



CITY OF SAVANNAH

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: Hansen Architects, Patrick Phelps

MPC File No.: 26-001571-COA

Address: 2517 Bull Street

PIN: 20074 07005

Zoning: TC-1

Staff Reviewer: Rohan Urs

Date: April 22, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

2517 Bull Street is requesting approval for rehabilitation of the storefront along the De Soto Avenue elevation. The proposal includes removal of the existing storefront system and portions of masonry, installation of a new aluminum storefront system, selective infill of masonry to match existing, removal of an existing metal canopy, and reuse of salvaged storefront components where feasible. The upper façade remains unchanged.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

The subject property is located within the Streetcar Historic District and is identified as a non-contributing structure. The surrounding area consists of empty lots in immediate adjacency and a mix of residential and commercial buildings of varying conditions. The immediate streetscape includes structures that have undergone varying levels of rehabilitation, as well as properties exhibiting deferred maintenance. Storefront conditions along this portion of De Soto Avenue vary, with some buildings retaining active commercial frontages while others remain underutilized or previously vacant.

FINDINGS:

The building is a non-contributing resource within the Thomas Square-Streetcar National Register Historic District and the local Streetcar Historic District.

The following standards from the Sec 7.11 - Streetcar Historic District Ordinance apply:

***Visual Compatibility Criteria.** To maintain the special character of the Streetcar Historic District as identified in the architectural survey and visual analysis, new construction and any material change in appearance shall be consistent with the standards, criteria and guidelines developed for the district. The applicable criteria below shall be used to assess new construction and material changes. These criteria shall not be the basis for appeal to*

any board, commission or administrator described in this Ordinance, or to the Mayor and Aldermen.

Scale. *The overall scale and the scale of individual components of the proposed building or structure shall be visually compatible to the contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related.*

The proposed storefront intervention is limited to the ground floor and maintains an appropriate pedestrian scale. The modification enhances the commercial frontage without altering the overall building scale. Standard met.

Openings. *The rhythm and solid-to-void ratio of the proposed building or structure shall be visually compatible with contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related.*

The proposed storefront introduces larger, more consistent openings that improve transparency and align with typical commercial storefront patterns. The rhythm and proportion of openings are compatible with the streetscape. Standard met.

Materials. *The relationship of materials and textures of the proposed building or structure shall be visually compatible with the contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related.*

The proposed aluminum storefront system in a white finish, along with masonry infill to match existing, is consistent with materials commonly used in storefront construction within the district. Limited use of fiber cement in secondary locations does not dominate the façade. Materials are visually compatible. Standard met.

Streetcar Historic District Design Standards.

New Construction, Additions, and Alterations. The intent of these standards is to ensure appropriate new construction, additions, and alterations within the Streetcar Historic District. They are not intended to promote copies of the architectural designs of the past, but to encourage contemporary designs that protect and complement existing contributing resources. They are further intended to protect the historic integrity of the contributing resource.

The following design standards shall apply to new construction, additions, alterations to contributing and non-contributing resources, and site alterations, unless otherwise specified. Though certain building materials are prescribed below, the Historic Preservation Commission may approve alternative materials that are not listed as prohibited upon a showing by the applicant that the material or product is visually compatible with historic building materials and has performed satisfactorily in the local climate.

Exterior walls, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources, and additions.

Portions of the existing masonry wall are removed to accommodate the new storefront; however, the overall wall plane is retained, and masonry infill is proposed to match existing conditions. The intervention maintains material continuity and façade integrity. Standard met.

Permitted materials, Exterior walls, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources, and additions. Brick, stone, wood, true stucco, and wood or fiber cement siding.

Existing masonry is retained and matched where modified. Fiber cement is used minimally in secondary conditions. Materials comply with permitted material standards. Standard met.

Windows, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources, and additions.

Materials, Windows, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources, and additions.

Window casings and sashes shall be made of PVC, metal, wood or clad wood material.

Window glass shall be transparent with no dark tints or reflective effects (except for stained glass windows). This provision does not preclude the use of Low Emissivity or laminated glass.

Solid vinyl windows are prohibited.

The proposed storefront glazing system utilizes aluminum framing with transparent glass. No tinted or reflective glazing is indicated. The proposal does not include vinyl window systems. Standard met.

Configuration, Windows, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources, and additions.

Windows shall be taller than they are wide, except for accent windows, which may be round or other shapes.

Windows shall be single-hung, double-hung, triple hung, awning, or casement, except for accent windows which may also be fixed or hopper.

Simulated divided light windows shall be permitted provided that the muntin is 7/8 inches or less, the muntin profile shall simulate traditional putty glazing, the lower sash rail shall be wider than the meeting and top rails, and there shall be a spacer bar in between double panes of glass. Between-the-glass, snap-in or applied muntins shall not be permitted.

Framing members shall be covered with appropriate trim; trim shall feature a header, surrounds, and pronounced sill where appropriate.

Retail uses shall incorporate transparent features (windows and doors) over a minimum of 70% of the ground floor façade.

All other nonresidential facades shall incorporate transparent features (windows and doors) over a minimum of 50% of the ground floor façade.

The storefront glazing significantly increases transparency at the ground level and meets the transparency expectations for commercial façades. Window proportions are appropriate for storefront conditions. Standard met.

Storefront, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions.

Storefront materials, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions.

Storefronts shall be constructed of wood, cast iron, Carrera glass, aluminum, steel or copper as part of a glazed storefront system.

Storefront bases shall consist of wood, bronze, glazed brick or tile.

Exterior burglar bars, fixed or roll-down security devices or similar security devices shall not be permitted.

The proposed storefront system utilizes aluminum framing, which is an approved material. No prohibited security features are indicated. The storefront composition is consistent with district standards. Standard met.

Storefront Configuration, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions.

Storefront glazing in subdivided sashes shall be inset a minimum of four inches from the face of the building.

Storefront glazing shall be transparent; provided, however, opaque glass may be used in the storefront window transoms.

The proposed storefront system provides transparent glazing consistent with commercial storefront expectations. Inset consistent with standard storefront construction practices. Standard met.

Doors/Entrances, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions.

Doors/Entrances, Materials, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions.

Doors shall be made of glass, wood, clad wood or steel (without wood grain simulation).

Doors shall not have a decorative diamond inset or half-moon inset.

Standard met.

Doors/Entrances, Configuration, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions.

Entrances shall face the primary street on which the building is located (normally the street from which it takes its address).

Entrances on corner lots shall be oriented in the same direction as entrances of adjacent buildings, toward the corner of the intersection, or based on historic precedent.

Angled entrances shall only be permitted at intersections of streets or lanes.

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There shall be a primary entrance along the primary street at intervals no greater than 60 feet.

The proposed entrance is oriented toward De Soto Avenue and maintains a clear and accessible primary entry point consistent with storefront design. Standard met.

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STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the storefront rehabilitation on 2517 Bull Street, as requested, as the proposal is visually compatible and consistent with the applicable standards.

MW: CC: RU

Note: This recommendation could change subject to new information provided at the Historic Preservation Commission meetings. Final decisions will be made by the Historic Preservation Commission at the public hearing based on information provided at the meeting, as well as information submitted for the staff recommendation.