



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:** **Studio Mc+G Architecture**

**MPC File No.:** **23-004875-COA**

**Address:** **2-14 East Bryan Street**

**PIN:** **20004 15008**

**Zoning:** **D-CBD**

**Staff Reviewer:** **Leah G. Michalak**

**Date:** **October 11, 2023**

**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

The applicant is requesting approval for rehabilitation, alterations, and rooftop additions for the buildings located at 2-14 East Bryan Street; they will become a Ritz Carlton hotel and residences.

2 East Bryan Street, which is a contributing building, will be preserved and restored. The scope of work includes:

- Replace the front door with a new door to match the original.
- Install new awnings along Bull and Bryan Streets that are inspired by a historic photo.
- The stone façade will be restored and repaired as needed.
- The existing windows will remain; the frames will be painted black.
- New openings in east façade to allow for connection to 14 East Bryan Street.
- New mechanical equipment on the roof to replace existing equipment.

For 14 East Bryan Street, which is a non-contributing building, the applicant “proposes an addition of an 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> floor of residences, within a 12-story height map location, along with a limited bonus floor (level 13) to allow for a small kitchen to service the proposed pool deck.” The scope of work also includes the following:

- Restaurant “outdoor” seating within the building footprint but covered with a new terrace above facing Bryan Street.
- Exterior balcony with metal rail at level two.
- New metal cladding on 12<sup>th</sup> floor addition.
- New mechanical equipment to be screened.
- New balcony doors on the north and south facades “along with limited new doorways on the east side.” New balconies are proposed along the south side and Juliet balconies are proposed on the east and north sides.
- New sconces and lighting fixtures on the façade and balconies.

- Storefront on floors 1 and 2 and windows to be replaced with new insulated glazing with black frames.

### **CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:**

2 East Bryan Street was constructed in 1915 and is a contributing resource within the National Historic Landmark District and the local Savannah Downtown Historic District.

14 East Bryan Street was constructed in 1976 and is a non-contributing resource within the National Historic Landmark District and the local Savannah Downtown Historic District.

The surrounding context consists of a mix of contributing and non-contributing buildings both tall and short.

### **FINDINGS:**

The following standards from the Sec 7.8 - Savannah Downtown 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 3– Physical Record.*** *Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.*

***Secretary of the Interior's Standards 4– Historic Changes.*** *Most properties change over time; those changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.*

***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.*

***Secretary of the Interior's Standards 6– Deteriorated Features.*** *Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.*

***Secretary of the Interior's Standards 7– Chemical or Physical Treatments.*** *Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.*

**Secretary of the Interior's Standards 9– New Additions to not Damage.** *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*

**Secretary of the Interior's Standards 10– New Additions Reversible.** *New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

The contributing building is proposed to be restored and all materials preserved; windows are to be retained and repaired. Stonework is proposed to be restored. A minimum amount of exterior wall material is proposed to be removed to gain access from the historic building into the new building (where there isn't already). However, the drawings indicate that the main entrance doors will be YKK aluminum storefront-type doors which is not an appropriate material for a replacement door on a contributing building.

**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.*

The non-contributing building is within the height limit (including the bonus story); it is a 12-story zone and the building is proposed to be 13-stories.

**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.*

**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.*

The new openings proposed on the non-contributing existing building match the rhythm and size of the existing openings; the openings on the 12<sup>th</sup> floor addition on the non-contributing building will be minimally visible from the public right-of-way and are compatible with the rhythm and size of the existing openings on the building.

**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.*

The redesigned entrance on the non-contributing building is visually compatible. This proposal brings the existing sunken entrance visually closer to the street with the outdoor dining and the terrace above.

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

Non-contributing building:

- All new marble cladding is to be “white marble stone” to match the historic building.
- Metal canopy(s)/terrace to be bronze aluminum.
- Railings are to be bronze colored metal and glass.
- 12<sup>th</sup> floor addition is to be bronze metal cladding.
- The stair and elevator enclosures on top of the non-contributing building are to be white stucco over CMU.
- Storefront and storefront doors to be bronze aluminum.

Staff finds these 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.*

***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:*

A bonus story is sought for one-story above the Height Map; not a variance.

***Height, Commercial buildings.***

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

The standard is met.

***Exterior walls, Alterations to contributing resources.***

***Exterior Walls, Materials.***

*Exterior walls shall be repaired with in-kind materials rather than replaced, provided however, if the degree of degradation does not allow repair, the degradation shall be photographically documented and verified by the Planning Director and the replacement materials and configuration shall be of the same materials and configuration as the original wall.*

***Exterior Walls, Prohibited Materials.***

*Materials that cause damage, obscure, or change the appearance to the underlying historic fabric are prohibited.*

*Vinyl siding, aluminum siding, rolled asphalt, precast concrete panels, fiber cement wood simulated horizontal lap siding, fiber cement panels, EIFS, T-111, ceramic-based coatings and sealers on siding.*

***Exterior Walls, Finishes and Treatments.***

*Color changes to contributing resources shall be historically appropriate.*

*Ceramic based-coatings and sealers on wood siding shall not be permitted.*

*Cleaning, when undertaken, shall be so as not to damage historic fabric. Sandblasting and disc sanding shall not be permitted.*

For the contributing building, the historic marble walls are proposed to be restored and repaired where needed. No prohibited materials or color changes are proposed.

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

***Exterior Walls, Permitted Materials.***

*Commercial exterior walls shall be finished in brick, true stucco, 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.*

***Exterior Walls, Prohibited materials.*** *Vinyl siding, aluminum siding, rolled asphalt, EIFS, one-part stucco over insulation and/or wood or metal-framing, T-111, corrugated metal, unpainted exposed CMU blocks, fiber cement panels, ceramic-based coatings and sealers on siding.*

The standard is met for the stucco on the stair and elevator enclosures which is a 2-part stucco over CMU.

For the metal cladding on the 12<sup>th</sup> story, 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. The metal cladding will be minimally visible and performs well in the local climate. Staff recommends approval.

***Exterior Walls, Finishes and Treatments.***

*Colors, stains, and finishes shall be visually compatible with contributing resources within the block. If none exist, the color shall be compatible with contributing resources within the ward.*

Bronze, white marble, and white stucco are visually compatible with the historic building that is part of this project.

***Entrances and Doors, Alterations to contributing resources.***

*Doors shall be repaired with in-kind materials rather than replaced, provided however, if the degree of degradation does not allow repair, the degradation of the door shall be photographically documented and verified by the Planning Director and the new door shall be of the same materials and configuration as the original.*

The non-historic door on the contributing building is proposed to be replaced with an aluminum storefront door which does not match the materials of the original which would have been wood. Revise the proposed entrance doors to be wood.

***Windows, Alterations to contributing resources.***

*Windows shall be repaired rather than replaced, provided however, if the degree of degradation does not allow repair, the degradation of each window shall be photographically documented and verified by the Planning Director, and the new window shall be of the same materials and configuration as the original (including single-glazed and true-divided lights, when appropriate).*

The windows on the contributing building are proposed to be retained and repaired.

***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.*

The standard is met for new window openings.

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

It does not appear that the standard is met for the new windows facing Bryan Street on the 11<sup>th</sup> floor. Staff recommends that an operable component be added per the standard or that a Special Exception is sought in order to match the other windows on this façade which are not operable.

*The centerline of window and door openings shall align vertically on the primary façade.*

The standard is met for new window openings.

***Windows, Materials.***

*Window casings and sashes shall be made of 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 glass.*

*Solid vinyl windows shall be prohibited.*

The new windows are metal and the glass is transparent.

***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.*

This information was not provided with the submittal packet.

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

*Installations shall not obscure the character-defining features of historic façades.*

*Back-lit (internally lit) awnings shall be prohibited.*

*Awnings shall not connect two (2) facades.*

***Awnings, Canopies, and Shade Structures, Materials.***

*Installations shall be constructed of canvas, other equivalent cloth, metal, or glass.*

*Supports shall consist of metal or wood. PVC shall not be permitted.*

The standards are met.

***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.*

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

This information was not provided with the submittal packet.

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

The standard is met. The equipment is on top of the 13<sup>th</sup> floor and is screened.

***Lighting.*** *In addition to the requirements set forth in Sec. 9.8, Lighting, the following standards apply:*

*Configuration: Light fixtures shall be compatible with the scale of the subject property and with the character of the district.*

*Materials: Light fixtures shall be constructed of metal and/or glass.*

*Source Type: White light source only.*

The proposed sconces on the front of the non-contributing building are metal and glass with a white light source. The standards are met.

***Additional stories above the Height Map for non-contributing Large-Scale Development.***

*The following properties are eligible for an additional story on the area of the building that is unaffected by the standards in Table 7.8-1.*

*D-C and D-R Zoning Districts: A maximum of one (1) story above the Height Map may be permitted for properties located on Oglethorpe Avenue, Liberty Street, Trust Lots, and outside the National Historic Landmark District boundaries.*

*All Other Zoning Districts: A maximum of one (1) story above the Height Map may be permitted.*

One (1) story above the Height Map is possible.

*Access above the bonus story shall be the minimum necessary for mechanical maintenance and repairs only. Only one point of access (excluding hatch access) shall be permitted above the bonus story.*

The stair provides access above the bonus story where the mechanical equipment is located. The standard is met.

***Multiple Ground Floor Active Uses and Masonry Materials.*** *Multiple ground floor active uses (as defined) permitted in the base zoning district span the length of the façade on all street fronting elevations (not including lanes) and maintain individual primary exterior entrances.*

*For rehabilitations, the active ground floor uses must replace previously inactive uses to qualify.*

The standard is met. The ground floor was previously inactive.

*Lobbies shall not occupy more than 30% or 60 linear feet (whichever is greater) on the secondary facades provided that the total linear feet of the lobby area on the street-facing exterior does not exceed 120 linear feet.*

This building does not have secondary facades. It has only a front façade facing Bryan Street. The lobby occupies 23% of the façade (20 feet). The standard is met.

*At least 50% (linear measurements) of active use space shall be designed so that their primary entrance is only accessed from the exterior.*

The restaurant and lobby are both only accessible from the exterior. The standard is met.

*Additionally, exterior building walls incorporate 100% modular masonry materials on all sides with the use of granite, marble, or other natural quarried stone over a minimum of 30% of all street fronting facades; or*

The bonus story is proposed to be clad in “white marble stone”. The standard is met.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

**Approval for rehabilitation, alterations, and rooftop additions for the buildings located at 2-14 East Bryan Street with the following conditions** because the proposed work is otherwise visually compatible and meets the standards:

1. Revise the proposed entrance doors on the contributing building to wood.
2. Add an operable component to the new windows on the 11<sup>th</sup> floor facing Bryan Street or apply for a Special Exception in order to match the other windows on this façade which are not operable.
3. The awnings must have a minimum vertical clearance of 8 feet above the sidewalk.
4. The electrical equipment must be on the rear façade and minimally visible from view; illustrate the location on the site plan.
5. The refuse storage area must be located within the building or to the rear of the building and screening from the public right-of-way; illustrate the location on the site plan.

**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.