



SAVANNAH HISTORIC DISTRICT  
BOARD OF REVIEW

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Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room  
December 9, 2009 - 2:00 P.M.  
Meeting Minutes

**DECEMBER 9, 2009 HISTORIC DISTRICT BOARD OF REVIEW REGULAR MEETING**

**HDRB Members Present:** Dr. Malik Watkins, Chair  
Brian Judson, Vice-Chair  
Reed Engle  
Ned Gay  
Dr. Nicholas Henry  
Sidney J. Johnson  
Richard Law, Sr.  
Linda Ramsay  
Joe Steffen

**HDRB Members Not Present:** Gene Hutchinson  
James Overton

**MPC Staff Present:** Beth Reiter, Historic Preservation Director, AICP  
Sarah Ward, Historic Preservation Planner, LEED AP  
Julie Yawn, Systems Analyst  
Mary E. Mitchell, Administrative Assistant

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

**I. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME**

1. [Order](#)

Dr. Watkins called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

The Board held a moment of silent meditation in memory of the passing of Mr. Ron Kolman

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

2. [November 12, 2009 Meeting Minutes](#)

Attachment: [Minutes 11-12-09.pdf](#)

**Board Action:**

Approved November 12, 2009 Meeting Minutes - PASS

**Vote Results**

Motion: Linda Ramsay

Second: Ned Gay

Reed Engle - Aye

Ned Gay - Aye

Nicholas Henry - Aye

Sidney J. Johnson - Aye

Brian Judson - Aye

Richard Law, Sr - Aye

Linda Ramsay - Aye

Joe Steffen - Aye

Malik Watkins - Abstain

**III. ITEM(S) REQUESTED TO BE REMOVED FROM THE FINAL AGENDA**

**IV. SIGN POSTING**

**V. CONTINUED AGENDA**

3. [Continued Petition of BWBF, Incorporated - Richard Guerard - H-09-4118-2 - 342 Drayton Street - New Construction Part II - Design Details - Continue to January 13, 2010, at the request of the petitioner.](#)

4. [Continued Petition of Thomas Sign & Awning - Dominic Nelson - H-09-4168-2 - 111 West Congress Street - Sign - Continue to January 13, 2010, at the request of the petitioner.](#)

5. [Continued Petition of Phillip R. McCorkle - H-09-4179-2 - PIN 2-0031 -15-007 - 319 Tattnell Street - New Construction Part I - Height and Mass - Continue to January 13, 2010 at request of Petitioner](#)

Attachment: [Submittal Package 1.pdf](#)

**Board Action:**

Approval of Continued items to January 13, 2010 as requested. - PASS

**Vote Results**

Motion: Ned Gay

Second: Linda Ramsay	
Reed Engle	- Aye
Ned Gay	- Aye
Nicholas Henry	- Aye
Sidney J. Johnson	- Aye
Brian Judson	- Aye
Richard Law, Sr	- Aye
Linda Ramsay	- Aye
Joe Steffen	- Aye
Malik Watkins	- Abstain

## VI. CONSENT AGENDA

### 6. [Petition of Sign-A-Rama - H-09-4186-2 - 7 East Congress Street - Sign](#)

Attachment: [Staff Recommendation.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Submittal Packet.pdf](#)

#### **Board Action:**

Approval of principal use projecting sign as submitted. - PASS

#### **Vote Results**

Motion: Ned Gay

Second: Linda Ramsay

Reed Engle	- Aye
Ned Gay	- Aye
Nicholas Henry	- Aye
Sidney J. Johnson	- Aye
Brian Judson	- Aye
Richard Law, Sr	- Aye
Linda Ramsay	- Aye
Joe Steffen	- Aye
Malik Watkins	- Abstain

## VII. REGULAR AGENDA

### 7. [Petition of Mark and Kathleen Bemis - H-09-4185-2 - PIN 2-0015 -15-006 - 113 East Oglethorpe Avenue - Addition](#)

Attachment: [Photos.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Site Plan and Elevations.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Dimensions.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Staff Recommendation.pdf](#)

The petitioners were not present.

**Ms. Reiter** gave the Staff report. Initially, the porch was begun without a permit and a certificate of appropriateness. A stop work order was put on this until they get approval from the Historic Review Board.

**Ms. Ramsay** asked how this came to the staff's attention.

**Ms. Reiter** answered that a citizen called and reported it.

**Mr. Engle** asked if a fine was imposed.

**Ms. Reiter** believes that the City's permitting department will charge the petitioners double for the permit, but the Historic Review Board does not have fines capability.

**Mr. Engle** asked how much is the fine.

**Ms. Reiter** stated that she does not know.

**Ms. Ramsay** asked Ms. Reiter if she knew of any review boards who punishes people either monetarily or delays for going ahead and building something without permission.

**Ms. Reiter** believed there could be, but she was not sure. The City has been approached to increase our submittal fees, but presently the request has not been approved.

**Mr. Engle** stated that the design standards section states that the addition shall be clearly differentiated from the historic building. But, this is an exact copy of the historic building and 20 or 30 years from now, no one will know that this is not an original part of that building. In many other reviews, there must be a differentiation including the details so that it's clear that it is not historic fabric.

**Dr. Henry** said he would rather have what was being proposed instead of coming up with something new.

**Mr. Engle** stated that simpler trim and patterns could have been used on the columns. The back porch is a fancy copy of the front porch. People add new things and make them look exactly like the originals instead of being different. This is what troubles him along with the fact that it is already built.

**Ms. Reiter** said she was thinking of additions as being livable space. She thought it was visually compatible and stated that the petitioner is reusing existing balusters that were taken from the house.

**Mr. Steffen** said the question is whether the porch would be considered an addition.

**Mr. Engle** said the paragraph states "add" on. If it is not an addition, then what is it?

**Mr. Judson** stated that if someone came down Oglethorpe Avenue, they would not have seen the posted sign. In order to see the sign, you would need to have known that the project was in the back and went down the lane by the fire station.

**Ms. Reiter** said one sign was facing Floyd Street and the other was facing the lane.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Mr. Daniel Carey** of Historic Savannah Foundation stated that both of their preservationist assistants and their architectural review committee looked at this project. He believes the preservation assistant left the petitioner with the belief that it was alright. Mr. Carey said unfortunately he was not in the office. If so, he would have suggested that it be a little different. They have the same general concerns that Mr. Engle brought up in terms of differentiation between the new and the old and making the addition slightly different so that it could be distinguished between the new. They were not suggesting that this be redesigned, but a slightly difference in the balusters and support columns so that the difference could be recognized.

**Ms. Reiter** said the staff informed the petitioner to go to the Historic Savannah Foundation and the petitioner said he went as directed. The petitioner believed the Historic Savannah Foundation was okay with it. The balusters are on site and are being reused.

**Mr. Engle** was hoping that the petitioners would be present as he wanted to ask them several questions. For example, the under side of the porch's roof which is visible from the lane and the side view, would this be covered or left exposed. The sides of the piers on the parking lot side are not stucco. You can see 14 to 15 inches of bare concrete block above the brick wall. But, this cannot be answered because the petitioner is not present.

**Dr. Henry** asked what are the options of the Historic Review Board. Can they vote to continue this so they can get some of their questions answered?

**Mr. Steffen** said since the petitioner is not present, the Historic Review Board can vote to continue the hearing. They have done this many times in the past. He has been in Savannah almost 10 years and originally got involved with the Historic Savannah Foundation before getting on the Historic Review Board. He built a carriage house and before he started doing the plans, he learned that there was a process. At that time, the economy was of such that many people in the Historic District were doing improvements, building carriage houses, doing additions and these meetings were much longer and more involved. Mr. Steffen believed that what happened is partly the result of the economy becoming schizophrenic and partly because we have not had a lot of public knowledge out there with the exception of how it relates to big structures. He believes that the general knowledge within the Historic District about the need to go to the Historic Review Board is considered to be minor. Mr. Steffen believes further that a lot of people are no longer aware that the Historic Review Board is a part of this process because there has not been a lot of public disputes over home renovations as they were nine years ago. Therefore, a part of this could be that after the new chair and vice-chair are gotten, a letter ought to be sent to City Council and especially to the Public Information Director, Bret Bell, asking that public information be sent to remind people that when they are doing minor additions within the Historic District that there is a process to go through. As he stated, when he moved here, he was aware of this, but knew that persons moving into the Historic District now are not aware of this.

**Mr. Engle** stated that the persons have to go to the City for the building permits.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that he was aware of this, but he could tell them that the visibility level has gone down as it relates to residential. This is at no fault of anybody other than the fact that the City has not been talking about it and there has not been a lot of controversial projects on the residential end and presently a lot is not being done.

**Mr. Judson** stated that he agreed with this wholeheartedly and anything they can do proactively to reenforce the fact that people be aware that if they are in a landmark district there are binding rules on what they can do. Secondly, they all know that ignorance of the law is no defense. Also, he does not see a design architect's name on what they are discussing now, but 90% of the projects they see a professional is hired. Certainly, if he as a new homeowner to the community was not aware of a law, anyone he hired in this town should be. Therefore, on this project he does not know if this is a homeowner's project or not. However, he agrees that they need to do whatever they can to raise the visibility and the bottom line is that it is not the responsibility of the Historic Review Board that the citizens are aware.

**Mr. Steffen** said that partly this goes back to the economy because people are doing the projects themselves and are hiring unlicensed people to do the work as they feel this is all they can afford. Even the real estate industry, which has been an allied for them as a whole, is now just glad to sell a house. Consequently, they may not be telling people as strictly as they have been in the past about what their obligations are in the Historic District. He believed the Historic Review Board needs to use whatever influence it has to ensure that the message gets out. Now, what is being discussed today may not be the case, but there have been cases where people have said that they did not know, I am only doing something minor.

**Mr. Judson** asked the staff if there were precedences in the Historic District for the paint treatment that is being discribed where they are going to paint the bottom story one color.

**Ms. Reiter** answered yes.

The staff was directed to contact the petitioners and ask them to be present at the January 13, 2010 meeting.

**Board Action:**

Continue to January 13, 2010 meeting. - PASS

**Vote Results**

Motion: Joe Steffen

Second: Reed Engle

Reed Engle	- Aye
Ned Gay	- Aye
Nicholas Henry	- Aye
Sidney J. Johnson	- Aye
Brian Judson	- Aye
Richard Law, Sr	- Aye
Linda Ramsay	- Aye
Joe Steffen	- Aye
Malik Watkins	- Nay

8. [Petition of Lynch Associates Architects - Andrew Lynch - H-09-4187-2 - 236 Drayton Street - Alterations and Addition](#)

Attachment: [Submittal Packet.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Staff Recommendation.pdf](#)

Present for the petition was Mr. Andrew Lynch, architect.

Ms. Reiter gave the staff report.

**Mr. Judson** asked whose purview it is to approve the outside dining area.

**Ms. Reiter** answered that this is an interesting question as this is not on the public right-of-way. She asked Tiras Petrea, City Zoning Inspector, if this comes under Bridget Lidy of Tourism and Film.

**Mr. Petrea** responded that this does not come under Tourism and Film. The outside cafe only deals with public sidewalks. Parking is not required; therefore, zoning will probably sign off on it. Currently, we don't have anything that addresses tables and chairs of the exterior of property.

**Ms. Ramsay** wanted to know if there was another color besides white and the stainless steel.

**Ms. Reiter** replied that the only colors are white and stainless steel.

**Ms. Ramsay** asked what is the color of the lighting.

**Ms. Reiter** stated that architect is present and could answer Ms. Ramsay's question.

**PETITIONER'S COMMENTS**

**Mr. Lynch** reported that he was not sure of the color of the lighting. However, it will probably just be a white light. They will submit this to the staff later.

**Board Action:**

Approval of alterations and addition to 236  
Drayton Street accessory building, but submit the - PASS  
light color to staff.

**Vote Results**

Motion: Brian Judson

Second: Ned Gay

Reed Engle - Aye

Ned Gay - Aye

Nicholas Henry - Aye

Sidney J. Johnson - Aye

Brian Judson - Aye

Richard Law, Sr - Aye

Linda Ramsay - Aye

Joe Steffen - Aye

Malik Watkins - Abstain

9. [Petition of Neil Dawson - H-09-4188-2 - 212 West Taylor Street - Elevator Addition](#)

Attachment: [Staff Recommendation.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Submittal Packet.pdf](#)

Present for the petition was Mr. Neil Dawson.

**Ms. Ward** gave the staff report. The staff recommends approval of the petition with the condition that the roof's eave be detailed to match the existing building and that the drawings be resubmitted to staff.

**PETITIONER'S COMMENTS**

**Mr. Dawson** stated that when they found that they could keep the elevator underneath the existing eaves, they felt it would be more appropriate for this addition to have a more contrasting roof shape. This is why they chose to extend the existing shed condition out further to cover this with much smaller overhangs, rather than maintain the cornice with large three feet overhanging eaves. They did have that design and considered it, but it looks much like the existing bump on the back. They wanted to maintain the feel that it was clearly an addition with the shed roof on it. They have no problem doing what the staff has recommended; however, they believe that it makes the addition look more like a part of the original fabric.

**Mr. Steffen** realized that the petitioners' task was to try to find a place to put an elevator in the building. He believed that they did an awesome job in finding the least conspicuous place to do so.

**Mr. Dawson** stated that it was not their preference. They just completed Gordon Hall renovation where they put the elevator inside. This building, however, has such a strong and functional layout that there is no extra space for a 10x10 hole inside the building.



**Mr. Engle** asked Mr. Dawson if they considered putting the elevator on the other side of the rear bump out.

**Mr. Dawson** said if they look at the floor plan an unfortunate metal building has been added on the Jones Lane side. There is no public access. One of their key criteria is that someone in a wheelchair be able to get from the public right-of-way to the elevator. In this case, they will have to go into a classroom to get to either one of these potential window openings where they could penetrate into the building. Then they would be coming through a classroom space, except for this one. Therefore, without totally reconfiguring this classroom, there is really no way to get people from Jefferson Street over into this spot to get into the space.

**Mr. Engle** stated that the visual compatibility standards do talk about balancing voids with solids. Two elevations of solids are being presented to Barnard Street without a break. He was not saying put in fake windows, but recesses could have been put in.

**Mr. Dawson** stated that they did consider those design elements whether to put recesses in the masonry so that there would be some articulation facade. The original building is so beautifully explicit in detailing that they felt their task was to be as plain as they could. They can certainly embellish it, but he would dare to say that the embellishments would be mimicking details and maskings that are inappropriate. However, they will consider this. Initially, they talked about doing smaller square windows that would just be little recesses of three inches to break up the mass. After they looked at all the options, they felt that less is better for this. They don't want to make it look like a part of the building, it is an elevator.

**Mr. Engle** said the petitioners are copying the masonry and roof. He felt the simplest way would be a glass top.

**Mr. Dawson** said they considered some of these elements as well; doing a more contemporary metal clad addition.

**Ms. Ramsay** believes that glass would be beautiful. The Kehoe House is a wonderful building with a glass hyphen connecting the elevator addition.

**Mr. Dawson** said at the upper level, they do have about 12 inches where they could put a reveal of glass to separate it from the building mass. He believes this would be a nice modification to the design.

**Mr. Engle** felt this would help. He would be more comfortable if a three foot glass connector was here. This is taking on the historic masonry box, roofing and will look like they did not want to bother detailing the building.

**Mr. Gay** felt the petitioners did not want to call attention to the fact that it is an elevator.

**Mr. Steffen** asked Mr. Dawson what is a realistic chance of getting the glass connector.

**Mr. Dawson** replied that he believes his client would be open to the suggestion. In fact, the same discussions they are having here today are the same discussion they have had with the client. He said that he is encouraged that the Historic Review Board is pushing them a

little on the design. He did not believe there would be an issue at all with introducing the glass and possibly some minor articulations in the exterior scanner. However, when he hears fake windows, he gets uncomfortable with the direction they are going.

**Mr. Judson** stated that he felt Ms. Ramsay's suggestion was excellent. The glass would give enough distinction and certainly give the separation from the building that at this point any further articulation or design change would probably be over the top.

**Mr. Steffen** said the glass connector has the advantage that if the elevator structure becomes obsolete, it can be removed. Every time people look at designs or additions that are done during our life times, they are saying that we became a more compassionate people because we started putting in elevators. May be 100 years from now our sciences will advance where we will not need elevators any longer.

**Board Action:**

Continued to the meeting of January 13, 2010. - PASS

**Vote Results**

Motion: Brian Judson

Second: Ned Gay

Reed Engle - Aye

Ned Gay - Aye

Nicholas Henry - Aye

Sidney J. Johnson - Aye

Brian Judson - Aye

Richard Law, Sr - Aye

Linda Ramsay - Aye

Joe Steffen - Aye

Malik Watkins - Abstain

**VIII. REQUEST FOR EXTENSIONS**

**IX. APPROVED STAFF REVIEWS**

10. [Petition of Alex Ormond & Martha Mythlo - H-091105-4180\(S\)-2 - 502 Price Street- Color Change](#)

Attachment: [Staff Decision.pdf](#)

11. [Petition of Martin Smith - H-091110-4181\(S\)-2 - 516 Abercorn Street - Color Change](#)

Attachment: [Staff Decision.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Submittal Packet.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Submittal Packet 2.pdf](#)

12. [Petition of Linda Ramsay - H-091112-4182\(S\)-2 - 309 East Gordon Street - Doors](#)

Attachment: [Staff Decision.pdf](#)  
Attachment: [Submittal Packet.pdf](#)

13. [Petition of Lazaro Entrena - H-091113-4183\(S\)-2 - 344 Whitaker Street - Windows & Doors](#)

Attachment: [Staff Decision.pdf](#)  
Attachment: [Submittal Packet.pdf](#)

14. [Petition of Laura Bryant - H-091116-4184\(S\)-2 - 128 West Taylor Street - Color Change](#)

Attachment: [Staff Decision.pdf](#)

**X. WORK PERFORMED WITHOUT A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**

**XI. NOTICES, PROCLAMATIONS, and ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

**XII. OTHER BUSINESS**

**Unfinished Business**

15. [Historic District Ordinance \(Section 8-3030\), Update - Continued to January 13, 2010](#)

Attachment: [HD Ordinance 8-3030, REVISED 12.3.09.pdf](#)

**New Business**

16. [Election of Officers: Nominating Committee nominates Brian Judson for Chairman and Malik Watkins for Vice-Chairman](#)

**Ms. Ward** reported that on Thursday, December 3, 2009, City Council appointed and reappointed members to the Historic Review Board. Unfortunately, because of a lapse in communication one member who was eligible for reappointment did not reapply. Sadly, Dr. Watkins will no longer be on the Historic Review Board. At the start of 2010, we will have a full board.

**Dr. Watkins** thanked everyone for their service and said he has thoroughly enjoyed his tenure on the Historic Review Board.

**Mr. Carey** thanked Dr. Watkins for his years of service. He also congratulated Mr. Steffen for his service. Mr. Steffen will be rotating off the Historic Review Board. They have been good representatives and have helped to shape the discussion on a number of important cases.

**Dr. Henry** motioned that Historic Review Board give a resolution to members rotating off in recognition of their service. This was seconded by **Mr. Judson** and carried unanimously.

**Ms. Ramsay** reported that the nominating committee met and nominated Mr. Brian Judson as chair and Dr. Malik Watkins as vice-chair. However, she believes that the nominating committee will have to meet again and nominate a vice-chair as Dr. Watkins will be rotating off the Historic Review Board.

**Board Action:**

Approval of Brian Judson for Chairman. - PASS

**Vote Results**

Motion: Linda Ramsay

Second: Reed Engle

Reed Engle - Aye

Ned Gay - Aye

Nicholas Henry - Aye

Sidney J. Johnson - Aye

Brian Judson - Aye

Richard Law, Sr - Aye

Linda Ramsay - Aye

Joe Steffen - Aye

Malik Watkins - Abstain

17. [Sample Panel Guidelines](#)

Attachment: [Sample Panel Guidelines 120309.pdf](#)

**Ms. Ward** stated that attached to the Historic Review Board packet was the proposed Sample Panel Guidelines. The guidelines will be used when individuals come forward with large-scale developments. This is somewhat an addendum to the Historic District Revisions. This is a way to provide quality control and an enforcement measure that the materials and windows approved by the Historic Review Board will be what is going on the projects.

**Mr. Steffen** believes that the guidelines are extraordinarily important because they not only keep the petitioner honest, but provides a guide for the people on the site. Many times in the past, the problems they have had is that persons on site decided to do something on their own and would come back and say that they did not know. The guidelines will provide them with valuable assistance.

**Board Action:**

Approval of Sample Panel Guidelines. Adopt

guidelines as a policy for final review of materials, finishes, and details when required on Large-Scale Development. - PASS

**Vote Results**

Motion: Joe Steffen

Second: Linda Ramsay

Reed Engle - Aye

Ned Gay - Aye

Nicholas Henry - Aye

Sidney J. Johnson - Aye

Brian Judson - Aye

Richard Law, Sr - Aye

Linda Ramsay - Aye

Joe Steffen - Aye

Malik Watkins - Abstain

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

18. [Adjournment](#)

There being no further business to come before the Historic District Board of Review, Dr. Watkins adjourned the December 9, 2009 meeting at approximately 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beth Reiter  
Preservation Officer

BR:mem

*The Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission provides meeting summary minutes which are adopted by the respected Board. Verbatim transcripts of minutes are the responsibility of the interested party.*