

**HISTORIC DISTRICT BOARD OF REVIEW
REGULAR MEETING
112 EAST STATE STREET**

ARTHUR A. MENDONSA HEARING ROOM

July 8, 2009

2:00 P.M.

MINUTES

HDRB Members Present:

**Dr. Malik Watkins, Chairman
Brian Judson, Vice-Chairman
Reed Engle
Ned Gay
Dr. Nicholas Henry
Richard Law, Sr.
James Overton
Linda Ramsay**

HDRB Members Not Present:

**Gene Hutchinson
Sidney J. Johnson
Joseph Steffen**

**City of Savannah Staff Members Present: Tiras Petrea, Zoning Officer
Mike Rose, Building Inspector**

**HDRB/MPC Staff Members Present: Thomas L. Thomson, P.E./AICP, Executive Director
Beth Reiter, Historic Preservation Director
Sarah Ward, Historic Preservation Planner
Janine N. Person, Administrative Assistant**

RE: CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

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

RE: SIGN POSTING

All signs were properly posted.

RE: CONTINUED AGENDA

**RE: Continued Petition of BWBF, Incorporated
Richard Guerard
H-09-4118-2
PIN 2-0032-07-001
342 Drayton Street
New Construction Design Details - Part II**

Continue to August 12, 2009, at the request of the petitioner.

**RE: Continued Petition of Dr. Lance Hemberger
H-09-4129-2
PIN 2-0033-01-021B
548 East Taylor Street
Covered Deck Addition**

Continue to August 12, 2009, at the request of the petitioner.

HDRB ACTION: Ms. Ramsay made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the Continued Agenda items as submitted. Mr. Gay seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

RE: CONSENT AGENDA

**RE: Petition of Doug Bean Signs, Incorporated
Donna Swanson
H-09-4156-2
PIN 2-0004-40-002A
232 East Broughton Street
Sign**

The Preservation Officer recommends **approval**.

HDRB ACTION: Mr. Judson made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the Consent Agenda item as submitted. Mr. Gay seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

RE: REGULAR AGENDA

**RE: Amended Petition of Gunn, Meyerhoff & Shay
Patrick Shay
H-09-4121-2
PIN 2-0016-01-001
0 Barnard Street
New Construction Part I - Height and Mass**

The Preservation Officer recommends **approval**.

NATURE OF REQUEST: The applicant requests to amend a previously approved petition to reduce a six-story proposed structure to two stories. The applicant requests Part I Height and Mass approval.

FINDINGS:

The new proposal occupies the same site as the previously approved building, but has been redesigned to be only two stories.

FINDINGS:

The lot is zoned B-C-1 (Central-Business) and is currently vacant. A portion of the neighboring parking garage will be demolished and the property used for the proposed development. Partial demolition of the parking structure and the alterations to the remainder of that structure were approved by the Historic Review Board on October 8, 2008, (File No. H-08-4057-2). A recombination subdivision plat will need to be submitted and approved prior to issuance of a building permit.

Comments from Site Plan Review (SPR) were submitted by the City’s infrastructure departments in February 2009. All departments have reviewed the General Development Plan with the revisions needed below. These revisions and variances will need to be addressed prior to the Part II, Design Details submittal.

- 1) Traffic Engineering, Cindy Coddington: Handicap ramps for Bay Lane, Barnard Street, and Bryan Street will need to be shown on the Specific Development Plan.
- 2) Streets Maintenance, Carey Purvis: 1) Show ADA ramp locations; 2) Improvements on north side of Bay Lane are on a separate parcel. Is this going to be on a separate plan?

The following Part I Height and Mass Standards Apply:

Standard	Proposed	Comment
Development Standards: No setbacks, maximum lot coverage, or parking are required in B-C-1 zone.	The building extends to the property line on both Barnard and Bryan Streets with a curved recessed corner entrance fronting the square.	The standards are met.
Street Elevation Type: 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 tithing or trust block.	Two-story office/retail with market space on the ground floor. The building form is a commercial storefront form.	There are no historic buildings within the block front. Immediately adjacent trust and tithing blocks feature historic buildings that are built to the property line for the full height of the building, typically divided by storefronts and fenestration into 60’ and 30’ increments. The historic portion of the Inn at Ellis Square (Guckenheimer Building) across Bay Lane is a tall four-story building that occupies the entire lot for the full height of the building, with slight (inches) recesses in the center portions of the building which are continuous for 60+ feet to accentuate the corners of the building. The proposed form is consistent with these structures.
Entrances: A building on an east-west connecting street fronting a square shall have	A corner entrance and side entrances on Bryan and Barnard Streets are proposed	The standard is met.

<p>entrances at intervals not to exceed 50’.</p>	<p>at approximately 25-35’ intervals.</p>	
<p>Large-Scale Development: Large-scale development shall be designed in varying heights and widths such that no wall plan exceeds 60 feet in width.</p>	<p>The foot print is 12,330 square feet, thus the Large-Scale development standards apply. The building has numerous recesses and setbacks along the sidewalk edge with no wall plane exceeding 60 feet in width.</p>	<p>The standard is met.</p>
<p>Commercial Design Standards: The first story of a retail building shall be designed as a storefront. The first story shall be separated from the upper stories by an architectural feature. The height of the first story shall be not less than the exterior visual expression of the height of any single-story above the first. The exterior visual expression of the top story of buildings over three stories shall be distinctive from the stories below the top story. Retail storefront glazing shall be not less than 55 percent. Storefront glazing shall extend from the sill or from an 18”-24” base of contrasting material, to the lintel.</p>	<p>The ground floor will be occupied by an “urban market”. The first story is separated from upper floors by a change in material and a stone band course. The height of the ground floor is 20’. The cornice shape is varied. Double-door storefront entrances with sidelights are proposed on the Barnard and Bryan Streets facades. A full glass storefront is at the northeast corner entrance and on the recessed entry arcade to the west. The storefront on the western portion consists of a projecting two-story arcade that is 18’-4” wide and 16’ deep. The percentage of storefront glazing is 55 percent.</p>	<p>These standards are met.</p>
<p>Proportion of Structure’s Front Façade: 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 bays are taller than they are wide which is consistent with nearby historic structures.</p>	<p>The standard is met. The floor height of the ground floor is at 20’ to be consistent with other historic buildings nearby. The height is consistent with historic buildings on the square.</p>
<p>Proportion of Openings: The relationship of the width of the windows to height of windows within a structure shall be visually compatible to the contributing structures to which the structure is visually related. All</p>	<p>The majority of the upper floor windows have the ratio of 5:3. The center bay on Bryan Street has a bank of four windows that are each less wide than 3, but may be considered accent windows.</p>	<p>These standards are met.</p>

<p>windows facing a street, exclusive of storefronts, basement, and top story windows, shall be rectangular and shall have a vertical to horizontal ratio of not less than 5:3; provided, however, nothing in this section precludes an arched window being used.</p>		
<p>Rhythm of Solids-to-Voids: The relationship of solids-to-voids in the facades visible from the public right-of-way of a structure shall be visually compatible with the contributing structures to which the structure is visually related.</p>	<p>There are a high number of voids-to-solids within the street fronting facades, broken into bays.</p>	<p>The rhythm of bays is consistent with nearby historic structures.</p>
<p>Rhythm of Structure on Street: 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>There is no open space between the proposed building and the neighboring parking garage.</p>	<p>The standard is met. Historic structures within the ward are built adjacent to one another with no open space.</p>
<p>Rhythm of Entrances, Porch Projections, and Balconies: 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>The arcade projects forward of the building plane on the western end of the Bryan Street façade.</p>	<p>The standard is met. While the arcade projection is not typical of historic buildings within the ward, the wall of continuity is maintained at the sidewalk.</p>
<p>Roof Shape: The roof shape of a structure shall be visually compatible with the contributing structures to which it is visually related.</p>	<p>The roof is flat behind a parapet wall with paired front facing gabled pediments.</p> <p>Projecting metal cornices are located over the 30’ wide sections at the corner and arcade.</p>	<p>The brick parapets recall the historic structures while the metal cornices with uprights reflect the new construction across Barnard Street and are consistent with the entertainment use of this square.</p>

<p>Scale: The mass of a structure and size of windows, door openings, porches column spacing, stairs, balconies, and additions shall be visually compatible with the contributing structures to which the structure is visually related.</p>	<p>The scale of the building at two stories is consistent with the majority of historic structures on the square.</p>	<p>The standard is met.</p>
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RECOMMENDATION

Approval of Part I Height and Mass.

Dr. Henry asked Staff to remind him of what the Guckenheimer building looked like. He asked if it would be possible to reflect the Guckenheimer more with a series of arches.

Mr. Shay stated that they used the arch on the central entrance from Bryan and Barnard Streets, learning some of the language from the architecture of the Guckenheimer building. He stated that arches had been discussed before and that there was not a consensus about it. There would be times when the storefronts would be wide open.

Dr. Henry stated that he saw that but thought that it would be a neater façade with the arches. He asked if Mr. Shay was referring to the Board when he mentioned the consensus.

Mr. Shay stated that he was.

Mr. Engle stated that he thought the building was compatible, and that it did not replicate the other building that was a very unique building in Savannah. He said that when you get into too many replicas then it won't be unique any more. It gave some allusion to the Guckenheimer building and the stone work carried it through.

Mr. Shay stated that they were trying to hang onto the proposed material palette for the exterior despite issues with the budget.

Dr. Henry asked if the motivation for the design was aesthetic or financial.

Mr. Shay stated that the client wanted to reduce it from six to two stories and that the client's motivation was primarily financial. He said that there was no financing for large-scale projects at this time and that a project at this scale was something the client couldn't undertake without having to go to banks.

Dr. Henry asked if the mass portion was fairly similar to the original six-story proposal.

Mr. Shay stated that it was in the sense that the base and the parapet cornice line were identical. He said that the story in between was modified in order for it to become a commercial space rather than a hotel space that was previously proposed.

Dr. Henry asked if the mass aspect was chosen out of an aesthetic sense.

Mr. Shay stated that it was. He said that the bank wanted a one-story building on the corner and he didn't feel comfortable bringing a single-story building to the Board with all of the trouble that had been put into writing the guidelines that would dissuade people from single-story buildings.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Mr. Daniel Carey (Historic Savannah Foundation – HSF) stated that were watching the project very carefully because of the opportunity it provided to create a new building that could propel future contemporary design on Ellis Square. He said it would be easy to applaud the reduction in height on the project, but saw the elimination of four stories as an opportunity to reexamine the overall design of the building.

He said reducing the building's height by removing the four middle stories did not mean that the building was the right one for the location. He asked if the original design elements still worked together as intended. HSF maintains that the mixing and matching of the design elements from numerous architectural styles and surrounding structures created an overly complex and confusing building. He said that there was too much going on in too small of a space. They felt that way with the six-story building and even more the case with the two-story building.

There had been references to the Guckenhimer building and he reminded everyone that the building faced Bay Street. He appreciated the effort with respect to the Guckenhimer, but he did not see any relationship. They reviewed the proposed lower height as an opportunity to create a simplified building based on the historic context of the ward, looking specifically to the smaller, less ornate adjacent historic buildings around Ellis Square. He said that HSF was willing to consult with the petitioner as needed or if requested.

Mr. Shay stated that the relationship with the Guckenhimer building was not direct but a psychological connection which was much more important. He said that his client owns the Guckenhimer building and the current site was the last of a campus of buildings. The client required was that it would appear that the Days Inn and the parking garage were one ensemble. He said that they wanted to go over the concerns with HSF.

Dr. Henry stated that the design could be completely changed if they were reconsidering Height and Mass. He said that the Board had that option.

Dr. Watkins stated that the Board was considering Height and Mass, not design.

Mr. Overton stated that at the last meeting the Board reviewed the SCAD museum, that it had been approved for Height and Mass, and was described as being shrink-wrapped and could not be revisited. He asked if that was what they were saying with the Height and Mass.

Dr. Watkins answered yes; it was the shrink-wrap.

Mr. Overton asked if they were approving the façade.

Mr. Gay stated that the Board was not approving the materials but were approving openings and recesses.

Mr. Judson stated that on the continuation of arches that it would require voting against it in Height and Mass because to change it to arches it would change the shrink-wrap. He said if they were discussing the facing elements or anything that it didn't change the profile of the building, then it would be considered under design.

Dr. Henry stated that he wasn't advocating the arches because he liked them, but he liked what Mr. Carey said about the greater simplicity of the design.

HDRB ACTION: Mr. Gay made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve Part I Height and Mass as submitted. Mr. Judson seconded the motion. Dr. Henry was opposed. The motion passed 6 to 1.

Dr. Henry stated that the Board could still discuss details like storefronts, windows, porticos, parapets, stoops, balconies, porches, etc. He asked if it was not corrected in the second round.

Dr. Watkins answered yes in terms of design elements.

Mr. Overton stated that the roofline was set. The Board had approved the roofline.

RE: STAFF REVIEWS

1. Petition of Coastal Canvas
Jennifer Wall
H-09-4152(S)-2
18 Bay Street
Awning
STAFF DECISION: APPROVED
2. Petition of Wendell Horton
H-09-4153(S)-2
220 Houston Street
Existing Windows/Doors
STAFF DECISION: APPROVED
3. Petition of AARS
Steve Overmire
H-09-4154(S)-2
18 East State Street
Existing Windows/Doors
STAFF DECISION: APPROVED
4. Petition of Structured Green
Blaz Ruzic
H-09-4155(S)-2
104 Broughton Street
Existing Windows/Doors
STAFF DECISION: APPROVED

RE: WORK PERFORMED WITHOUT A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Mr. Judson stated that the Savannah Bee store had an approved sign and had hung new doors.

Ms. Reiter stated that Staff approved the double doors on Savannah Bee.

Mr. Judson stated he recalled the Lady and Sons sign that was above street level being a single sign at the corner of the building. He said there were two signs now.

Ms. Reiter stated that two signs were approved for two separate streets.

Mr. Overton asked when the Board approved design criteria for compliance with the ordinance, if there was someone who went out to make sure that it was built as approved by the Board.

Ms. Reiter stated that when a project was permitted, that Staff stamps the building permit drawings to make sure they comply with what the Board approved. She said that they still have problems with things changing on-site, change orders that come in the middle of the project, and that they were trying to get around it by making large projects build a sample board on site. It has not resolved the problem of the contractor ordering something different. Hopefully, as they move forward with the Unified Zoning Ordinance and the changes to the Historic District Ordinance that it could be tightened up with the inspectors.

Mr. Overton asked if there was a historic Board inspector to go out.

Ms. Reiter answered not any of their own. She said that Mr. Petrea helped but that he works in other areas.

Mr. Overton asked if the Building Inspectors were looking for variances from what was approved.

Ms. Reiter stated that they try, but their main emphasis was life safety issues. She said that she and the inspectors work well together and that it would continue to evolve and improve. Staff was aware of past flaws and they were trying to work them out.

Mr. Gay stated that he remembered someone changing plans that Staff had approved after the Board approved a certain set of plans. He said that before bringing the plans to Staff to be stamped they had made changes and Staff stamped the plans and didn't catch the changes.

Ms. Reiter stated that Staff was currently sitting down with the architect before stamping the plans, and have them say the plans were correct and matched what was approved.

Mr. Overton stated that at the last meeting the Board suggested that a sign be moved and the applicant agreed, but that theoretically the applicant could put the sign back where they originally had it.

Ms. Reiter stated that they couldn't because they had to bring in revised drawings for the building permit to show where the Board wanted it placed.

Mr. Overton asked what would happen if they didn't install the sign where the Board wanted it.

Ms. Reiter stated that they would have to take it down.

Mr. Overton asked who would check it.

Mr. Reed stated that the Board had a responsibility between themselves. He said that he goes out and looks at things when they were happening and that everyone on the Board should do that.

Ms. Reiter stated that if there were a set of building plans that were drawn on the edge and the inspectors go down and see that it's on the middle, then it would not be in compliance with the building permit.

Mr. Gay stated that if the Building Inspector wasn't going to say anything about it, then it was apparent that they won't say anything.

Ms. Reiter stated that they did. She said that they put a stop work order out recently for a lady who put up metal garage doors.

Mr. Overton stated that he wanted to make sure that someone was looking out after the final product being in accordance with what was approved by the Board.

Mr. Judson stated that Mr. Reed's point was well-spoken in that it was part of the Board's responsibility to be out looking at these items.

**RE: NOTICES, PROCLAMATIONS, AND
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

1. E-agenda Training Session - August 11, 2009, 4:00 p.m. - MPC Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room.

Ms. Reiter stated that on August 11th there would be an e-agenda training session with the computers.

2. Retreat - August 27, 2009 - MPC Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room - Time to be Determined

Ms. Reiter stated that the retreat would be August 27th and that Staff would like to have it from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. She said that there would also be another e-agenda training at the retreat.

RE: OTHER BUSINESS

- a. Unfinished Business
- b. New Business

**RE: APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS
MEETING – June 10, 2009**

HDRB ACTION: Ms. Ramsay made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the Minutes of June 10, 2009. Mr. Judson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

RE: ADJOURNMENT

HDRB ACTION: Mr. Gay made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review adjourn the meeting. Mr. Judson seconded the motion and was passed unanimously.

There being no further business to come before the Historic District Board of Review the meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beth Reiter,
Preservation Officer

BR/jnp