is currently zoned B-C, Community Business. The Metropolitan Planning Commission approved the application for a rezone to RIP-A, Residential, Medium-Density on May 2, 2006, and the final decision will go before City Council. A subdivision plat will need to be filed and recorded prior to issuance of a building permit. The applicant provided a detailed description of how the project meets the standards set for the in the Historic District Ordinance, Section 8-3030, with the submittal so the staff report is a brief assessment of those findings.

**The following Part I Height and Mass Standards apply:**

Standard	Proposed	Comment
<i>Setbacks &amp; Coverage:</i> No setbacks are required in RIP-A zone. A 75% maximum lot coverage standard is allowed in RIP-A.	The proposed buildings will have a 69% building lot coverage once the property is subdivided.	The standard is met.
<i>Street elevation Type:</i> A proposed building on an east-west connecting street shall utilize an existing historic building street elevation type located within the existing block front or an immediately adjacent titling or trust block.	A three-story brick duplex, three bays wide, with a raised stucco ground level and high stoop entrance is proposed. This is a common type found throughout block, Berrien Ward, and the historic district.	The standard is met. There is only one historic building within the block face which is four bays wide, 2-stories tall, with a low porch entrance.
<i>Entrances:</i>	Entrances face W. Taylor Street and are defined by high stoop porticos on a scored stucco base. These are consistent with what was historically on the property and other structures in the block and ward.	Staff recommends approval.
	Garage entrances are located on the ground level facing W. Taylor Street since the lot does not have access to the lane.	Staff recommends approval. Garage doors are not typically located on the front of the building; however, there are pedestrian entrances at the same level and the wood swing doors meet the standards for garage doors on a street and the property does not maintain another means of access to off-street parking.
<i>Building Height:</i> The property is in a 3 story maximum height zone.	The proposed duplex is three stories tall at 34'-7½" above the slab foundation.	The standard is met.

<p>Raised Basements shall not be less than 6'-6" and not higher than 9'-6". The floor above shall not be less than 11' and each story above shall not be less than 10'.</p>	<p>The ground level is 7'-10½"; the exterior expression of the first floor above is 11'-8" and the second floor is 10'.</p>	<p>The standard is met.</p>
<p><i>Rhythm of solids to voids:</i></p>	<p>A 3 bay rhythm on the three story duplex has been incorporated into the design. Three bays are common in the ward.</p>	<p>The standard is met.</p>
<p><i>Proportion of openings:</i> The relationship of the width of the windows to the height of the windows within a structure shall be visually compatible.</p>	<p>The window openings have a 3:5.5 ratio throughout. The ratio of each town home is 3:3.7.</p>	<p>Staff recommends increasing the length of the first floor windows to break up the amount of solid on the façade. Traditionally, openings on the parlor level are taller than those on the upper floors and elongating the parlor level windows may create a more vertical effect. In addition, it may appear more proportionate if the top floor windows were lowered to decrease the amount of solid between the first and second floor openings.</p>
<p><i>Rhythm of structure on street:</i> The relationship of a structure to the open space between it and adjacent structures shall be visually compatible with the open spaces between contributing structures to which it is visually related.</p>	<p>The building is semi-attached with approximately 8' of open space to the west and a vacant parcel to the east. The proposed building is only 3'-5" off of the west property line.</p>	<p>The standard is met. The attached configuration of the building is appropriate as rowhouses dominate the block.</p>
<p><i>Rhythm of entrances and/or porch projections:</i> The relationship of entrances, porch projections, and walkways to structures shall be visually compatible with the contributing structures to which the structure is visually related.</p>	<p>The building will be setback 2' from W. Taylor Street with a 4' porch projection from the face of the building. The duplex will be attached in the center and have a 3'-5" setback on either side. The setbacks and porch projections are consistent with other buildings within the block.</p>	<p>The standard is met.</p>

**The following Part II Design Standards Apply:**

Standard	Proposed	Comments
<p><i>Exterior Walls:</i> On lots less than 60' in width the front façade shall be constructed so as to form a continuous plane parallel to the street. Porches may project street ward of the plane.</p> <p>Exterior walls shall be finished in brick, wood, or true stucco.</p>	<p>The duplex maintains a continuous masonry wall along W. Taylor Street with portico projections on the east and west ends of the façade.</p> <p>A scored stucco base is proposed for the ground floor with brick veneer for the remainder of the building in a running course pattern. Brick is Hanson Brick "Carolina</p>	<p>The standard is met.</p>

	<p>Collection. Old Savannah. Queen-size.” Mortar will be Jenkins “Premium Light Gray.’ Cast stone lintels and sills will be incorporated into the window and door surrounds.</p>	
<p><i>Windows and doors:</i> Residential windows facing a street shall be double or triple hung, casement or Palladian. New residential construction shall have wood or wood clad windows.</p> <p>Double glazed (simulated divided light) windows are permitted on new construction provided: the muntins are no wider than 7/8”, the muntin profile shall simulate traditional putty glazing; lower sash shall be wider than the meeting and top rails; extrusions shall be covered.</p>	<p>Windows and transoms and glazed doors are to be Norco, aluminum clad wood, double-hung sash, 6-over-6, simulated divided light windows with standard 7/8” muntins with putty glazing and a spacer bar.</p> <p>Entrance doors are treated wood raised panel doors with weather stripping and hardware.</p>	<p>Staff recommends approval. The Norco windows have been previously approved in the historic district.</p>
<p><i>Shutters:</i> Shall be hinged and operable and sized to fit the window opening. Horizontal rails shall correspond to the location of the meeting rail of the window. They shall be constructed of wood, or other materials shown to be compatible.</p>	<p>Operable shutters are proposed that fit the window openings. They are a PVC material, with extruded aluminum stiles on the sides manufactured by “New Horizon Shutters” in North Charleston, SC.</p>	<p>Staff recommends restudy of the shutter and resubmitting to staff for final approval. The shutter itself is comparable in design, composition, texture, and appearance to the Atlantic Shutter that has been previously approved. However, the bolts and hardware do not have any correlation to a historic shutter and are not appropriate in the historic district.</p>
<p><i>Roof shape:</i> The roof shape of a structure shall be visually compatible with the contributing structures to which it is visually related.</p> <p>Parapets shall have a string course of not less than 6” in</p>	<p>A low sloop roof behind a 1’-2’ brick parapet is proposed with a metal and brick coping 6” high and overhanging 1” and a string course projecting 1 3/8” from the building. The neighboring historic building features the same roof configuration as does the entire</p>	<p>Staff recommends approval. The overhand for the corbelling of the brick was reduced from the standards to meet Building Code requirements, which limits the amount of overhang for brick veneer construction.</p>
<p>depth and extending at least 4” from the face of the building, running the full width of the building between 1’ and 1½’ from the top of the parapet.</p>	<p>row of buildings across the street.</p>	
<p><i>Balconies, stoops, stairs, porches:</i> Stoop piers and base walls shall be the same material as the foundation wall facing the street. Infill between foundation piers shall be recessed so that the piers are expressed. Stairs</p>	<p>The proposed entrance stoops are 9’ above grade with scored stucco bases, wood stairs and balustrade and wood portico above. A recessed entry door is located within the stoop and the stoop piers come forward from</p>	<p>Staff recommends approval. The garage doors on the front of the building are dictating that the entrance stoop be more narrow than usual. Although staff would like to see a wider portico, widening of the building</p>

<p>shall be constructed of brick, wood, pre-cast stone, marble, sandstone, or slate. Portico posts shall have a cap and base molding and the capital shall extend outward of the porch architrave. Stoop heights shall not exceed 9'-6".</p>	<p>the recessed portion.</p>	<p>would not be proportionate to the height and openings of the structure..</p>
<p><i>Lanes &amp; Carriage Houses:</i> Garage openings shall not exceed 12' in width. Overhead garage doors shall not be used on street fronts, unless they are detailed to resemble gates.</p>	<p>The garage openings are 9'. The doors are sectional overhead wood doors with applied trim to simulate historic carriage house doors.</p>	<p>The standard is met.</p>
<p><i>Fences:</i> Walls and fences shall not extend beyond the façade of the front elevation. Walls and fences facing a public street shall be constructed of the material and color of the primary building.</p>	<p>A 6'-2" wooden fence is proposed for the side and rear of the property with a wooden gate facing the street level with the front façade.</p>	<p>The standard is met. Although the material is wood, the fence is at the side and rear not facing the street.</p>
<p><i>Colors:</i></p>	<p>Window frames, portico, balustrade and trim – white                  Pre-cast stone lintels and sills – "Classic Gray                  Scuppers, Leaderheads, and downspouts – unfinished copper                  Shutters, doors, stairs, handrails, gates – Savannah Black/Green                  Stucco Base – Grey to match lintels</p>	<p>Staff approval.</p>

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**Approval for New Construction Part I and Part II with restudy of the vertical window placement and the shutter material to be resubmitted to Staff for final approval.**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**Cassie Dolecki (Historic Savannah Foundation)** stated that the Architectural Review Committee felt that garages on the front facades of dwellings were not appropriate for this area and were not in context with the row across Taylor Street. She stated that garages on the front façade opened up the pedestrian right-of-way to vehicular traffic and became a safety hazard for walkers.

**HDBR ACTION:** Mr. Meyerhoff made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the petition with Part I Height and Mass and Part II Design with the condition that Staff recommends. Ms. Seiler seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

RE: Petition of Rowland Commercial Development  
H 06-3586-2  
229 Price Street  
Demolition/New Construction Part I

The Preservation Officer recommends continuance.

**HDRB ACTION:** Mr. Deering made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Review Board continue the petition. Dr. Johnson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

RE: Petition of The Oglethorpe, LLC  
H 06-3587-2  
143 Houston Street  
Demolition/New Construction Part I

Withdrawn by Petitioner

RE: Petition of Gunn Meyerhoff Shay  
H 06-3588-2  
508 – 512 West Oglethorpe  
Demolition/New Construction of Five-Story  
Hotel

The Preservation Officer recommends continuance.

Mr. Meyerhoff recused.

Present for the petition was Patrick Shay.

Ms. Reiter gave the Staff report.

**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

The applicant is requesting approval to:

1. Demolish the Econo-Lodge Motel
2. Part I Height and Mass to erect a five story “L” shaped hotel in two phases. The first phase is a rectangular portion on the north end of the lot along Laurel Street easement between Ann Street and Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard (MLK).

**FINDINGS:**

1. The maximum lot coverage allowed in a B-C district is 100 percent.
2. The existing motel was originally built in 1966 as a Travel Lodge Motel. It has undergone a number of physical transformations and does not appear to possess any historic significance.
3. The applicant needs to provide an elevation of the external appearance of the connecting wall between phases.

**The following Part I Height and Mass Standards apply:**

Standard	Proposed	Comment (See below)
Setbacks: No setbacks are required in BC district when next to BC.	No streetside setbacks proposed except at entrances.	
Dwelling Unit Type	Hotel mixed use	
Street elevation Type	Ground entrance. Two floors underground parking.	
Entrances	Entrance to parking garage off Laurel Street. First phase lobby off MLK with automobile court on Laurel Street easement. Second phase lobby on Ann Street and corner condo entrances at Oglethorpe Avenue and at Laurel Street on Ann.	
Building Height:	Five stories, 51'-6" to top of parapet. 16'-9" decorative devices at various points above the parapet.	
Tall Building Principles and large scale development Frontage divided into 60' sections Bays between 15-20 feet wide Parapet roof or bracketed corbelled or entablature. Primary entrances not exceed 60 feet.	The primary entrance is on MLK for the hotel and corner of Ann and Laurel for the Condos. The bay spacing on the front is 7'-5", 13'-1", 7'-5", 6'-7" 27' and reflected. The roof has a solid parapet and railing with finials and a 16'-9" high device over the entrances.	
Proportion of structure's front façade	The front façade consists of a three-part division with the center part a cylindrical mass with recesses dividing it from the end masses which have recessed center portions.	
Proportion of openings	Without an enlarged detail or written dimensions, it is difficult to tell whether the windows meet the standards for proportion (3:5). On the East (main) elevation there appear to be too few windows for the amount of solid surface.	
Rhythm of solids to voids	See tall building principles above.	
Rhythm of structure on street	See comments below	
Rhythm of entrances, porch projections, balconies	Recessed entrance behind a curved screen. Some recessed balconies on Laurel Street and Ann Street elevations.	

Scale	The building will ultimately take up $\frac{3}{4}$ of a block over 300 feet long by over 243 feet wide.	
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This is a critical and at the same time difficult site. It is located at a main entrance to the National Historic Landmark District along what could become an elegant entry boulevard from the bridge. There is little historic context which could be viewed as a plus. Here is an opportunity for a contemporary expression. The hotel is to occupy three-fourths of a 300-foot plus by 243-foot plus city block, one quarter of which is occupied by a gas station. While the site with Ann Street and the Laurel Street easement provide excellent opportunities to handle vehicular arrival, the rhythms and massing and juxtaposition of the various shaped elements of the proposed structure do not establish an urban dialog that this site demands. Neither does it appear to meet the Historic District standards. Staff recommends significant divisions in the massing to reduce the overall box-like form. In addition, reconsideration should be given for the condo entries so that Oglethorpe Avenue could also have entry features indicative of a prominent boulevard.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Continuation to further explore an urban expression for this important site.

**PETITIONER’S COMMENTS:**

**Mr. Patrick Shay** stated that someone asked him when there were going to be enough hotels in Downtown Savannah. He stated that at the end of 2005 there were 2,800 hotel rooms in the Historic District convention service area including the Westin Hotel on Hutchinson Island. He said that there are 11,000 countywide in Chatham County. The 2,800 rooms in the Historic District in the year 2005, made available 988,000 room nights. He said that 720,000 of the room nights were sold (73 percent) throughout the district and the average room rate was \$138. He stated that the average room rate for hotels outside of the Historic District were \$50 per room rate less or about \$88 per room as opposed to \$138. He stated that he did not know why the question was asked, but if only one-quarter of the hotel rooms in Chatham County are located in the Historic District, they are the most desirable and the most profitable. He said that he didn’t think that the Board was about to see the demand for hotels decrease at any time in the very near future. He stated the other thing that was discussed was that in order for Savannah to be a successful convention destination, Savannah needed more hotels with 300 rooms under one roof, and that the convention meeting planners don’t like having to book the attendees in eight or ten hotels in order to meet the room block. He stated that the Board may not like to consider economics, but that he felt that it was informative.

He said that he wanted the Board to understand the dynamics of the site. The property is a very odd-shaped piece that surrounds a single-story gas station on the corner. One of the changes that was made in the standards recently was that it was no longer acceptable to approve single-story buildings that face main streets, other than the Lanes, in the Historic District. He said that there was a small piece that was part of the property and there was an easement for utility lines, and that he suspected that at one time Laurel Street might have been a through street. He stated that what he was proposing for this project was to reopen Laurel Street. He said that as Staff reported it was in a B-C1 zone, the most intensively structured zoning district within Chatham County, and the height limit for this area was five stories. He stated that the project requirements are that the hotel be built in two phases of approximately 150 rooms in Phase I and 150 rooms in Phase II, and that it may or may not have a hotel complex that consists of two hotels under one franchise, or that there may be two hotels that are joined together with

different franchises. He stated that something that makes this an interesting and unique site was that there was almost no historic context for this area. He stated that if you go back to the old maps, these areas were small worker cottages for the railroads that had been demolished a long time ago. The nearby adjacent buildings are 1960's, and that there were some remaining historic fabric in some buildings, but they had been completely refacaded. He pointed out the Chatham County buildings; the courthouse, the Chatham County jail that was being renovated for office space with the addition of a fifth floor, and the recently constructed Hampton Inn Suites. He stated that it was unlike the other sites that had been considered today in that it was not surrounded by a lot of existing historic fabric. It was an important gateway but that it was one of the sites that was available, already assembled under one owner, and combined into one lot. This would allow a footprint that would sustain 300 hotel rooms and that was one of the reasons that it was a unique challenge. He stated that the frontage on Oglethorpe Avenue was much less than the frontage of the adjacent Hampton Inn Suites. While it was possible to look at the building and say that it was massive, it was significant to point out that the frontages of the two main streets are smaller scale than the buildings immediately across MLK and Oglethorpe. He stated that the ordinance and the guidelines say, "large-scale developments should comply with the following standards, it shall be designed in varying heights and widths such that no wall plane exceeds 60 feet in width." He said that it was a requirement that he had come up against quite frequently and had dealt with some success in the past. He added, "That primary entrances shall not exceed intervals of 60 feet along the street." He stated that the only other guidance was the Oglethorpe Avenue entryway district that had a paragraph that states, "This area was easily adaptable to frontage of the service street hierarchy's. Build-to lines are established parallel to Oglethorpe to guide any future redevelopment. Parking areas could be entered from the front, which should be located in the rear. An exception could be made for hotel/motel uses, which may provide drop-off and registration parking at the building entry. Such drop-offs shall occur in the recessed areas of the building such that the upper floors of any and the balance of the frontage abut the built-to line." He stated that it would be suggesting that it would be the place to be allowed to have a loggia. He stated that they had tried to follow the guidance to the best of their ability in presenting what will be a large-scale building. He said that his associate Saad Al-Jassar had been the one designing the project and that he wanted him to address some of the specific comments from Staff.

**Mr. Saad Al-Jassar** stated that they tried their best to follow the standards and to break the facades into modules of 60, which could be seen from the elevations and the model. He said that it had a long façade and that it was difficult to treat a long façade, and the massing could be seen in the model. He stated that they provided sufficient entrances not only for the hotel, each road had at least one entrance, and the condominiums also had entrances on both sides. The model shows a break in height where they depressed one section and lost one floor with the roof garden, which could also be seen in elevation. He stated that as far as massing that he doesn't really see it as a box unless it was seen from the top and that he doesn't know who will look at the building from that elevation. He said that when you walk in the streets it was within the height requirements, and asked the Staff to specifically tell them more about what the urban dialogue that the building needed to address. If it needed a contemporary expression, what were the guidelines because he could not follow the standards.

### **DISCUSSION:**

**Mr. Deering** stated that they had met the intent of the ordinance and the guidelines. That the entrances did not exceed 60 feet, the wall planes did not exceed 60 feet, the massing went in and out, the roof shape changed, and Mr. Jassar added where they dropped the level one floor. He stated that there were some elements that he was not fond of. There were so many pediments on the building and they did not relate well to the design intent of the architecture

below. He said that the arcaded semi-circular pergolas on the roofline were not tying to the building other than the shape that goes down on the corners and the front of the building. He stated that they seemed like an anomaly that did not work with the building or the district in this area.

**Mr. Mitchell** stated that the drawing of the north elevation of Laurel Street had what appeared to be shadows for the areas of the building that step forward and step back. He stated particularly the shadows on the right, he was trying to read the bay to the right of the gable steps forward, but yet it doesn't step forward down at the base.

**Mr. Shay** stated that this was where Laurel Street turned left and the façade was obscured and not visible except for on the upper stories. He said that they had an inset there, insets at the entrance that went down to the parking level, a slight projection, another inset that went back out to the front and then deepens. He stated that the idea was that there was a rhythm of insets in the façade to break up the massing.

**Mr. Mitchell** stated that the drawing was just not correct.

**Mr. Jassar** stated that the recess was the entrance to the parking garage below, and the shadow should be continuous and it was missing the shadow below.

**Dr. Caplan** stated that he was not certain what they had in mind when they say a contemporary influence. He said that it may be a gateway to any area, and rather than having a very contemporary and modern building, it should have a gateway that was more in keeping with other buildings. He stated that it was not to say that the Board was not interested in some contemporary influences in the area, but that he doesn't want the Board to design the projects for the petitioner. That perhaps it would be helpful if the Staff would tell everyone what they had in mind by the statement, because it was confusing.

**Ms. Reiter** stated that in Staff's opinion the building had no foothold in any typology in the Historic District. That the pediments and the pergolas were all on the top and not related to the building or to Savannah. She stated that the building was trying to look historicist but that she didn't know of what era or what city. She said that to her it was a disappointment that on one of the most important sites in the downtown area that they could not have a modern expression that would be interesting. She stated that Dr. Caplan was right in that the Board could not design a building for the architect. When Phase II was completed, as it was designed on these drawings, it was turning its back on Oglethorpe Avenue as did the building across the street and it creates a dead space coming into the City with no urban interface. She stated that there was an exit from a meeting room onto Oglethorpe Avenue, and the entries to the condominiums are on the corner, and that she thought that the building could do more.

**Dr. Caplan** asked how Ms. Reiter felt about the mass and the size of the whole structure.

**Ms. Reiter** stated that the mass was very large for the area and could be broken down better. She stated that the massive semi-circular item in the middle where the actual entrance was setback, with a loggia in the front, had two massive wings to the side with very few window openings. She said that it does not relate to the rhythms along MLK, in her opinion. She thought it would be a place where more glass could be used. She stated that the ordinance states that a bay should be not less than 15 and not greater than 20, and when it was measured out that it does not meet the ordinance. That she could not find a reason for the ins and outs other than it was required to go in and out, and that is what it is doing to try and meet the letter of the ordinance.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**Mr. Mark McDonald (Historic Savannah Foundation)** stated that the Architectural Review Committee agreed with Staff that it was too much revivalist architecture on the corner and that it was too sprawling. He stated that the contemporary expression was a good idea for the site and would suggest two types of expression. One on MLK, and another one on Oglethorpe to keep it from looking like one sprawling building that surrounded the gasoline station on the corner. He said that it was just an idea, a way to break it up, but that they thought it was too much revivalist architecture and confusion about historic period and styles going on with a lot of the large hotel buildings being built today.

**Mr. Bill Stuebe (Downtown Neighborhood Association)** stated the Downtown Neighborhood Association was very concerned about the massing and the over-scaled buildings that were being developed in the Historic District. He stated that there was clearly a reason why room rates were \$50 more a room night in the Historic District and it was because of the massing and the scale of what everyone enjoyed in Historic Savannah. He said that the project severely violated the standard and that the guidelines sought to restore traditional massing to large-scale developments. They agreed with Staff that significant divisions in the massing to reduce the overall box-like form were required. He said that the point made was that there may be two flags operating the hotel, and that there was a condominium element in this project that made it appear that it would be a perfect opportunity to have three separate buildings on the site. He stated that each one should have a different vocabulary of architectural style, and it would go a long way with solving the problem of the over-scaled building.

**Mr. Joe Saseen** stated that it was almost too late to say that it was a promenade because of the big yellow brick stucco motel, and that he wished the Board was more careful with that. He said that it was an abomination and didn't know whether the area could be saved. He stated that this was once a palace compared to what just went in at Oglethorpe and MLK. He wondered how it got by the Board and that he was present at the meeting and should have gotten up and said something so he was at fault too. He said that there were a lot of people complaining about Height and Mass. He stated that when you are live Downtown you get what you buy. He said that people would have to understand that Savannah can't be stopped; that a commercial area had to be vibrant too and people who buy townhouses Downtown just have to understand that progress was not going to come to a screeching halt. He stated that the City Council was not going to allow it. He said that there was a height limit, which was fine, but if the idea of a five- or six-story building bothered them, they just had to understand that they could go to Skidaway or they could live Downtown.

**DISCUSSION:**

**Mr. Steffen** stated that the recommendation from Staff on this project painted the Board into a bit of a corner, because it was specifically for a continuance to further explore an urban expression for this important site. That at this point he wanted to ask the petitioner for a reaction to the recommendation and what was the petitioner's pleasure.

**Mr. Shay** stated that petitioners try to come and hear good comments and that they had heard a few today. He stated the thing that they needed to know more about was the issue of the urban dialogue. Whether or not the buildings had pediments on them, or whether or not they had curved shapes or not what they try to do are make buildings that engage the street at street level, even if the street was basically a lane. He stated that Laurel Street becomes a lane once it turns left and goes behind the buildings on Bay Street. He said that they are going into an area where the remainder of the urban fabric was not there. That they could design buildings

with beautiful storefronts but that it was very difficult to attract boutique retailers to go into these types of spaces, which was why they have placed the meeting rooms and dining areas along the street. He stated that the building would last for 50 to 100 years, and if the street got to the point where boutique retail was the thing, then those spaces could easily be converted into retail spaces. He stated that a hotel at this stage of the game in this location will have doors that open up to meeting rooms or a secondary way to leave the building. He said that in today's world hotels could not be designed with 20 or 30 primary entrances that are in several places because you would have to have 20 or 30 concierges around the building to keep an eye on those doors. He stated that they want to do the right thing and that they will try to improve the submission to the Board. He said that to look at the project and say that it was huge because the elevations show a street frontage that was 180 feet in front of the building and it makes it look like one great big box because the way the room was set up, that the model was being looked upon from the prospective of someone flying over the City in a helicopter, rather than being able to actually look at how the buildings do meet the street. He said that they feel strongly that they have engaged the surroundings streets and created one, in a way that was very customer friendly. He said that he promised Mr. Jassar that he would not compare their building to the one across the street. He asked the Board to please take time between now and the next meeting to stand on the corner and walk the block toward Greyhound. They want to engage the street, but it was a street that had its back turned on it by every building including the largest building that had been built on that street in a long, long time. He said that they want to do the right thing and they are going to go back and take the comments, and that they are willing to improve it before the next meeting if they could get it done in that timeframe.

**Ms. Seiler** stated that when she looked at the design she wanted to know what was engaging about the design of the hotel that would make her want to stay there as opposed to any of the other hotels this size. She stated that there was nothing that grabbed her and that it looked like the elements were pulled from the Patrick Shay of the past and put together in one great big hotel. She said that none of the features had a signature of originality that Staff and the Board were asking for that would make the important historical site unique to pull people in.

**Mr. Shay** stated that they chose something that was near traditional. He stated that they felt like the surrounding buildings that were contemporary are hideous failures. He said that he heard from several people today that what they were being recommended or allowed to consider a more contemporary plan, and that the Board was not just leading him down the primrose path so that when he came back with a contemporary expression, the Board should not just throw their hands up in the air and say that it doesn't look like Savannah. He stated that he would be happy to do it.

**Mr. Deering** stated that he disagreed with Mr. Sasseen because there are so many sites behind the proposed building to be developed in the near future, and may very well be developed in the near future, that this could be a vital corner of the Historic District. He stated that there were so many old 1940's, 50's, and 60's things that are not on the City's historic building map that could come down, along with projects very similar to this such as vital office buildings, that with a hotel this size like the Fairmont in New Orleans that may be as big as this one or maybe bigger. He stated that people pass through that hotel all of the time getting from one street to the next because it was a convenient avenue through their lobby. He commended Mr. Shay for recreating the street. He said that SCAD was growing by leaps and bounds, and the entire west side where students were now, when he was attending SCAD in 1980, that he would never venture over there and now students live over there. He said that there were many people going back and forth through the neighborhood now and he thought it would be a very vital section of the city. He said that they had taken some elements from other things that worked but overall it lacked imagination. He stated that with Staff's comments and with Historic

Savannah Foundation's (HSF) endorsement and the Downtown Neighborhood Association's (DNA) endorsement, that he could come back with a really imaginative, creative building. He loved the DNA's suggestion of doing three buildings or three different typologies that could be interconnected through different spare elements like glass towers or something like that. He stated to somehow pull something from the Historic District because there really was very little context, and he had a great opportunity to create something really fantastic. He stated that it was what he got from Ms. Seiler and Ms. Reiter that they would like to see and that it was a really wonderful site. He said that Brown's Service Station might even go away someday.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that from Mr. Shay's comments that a continuance was appropriate.

**Mr. Shay** asked for a continuance.

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

**RE:     Petition of Eric Meyerhoff  
          H 06-3589-2  
          626 – 628 Montgomery Lane  
          Demolition**

**RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval.**

Mr. Meyerhoff Recused

Present for the petition was Eric Meyerhoff

Ms. Reiter gave the Staff report.

**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

The applicant is requesting approval to demolish the structure located at 626-628 Green Street, aka Montgomery Lane.

**FINDINGS:**

1.     The structure is not listed as a historic structure on the Historic District Buildings Map.
2.     It is listed on the State Historic Resources Survey as CH-S-6565. The date of the survey is 1998.
3.     The structure originally was a one story duplex built c.1916. It does not appear before the 1916 Sanborn map. The shallow roofline suggests a turn-of-the-century date. Nothing appears in any City directory for this block of either Green Street or Montgomery Lane.
4.     The exterior siding has been replaced with Hardi-Board and asbestos siding; the windows have been removed. The porches have been enclosed and the interior has had fire damage. The interior wall covering appears to be charred Luan or similar paneling. The siding and window change has occurred since 1998.

4. Is the building associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of local, state or national history? None identified.

Is the building associated with lives of persons significant in our past? None identified.

Does the building embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, possess high artistic values, or represent a distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction? None identified. Any character defining features have been lost.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Approval to demolish. The building does not appear to meet the criteria for listing on the Historic Building Map.

**HDBR ACTION:** Mr. Neely made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the petition as presented. Mr. Mitchell seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**RE: Petition of Bobby Melton  
H 06-3590-2  
110 West Taylor Street  
Exterior Paint – Acrylic Paint with Ceramic Additives**

Petitioner was not present.

Ms. Reiter gave the Staff report.

**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

The applicant is requesting approval to paint the exterior wood siding building at 110 West Taylor Street with acrylic/latex paint containing ceramic additives manufactured by Ecospeciality. According to the applicant, the permanent finish is 100 percent acrylic/latex paint with ceramic bead additives with an 18-permeability rating. The paint will be applied to the wood siding after it has been thoroughly pressure washed and cleaned. It is meant to provide a reduced maintenance exterior and combat the effects of the humid environment in the coastal area.

**FINDINGS:**

The property at 110 West Taylor Street is part of a row of wood frame townhouses constructed in 1851. The building is a rated structure within Savannah's Landmark Historic District. The following standard from the Historic District Ordinance (Section 8-3030 (l)(e)) states:

*Ceramic based coatings and sealers used on siding are inappropriate on buildings in the Historic District and shall be prohibited.*

Limited research has revealed little information on this product and its ability to stand the test of time. Staff contacted numerous preservation groups including the National Park Service, the State Historic Preservation Office, Historic Preservation Commissions throughout the country, and local preservation associations, contractors, and architects. All groups were positive about

acrylic paint, but had strong concerns about the ceramic additives and had previously denied similar products in their respective historic districts due to its irreversibility, thickness, and questionable permeability.

Historic Savannah Foundation conducted a study on ceramic paint finishes several years ago, that revealed that the method for applying the paint could be damaging. In some cases, sandblasting is required to create a proper surface for the paint. If sandblasting was not done, in some cases, the paint failed and what to do with the exterior fabric was left in question.

The Historical Architect at the Southeast Regional Office of the National Park Service stated concerns that ceramic beads would make the paint “extra thick” and may obscure details common to historic buildings. This may not be a major issue for siding but could affect window and door moldings.

Since this is a “permanent” finish, staff has questions about the “reversibility” of the product and if it is even possible. In addition, although it has a permeability rating of 18, staff has concerns about moisture being trapped in the building and its ability to breathe which could cause the siding to rot. Since the paint would not be able to be removed, the historic siding would then have to be replaced. The applicant stated that the product was recently used to paint the historic windows on the Independent Presbyterian Church administration building on Bull Street. Field inspection revealed that the material did look very similar to average latex paint, but did appear somewhat thicker in composition.

The applicant did submit the name of the Vice President of Manufacturing for Ecospeciality, Afshin Rezai, as a contact. The Board may decide to continue the application for further research, in which case staff will need direction as to what questions to ask in order to compare the new product with regular paint.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends denial at this time of the use of paint with ceramic bead additives and permanent coatings on historic buildings as it is not permitted in the Historic District under Section 8-3030 (l)(e) of the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance. Staff does not recommend the experimentation of unknown products on our significant historic structures, and if the product was so similar to latex paint, then the applicant should use latex paint. Historic buildings require regular maintenance and care to preserve their historic integrity and exterior paint on wood siding was an integral component to the preservation of the siding and underlying structure.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

**Mr. Deering** asked if the applicant was the painting contractor.

Ms. Reiter stated that the petitioner said that he was an engineer and that she thought he owned the company that carried the product.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that with the circumstances of the person not being there, and for that reason alone, that a continuance might be more appropriate. He said that Ms. Reiter might be putting too much upon Staff and herself. He stated that if the applicant was asking the Board to accept a new product, that Ms. Reiter had put forward a list of very appropriate questions and concerns, and that the burden should be on the applicant or their representative to come forward and explain and convince the Board that the product actually meets the standards that the Board had set forward. He stated that he appreciated the research that Ms. Reiter had

done, but just like a judge, he was going to ask the lawyers to write the brief, and if they want the Board to change what was decided in the past that they ought to be specifically told that they need to come back with specific information.

**Ms. Reiter** stated that she was hoping to get direction from the architects or people with building experience of what type of information are they looking for because they come back and say that it had a permeability of 18. She asked what does that mean. That they come back and say that our information was old and this was a new product, and what do they want.

**Mr. Deering** stated that he was often aware of new products, but that Ms. Reiter would check the permeability of regular acrylic paint and compare it. He said that if it was more dense then it was not going to allow moisture to enter and also does not allow moisture to exit, which was a bad thing that had already been pointed out. He stated that the only experience that he had with this particular product was that Mary Osborne the City Council person lives down the street from Mr. Deering and that someone had painted her house with this product. He said that it had been there for two approximately two years, but that he had not gone to the house to investigate if the siding was rotting underneath.

**Ms. Reiter** asked if it was the eco armor shield.

**Mr. Deering** stated that it was one of the products that was supposedly a ceramic coating. He stated that he never used it and that he does not know anything about it. He said that new products had to be around for ten to twenty years for him to recommend them.

**Dr. Caplan** asked if the Board had approved the project before.

**Mr. Deering** stated no and that it was prohibited because when the Board wrote the part of the ordinance, approximately three years ago, that the Board did not have any experience with the product and that the Board still does not have any experience with the product that he was aware of.

**Mr. Mitchell** stated that as the Board discussed the particular product the last time it came through that the Board disallowed it. He stated that when you talk about the permeability, and the fact that it runs a risk of locking in moisture, that it was a bad situation. He said that then there was the other situation of most successive painting being in the prep, and if you had to sandblast in order to get good adhesion, that was another problem. He said then there was the problem of what if it does not work in getting it off. He stated that it just doesn't pass the old risk reward ration because the risk of using it far outweighs the reward of using it. He stated that until the petitioner could demonstrate from an engineering standpoint that the product was no more harmful than paint, then the Board needed to stay away from it.

**Mr. Deering** stated that the Board stayed away from the last demerit codings for a very long time because they didn't know what they would do.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that since the petitioner was not present that the two choices are to either continue this and come back and meet a high standard of proof, or to deny it and cause them to have to resubmit. He stated that those were the two choices and that he would entertain a motion to either affect.

**Mr. Deering** stated that he felt that it should be continued until next month and maybe the petitioner could have more information by then.

Mr. Steffen stated that if the Board does that, that the petitioner be told that the burden was on them to show the Board that it was different.

**HDRB ACTION:** Mr. Deering made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review continue the petition. Ms. Seiler seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**RE: Petition of Mark B. Hiott  
H 06-3584-2  
504 East State Street  
Rehabilitation/Addition/New Construction**

The Preservation Officer recommends approval.

Petitioner was not present.

Ms. Ward gave the Staff report

**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

The applicant is requesting approval to construct a one-story addition on the rear of the building at 504 East State Street and erect a fence at the lane. The proposed addition is 20 feet wide, which was consistent with the main house, and 28 feet - 9½-inches long, consuming 327 square feet. It will be surfaced in Savannah Gray brick to match the existing residence. The proposed fence is six feet tall and is comprised of brick piers with brick lattice infill and an 8-foot-wide sliding gate.

**FINDINGS:**

This masonry residence is part of historic rowhouse constructed in 1890, and is a rated structure within Savannah’s Landmark Historic District. The property is zoned RIP-A, Residential, Medium-Density.

The following standards from the Historic District Ordinance (Section 8-3030) apply:

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<i>Lot Coverage:</i> RIP-A zoning districts have a 75% maximum building coverage	The proposed addition and existing building will cover 64% of the lot.	The standard is met.
<i>Additions</i> (l)(12): shall be located to the rear of the structure or the most conspicuous side of the building. Where possible, the addition shall be sited such that it is clearly an appendage and distinguishable from the existing main structure.	The one-story addition is on the rear of the two-story residence and as such is clearly distinguishable as an addition. The addition will feature a flat roof with a shed extension over a patio area with a metal or slate roof. The exterior walls will be surfaced in Savannah Gray brick to match the existing residence.	Staff recommends approval.
Additions shall be constructed with the least possible loss of historic	The existing one-story addition will be encompassed in the new design, which is	Staff recommends approval.

<p>building material and without damaging or obscuring character-defining features of the building. Additions shall be designed to be reversible with the least amount of damage to the historic building.</p>	<p>consistent with the height of the existing addition.</p>	
<p>Additions shall be subordinate in mass and height to the main structure.</p>	<p>The one-story addition is subordinate to the two-story residence. It is 15' tall on the side walls and although the addition extends beyond the neighboring additions within the row, the applicant is within the maximum building lot coverage and the building maintains a modest footprint.</p>	<p>Staff recommends approval.</p>
<p><i>Fences and Garden Walls (I)(13):</i></p>	<p>The existing brick garden wall, which defines the parking area at the rear of the property will be removed and a new fence will be erected at the rear property lane at the lane. The proposed fence is 6' tall and is comprised of brick piers with brick lattice infill and an 8' wide sliding gate for vehicular access.</p>	<p>Staff recommends approval upon verification of gate material.</p>

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**Approval upon verification of gate material at garden wall.**

**HDBR ACTION: Mr. Meyerhoff made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the petition as presented and the gate materials be returned to Staff. Ms Seiler seconded the motion and it passed unanimously**

**RE: STAFF REVIEWS**

1. Petition of Audrey Platt  
 HDBR 06-3579(S)-2  
 208 East Hall Street  
 Sign/Rehabilitation/Addition  
**STAFF DECISION: APPROVED**
  
2. Petition of Yardwork, Incorporated  
 Tera Benyard  
 HDBR 06-3581(S)-2  
 224 Houston Street  
 Color  
**STAFF DECISION: APPROVED**

3. Petition of Drayton Builders  
HDBR 06-3582(s)-2  
415 East Gordon  
Color  
**STAFF DECISION: APPROVED**

4. Petition of Coastal Canvas  
HDBR 06-3585(S)-2  
103 West Congress Street  
Awning  
**STAFF DECISION: APPROVED**

**RE: MINUTES**

1. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes – March 8, 2006

**RE: OTHER BUSINESS**

**Mr. Mitchell** asked if anyone had been watching the construction of a house at Price and Nicoll Streets. He stated that the demolition was terrible and the roof was weak. He stated that what the Board approved as opposed to what had been done was completely different and that they never came back.

**Ms. Ward** stated that she had been in contact with the petitioner at least twice a week and they had been approved to redo all of the exterior fabric and all of the roof, and that they had been in close contact with her.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** stated that there are two new signs on the northeast corner of Saint Julian and Drayton, the American Building, by the bank. He asked if they had been approved. He stated that one was a vertical sign about 12 feet high.

**Mr. Deering** stated that it was one of his proposals and that it had been approved. He said that it was the United Community Bank on the realty building and that they had received approval.

**Ms. Reiter** handed out a Thomas Square brochure, a report from the Charleston trip, and made a request to amend the minutes it include only the Staff report, public comments, and the decision on projects that were not controversial. On the controversial ones there would be more of the lengthy discussion.

**Dr. Caplan** stated that the Board agreed to that some years ago.

**Ms. Reiter** stated that they tried it some years ago but then everyone stated that we didn't have what they said.

**Mr. Deering** asked that if the Board needed to know what was said for some reason, then could they go back to the tape.

**Ms. Reiter** stated that we keep the tapes for approximately ten years or so.

**Ms. Seiler** stated her concern with the sign posting on Bryan Street that the Proposed Action on the sign was not what was applied for. She said that the resident made a good point that it said alterations and it actually was new construction.

**Dr. Caplan** stated that that was the problem. That the signs aren't being read and that he drives by half of the time.

**Mr. Mitchell** stated that a very litigious resident would certainly take up the task, that if it said alteration and something else happened, that the Board would be in trouble.

**Ms. Seiler** asked why wouldn't new construction also have been written on the sign.

**Ms. Reiter** stated that it should have been because that was what was stated on the application. She didn't have an answer.

**Mr. Meyerhoff** stated that the sign should have been located in the middle of the block, because the building where it was posted was not being altered.

**Ms. Reiter** stated that her guess was that obviously they would have been given more than one sign for that site.

**Ms. Seiler** stated that it doesn't necessarily remain with that particular property, but that it was overall something that the Board and that Staff needed to be aware of and to make sure that it did not happen again.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that it was within the Board's purview, as well as for Staff, to make sure that it was not just properly posted but that it was properly designated. He stated that it was the Board's and Staff's responsibility to make sure that it happens because the bottom line was that it does present a legal issue, and that a resident could raise a legal issue if it was not.

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

**RE: ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Historic District Board of Review the meeting was adjourned approximately 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Reiter,  
Preservation Officer

BR/jnp