



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: Lynch Associates, Andrew Lynch
MPC File No.: 24-004958-COA
Address: 20, 24 East Oglethorpe Avenue
PIN: 20015 08014
Zoning: D-N
Staff Reviewer: Jonathan Mellon
Date: February 12, 2025

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is seeking approval for the demolition of a non-contributing building, New Construction Part I, Height and Mass for the construction of a six-story mixed-use building, and the recombination of the two lots, for the property located at 20-24 East Oglethorpe Avenue.

Per the applicant:

“Demolition Application

The structure proposed for demolition located at 20-24 Oglethorpe Avenue is not on the contributing buildings list. The one-story structure, currently operating as a realtor’s office, was originally built as two separate buildings but was physically combined to operate as a single business in the 1990’s. As part of this application, the applicant contracted Ethos Preservation to do a historical analysis of the property and their detailed report is included as an exhibit in this application. Ethos agreed with the MPC designation that the structures did not warrant a Contributing Building designation, as the historic details on both structures had been significantly modified and that the defining characteristics of the building (including the storefront, soffit and most significantly the curved light monitor) were added or modified in the 1990’s renovation.

If required, our firm would provide as-built documentation of the building prior to demolition for the City archive and would not demolish the building until a new building permit is approved through the HDBR Part 1 approval process.

Lot Recombination

The project includes a proposed combination of the two lots on the property, 20-24 Oglethorpe Avenue (Pine # 20015-08009 and 20015-08014). The existing structures were combined in 1998 as a single resource when the property underwent a significant renovation and has been operating

February 12, 2025

as one building since that time with a single owner. While this is not a contributing building/resource, if combined, the resulting lot configuration is proposed to function in the same orientation and entrance configuration as the existing structures, and will not alter the frontage on Oglethorpe Avenue, similar to the requirements set forth for contributing resources in *Section 7.18.12 of the Subdivision and Recombination Standards*.

The property at the corner of Oglethorpe Avenue and Drayton Street is in the immediate context of a number of monumental buildings and associated lots as well as **combined lots** including but not limited to:

1. SCAD's Bradley Hall at 115 York Street (1906)
2. Juliette Gordon Lowe Federal building at 100 W Oglethorpe Avenue (1896)
3. Tomochichi Courthouse at 125 Bull Street (1894-1899)
4. Wells Fargo Building at 136 Bull Street (1890)

Project Narrative:

The proposed project located at 20-24 Oglethorpe Avenue is a 6-story mixed use building which will house commercial property and a small lobby on the ground floor, boutique hotel rooms and/or residences on the second through fifth floors, and private residences on the sixth floor. The property is in a five-story height zone and is applying for a bonus story using the criteria of **ground floor active uses**. The design fulfills the bonus story criteria of **100% masonry materials** and incorporates the massing strategies of **base/middle/top** and **roofline variation** but also employs the 4' recess setback on two sides. The property sits to the east of a five-story contributing building and across from the monumental Board of Education which occupies the full block. The greater context in a 1-2 block radius includes many additional large-scale buildings including the Chatham County Courthouse, SCAD's Bradley Hall, the Wells Fargo building and Tomochichi Courthouse on Wright Square, as well as the MPC building and the Lutheran Church down Drayton Street. The proposed structure at this prominent intersection anchors the corner of Drayton and a major arterial street in a similar but lower scale fashion to the historic twelve-story apartment building located at 24 East Liberty Street at the NW corner of Liberty and Drayton, along with the mid-century twelve-story Drayton Tower. Despite its strong corner presence, the building will be softened by the heavy mature tree canopy on Oglethorpe and the height will primarily be visible on the Drayton Street façade.

Two main pedestrian entrances are proposed along Oglethorpe Avenue, which will access the commercial and lobby areas of the building, with secondary entrances on Drayton Street and at the Lane in the rear. The program in the building will be fully parked in the State Street Parking Garage but additional parking is provided along the Lane for the residences, along with valet parking on Oglethorpe Avenue.

Although the bonus story is necessary to meet the program of the building, the massing of the building is compatible with many of the larger scale buildings in the area. The verticality of the building is broken down into a base, middle and top and the entry canopies maintain a pedestrian scale along the street. The projecting cornice at the fifth floor will be similar in scale to the strong cornice line of the Board of Ed building immediately to the south. The sixth floor was intentionally set back to strengthen the roofline variation but sits on the parapet at the two east corners to anchor the Drayton Street elevation.

The building is proposed to employ classical proportions with a combination of traditional and modern detailing. The materials have not yet been selected but the color blocking on the

elevations is indicative of the material allocation to help break down the scale of the building. The materials and details will be submitted in the Part II submission. The bay spacing and glazing percentage requirements for large scale development have been met, and the windows will be set back a minimum of 3” and all storefront a minimum of 4” as set forth by the ordinance.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

20-24 East Oglethorpe Avenue was constructed as two separate buildings in 1958 and 1965 on the north side of East Oglethorpe Avenue between Drayton Street and Bull Street in Percival Ward and is a non-contributing resource within the National Historic Landmark District and the local Savannah Downtown Historic District.

20 East Oglethorpe Avenue was constructed in 1958 and is a one-story masonry (brick) building with an aluminum storefront and metal awning that is flat, with decorative ironwork at the roof level that is presently covered in foliage. The building runs the full depth of the lot with frontage at the rear on East York Lane.

22-24 East Oglethorpe Avenue was constructed in 1965 and is also a one-story masonry (brick) building that has seen notable alterations over the years including the addition of the distinctive monitor clerestory and the relocation of the primary entrance from the corner to East Oglethorpe Avenue. The mid-century design includes the use of masonry columns that serve to divide the bays and give a vertical character to the building that is then contrasted by the horizontal windows and flat roof. The rear of the lot contains a surface parking lot with frontage on East York Lane.

The surrounding context includes free-standing frame and masonry (stucco) contributing buildings to the west along this block of East Oglethorpe Avenue, the free-standing masonry (brick) contributing collection of buildings of the Board of Education that takes up the entire block directly to the south across the landscaped median, and a combination of attached and partially free-standing frame and masonry (brick and stucco) contributing and non-contributing buildings to the east on East Oglethorpe Avenue.



Staff Site Visit Photos – Views of front (East Oglethorpe Avenue), and side / rear (Drayton Street & East York Lane) elevations

A review of the Sanborn maps shows that the present location and surrounding area of the building had a residential character in 1916 with primarily masonry buildings and some frame ones. However, on the block immediately to the north across East York Lane a number of commercial establishments / uses are present.

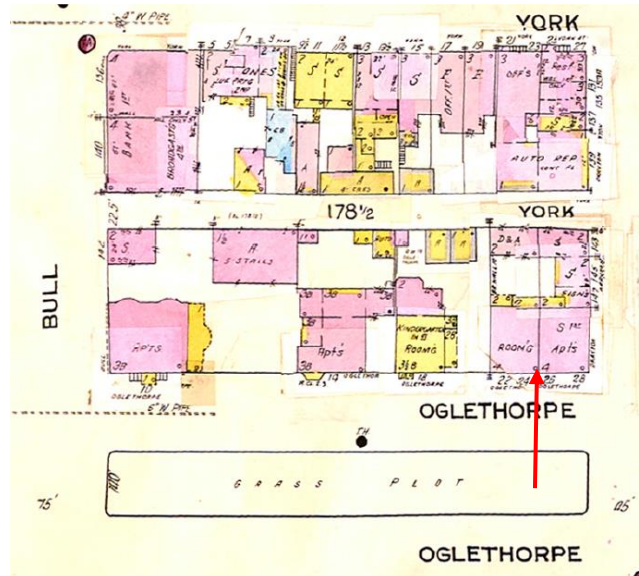


Figure 1 - 1916 Sanborn Map

The 1955 Sanborn map (with later changes / paste-ins) shows the further transformation of the area from a largely residential to a commercial character with the demolition of the historic buildings on the site and their replacement with the two commercial ones that still stand.

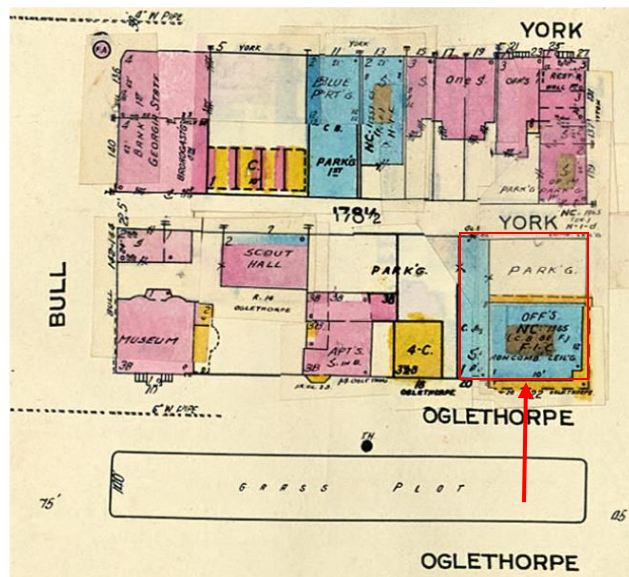


Figure 2 - 1955 Sanborn Map (with later paste-ins)

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.).

20-24 East Oglethorpe Avenues is a non-contributing resource, which will be evaluated.

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 or more of the following criteria:

The Savannah Downtown Historic District has a period of significance from 1733-1960, which 20 East Oglethorpe Avenue (1958) falls within, and 22-24 East Oglethorpe Avenue (1965) does not. The applicant has provided a comprehensive history of development of the two sites and buildings as part of the submission.

The staff is not aware of any efforts having been made to change the status of the building to contributing as the Historic Building Map was updated numerous times over the course of thirty years.

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

The building in question has housed over the years several commercial tenants that undoubtedly played a role in the on-going development and history of the City of Savannah. However, staff have not been able to find any information that ties the building to significant historical events in the city's history.

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

The building in question has housed over the years several commercial tenants with people that undoubtedly played a role in the on-going development and history of the City of Savannah. However, staff have not been able to find any information that ties the building to significant historical events in the city's history. For several years, the building was associated with Cora Bett Thomas Realty which was involved with the profound growth / interest in the Savannah real estate market in recent decades.

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

The building, as noted, is made up of what were originally two separate structures and an individual analysis of each is warranted.

20 East Oglethorpe Avenue is a simply designed and detailed one-story masonry (brick) building that does not have a notable architectural presence on East Oglethorpe Avenue and is not a distinctive example of an architectural style or work of a master.

22-24 East Oglethorpe Avenue is right next door to the east, but as it is on a corner lot with a frontage also on Whitaker Street, it has a much more prominent presence on the East Oglethorpe Avenue corridor. The original design does have some distinctive characteristics from the period, including the use of the columns to have a vertical nature that contrasts with the horizontal windows and flat roof. While the original design undoubtedly is more notable than some other ones from this period within the Savannah Downtown Historic District, it has been altered over the years and is not an overall distinctive example of an architectural style or work of a master.

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

This has not been determined, however, given the disturbance to the site which occurred with the demolition of the two historic buildings and their replacement with the two non-contributing ones, there may not be any historic or prehistory archaeological resources.

Exceptional Importance. Contributing buildings include a select group of exceptional resources constructed outside the district's Period of Significance. These resources possess integrity of:

Location: The integrity of the location of the building is intact with largely contributing buildings located along the adjacent section of the East Oglethorpe Avenue corridor with some notable non-contributing ones such as is found directly to the west across Drayton Street.

Design: Alterations have been made to both 20 and 22-24 East Oglethorpe Avenue, with the most notable ones having occurred to 22-24 with the addition of the monitor clerestory and the relocation of the primary entrance from the corner. 20 East Oglethorpe Avenue is of a simple, almost utilitarian commercial design of the period, while 22-24 Oglethorpe Avenue is a more fully realized design of a slightly later period, but still not a notable example beyond some interesting details.

Setting: The setting is largely intact, save for the non-contributing building to the east across Drayton Street.

Materials: Both 20 and 22-24 East Oglethorpe Avenue are of a simple material palette that includes the use of a brick veneer, aluminum storefronts and windows, and flat membrane roofs.

Workmanship: Both 20 and 22-24 East Oglethorpe Avenue are not reflective of a notable level of workmanship, given their simple detailing and use of a basic material palette.

Feeling: Although 22-24 East Oglethorpe Avenue has seen alterations, the overall feeling of it and 20 are by and large intact.

Association: 20 and 22-24 East Oglethorpe Avenue are not associated with any notable individuals, with the caveat that the varied tenants who have occupied them have undoubtedly played important roles in the development and growth of the City of Savannah.

And meet one of more of the above criteria: 20 East Oglethorpe Avenue while largely intact, does not meet the criteria to be considered as an exceptional resource as it was constructed largely as a simple / almost utilitarian commercial building that reflected the changes underway during the transformation of the area from a residential to commercial character. 22-24 East Oglethorpe Avenue has seen a number of notable alterations to key elements including the location of its main entrance and roof design, and while it has some notable design details, does not meet the criteria to be considered as an exceptional resource.

Non-Contributing. New construction and all resources identified as non-contributing on the “Historic District Contributing Resources Map” are classified as non-historic for zoning purposed hereunder.

This building is classified as non-contributing on the Historic District Building Map.

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

As noted, the building does not meet all the required criteria for contributing status, and as such the criteria for relocation or demolition are not applicable.

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.

Staff recommends the following conditions for the proposed demolition of the building:

1. The building must be documented per the MPC Policy for Documenting Buildings.
2. Rather than traditional demolition, the building should be deconstructed, and the materials salvaged for reuse.

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.*

The standard for new construction is not applicable as the building is classified as non-contributing to the Savannah Downtown Historic District.

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-N Development Standards for Permitted Uses.

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

Single-family Detached. 1,200 (min)

Single-family Attached. 1,200 (min)

Two-family. No min/max

Apartments. No min/max

Upper Story Residential. No min/max

All Other Housing Types. No min/max

Nonresidential. No min/max

The standard is met. The proposed mixed-use building is not required to have a minimum or maximum lot area.

D-N Lot Width (min ft). 20

The standard is met. The proposed recombined lot would have a width of 82'-11". The two existing lots have widths of approximately 22' and 60.5'.

D-N Building Coverage (max). 75%

The standard is met. The proposed building would have a lot coverage of 74%.

D-N Building Setback (max ft).

Front yard. None

Side (street) yard. None

Side (interior) yard. None

Rear yard. None

The standard is met as there are no / zero setback requirements for buildings in the D-N zoning district.

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.*

The standard looks to potentially be met, with further study warranted. The Savannah Downtown Historic District Height Map allows for a five-story building to be constructed at this site. The proposed scope of work calls for the construction of a six-story building, which would be allowable for “*Additional stories above the Height Map for non-contributing Large-Scale Development.*” through meeting the relevant criteria for ground floor active uses.

The proposed six-story building would rise to a height of 73’ which while taller than the contributing buildings found on the block to the side (west) could be in-keeping with the varied heights of contributing buildings to which it is visually related. In particular, the East Oglethorpe Avenue corridor has a notable variety in the heights of its buildings, the most relevant to this site being the Board of Education collection of contributing buildings directly to the south / across the landscaped median, that has a height of 66’. As well, to the north and west of the site are contributing commercial and institutional buildings that range in height from 65’ to 73’ to which it is visually related. Given the varied context, in terms of height and massing, that the site is in, and the historical precedent that corner buildings have additional height, the proposed six-story building could be visually compatible with the contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related. Staff would recommend further study of the proposed height to see how the visual compatibility could be strengthened, including potentially through having the sixth floor be more integrated with / less differentiated from the lower five floors with the main cornice line terminating at the top of the building / the sixth floor.

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.*

The standard looks to be potentially met, with further study warranted. The proposed proportion of the front façade would be visually compatible with the varied streetscape found along East Oglethorpe Avenue with a recessed center bay and classical architectural composition of a base, middle and top. The proposed design would directly relate to the use of recessed entrances found on contributing buildings including the Board of Education collection of contributing buildings directly to the south / across the landscaped median. Staff would recommend that the proportion of the front façade be further studied through looking at how the proposed sixth floor could be further integrated into the overall architectural composition.

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.*

The standard is met. The proposed proportion of the openings would be visually compatible with the contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related which have a notable

variety of openings, both in terms of their scale and design. Staff would note that the side (west) elevation is proposed to have blind windows which would serve to both break-up the massing and provide architectural interest to a secondary elevation that will nevertheless be visible. The standard will be thoroughly reviewed in Part II, Design Details submission that is to follow

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 standard is met. The proposed solid to void ratio on the front (East Oglethorpe Avenue) elevation would be visually compatible with the contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related which are primarily of masonry construction with punched openings that have single and ganged windows of varying sizes and shapes. The standard will be thoroughly reviewed in the Part II, Design Details submission that is to follow

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.*

The standard is met. The proposed scale / massing of the building would be visually compatible with the contributing buildings and structures to which it is related which are a notable variety of free-standing and attached frame and masonry buildings that through setbacks and side yards contribute to the rich streetscape of East Oglethorpe Avenue. The proposed building would not be connected to the contributing frame building to the side (west) with a 5'-6" setback and there would be a 20' setback to the north from East York Lane.

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 standard is met. The proposed building would have two sets of grouped entrances on the front elevation (East Oglethorpe Avenue) and another entrance on the side elevation (Drayton Street) that would be visually compatible with the contributing buildings and structures to which it is related. The proposed entrances would serve to activate the streetscape which is found on the contributing buildings along East Oglethorpe Avenue both at ground level entrances and raised ones accessed through stoops and steps / stairs. The standard will be thoroughly reviewed in the Part II, Design Details submission that is to follow

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.*

The standard looks to be met and will be thoroughly reviewed in the Part II, Design Details submission that is to follow as the proposed final material palette has not been selected. As noted in the project narrative, "The materials have not yet been selected but the color blocking on the elevations is indicative of the material allocation to help break down the scale of the building. The materials and details will be submitted in the Part II submission."

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 standard is met. The proposed roof shape for the building would be a flat roof which would be visually compatible with the contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related, which are a notable variety of roof shapes ranging from side gable, to flat, to hipped.

***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.*

The standard is met. The proposed scope of work would include walls at the rear (north) of the site that would serve to screen the sides (east and west) of the proposed parking and refuse storage areas. The standard will be thoroughly reviewed in the Part II, Design Details submission that is to follow, which will include the details on the proposed final design and material palette proposed for the walls.

***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.*

The standard looks to potentially be met, with further study warranted. The proposed mass of the building could be visually compatible with the contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related, which include a notable variety of free-standing and attached frame and masonry buildings. While there are some blocks of Oglethorpe Avenue that have more or less a consistent height of buildings, such as can be found in the block of East Oglethorpe Avenue between Lincoln Street and Abercorn Street (which contains the distinctive Marshall Row), more often there is a variety in heights found. The proposed details of the design of the building including the windows, doors, balconies, etc. will be thoroughly reviewed in the Part II, Design Details submission that is to follow. Staff would also note the under-construction project at 302 East Oglethorpe Avenue (corner of Lincoln Street) where a non-contributing one-story building was approved for demolition (which has been completed) and a replacement four-story residential building was approved that has the visual expression of a five-story one.

Staff would recommend further study of the proposed height to see how the visual compatibility could be strengthened, by looking at how the sixth floor could be more integrated with the lower five floors, which could allow for as perceived reduction in the overall scale.



Figure 3 – 302 East Oglethorpe Avenue (rendering – under construction)

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

The standard will be reviewed in the Part II, Design Details submission that is to follow or in a separate signage application.

Directional expression of front elevation. *A building or structure shall be visually compatible with the buildings and structures to which it is visually related in its directional character, including vertical character, horizontal character, or nondirectional character.*

The standard is met. The proposed directional expression of the front (East Oglethorpe Avenue) elevation of the building would be visually compatible with the contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related which is the predominant development pattern found along the Oglethorpe Avenue corridor save for notably at Oglethorpe Avenue and Bull Street on the south side. The standard will be thoroughly reviewed in the Part II, Design Details submission that is to follow, which will include the details on the proposed final design, including the exterior expression of the vertical and horizontal components.

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.

Streets and lanes shall not be bridged by development, except on Factors Walk. Such bridges shall be for pedestrian use only. Factors Walk bridges shall not be covered by a roof, awning, or any other type of extension from a building.

The standard is met. The proposed building would be setback from East York Lane to the rear (north) by 20's, and there would be no impact on the streets or lanes that are part of the Oglethorpe Plan.

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 standard is met. The Savannah Downtown Historic District Height Map allows for a five-story building to be constructed at this site. The proposed scope of work calls for the construction of a six-story building, which would be allowable for “*Additional stories above the Height Map for non-contributing Large-Scale Development.*” through meeting the relevant criteria for ground floor active uses.

The 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.

The standard is met. The proposed scope of work would result in the construction of a six-story building with frontage on both East Oglethorpe Avenue and Drayton Street.

Height, Commercial buildings.

The exterior expression of the height of the ground floor shall be not less than 14 feet, six (6) inches.

The exterior expression of the height of the second story shall be not less than 12 feet.

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

The standards are met. The proposed exterior expression of the ground floor would be 14’-6”, with the second floor having an expression of 12’-0”, followed by floors ranging from 10’-6” to 13’-6”.

For commercial buildings, stories shall be configured as provided below.

The first story shall be designed as a storefront.

The standard is met. The proposed building would be mixed-use, with a ground floor largely consisting of approximately 3,468 SF of commercial space that would have storefronts fronting on both East Oglethorpe Avenue and Drayton Street.

Subdivide the façade horizontally into base, middle, and top. The first story shall be separated from the upper stories by an architectural feature such as a string course (i.e., projecting horizontal band) or change in material. Such features may be placed at the top of the second story when the first and second stories have the visual appearance of a unified exterior expression.

The standard is met. Although the design of the building would allow it to be clearly recognizable as being a new construction, the contextual design uses a classical tri-partite composition of a base, middle and top to serve to break up the massing. The first floor would be clearly delineated on the front (East Oglethorpe Avenue) elevation from the upper floors, and the standard will be thoroughly reviewed in the Part II, Design Details submission that is to follow.

The height of the first story shall not be less than the exterior visual expression of the height of any single story above the first story.

The standard is met. The proposed exterior expression of the ground floor would be 14’-6”.

The exterior visual expression of the top story of buildings over three (3) stories shall be distinctive from the stories below the top story.

The standard is met. The proposed exterior visual expression of the top (sixth floor) floor would be clearly differentiated from the five floors below, with a change in massing, fenestration and materiality. Staff would recommend further study of the proposed design of the sixth floor in order to meet the standard while at the same time strengthening the visual compatibility of the building and overall architectural composition.

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 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.

The standard is met. Oglethorpe Avenue is an East-West Through Street at the bottom of Percival Ward. The proposed building form is one that is seen in the ward and adjacent ones in the “downtown area”. Given the growth of the area over the years, a character-defining feature is the notable variety of building forms found with larger scale ones often directing adjacent to smaller ones.

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.

The standards are met. There are no / zero setback requirements for buildings in the D-N zoning district. The proposed building would be designed so as to hold the corner of East Oglethorpe Avenue and Drayton Street in order to allow for the urban character of this prominent location to once again be expressed which was diluted with the demolition of numerous contributing historic buildings along the Drayton Street corridor with the introduction of buildings and uses that reflect the impact of the automobile on the built environment.

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

The standard is met. The proposed building would have a 20’ setback to the north from East York Lane, which while not being required would allow for the building to not overwhelm the lane and smaller scale buildings directly to the north.

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.

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.

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.

Curb cuts shall not exceed 20 feet in width. Loading areas for commercial development are exempt from this provision and shall be the minimum required.

Loose paving materials, such as crushed shell or gravel, may be permitted provided that it is no closer than 18 inches of the public-right-of-way.

Vehicle and pedestrian drop-off areas shall not be accommodated within the footprint of the building on the primary façade, unless the Board determines that there are site-specific constraints which require it.

The standards are met. The proposed site plan would include a parking area in the rear (north) yard fronting East York Lane, and the standard will be thoroughly reviewed in the Part II, Design Details submission that is to follow.

Large-Scale Development Standards. *Large-Scale Development shall comply with the following standards. New construction monumental buildings shall be exempt from Large-Scale Development Standards.*

Visual Compatibility Criteria.

Design Standards. Should there be a conflict, the Large-Scale Development Standards shall take precedence.

Large-Scale Development, Footprint.

Building footprints shall not exceed 13,500 square feet within the National Historic Landmark District boundaries. Building footprints shall not exceed 40,500 square feet outside the National Historic Landmark District boundaries. Multiple buildings, as defined by Building Code, with building footprints equal to or less than the maximum permitted may be constructed for shared use(s).

In D-C and D-R zoning districts, the building footprint shall occupy a minimum of 50% of the lot width along the lane.

The standards are met. The proposed building would have a footprint of 5,530 SF and a lot coverage / occupancy of 74%.

Large-Scale Development, Mass. *A minimum of two (2) of the following devices shall be incorporated into the design:*

Subdivide Horizontally (for residential buildings only). *Subdivide the façade horizontally into base, middle, and top. The first story shall be separated from the upper stories by an architectural feature such as a stringcourse (i.e., a projecting horizontal band) or change in material. Such architectural feature may be placed at the top of the second story when the first and second stories have the visual appearance of a unified exterior expression.*

The standard is met. The proposed design uses a classical tri-partite composition of a base, middle and top to serve to break up the massing. The first floor would be clearly delineated on the front (East Oglethorpe Avenue) elevation from the upper floors, and the standard will be thoroughly reviewed in the Part II, Design Details submission that is to follow.

Multiple Volumes. *Use multiple detached volumes made up of two (2) or more separate forms to break up the building into two (2) or more structures.*

The proposed design treats the building as a singular building which is appropriate given the scale of the site, which would allow for it to be visually compatible with the contributing buildings and structures to which it is related.

Roofline Variation. *Frontage may be continuous, provided that the roofline shall be varied through the use of volumetric forms and roof shapes of varying heights. The roofline shall provide a minimum one-half story height variation within the street fronting façade.*

The standard is met. The proposed design includes the use of variations in the roofline that would serve to both break up the massing of the six-story building and provide visual interest at the upper floors which is a character-defining feature of the contributing buildings in the area to which it is related.

Setback Standard. *Incorporate setbacks within the façade. Setbacks between street fronting walls shall be at least 24 feet wide and eight (8) feet deep and contain windows in the walls perpendicular to the street. Setbacks shall extend to the ground or begin immediately above the ground floor.*

The proposed design would not include the use of substantial setbacks that would meet the standard; however, the front (East Oglethorpe Avenue) elevation would have a recessed / setback center bay section that would serve to break up the massing and add visual interest to the overall architectural composition.

Recess Standard. *Incorporate recesses within the wall plane. Building frontage shall be limited to 30 feet with recesses of at least 12 feet in width and four (4) feet in depth. Recesses shall extend to the ground or begin immediately above the ground floor.*

The proposed design would not include the use of substantial recessed that would meet the standard; however, the front (East Oglethorpe Avenue) elevation would have a recessed / setback center bay section that would serve to break up the massing and add visual interest to the overall architectural composition.

Large-Scale Development, Height.

Large-scale development shall be subject to the Height standards in Sec. 7.8.9.b. and the provisions of Table 7.8-1.

For the purposes of this Section, large-scale development is any development whose combined ground floor footprint is equal to or greater than 9,000 square feet within a single parcel; or is four- (4) stories or greater in D-C and D-R zoning districts; or is five- (5) stories or greater in all other zoning districts within the Savannah Downtown Historic District. In the case of an addition to an existing building, the combined footprint and height of both the existing building and the addition located on the same parcel apply.

Large-Scale Development, Height - All Other Zoning Districts.

Roofline Variation: Maximum frontage of 120 linear feet of continuous height shall be permitted before a minimum one-half story variation is required. This variation shall be expressed in the roofline.

Lane: Maximum height shall not exceed two (2) stories within 20 feet of a lane when across the lane from a D-C and/or a D-R zoning district.

The standards are met. The proposed design of the building would include variations in the roofline to break up the massing of the building and a 20' setback to the north from East York Lane would be provided.

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.

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 standards are met. The site is located along East Oglethorpe Avenue, and the Savannah Downtown Historic District Height Map allows for a five-story building to be constructed. The proposed scope of work calls for the construction of a six-story building, which would be allowable for “*Additional stories above the Height Map for non-contributing Large-Scale Development.*” through meeting the relevant criteria for ground floor active uses. The proposed access above the bonus story would be for mechanical maintenance and repair only with no programmed spaces.

One or more of the criteria below must be met to qualify for an additional story:

Historic Street or Lane. *An historic street or lane, as identified on Figure 7-8.2, is restored and dedicated back to the City of Savannah as a public right-of-way;*

The proposed scope of work would not result in the restoration of a historic street or lane. The proposed building would have a 20' setback to the north from East York Lane.

Affordable Housing. *Affordable Housing, as defined and quantified by the City of Savannah, is provided within the development and so certified by the City Manager;*

The proposed scope of work would not include affordable housing within the building.

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.

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.

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

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 standard is met. The proposed scope of work would include a ground floor largely consisting of approximately 3,468 SF of commercial space that would have storefronts fronting on both East Oglethorpe Avenue and Drayton Street with access from the exterior. The proposed lobby fronting East Oglethorpe Avenue would have a frontage of 25'-3". The proposed exterior of the building would be clad in 100% masonry materials, and the standard will be thoroughly reviewed in the Part II, Design Details submission that is to follow.

LEED Gold Certification and Masonry Materials. *Achieve LEED Gold Certification, or verified equivalent, on the building. Substantial completion of certification requirements, and confirmation from the awarding agency, shall be required before a Certificate of Occupancy is issued.*

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.

The proposed scope of work would not at this time include LEED Gold Certification, however, the proposed exterior of the building would be clad in 100% masonry materials, and the standard will be thoroughly reviewed in the Part II, Design Details submission that is to follow.

Large-Scale Development, Exterior Walls - Configuration.

The frontage of buildings shall be divided into architecturally distinct sections no more than 60 feet in width with each section taller than it is wide.

Exterior building walls shall use window groupings (including curtain walls), columns, and/or pilasters to create multiple bays not less than 15 feet nor more than 20 feet in width. The Board may vary this spacing requirement if historic precedent exists within the visually-related context and it is visually compatible.

The standards are met, and will be thoroughly reviewed in the Part II, Design Details submission that is to follow.

Large-Scale Development, Entrances. *Entrances for large-scale development shall comply with Sec 7.8.10.g., Entrances and Doors. When those conditions do not apply, the following standards shall be met:*

A minimum of one (1) primary entrance shall be provided for every 60 feet of street frontage, excluding lanes. Intervals between entrances shall not be less than 15 feet nor exceed 90 feet. On Trust Blocks, a minimum of one primary entrance shall be provided for every 100 feet of street frontage.

Buildings greater than four (4) stories and less than 60 feet wide located on a corner tithing lot abutting a north-south connecting street shall locate primary entrances on both the east-west and north-south streets unless a corner entrance is utilized. Buildings greater than 60 feet in width shall have an entrance located on an east-west street regardless of the location of any other entrances.

The standards are met, and will be thoroughly reviewed in the Part II, Design Details submission that is to follow.

Large-Scale Development, Windows and Doors - Configuration.

Façades fronting streets shall incorporate windows and doors over the following minimum percentage of surface area:

Ground level commercial uses: 55%;

Ground level residential uses: 25%;

Ground level all other uses: 35%; and

Upper levels all uses: 20%.

Window sashes and door frames shall be inset not less than four (4) inches from all façade surfaces.

The standards are met, and will be thoroughly reviewed in the Part II, Design Details submission that is to follow.

Large-Scale Development, Refuse Storage Areas. *The refuse storage area shall be located within the building.*

The standard is not met. The proposed location of the refuse storage area should be restudied in order to meet the standards, or the applicant should request a Special Exception as part of the Part II, Design Details application.

7.8.12 Subdivision and Recombination Standards

a. The subdivision or recombination of lots shall be consistent with the prevailing historic context and lot patterns within the visually related context including, but not limited to, lot size, lot shape, and lot configurations.

The standard is met. The Oglethorpe Avenue corridor contains a variety of building types that are of varying sizes, ranging from institutional buildings to religious, to residential and commercial. This varied collection of types of building results in a notable variation in lot sizes within the visually related context. Lot sizes range from larger ones that are 300', 120' and 60', and smaller ones that are 38', 31' and 15' among others. The proposed recombination would be in keeping with the varied historic context of the Oglethorpe Avenue corridor and surrounding area.



Figure 4 – 208 East Bull Street & 14 East Oglethorpe Avenue



Figure 5 – 115 East York Street & 101-109 East Oglethorpe Avenue



Figure 6 – 124 Bull Street & 122-132 East Oglethorpe Avenue

b. Contributing resources on the same parcel shall not be subdivided or recombined unless the proposed results in the same parcel configuration that existed when one of the contributing resources was constructed.

The standard is not applicable. The two lots in question do not contain any contributing resources, and as such the proposed recombination would not need to meet the standard that it results in the same parcel configuration that existed when a contributing resource was constructed.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the demolition of the non-contributing structure at 20-24 East Oglethorpe Avenue with the following conditions because the building otherwise meets the criteria for non-contributing demolition.

1. The building must be documented per the MPC Policy for Documenting Buildings.
2. Rather than traditional demolition, the building should be deconstructed, and the materials salvaged for reuse.

And

Approve the New Construction, Part I Height and Mass for a five-story building with potential bonus sixth floor at 20-24 East Oglethorpe Avenue with the following conditions to be submitted to the Board for review with Part II, Design Details because the proposed work is otherwise visually compatible and meets the standards:

1. Further study of the proposed height of the building including the potential bonus sixth floor, to see how the visual compatibility standard could be strengthened potentially through having the sixth floor be more integrated with / less differentiated from the lower five floors with the main cornice line terminating at the top of the building / the sixth floor.
2. Adjust the proposed location of the refuse storage area in order to meet the standards for Large-Scale Development by having it located within the building or alternatively request a Special Exception.

and

Approve the recombination of the lots located at 20-24 East Oglethorpe Avenue because it meets the standards.

MW: JM

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.