



S A V A N N A H H I S T O R I C D I S T R I C T
B O A R D O F R E V I E W

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: **Rose Architects**

MPC File No.: **23-002527-COA**

Address: **301 Alice Street**

PIN: **20045 16001**

Zoning: **D-C**

Staff Reviewer: **Leah G. Michalak**

Date: **June 14, 2023**

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting approval to demolish a non-contributing building and for New Construction: Part I, Height and Mass for a single-family residence with a four-car carriage house for the property located at 301 Alice Street.

PROJECT HISTORY:

On February 8, 2023, the Historic District Board of Review recommended approval to City Council to change the status of 301 Alice Street from a contributing to non-contributing structure in the National Historic Landmark District; staff's recommendation was for denial. Then on March 9, 2023, City Council approved the change. 301 Alice Street is now a non-contributing building on the Historic Building Map for the National Historic Landmark District. [File No. 22-005388-COA]

DEMOLITION FINDINGS:

The following standards from the Sec 3.19.9 - HBR Criteria for Relocation or Demolition apply:

Criteria for Relocation or Demolition.

Evaluation Required. Any non-contributing resource must first be evaluated and considered for contributing status prior to issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness for relocation or demolition (See Sec. 3.16.4.b.).

This building will be evaluated and considered for contributing status.

Sec. 3.16.4.b. Classification of Resources and Criteria for Resource Designation. All resources within the District shall be classified and designated on the District's "Historic District Contributing Resources Map." All resources shall be identified as contributing or non-contributing as follows:

Contributing. All resources identified on the “Historic District Contributing Resources Map” having historic significance shall be considered “contributing” and worthy of preservation and shall be classified as “historic” for purposes hereunder.

Period of Significance. Contributing buildings include those within the current Period of Significance, possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and meet one of more of the following criteria:

Are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or

Are associated with the lives of significant persons in our past; or

Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

Have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in historic or prehistory.

The building was constructed c.1952 which is within the Period of Significance of 1733-1960. The site is not associated with lives of significant events or persons, and does not embody distinctive characteristics, the work of a master, and is highly unlikely to yield information important in history or prehistory. However, staff finds that it does retain its original location, general design, setting, some materials and workmanship, feeling, and association. Staff finds that the building is associated with the automobile era which has made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Savannah’s history; Sanborn Maps indicate that this building was used for auto repair.

Should the resource meet the criteria for contributing status, the criteria for relocating or demolishing a contributing resource shall apply.

Staff finds that this building still meets the criteria for contributing status.

Conditions. *In granting a Certificate of Appropriateness for relocation or demolition, the Historic District Board of Review may impose, in addition to those listed below, reasonable conditions as will mitigate the negative effects of the relocation or demolition.*

Demolition. *In the case of the demolition of a contributing principal building, a Certificate of Appropriateness must first be issued for the new construction of the replacement building prior to approval of the demolition.*

If the HDBR approves demolishing the building, staff recommends that the building be deconstructed, and historic materials be salvaged. Additionally, a Certificate of Appropriateness must first be issued for the new construction of the replacement building prior to approval of the demolition.

Application Requirements. *Except where a resource or portion of a resource poses an immediate threat to public safety, all applications for relocation or demolition of a contributing or non-contributing resource shall include the following information:*

A detailed explanation for the relocation or demolition and why it cannot be avoided;

The applicant has provided a detailed explanation, including photographs documenting the current condition of the building and why, they believe, demolition cannot be avoided.

Information documenting the construction date, history and development of the property;

The standard is met. The applicant provided this information within their submittal packet.

A report from a Georgia-licensed structural engineer with demonstrated experience in historic renovation, restoration, or rehabilitation, as to the structural soundness of the contributing resource. The report shall also identify and dangerous structural conditions;

SAPP Structural is a Georgia-licensed structural engineering firm. Staff could not determine if the structural engineer has demonstrated experience in historic renovation, restoration, or rehabilitation. Quoting from the report, some of the structural conditions the engineer identified include:

“From visual observations, the structure was found to be in good general condition with some areas of deterioration from exposure to environmental elements. However, the structural elements of the building appear to be more utilitarian than typical commercial buildings with lower structural capacities than commercial building codes would typically allow.”

“The analysis of the [roof] deck shows that this edge is not capable of supporting live loading along the edge.”

“An analysis shows that the existing roof purlins are not adequate to support a code-required live load of 20 pounds per square feet ... Upon inspection of some of the roof purlins, the sections show some mild corrosion and deformations that reduce the structural integrity of the members.”

A fair market value appraisal of the property from a Georgia-licensed property appraiser. The appraisal shall include a full market sales report to include comparable sales;

The amount paid for the property; the remaining balance on any mortgage or other financing secured by the property; and, the annual debt service for the previous two (2) years;

The above two standards do not apply because the applicant is retaining the property.

If the property is income producing, the annual gross income from the property for the previous two (2) years; the itemized operating and maintenance expenses for the previous two (2) years; and depreciation deduction and annual cash flow before and after debt service for the previous two (2) years. The Historic Preservation Commission may require details of past rental history;

The property is vacant and currently is not income-producing.

The selling price asked and offers received within the previous two (2) years; the most recent assessed values of the property and real estate taxes (if applicable); and, evidence of listing for sale; and,

This standard does not apply. The applicant is not selling the property but rather, has plans to build new construction on the site.

Any economic incentives and/or funding available to the applicant through federal, state, local or private programs.

It is not likely that funding is available because this building was constructed outside the National Historic Landmark District's period of significance.

NEW CONSTRUCTION, PART I: HEIGHT AND MASS FINDINGS:

The following standards from the Article 5 - Base Zoning Districts apply:

(D) Downtown District Development Standards. *Development in any D- district shall meet the development standards as set forth below.*

D-C Development Standards for Permitted Uses.

D-C, Lot Dimensions. *Lot area per unit (min/max sq ft)*

Single-family Detached. 1,200 (min)

The parcel is 60' x 110'-7" which exceeds 6600sf.

D-C Lot Width (min ft). *20*

The parcel is 60 feet wide.

D-C Building Coverage (max). *100%*

The proposed lot coverage is 59.06%.

D-C Building Setback (max ft).

Front yard. None

Side (street) yard. None

Side (interior) yard. None

Rear yard. None

No setbacks are proposed.

The following standards from the Sec 7.8 - Savannah Downtown Historic District Ordinance apply:

Visual Compatibility Criteria. *To maintain the special character of the Savannah Downtown 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.*

Height. *New construction shall be permitted to build to the number of stories as shown on the "Savannah Downtown Historic District Height Map," referred to herein as*

“Height Map,” and the overall height of a building and the height of individual components of a building or structure shall be visually compatible to the contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related.

Staff finds, per the context elevations, the height to be visually compatible.

Proportion of front façade. *The relationship of the width of a building or structure to the height of its front facade shall be visually compatible to the contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related.*

Although atypically wide for a single-family residence, the mass is broken into two distinct masses along Alice Street making it more compatible with the widths contributing buildings.

Proportion of openings. *The relationship of the width of the windows to height of windows within a building or structure shall be visually compatible to the contributing buildings and structures to which the structure is visually related.*

All windows are taller than they are wide; staff finds them visually compatible.

Rhythm of solids to voids in front façades. *The relationship of solids to voids in the façades visible from the public right-of-way shall be visually compatible with the contributing buildings and structures to which the structure is visually related.*

A consistent rhythm of solids to voids is proposed on visible facades which staff finds visually compatible.

Rhythm of structures on streets. *The relationship of a building or structure to the open space between it and adjacent buildings or structures shall be visually compatible with the open spaces between contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related.*

Three (3) feet are proposed between this building and the adjacent building to the west. It is common throughout the district to have little space between buildings.

Rhythm of entrance and/or porch projection. *The relationship of entrances, porch projections, and walkways to buildings or structures shall be visually compatible with the contributing buildings and structures to which they are visually related.*

Although a central entrance is atypical, this design, with the double-door in the center appears as two entrances in the center with a mass on either side similar to a side hallway plan.

A full-width porch on the rear of the main building is visually compatible.

A second floor porch on the carriage house, facing Jefferson Street, is visually compatible.

Roof shapes. *The roof shape of a building or structure shall be visually compatible with the contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related.*

The roof shape reads as a hip roof which is a common roof form that is visually related.

Walls of continuity. *Brick walls, wrought iron fences, landscape masses, building facades, or combinations of these shall be visually compatible with the contributing buildings, structures and objects to which they are visually related and shall form continuous walls of enclosure along the street.*

Continuous walls of enclosure are proposed along all 3 streets.

Scale of a building. *The mass of a building or structure and size of windows, door openings, porches column spacing, stairs, balconies and additions shall be visually compatible with the contributing buildings and structures to which the structure is visually related.*

Staff finds the scale of the building and its individual components to be visually compatible.

Savannah Downtown Historic District Design Standards. *The intent of these standards is to ensure appropriate new construction, additions, and alterations within the Savannah Downtown 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 resources.*

The following design standards shall apply to new construction, additions, alterations to contributing and non-contributing buildings and structures, unless otherwise specified. 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.

For the purposes of evaluating the visual compatibility and design standards of exterior fenestration, where voids (windows, doors, and storefronts) in the exterior façade are substantially blocked by interior walls or built-in furniture, these may be considered part of the exterior wall if they are built within three feet of the exterior wall. For example, if an interior wall is built abutting the storefront, that interior wall is impacting the exterior design of the fenestration and may be subject to review by the Historic Board of Review.

Streets and Lanes.

Development shall preserve or reconstruct the historic ward pattern of streets and lanes within the Oglethorpe Plan Area.

The parcel is in the southwest corner of the Oglethorpe Plan and preserves the Plan.

Streets and lanes shall not be bridged by development, except on Factors Walk.

The standard is met.

Height. *The number of stories as shown on the Height Map shall be permitted. Variances from the Height Map shall not be permitted. Additionally, the following standards shall apply:*

The parcel is within a 3-story height zone per the Height Map. Both buildings are proposed to be 2-stories.

Stories are further classified as follows.

Buildings throughout the Savannah Downtown Historic District, which front a street, shall be at least two (2) stories, except in the Beach Institute Character Area or for accessory buildings which front a lane.

Accessory buildings which front a lane shall be no taller than two (2) stories.

The standards are met.

In calculating the dimensions of a story, the following provisions shall apply, except in cases where the floor-to-floor heights can be shown to be historically predominately lower, such as in the Beach Institute Character Area.

Height, Residential buildings.

The exterior expression of the height of the first story, or the second story in the case of a raised basement, shall be not less than 11 feet.

The exterior expression of the height of each story above the second shall not be less than 10 feet.

The first floor is 13'-10 ¼" and the second is 11'-4 ¾". The standards are met.

Building Form. *Building form is based on the height, mass and envelope of a building. The proposed building form for new construction shall comply with the following:*

A proposed building on an east-west connecting street shall utilize a contributing building form located within the existing block front or on an immediately adjacent tithing or trust block.

A proposed building located on an east-west through street shall utilize a contributing building form fronting the same street within the same ward or in an adjacent ward.

A proposed building located on a trust block which fronts into a tithing block shall utilize a contributing building form within such trust block. If, however, no contributing buildings exist on such trust block, a contributing building form from the tithing block across the street shall be utilized.

A proposed building located on a trust block which fronts another trust block shall utilize a contributing building form from the same trust block. If, however, no contributing building exists on the trust block, a contributing building form from the trust block across the street shall be utilized. If, however, no contributing building exists on such trust block, a contributing building form from the tithing block across the street shall be utilized.

The standards do not apply because, although still within the Oglethorpe Plan Area, the parcel is not within a standard ward with the standard street types.

Setbacks, Front yards. *There shall be no front yard setbacks except as follows:*

On tithing lots where there is a historic setback along a particular block face, such setback shall be provided. For the purpose of this Section, a historic setback is the average of the contributing buildings along a block face.

On a trust lot fronting a square, proposed buildings may establish a front yard setback not to exceed 20 feet.

Setbacks, Side and rear yards. *Side and rear yard setbacks shall not be required.*

No setbacks are proposed.

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

Foundations, Configuration. *Beneath a wood frame building, the foundation shall be recessed and not project forward of the building plane.*

This is not intended to be a wood frame building.

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

Exterior Walls, Configuration. *On lots less than 60 feet in width the front face shall be constructed so as to form a continuous plane parallel to the street. Bays and porches attached to such elevation may project streetward of the plane.*

The lot is exactly 60 feet wide and has a recessed front entrance. The standard is met.

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

Location, Trust Lots.

A building on a trust lot facing a square shall locate its primary entrance to front the square.

A building on a trust lot not facing a square shall locate its primary entrance so that it fronts the same street as the other historic buildings on the same block.

Location, Tithing Blocks. *A building on a tithing block shall locate its primary entrance to front the east-west street.*

Location, Broughton Street. *A building on Broughton Street shall locate its entrances at no greater intervals than 50 feet; provided, however, that for a corner entrance the interval to the next entrance may be increased to 60 feet.*

Location, North of Broughton Street. *North of Broughton Street, a corner building located adjacent to a north-south service street shall have an entrance on the service street.*

Location, East-West Connecting Street. *A building along an east-west connecting street fronting a square shall have entrances at intervals not to exceed 50 feet.*

Location, Corner Entrance. *An angled entrance shall only be permitted at intersections of streets or lanes.*

The standards do not apply because, although still within the Oglethorpe Plan Area, the parcel is not within a standard ward with the standard street types.

Location, None of the above. *If none of the above conditions apply, the building entrance shall be consistent with contributing buildings within the context.*

The standard is met. The primary entrance faces Alice Street; in the adjacent block to the east the contributing building also faces Alice Street.

Doors, Configuration. *Door frames shall be inset not less than three (3) inches from the exterior surface of the façade of a building, excluding façades with wood siding.*

This information was not provided with the submittal packet.

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

Windows, Configuration.

All 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. Accent windows may be round or other shapes.

Paired or grouped windows shall be permitted, provided the individual sashes have a vertical to horizontal ratio of not less than 5:3.

All windows meet the standards.

Window sashes shall be inset a minimum of three (3) inches from the façade of a building, excluding exterior surfaces with wood siding.

This information was not provided with the submittal packet.

The distance between windows shall be not less than for adjacent contributing buildings, nor more than two (2) times the width of the windows on primary facades. The Board may waive strict compliance with this standard where historic precedent exists within the visually-related context and is visually compatible.

The standard is met.

Shutters.

Shutters shall be hinged and operable and sized to fit the window opening.

The placement of the horizontal rail(s) shall correspond to the location of the meeting rail(s) of the window.

The standards do not apply to shutters that do not cover windows.

Porches, Stoops, Balconies, Porticos, Exterior Stairs and Decks - New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions. *Porches, stoops, balconies, porticos, and exterior stairs within the public right-of-way may be permitted with the approval of the encroachment by the Mayor and Aldermen and provided that the following criteria are met:*

Porches, Stoops, Balconies, Porticos, Exterior Stairs and Decks - Configuration.

Wood portico posts shall have cap and base molding. The column capital shall extend outward of the porch architrave.

The standard does not apply.

Balusters shall be placed between upper and lower rails, and the distances between balusters shall not exceed four (4) inches on center. The height of the railing shall not exceed 36 inches for single- and two-family dwelling units.

The drawings indicate that the design of the railings will be submitted with Part II: Design Details.

Awnings, Canopies, and Shade Structures. *Awnings, canopies and shade structures within the public right-of-way may be permitted with the approval of the encroachment by the Mayor and Aldermen and provided that the following criteria are met:*

Awnings, Canopies, and Shade Structures, Configuration.

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

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

A canopy is proposed over the side entry door on the east façade. It provides 9 feet of clearance above the sidewalk and is integrated with the contemporary design of the façade.

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

Roofs, Configuration.

Where historically appropriate, flat roofs may be utilized.

Parapets shall have a stringcourse and a coping.

The proposed roof is neither a true flat roof nor a parapeted roof. The standards do not apply.

Eaves shall extend no less than 12 inches beyond supporting walls.

This information was not provided with the submittal packet.

Eaves and rakes on accessory buildings and dormers shall overhang at least eight (8) inches.

This information was not provided with the submittal packet.

Accessory Structures. *Accessory structures, including accessory dwellings, shall comply with the Visual Compatibility Criteria, the above design standards, the requirements set forth in Sec. 8.7, Accessory Structures and Uses, except as provided below:*

Accessory Structures, Configuration. *Accessory structures shall be located in the rear yard even if there is no lane access.*

The height and mass of the primary building shall not be exceeded by any accessory building or structure on the same parcel.

Accessory buildings and structures shall not be more than two (2) stories tall.

The standards are met.

New accessory dwellings and garages may have up to a five (5) foot lane setback to allow a turning radius into the garage.

No setback is proposed.

Roofs shall be side gable, hip with parapet, flat or shed hidden by a parapet.

The roof is flat/shed hidden by a parapet. The standard is met.

Driveway aprons shall not be erected on the public right-of-way.

It is not clear if the driveway apron is on the public sidewalk.

Mechanical Equipment and Refuse. *Mechanical equipment and refuse shall comply with Sec. 9.5.3, Screening of Service Areas, except as provided below.*

Electrical vaults, meter boxes, communications devices, and similar equipment shall be located on the secondary and/or rear façades and shall be minimally visible from view.

The electrical service is proposed on the carriage house along Gaston Street. The standard is met.

Roof mounted equipment and HVAC units shall be screened from view from the public right-of-way.

The mechanical equipment is proposed on the roof of the primary building screened by the parapet. The standard is met.

Refuse storage areas for shall be located within a building or to the side or rear of the building and screened from the public right-of-way.

A refuse storage room is proposed in the carriage house.

Parking and Paving. *In addition to the requirements set forth in Sec. 9.3, Off-Street Parking and Loading, parking and paving shall comply with the following:*

Parking areas shall be located in the rear yard. Properties on Trust Lots or with double street frontage are exempt from this provision.

The property has triple street frontage. The standard does not apply.

Vehicular access shall be from lanes or north-south service streets. When a property does not front a lane or north-south service street, parking may be accessed from east-west connecting streets or trust streets.

The vehicular access is from an east-west street.

Structured parking within the first floor of a building shall be setback a minimum of 30 feet from property lines along all public rights-of-way (not including lanes). This standard does not apply to structured parking on the same lot as single family and two family residential dwellings that are either on a corner lot with lane access or on a parcel that does not have access to a lane.

The parcel does not have access to a lane.

Curb cuts shall not exceed 20 feet in width.

The standard is not met. The curb cut is proposed to be 48'-8".

Fences, Trellises and Walls. *Fences and walls shall comply with Sec. 9.6, Fences and Walls except as provided below:*

Fences, Trellises and Walls, Configuration.

Fences, trellises or walls shall not exceed 11 feet in height; however, where adjoining walls exceed 11 feet, any new wall may be constructed to the height of the existing wall.

A minimum of five (5) feet must be provided between a fence and a building where they are parallel.

Nine (9) foot high walls are proposed to connect the carriage house to the primary building and enclose the courtyard. The standards are met.

The following standards from the Sec 8.7 - Accessory Structures and Uses apply:

Accessory Structures and Uses, Generally. All accessory structures and uses shall be consistent with all standards of the base zoning district (Article 5.0), any applicable overlay district (Article 7.0) and any applicable use standards (Article 8.0), except as expressly set forth below. Accessory structure and uses shall:

Be accessory and clearly incidental and subordinate to a permitted principal use. No accessory use may be established on a site prior to the establishment of a permitted principal use.

Be located on the same property as the principal use or structure.

Not involve uses or structures not in keeping with the character of the principal use or principal structure served.

Be located within a district that permits the principal use.

Not be erected in any required setback area, except as expressly set forth in this Ordinance.

Shipping containers and tractor trailers shall be prohibited as storage buildings or structures except as permitted on an active construction site of in Industrial zoning districts (see Article 8.8, Temporary Uses).

The standards are met.

Accessory Dwelling Units (not including Caretaker's Dwelling Unit). One (1) accessory dwelling unit shall be permitted as an accessory use to a principal dwelling located in the A-1, RSF-, RTF-, RMF-, TR-, TN-, TC-, D- and PD districts. Such use is not required to be included in the gross residential density calculations. For such use, the following shall apply:

Accessory Dwelling Units, Location.

The unit may be attached to or detached from the principal dwelling.

The unit is detached.

Detached accessory dwelling units shall meet the same side-yard setback requirement as the principal structure. Such units shall be separated from the principal structure by at least 10 feet.

No setbacks are required for the principal structure. The buildings are separated by 52 feet.

Any portion of an accessory dwelling unit over 25 feet in height shall be located at least 20 feet from a rear property line that does not abut a lane.

The rear property line abuts a street not a lane; however, the building is 22'-4 ¾" high.

Accessory Dwelling Units, Building Size.

The footprint of the accessory dwelling unit shall be a maximum of 40% of the habitable floor area of the principal dwelling.

This calculation was not provided with the submittal packet.

The unit shall contain a minimum of 400 square feet of heated area.

The unit shall contain no more than one (1) bedroom.

The standards are met.

Accessory Dwelling Units, Architectural Style. Such use shall be designed in a similar architectural style as the principal dwelling. If the site is located within an overlay district, the standards of the overlay district shall apply.

The standard is met.

Accessory Dwelling Units, Parking and Access.

If parking is provided for the accessory dwelling, it shall be provided on the same lot on which the principal dwelling is located.

Where there is no lane and parking is provided, the parking space shall be served by the same driveway as the principal dwelling.

The standards are met.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Denial to demolish a non-contributing building at 301 Alice Street because the building is eligible for contributing status. If the HDBR approves the demolition, staff recommends the following conditions:

1. The building shall be deconstructed, rather than demolished, and the historic materials salvaged.
2. A Certificate of Appropriateness must first be issued for the new construction of the replacement building prior to approval of the demolition.

Continue New Construction: Part I, Height and Mass for a single-family residence with a four-car carriage house for the property located at 301 Alice Street **until a decision is rendered by the HDBR for the demolition of the non-contributing building.** The petitioner is also to address the following:

1. Door frames and window sashes shall not be inset less than 3 inches from the exterior surface of the façade of the building.
2. Eaves on the primary building shall extend no less than 12 inches beyond supporting walls.
3. Eaves and rakes on accessory buildings and dormers shall overhang at least eight (8) inches.
4. The driveway apron shall not be erected on the public right-of-way.
5. Curb cuts shall not exceed 20 feet in width.
6. The footprint of the accessory dwelling unit shall be a maximum of 40% of the habitable floor area of the principal dwelling. Provide the calculation and ensure the standard is met.

MW: LGM

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