

**CITY OF SAVANNAH  
HISTORIC DISTRICT BOARD OF REVIEW  
REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**PETITIONER:** Lynch Associates Architects  
409 East Liberty Street  
Savannah, GA 31401

**FILE NUMBER:** 17-002110-COA

**ADDRESS:** 32 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard

**PIN:** 2-0016-09-004

**ZONING:** BC-1

**STAFF REVIEWER:** Leah G. Michalak

**DATE:** July 12, 2017

**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

The applicant is requesting approval for New Construction: Part II, Design Details of a 4-story mixed-use building to be located at 32 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. The building will be located on the northeast corner of MLK and West Congress Streets with its front façade oriented toward MLK; the West Congress Street facade has secondary entrances to the ground floor commercial and an entrance to the residential units on the upper floors. A mezzanine is proposed between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> stories.

**PROJECT HISTORY:**

On July 8, 2015, this same applicant applied for a COA to demolish the building located on this site at 32 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard [File No. 15-003214-COA]. The HDBR voted to approve the petition with the following conditions:

1. Conduct an archeological assessment of the property after demolition;
2. Document the existing conditions through photographs and measured drawings and provide to the City's Municipal Library and Archives;
3. Reuse or recycle the historic bricks; and
4. Apply for the removal of the building from the Historic Building Map;

Because the building had lost its historic fabric the Board no longer considered it to be contributing. This approval was based on the lack of historic integrity of the building and not on economic hardship. Conditions 1-3 have not yet been met and will be included as conditions of this project's approval.

The Board also decided that the approval of the demolition is contingent on approval and permitting of the new construction.

After the demolition approval and per the HDBR's conditions, the same applicant applied to The Planning Commission for a Zoning Amendment to remove the building from the Historic Building Map [File No. 16-001932-ZA]. The Planning Commission recommended approval to City Council and, on July 7 2016, City Council voted to remove 32 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard from the Historic Building Map; the building is now considered non-contributing (non-historic).

On May 10, 2017, the Board approved New Construction: Part I, Height and Mass with the following conditions (*staff responses are italicized*):

1. Document the existing conditions through photographs and measured drawings and provide to the City's Municipal Library and Archives prior to demolition.

*This information has not been provided. The applicant must provide it to staff before we will stamp the demolition permit drawings.*

2. Conduct an archeological assessment of the property after demolition;

*This information has not been provided. The applicant must provide it to staff before we will stamp the new construction permit drawings.*

3. Provide details as to how/where the historic bricks from the existing building will be used in the construction of the new building.

*This information has not been provided.*

4. Lower the visual expression of first level's floor-to-floor height.

*The physical height of the first floor cornice has been lowered 6 inches to 18 feet, the center higher cornice has been lowered, and an architectural element has been added under the second floor windows. Staff feels that these changes result in a compatible lower visual expression of the first floor.*

5. Provide information regarding the elevator overrun's height, mass, and visibility from all public right-of-ways.

*This information has been provided. The elevator overruns will extend 18 inches higher than the parapet wall and be minimally visible from rights-of-way.*

6. Further accentuate the building's subdivisions into "base, middle, and top" using material changes.

*See Part II review.*

7. Ensure door frames are inset not less than 3 inches and storefront glazing is inset not less than 4 inches.

*This information has been provided and the standards are met.*

8. Revise the height of the storefront base to be between 18-24 inches.

*The storefront base has been reduced to 18 inches.*

9. Provide HVAC equipment screening details.

*This information has been provided.*

10. Provide additional information for the north and east elevations.

*This information has been provided.*

### **CONTEXT:**

32 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. was constructed in 1883 for Patrick O'Connell and Richard Kirkland. The 1884 Sanborn Map shows a three-story masonry building facing West Broad

Street (now MLK Jr. Blvd.). The building has two sections divided with an interior wall. Three story masonry buildings are abutting to the east of the site. The 1888 Sanborn Map shows the same configuration with the abutting buildings now labeled as “Boarding.” The 1891 Koch’s Birds Eye View of Savannah also shows a three-story structure on the site.

By 1898, the building configuration has been substantially altered. Notably the building is now shown as two stories, is oriented to face West Congress Street, and has grown to include one of the bays of the adjacent Boarding House. The building is divided into two halves. It is possible that the three-story building was demolished, along with one bay of the Boarding House, and a new two story building constructed on the site, however the interior wall system seems to suggest alterations, rather than demolition/new construction. It may be that there was a fire on the third floor and it was not rebuilt.

By 1916, the building has been reoriented to face West Broad Street and is divided into three sections, one of which, faces West Congress Street. Additionally, a one-story stoop has been added to the West Broad Street façade. The same configuration is maintained through 1954, although the interior partition and stoop have been removed. By 1973, the abutting buildings have been demolished. Despite extensive efforts by both the applicant and staff, no historic photographs were located.

Surrounding historic context consists of one to four-story masonry buildings. The immediately adjacent buildings are simple building forms with very little decoration and detail; they also have small punched openings. Other historic context is more elaborate and taller, such as the Ships of the Sea Museum and 101 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. which is now a SCAD building. These buildings harken back to when this street was known as West Broad Street; it had many more historic buildings that were more elaborate than the modest ones now remaining.

## **FINDINGS:**

The following Part II standards from the Historic District Section (8-3030) of the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance apply:

***Visual compatibility factors.** New construction and existing buildings and structures and appurtenances thereof in the historic district which are moved, reconstructed, materially altered, repaired or changed in color shall be visually compatible with structures, squares and places to which they are visually related. The following factors shall be considered in determining the visual compatibility of such a building, structure or appurtenance. These factors shall not be the basis for appeal of an adverse decision. Greater weight shall be given to adjacent historic structures.*

***Relationship of materials, texture and color.** The relationship of materials, texture and color of the facade of a structure shall be visually compatible with the predominate materials, textures, and colors used on contributing structures to which the structure is Visually Related.*

The proposed materials, colors, and textures are visually compatible:

- Brick (2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> floors): Colonial Grey Smooth
- Cast Stone (1<sup>st</sup> floor, all lintels, bases, and cornices): Arriscraft, Limestone
- Mortar for brick and stone: Holcim, Oyster White

- Aluminum storefront and windows and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor doors: Marvin, Ebony (black)
- Metal spandrel panels: Caviar (black)
- Metal canopies: Caviar (black)
- 1<sup>st</sup> floor doors: mahogany with a clear finish
- Metal balcony railings: Caviar (black)
- Wood trellis: Caviar (black)

Provide specifications for the exterior light fixtures shown on the exterior elevations.  
Create a sample panel per the attached policy.

***Design standards.** The following design standards shall apply to new construction, additions, and alterations to historic and non-historic buildings and structures. Though certain building materials are prescribed herein, the Board 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.*

***Entrances.** Building entrance locations shall comply with the following:*

***Materials.***

*Permitted: Doors shall be made of wood, clad wood, glass, or steel. For commercial storefronts see Section (n)(7).*

*Prohibited: Vinyl doors; steel-pressed doors simulating wood grain; half-moon, semi-circular, diamond or similar glass insets in doors; boarded-up doors or entrance ways.*

The 1st floor doors are proposed to be mahogany and the second floor doors are proposed to be aluminum clad.

***Exterior walls.** Exterior walls of new construction shall comply with the following:*

*Commercial exterior walls shall be finished in brick, concrete formed or assembled as stone, precast concrete panels with finish to simulate stucco texture, polished stone and glazed brick or tile where similar historic examples exist along the same block front.*

The commercial building is proposed to be brick and precast stone assembled to look like blocks of stone.

***Windows and Commercial Storefronts.** The following standards shall apply to all development.*

***Windows.***

*Windows facing a street shall be double or triple hung, awning, casement or Palladian.*

The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor windows are proposed to be double-hung and 4<sup>th</sup> floor windows are proposed to be casement.

*Double glazed (simulated divided light) windows are permitted on nonhistoric facades and on new construction, provided, however, that the windows meet the following standards: the muntin shall be no wider than 7/8 inch; the muntin profile shall simulate traditional putty glazing; the lower sash shall be wider than the meeting and top rails; extrusions shall be covered with appropriate molding.*

*"Snap-in" or between-the-glass muntins shall not be used.*

*In new construction windows shall be constructed of wood or wood clad or metal. Solid vinyl windows shall be prohibited.*

The windows are proposed to be "Marvin, Ultimate" which is a double-paned, aluminum clad product with 7/8 inch wide simulated divided lites that has previously been approved by the Board for use on new construction. The muntin profile was not provided.

### ***Commercial Storefronts.***

#### ***Storefront windows and doors***

*Retail storefront area glazing shall be not less than 55 percent. Such glazing shall be transparent; provided, however, black glass may be used in the sign area above the storefront window transoms.*

Provide clarification that all ground floor glass will be transparent.

*Storefront glazing shall extend from the sill or from an 18 to 24 inch tall base of contrasting material, to the lintel.*

The bases under the storefront windows on the MLK façade are proposed to be 18 inches high; however, they are not a contrasting material. They are proposed to be the same cast stone as the ground floor walls.

#### ***Materials***

*Storefronts shall be constructed of wood, cast iron, Carrera glass, aluminum, steel or copper as part of a glazed storefront system; bronze, wood, masonry, glazed brick or tile as a base for the storefront.*

The storefront is proposed to be "Marvin, Ultimate" which is a double-paned, aluminum clad product. The applicant stated: "We are trying to get a thin muntin profile for the storefront, similar to a steel window. Marvin now makes a large clad fixed window that has a thinner muntin profile than the typical aluminum storefront." Staff requests that window and muntin details be provided.

#### ***Awnings. Awnings shall be subject to the following criteria:***

*Awnings extending above the public right-of-way shall have a minimum vertical clearance of eight feet (8') above the sidewalk.*

*Non-residential awnings shall be constructed of canvas, other equivalent cloth, metal, or glass.*

*Awnings shall be integrated structurally and architecturally into the design of the façade ...*

*The following shall be prohibited:*

*A single continuous awning that connects two buildings.*

*Back-lit or internally lit awnings.*

The standards are met for the contemporary, top-supported, metal canopies proposed above the two ground floor entrance doors. They are proposed to have 9 feet clear above the sidewalk; however, the canopy depths were not provided.

*Awnings within the public right-of-way shall be required to obtain an encroachment license from the City of Savannah.*

Ensure that an encroachment license is obtained for both canopies.

***Roofs.*** *Roofs shall comply with the following:*

*Parapets shall have a string course and a coping.*

Both are provided.

***Service Areas, Utilities and Mechanical Systems.*** *Service Areas, Utilities and Mechanical Systems shall comply with the following:*

*HVAC units shall be screened from the public right-of-way.*

The units are proposed on the roof and will be screened with 3-foot-high perforated metal panels.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

**Approval for New Construction: Part II, Design Details of a 4-story mixed-use building to be located at 32 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard with the following conditions to be submitted to staff for final review and approval:**

- 1. Document the existing conditions through photographs and measured drawings and provide to the City's Municipal Library and Archives prior to demolition.**
- 2. Conduct an archeological assessment of the property after demolition;**
- 3. Provide details as to how/where the historic bricks from the existing building will be used in the construction of the new building.**
- 4. Create a sample panel per the attached policy; staff must review and approve the panel on site prior to commencement of construction.**
- 5. Provide specifications for the exterior light fixtures shown on the exterior elevations, muntin profile details for the operable and fixed storefront windows, clarification that all ground floor glass will be transparent, and the canopy depths.**
- 6. Revise the storefront base material to contrast with the wall material.**
- 7. Ensure that an encroachment license is obtained for both canopies.**

**EIH: lgm**