



CITY OF SAVANNAH

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: Signs of the South

MPC File No.: 26-001751-COA

Address: 1719 Abercorn Street

PIN: 20053 38004

Zoning: TC-1

Staff Reviewer: Caitlin Chamberlain

Date: May 27, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting approval to install a freestanding decorative pole sign for the business, Roberts Civil Engineering, located at 1719 Abercorn Street. The sign is proposed to be installed to the right of the front lawn, replacing similar signage from a previous business.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

1719 Abercorn Street was built in 1913 and is a contributing resource within the Thomas Square-Streetcar National Register Historic District and the local Streetcar Historic District.

FINDINGS:

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

***Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation.** Material changes to contributing resources and resources that are eligible for listing as contributing shall be evaluated by use of the current edition of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation as published by the U.S. Department of the Interior. In considering proposals for alterations to contributing resources, the documented original design of the resource may be considered.*

***Secretary of the Interior's Standards 2– Historic Character.** The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*

***Secretary of the Interior's Standards 5– Distinctive Features.** Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.*

The placement of the sign is in the yard of the property, where it will not physically impact the character defining features of the historic building.

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.*

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 materials are appropriate and commonly used for signs and include:

- 6' metal pole
- Aluminum sign panels with vinyl
- 24" x 36" Oval with hook tabs panel
- 12" directory number circle with address

Signs. *Signs, where permitted, shall be visually compatible with contributing buildings and structures to which they are visually related.*

The standard is met.

The following standards from the Sec. 9.9.17 - Special Sign Districts apply:

Special Sign Districts. *In Addition to the requirements of Sec. 9.9.1 through 9.9.13, signs in the following special sign districts shall comply with the provisions of this Section, provided that where such provisions are in conflict with any requirements of Sec. 9.9.1 through 9.9.13, the requirements of this section shall prevail.*

Neighborhood Sign District. *The Neighborhood Sign District shall include any area located within the following districts: the Victorian Historic Overlay District, the Cuyler-Brownville Historic Overlay District, and the Streetcar Historic Overlay District.*

This property is in the Streetcar District.

Signs Allowed in Historic Special Sign Districts. *Sign types in historic special sign districts shall be allowed in accordance with the following table. Regardless of sign type, with the exception of decorative pole signs and signs painted on walls, non-illuminated signs that are three (3) square feet in size or less shall be permitted without a sign permit (COA).*

SEPTEMBER 1, 2019) > Article 9.0 General Site Standards > Sec. 9.9 Signs > 9.9.17 Special Sign Districts

Table 9.9-5 Signs Allowed in Historic Special Sign Districts					
Sign Type	Savannah Downtown Historic and City Market	Broughton Street	Factors Walk	Neighborhood	Plant Riverside
✓ = Sign Type Allowed * = Sign Type Allowed for Nonresidential Uses Only -- = Sign Type Not Allowed COA = Certificate of Appropriateness Required					
Signs Painted on Walls	*COA	*COA	*COA	*COA	✓COA
Window Sign [1]	*	*	*	*	✓COA
Wall Sign[1]	*COA	*COA	*COA	*COA	✓COA
Ground Signs					
Decorative Pole Sign	*COA	*COA	*COA	*COA	--
Decorative Post Sign	--	--	--	--	--
Monument Sign	*COA	--	--	*COA	--
Multi-tenant Sign	*COA	--	--	*COA	--

Special Sign Standards for the Savannah Downtown Historic, City Market, Broughton Street, Factors Walk and Neighborhood Sign Districts.

Ground, Projecting and Wall Signs.

Neighborhood Sign District.

Ground, Projecting Signs and Wall Signs.

Only one (1) ground, projecting or wall sign shall be permitted for each business establishment. Where a business establishment fronts on more than one (1) street or pedestrian walkway providing public access to the establishment, one (1) ground, projecting or wall sign for each frontage providing public access shall be permitted. If a business establishment fronts on more than one (1) street or pedestrian walkway but does not provide public access via that frontage, one (1) ground, projecting or wall sign may be located on the frontage without public access in lieu of the permitted signage on the frontage with public access. The sign area shall be calculated based on the frontage providing public access.

The business fronts on more than one street- 34th Street and Abercorn Street, and thus, more than one sign can be allowable. There are two signs on the building that are each less than 3 square feet and therefore exempt from needing a COA.

The maximum sign area shall not exceed the following:

B-N, TC-1, TC-2 Zoning Districts:

Projecting Sign or Ground Sign (max): 1 sq. ft. for every linear foot of building frontage not to exceed 30 sq. ft.

The sign will be 18 square feet. The standard is met.

6 ft.: Projecting Sign Distance from Wall or Ground Sign Width (max). provided that no portion of a sign shall overhang greater than one-third (0.33) of the width of a sidewalk or be erected within two (2) feet of a curb line.

The sign is 3 feet across. It would not hang over a sidewalk and is more than 2 feet from the curb line.

In addition to the above maximum sign size requirements, for buildings with over 75 feet of lot frontage, one (1) additional square foot of sign area shall be allowed for every two (2) linear feet of building frontage within any TC-district.

A ground sign shall not exceed the following heights:

B-N, TC-1, TC-2 Zoning Districts:

8 ft.: Monument

12 ft.: Decorative Pole or Multi-Tenant Monument

The decorative pole sign is 6 feet tall.

Ground, projecting and walls signs in a B-N or any TC- district may be illuminated in accordance with Sec. 9.9.6 and 9.9.17.g.i.

The sign is not illuminated.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the request to install one (1) decorative pole sign at 1719 Abercorn Street as requested because the proposed sign is visually compatible and meets the standards.

MW: CC

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.