Savannah Historic District Board of Review

Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room
February 11, 2026
1:00 P.M.
MINUTES

February 11, 2026 HISTORIC District Board of Review Meeting

A Pre-Meeting was held at 12:00 PM in the Jerry Surrency Conference Room, 112 East State Street. Items on the Agenda were presented by Staff, as time permitted, and the Board asked questions. No testimony was received, and no votes were taken.

Members Present: Thomas L. Thomson, Chair
Shedrick Coleman
Mariel Hamer
Robert Helm
Sabrina Nagel

Members Absent: Melissa Rowan, Vice Chair
Karen Guinn

MPC Staff Present: Caitlin Chamberlain, Director of Historic Preservation
Jodie Brown, Principal Planner
Alexander Merced. Planner
Rohan Urs, Planner
Bri Morgan, Administrative Assistant II
Hind Patel, Information Technology

I. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

II. SIGN POSTING

III. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Petition of Tegan Cuyar | 26-000220-COA | 322 West Hall Street | Rehabilitation & Alterations

Motion

The Savannah Historic District Board of Review does hereby Approve the proposed work at 314-322 West Hall Street with the following condition to be reviewed and approved by staff, because the work is otherwise visually compatible and meets the standard:

1.Upon drying, the rear fence must be painted or stained, and staff must be notified to review and approve color selection.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Shedrick Coleman

Second: Robert Helms

Karen Guinn	- Not Present
Melissa H. Rowan	- Not Present
Thomas L. Thomson	- Aye
Sabrina Nagel	- Aye
Sara Woodfield	- Aye
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Mariel Hamer	- Aye
Robert Helms	- Aye

2. Petition of Marchese Construction, LLC | 26-000118-COA | 234 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd | Alteration - Handrails

Motion

The Savannah Historic District Board of Review does hereby Approve the work proposed for the property at 234 MLK Blvd As Requested because the work is visually compatible and meets the standards.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Shedrick Coleman

Second: Robert Helms

Karen Guinn	- Not Present
Melissa H. Rowan	- Not Present
Thomas L. Thomson	- Aye
Sabrina Nagel	- Aye
Sara Woodfield	- Aye
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Mariel Hamer	- Aye
Robert Helms	- Aye

3. Petition of GMShay Architects | 26-000078-COA | 225 East President Street | Stair Rebuild

Motion

The Savannah Historic District Board of Review does hereby approve the request to reconstruct the collapsed staircase at 225 East President Street as requested because the work is visually compatible and meets the standards.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Shedrick Coleman

Second: Robert Helms

Karen Guinn	- Not Present
Melissa H. Rowan	- Not Present
Thomas L. Thomson	- Abstain

Sabrina Nagel	- Aye
Sara Woodfield	- Aye
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Mariel Hamer	- Aye
Robert Helms	- Aye

4. Petition of J. Elder Studio, Jerome Elder | 26-000105-COA | 8 East Broughton Street | Illuminated Wall Sign

Motion

The Savannah Historic District Board of Review does hereby approve the request to install one (1) illuminated wall sign for the business establishment at 8 East Broughton Street as requested because the work is visually compatible and meets the standards.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Shedrick Coleman

Second: Robert Helms

Karen Guinn	- Not Present
Melissa H. Rowan	- Not Present
Thomas L. Thomson	- Aye
Sabrina Nagel	- Aye
Sara Woodfield	- Aye
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Mariel Hamer	- Aye
Robert Helms	- Aye

IV. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

5. Adopt the February 11, 2026 agenda as presented.

Motion

The Historic District Board of Review motioned to approve the February 11, 2026 agenda.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Shedrick Coleman

Second: Sara Woodfield

Karen Guinn	- Not Present
Melissa H. Rowan	- Not Present
Thomas L. Thomson	- Aye
Sabrina Nagel	- Aye
Sara Woodfield	- Aye
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Mariel Hamer	- Aye
Robert Helms	- Aye

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

6. Approve the January 14, 2026 Historic Board of Review meeting minutes as presented.

Motion

The Historic District Board of Review motioned to approve the January 14, 2026 meeting minutes as presented.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Mariel Hamer

Second: Sara Woodfield

Karen Guinn	- Not Present
Melissa H. Rowan	- Not Present
Thomas L. Thomson	- Aye
Sabrina Nagel	- Aye
Sara Woodfield	- Aye
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Mariel Hamer	- Aye
Robert Helms	- Aye

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

VII. CONTINUED AGENDA

VIII. REQUEST FOR EXTENSION

IX. REGULAR AGENDA

7. Petition of Rose Architects, Kevin Rose | 25-005674 COA | 402 E Broughton Street | New Construction, Part I

Jodie Brown presented the petitioner's proposal to construct a multi-story building. This is a Part 1 review of the project. The existing building was approved for demolition at the September 2025 HDBR meeting. It was built in 1966 and received a new façade in 1985. It is located on the northeast corner of Broughton and Habersham Streets. The one-story concrete block building has plate glass windows and a cantilevered awning. It housed Southern Motors for several years

Prior to the extant building, there were number of iterations of buildings at the site. In 1884, there was a 2-story dwelling at the corner with a barn/dwelling along the rear lot line. By 1898, the dwelling had been modified with bay windows and covered porches. By 1916, the area had been converted to multiple store fronts along both Broughton and Habersham Streets with dwellings along the rear property line. In 1950, all of the lots were used for laundry and drycleaning service. The corner lots were 3-stories while the area that was previously open was one-story.
The subject building is listed as a non-contributing resource within the National Historic Landmark District and the local Savannah Downtown Historic District.

This project was originally heard at the January 14, 2026, hearing and continued to allow the applicant to:

1. *Research the City's definition of a mezzanine.*

The applicant met with city staff to discuss the meaning of mezzanine, and it was determined that the proposed design did not follow that definition.

2. *Research the trigger for large scale development as it relates to this project.*

The applicant met with city staff and reviewed the proposed design. It was determined that based on the square footage which included the parking area on the 1st floor that the project was deemed large-scale. Staff has included the large-scale development discussion under Findings.

3. *Visual compatibility issues.*

The applicant minimally addressed some visual compatibility issues; however, this particular review is only for Part 1 which is limited to review of Height and Mass. The Part 2 review will deal with the visual compatibility of the various parts.

4. *Other ordinance issues discussed during the meeting.*

The applicant spoke with city staff regarding the driveway and parking issue. Prior to the Part 2 review, the applicant will be applying for Special Exceptions for the driveway entrance off of Broughton Street and for parking within 30' of the property line.

Staff recommended to CONTINUE the request for New Construction, Part I: Height and Mass at 402 East Broughton Street AS REQUESTED, to allow the applicant to address the following concerns:

1. Evaluate the code sections associated with Multiple Volumes, Roofline Variation, Setback Standard and Recess Standard to ensure that at least two of these design elements are incorporated into the building proposal.
2. Verify the exterior dimensions of the proposed building.
3. Apply for the Special Exceptions prior to the Part 2 review.

Nagel asked for clarification of penthouse versus fourth floor technically. **Brown** responded that technically they are allowed the fourth floor if they activate the first floor. No square footage or design elements that differentiate being a fourth floor.

Woodfield stated first floor activation is key. Brown read from the ordinance its allowance criteria.

Coleman asked what qualifies as a Special Exception. **Chamberlain** responded it is non-measurable design standards and is non-guaranteed. **Coleman** expressed concern with Special Exception: mass is an issue for the lane - not compliant with the Ordinance. **Brown** stated the recess standard had been met; must be two of the four criteria.

PETITIONER COMMENTS:

Robert McCorkle, representing the petitioner, summarized the prior actions of the Board for this petition. Neighborhood is excited it is not a hotel. Support of public and city. Asked Board to not lose site of the request. Though it is a monumental building, it is a bank, and the intent is for it to read as a monumental bank for a long time.

Kevin Rose, petitioner, recapped his presentations and stated he had a short amount of time from last meeting to resubmit as a large scale. Stated none of the buildings on Broughton Street have setbacks. Added the indentions on rear lane facade.

Hamer asked if 'monumental' was considered for building. **Rose** responded he did not want to be included with schools or churches. **Hamer** stated if termed as 'monumental', it would not allow for penthouse, which is the sticking point. **Rose** stated it is for the employees, not

as a party deck. Would prefer to be as 'large scale' with Special Exception.

Woodfield stated the roof deck cannot be visible from the street. **Rose** stated it will be smaller, with planters, and on plans

PUBLIC COMMENTS:
Jim Hundsrucker, area resident, stated he was at the neighborhood meetings: there was much opposition because of concerns that could be a hotel in the future. He stated Staff used buildings many blocks away for the building form comparison to support the project. However, it does show how substantial buildings can affect historic neighborhoods.

Anna Habersham Wright, Oglethorpe Plan Coalition, stated there is concern with visual compatibility standards being ignored. There is overage of the lot requirement and height map. The Habersham home was not mentioned which shows how it can be done. Rhythm and facade overlooked and was a very chaotic presentation. would not be if done properly: cannot understand what vis com is. must protect visual compatibility as stated in the ordinances.

Andrews Jones expressed support of the project.

Mike English stated it has been a part of the neighborhood for past ten years, bought from Honda dealership to make into bank.

Rose stated the Marshall House was looked at as an example.

BOARD DISCUSSION:
The Board stated use is not part of their purview. The Ordinance is applied to all, and the letters of support were reviewed. Glad the petitioner reached out to the community. Acknowledged Staff's factual presentation as it pertains to the Ordinance. The Marshall House is not a fair comparison as it was built in the 1860's. New builds must adhere to current standards. The Special Exception that has not been applied for causes concern. While trying to be fair and apply due diligence, the lot has neighborhood zoning on both sides. It would have previously been three or four buildings, whereas one big one is proposed. Sticking to the rules to apply to all property owners. Special Exception in rear needs to be applied for and be evaluated. The fourth floor is a bonus floor - make the first floor active, not closed off, as Habersham and Broughton are valuable streets. The facades need to be applied. The roof is a trigger point to the Board: visual distractions, noise, lights, needs to follow criteria.

Something should be presented that does not require thinking outside of the Ordinance. Not rigid but need to work within; not arbitrary. Current proposal does not follow the Ordinance, too many missing and loose pieces. Using 'monumental' would be a better application, although it does not solve the issue of the rooftop. The Board has no choice but to follow the Ordinance. If not 'monumental', the large scale needs to be set-back and human-scaled. Concern expressed with obtaining Special Exceptions.

Motion

STAFF REPORT:

CONTINUE the request for New Construction, Part I: Height and Mass at 402 East Broughton Street AS REQUESTED, to allow the applicant to address the following concerns:

Evaluate the code sections associated with Multiple Volumes, Roofline Variation, Setback Standard and Recess Standard to ensure that at least two of these design elements are incorporated into the building proposal.
Verify the exterior dimensions of the proposed building.
Apply for the Special Exceptions prior to the Part 2 review.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Robert Helms

Second: Mariel Hamer

Karen Guinn	- Not Present
Melissa H. Rowan	- Not Present
Thomas L. Thomson	- Abstain
Sabrina Nagel	- Aye
Sara Woodfield	- Aye
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Mariel Hamer	- Aye
Robert Helms	- Aye

8. Petition of Paul Bush | 25-005014-COA | 318 East Huntingdon Street | After-the-Fact Alterations

Rohan Urs presented the petitioner's request The applicant requests after-the-fact approval for exterior alterations to a contributing structure, including enclosure of an upper-level rear porch and expansion of an existing rear deck area, for the property located at 318 East Huntingdon Street. The work already completed includes the installation of new exterior wall materials, windows, and a rear door, resulting in an increase in building area and alteration of the rear building form. The improvements have been substantially completed prior to approval by the Board. This work was cited by the City’s Code Compliance Department.

The subject property is located within the Downtown Historic District in an area characterized by contributing residential structures dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Buildings in the surrounding context commonly feature open rear porches, balconies, and decks that are secondary in character to the primary street facing façades. These rear elements are traditionally constructed of wood and maintain an open and lightweight appearance consistent with historic development patterns in the district.

318 East Huntingdon Street was built in 1895 and is a contributing resource in the local overlay and the National Historic Landmark District. It is a large three-story brick duplex, connected to 320 East Huntingdon Street along the corner lot on Huntingdon Street and Habersham Street. The rear porch area is visible from the vantage point of Habersham Street. Sanborn Maps show that there was a wooden one-story porch that went across the rear of both 318 and 320, but it appears that 320 has also modified theirs with a partial enclosure, but they maintained visibility of the earlier configuration showing decorative

wooden arches (also seen in photos provided by the applicant).Google Street View images from 2016 and 2017 show what the rear porch looked like, in part, before the enclosure work began. In these images, the decorative wood porch elements can be seen. These are still in existence but have now been enclosed with the current work that has taken place.

This project was first presented at the November 12, 2025, Historic District Board of Review meeting where it was continued to allow the applicant time to provide more details about the current status of the project to be able to make an informed decision, as follows:
The Savannah Downtown Board of Review does hereby continue the petition for 318 East Huntingdon Street, for a period not to exceed ninety (90) days, to allow the applicant to submit detailed product specifications, visual documentation, and clarifications necessary to evaluate visual compatibility and conformance with the Historic District ordinance.

In the time since the November meeting, the applicant has provided some updated photographs and conversations with the architect, Paul Bush, have provided some of the requested clarification, but staff still found that there were unanswered questions and inappropriate materials being proposed. Three main issues required prior continuance. Only one of the three was addressed. No updated drawings provided.

Staff recommended to deny the after-the-fact request for exterior alterations at 318 East Huntingdon Street, as the installed and updated materials do not comply with the Downtown Historic District Design Standards.

PETITIONER COMMENTS:
The petitioner stated they thought they were told they needed to submit more information - submitted pictures. Will change the materials if necessary. Compatible with lot sizes and widths with other properties on the block. Two other lots have larger rear; theirs is the smallest.

Woodfield asked if they were leaving or removing deck. Petitioner stated they were focused on completion. The petitioner responded they plan to cover deck with clapboard; have already installed the windows.

Coleman stated that the windows have to be replaced with approved windows.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:
Donavan Julius, neighbor of petitioner, agreed with recommendation of denial. It is not pre-existing, nor compliant for the first level. They are now on second level - no clarity provided on intent. He is concerned it will continue to drag out. The address is listed on Google as a business.

The petitioner stated it is not a business.

BOARD DISCUSSION:
Members of the Board stated they should deny and have petitioner return with an actual proposal. The applicants were thanked for being willing to change to comply with Staff conditions, however, they support Staff recommendation. Matter needs to be resolved quickly, as it impacts neighbors. Methodology is the problem: apply correctly and address Staff concerns when they are presented.

Motion

The Savannah Historic District Board of Review does hereby deny the after-the-fact request for exterior alterations at 318 East Huntingdon Street, as the installed and updated materials do not comply with the Downtown Historic District Design Standards.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Robert Helms

Second: Shedrick Coleman

Karen Guinn	- Not Present
Melissa H. Rowan	- Not Present
Thomas L. Thomson	- Abstain
Sabrina Nagel	- Aye
Sara Woodfield	- Aye
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Mariel Hamer	- Aye
Robert Helms	- Aye

X. APPROVED STAFF REVIEWS

XI. WORK PERFORMED WITHOUT A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

XII. REPORT ON ITEMS DEFERRED TO STAFF

XIII. NOTICES, PROCLAMATIONS, AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

9. Stamped Drawings Report- February

10. Staff COA Inspections Report - February

XIV. OTHER BUSINESS

11. Text Amendment discussion

Text Amendment request:

Caitlin Chamberlain stated the request will be presented to Council March 12, 2026. Will clarify that this Board can grant variances for small construction and signage, as it is a quasi-judicial. The board variance and COA date need to equalize.
Wilson stated this was approved with conditional input from stakeholders/petitioners. Would like the length of time of COA for two years with one-year extensions instead of six months.

Jessica Baldwin, City of Savannah, state the MPC requested that variance and COA align with two-year platform.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

12. Next HDBR Pre-Meeting - Wednesday March 11, 2026 at 12pm - 112 East State Street

13. Next HDBR Meeting - Wednesday March 11, 2026 at 1pm - 112 East State Street

14. Adjourn

adopted by the respective Board. Verbatim transcripts of minutes are the responsibility of the interested party.