



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: **Ronnie Hall**

MPC File No.: **26-002943-COA After the Fact**

Address: **17 West York Lane**

PIN: **20015 09009**

Zoning: **D-CBD**

Staff Reviewer: **Alexander Merced**

Date: **July 8, 2026**

NATURE OF REQUEST:

This is an after the fact application because the applicant filled in a short passageway opening with brick. They would also like to change the color of a small section of existing wood siding next to said opening.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

The building was constructed in 1899 and is a contributing resource within the National Historic Landmark District and the local Savannah Downtown Historic District. The altered property is the carriage house to 16 West Oglethorpe Street, and sits on a block comprised completely of contributing structures. The adjacent structures on each side appear to have been altered heavily over the years, as both have modern garage doors and entry doors that are painted a similar dark color to the one proposed by the applicant. Neither show any evidence of previously having a similar passageway.

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.*

Although the passageway has already been filled in, it is still plainly obvious that an entryway was once there. Neither this nor the proposed color has an effect on the historic character of the structure. The standard is met.

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.*

As noted above, the passageway is still evident, which pays homage to that part of the building's past. The standard is met.

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.*

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 passageway was filled with brick that matches the building and the proposed color is the same as both adjacent properties, both of which are contributors. The standard 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 brick used to fill in the passageway matches the exterior walls. The standard is met.

Exterior Walls, Finishes and Treatments.

Color changes to contributing resources shall be historically appropriate.

The color change is on a very small surface and is appropriate in the district. The standard is met.

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.

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

The passageway does not have a historic corollary in the immediate vicinity, nor in the historic district that staff can find. Also, as noted previously, the infill is recessed to show the former opening, and the iron gate has been preserved, clearly showing the historical opening. The standard is met.

July 8, 2026

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the proposed color change and after the fact alteration at 17 West York Lane as requested because they are visually compatible and meet the standards.

MW: CC: APM

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.