



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: **Architecture 101, Steven Stowers**

MPC File No.: **25-006061-COA**

Address: **20-22 West Hull Street**

PIN: **20015 13012**

Zoning: **D-CBD**

Staff Reviewer: **Jodie Brown, AICP**

Date: **January 14, 2026**

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant proposes to remove a non-historic addition and associated stairs from the rear façade that is located on the second and third floor. Installation of a new standing seam metal roof over the first-floor addition that is remaining and construction of a deck at the first floor. They are also proposing to remove failing stucco, shutters and to restore the brick and associated details prior to re-stuccoing the exterior. They are also proposing to add a new fence, sconces and primary door at the front façade.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

Located on the north side of the street mid-block, the house is in the Brown Ward. Designed in the Greek Revival style in 1858, the subject house features three stories with an exposed basement. The exterior has stucco with brick underneath and dentil molding at the parapet. Fenestration is 6/6 double hung wood windows with sills and lintels. The primary entrance is located at the southwest corner and is accessed via steps with an iron railing parallel to the house. The primary entrance is a single door flanked by pilasters and sidelights with a transom above it. The subject building is listed as a contributing resource within the National Historic Landmark District and the local Savannah Downtown Historic District.

FINDINGS:

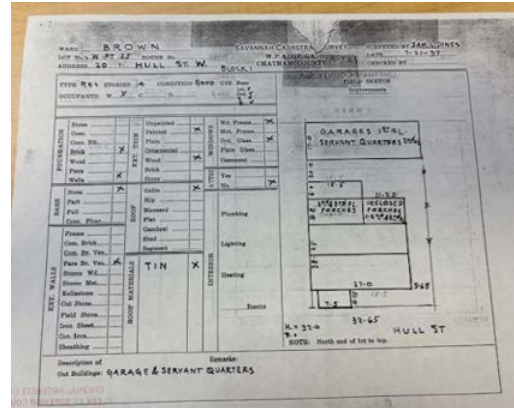
The following standards from §7.8 - Savannah Downtown Historic District Ordinance apply:

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.

Based on the 1937 Cadastral survey completed for the property, the original finish was brick. The stucco was added at a later date. The historic photo provided by the applicant indicates that it was stuccoed by 1979. The applicant intends to restucco the brick façade once it is repaired. Since there is clear documentation that the building was originally exposed brick, it should be restored and maintained. Re-stuccoing the exterior is not consistent with the Standards.

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.



The 1937 Cadastral survey indicates that the exterior surface was originally exposed brick rather than stucco. The applicant intends to re-stucco the surface which is not consistent with Standard 6.

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.

The applicant is proposing to remove a rear addition that was added in the 1990s and restore the windows impacted by the addition. They are also proposing to re-roof the 1st floor rear porch addition and install an uncovered deck. The re-roof will help protect the historic addition and not damage the house. The proposed deck is located off the rear 2 story addition and will not damage the historic house. The work is consistent with Standard 9.

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 proposed deck is easily reversible and will not impact the historic character of the house. The proposed work is consistent with Standard 10.

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.

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 applicant is proposing to remove two-stories at the 2nd and 3rd floors. At the time that this addition was built, the building had been split into apartments and the added square footage provided space for kitchens. The windows at these locations were used to access the kitchens. The window openings appear to be of similar height to the door openings which means there was limited modification to the openings. The new windows and associated openings will be compatible with the historic structure and this visual compatibility criterion.

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 applicant is proposing to re-stucco the exterior brick. The stucco will have a smooth finish and be painted Aesthetic White (Sherman Williams SW 7035) with Night Watch (Sherman Williams SW 9680) on the windows and doors. As noted previously, staff is concerned about re-stuccoing the exterior, but staff is also concerned with the proposed Chip and Joanna Gaines modern farmhouse aesthetic on the exterior. Specifically, staff is concerned with the large plane of white on the exterior. Dark colors for windows and doors seem to be common, but a quick look around the immediate vicinity shows warmer colors such as cream, yellow and tan. Staff does not believe that this criterion is met.

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.

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.

The extant stucco has begun to delaminate from the exterior walls. The applicant proposes to remove the stucco and repair the underlying brick and then re-stucco. The original exterior wall surface was brick according the Cadastral survey. The brick should be investigated for retention in cooperation with staff. If the brick is too damaged, then the stucco should be applied.

The applicant states that the stucco will have a smooth finish, but historically smooth was not a finish that was easily accomplished. The smooth finish had additives to accomplish the almost concrete smooth finish. Historic stucco finishes would have been a consistent fine sand, so the stucco finish should be further clarified.

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.

As noted, the original exterior was brick, but the building has been stuccoed since at least 1979. The stucco has started to delaminate from the wall surface. The brick should be investigated to determine if it can be restored. If it can't be restored, then the stucco should be re-installed. The applicant is not proposing to install any prohibited materials.

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.

The applicant is proposing to re-stucco the exterior brick. The stucco will have a smooth finish and painted Aesthetic White (Sherman Williams SW 7035) with Night Watch (Sherman Williams SW 9680) on the windows and doors. As noted previously, staff is concerned about re-stuccoing the exterior, but staff is also concerned with the proposed colors on the exterior. Specifically, staff is concerned with the large plane of white on the exterior. Dark colors for windows and doors seem to be common, but a quick look around the immediate vicinity shows warmer colors such as cream, yellow and tan.

The applicant has not indicated how the stucco will be removed. The plans should clarify that the existing stucco will not be blasted off of the walls which would cause additional damage to the brick. Information on how the brick surface will be prepped should also be provided.

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).

If the original window material and/or configuration is unknown, or if a new window is proposed in an unoriginal opening, the new window material and configuration shall be based on historic context.

The boarding of windows and/or window openings shall not be permitted. Windows and frames shall be weather-tight and free from cracks. Openings shall contain windows, doors, or storefronts.

The majority of the windows shall be repaired and painted, however, there are two windows on the rear of the building that were removed to accommodate the apartment kitchens. The applicant will be installing custom built Home South Architectural wood double hung windows that match the current 6/6 light pattern. The proposed work is consistent with this historic district design standard.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE the request to rehabilitate and alter the property at 20 West Hull Street, **WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS**, to be reviewed by staff because the work is otherwise visually compatible and meets the standards.

1. Work with MPC staff to investigate the condition of the exterior brick façade on the south elevation for retention and restoration;
2. Reconsider the color of the exterior stucco;
3. Clarify the stucco finish; and
4. Clarify how the stucco will be removed from the brick and how the new stucco will be attached.

MW: CC: JB

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.