



S A V A N N A H H I S T O R I C D I S T R I C T
B O A R D O F R E V I E W

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: Studio H Architects, Julie Miller

MPC File No.: 26-002967-COA

Address: 114 West Bay Street

PIN: 20004 07004

Zoning: D-W

Staff Reviewer: Caitlin Chamberlain

Date: July 8, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting approval for rehabilitation & alterations on the building located at 114 West Bay Street, the building that houses the expansion area of the Cotton Sail Hotel.

The scope of work is focused on the expansion area, in the building that had most recently been Finnegan's Package Shop but has sat vacant for several years.

Bay Street Side:

- Existing metal coping to be removed and replaced with new prefinished metal coping to match existing adjacent coping
- Existing stucco to be repaired and refinished
- Installation of windows in boarded up openings, including replacing deteriorated window trim- windows based on configuration seen in historic photos
- Existing storefront to be removed and replaced with new wood storefronts to match the existing hotel storefront
- Preserve existing columns, repaint including gold trim and accents

River Street Side:

- Reinstalling windows in areas where there are none
- Replacing existing metal coping
- Removal of the existing enclosed second-floor balcony, and replacing with a new open-air, covered balcony
- Stucco restoration and repainting

PROJECT HISTORY:

The project history timeline encompasses the full context of the building that was rehabilitated to reopen as The Cotton Sail Hotel, known as 126 West Bay Street, as well as the evolution of the expansion area project, at 114 West Bay Street.

October 12, 2005: The Board approved the rehabilitation of, with alterations to, the building located at 126 West Bay Street [H-05-3477-2].

June 14, 2006: The Board approved the rehabilitation of Factors Walk [H-05-3477-2 (Amended)].

August 22, 2007, The Board approved a rooftop addition above 126 West Bay Street [H-05-3477-2 (Amended)]. However, the approved work never transpired due to a lack of funding.

September 14, 2011: The Board approved a rooftop addition (again), as well as the installation of balconies on the River Street façade with the condition that “continuous balconies be used on the fourth and fifth floors instead of the proposed individual balconies” [H-11-4500-2].

April 11, 2012: The Board approved an amendment to the previously approved rooftop addition [File No. H-11-4500-2 (Amended)].

September 12, 2012: The Board approved an amendment to the previously approved balcony design – “instead of being continuous on the fourth and fifth floors, the Board approved them to be individual balconies” [File No. 12-000377-COA].

August 12, 2013: Staff approved exterior color changes for 126 West Bay Street [13-004090-COA].

April 13, 2022: The Board continued the requested rehabilitation and alterations to the top three levels of 114 West Bay Street, as well as a rooftop addition [22-001268-COA]. The continuation was based on requesting more information about the addition and the materials in the rehab process. The project was continued to the May 11, 2022, HDBR meeting but did not come back.

August 9, 2023: Another application was submitted for the rehabilitation and alterations to 114 West Bay Street, with a different petitioner, Studio H. Architects, who are the current petitioners. This project was approved with conditions [23-003320-COA]. It expired before the project started.

January 30, 2026: Staff approved in-kind wood window replacements and mortar repair work for the operational side of the hotel at 126 West Bay Street [25-005607-COA].

June 10, 2026: The Board denied the re-application of this expired project which also included a new element of removing the second-floor balcony on the River Street side and replacing with a new balcony [26-00. This was applied for as an amendment. The Board had concerns that this was a procedural error and that it should be reapplied for as a new application. The new application for rehabilitation and alterations will be presented at the July 8, 2026, HDBR meeting.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

The historic building was constructed in 1852 and is a contributing resource within the National Historic Landmark District and the local Savannah Downtown Historic District. It is part of the row comprised of 112-130 West Bay Street.

The image below left shows the 1962 Ward Notebook image and the image to the right is present day. The upper-level windows have been covered and the storefront doors and windows have changed, though the columns and decorative work remain intact. The applicant intends to preserve these.



FINDINGS:

The following standards from the Preservation Brief 22 - The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stucco apply:

General Stucco Summary. The term "stucco" is used here to describe a type of exterior plaster applied as a two-or-three-part coating directly onto masonry or applied over wood or metal lath to a log or wood frame structure.

Historic stucco is sometimes incorrectly viewed as a sacrificial coating, and consequently removed to reveal stone, brick or logs that historically were never intended to be exposed.

Stucco on historic buildings is especially vulnerable not only to the wear of time and exposure to the elements, but also at the hands of well-intentioned "restorers," who may want to remove stucco from eighteenth and nineteenth century structures, to expose what they believe to be the original or more "historic" brick, stone or log underneath. Historic stucco is a character-defining feature and should be considered an important historic building material, significant in its own right. While many eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings

were stuccoed at the time of construction, others were stuccoed later for reasons of fashion or practicality. As such, it is likely that this stucco has acquired significance over time, as part of the history and evolution of a building. Thus, even later, non-historic stucco should be retained in most instances; and similar logic dictates that new stucco should not be applied to a historic building that was not stuccoed previously. When repairing historic stucco, the new stucco should duplicate the old as closely as possible in strength, composition, color and texture.

Repairing Deteriorated Stucco. *Historic stucco is inherently not a particularly permanent or long-lasting building material.*

Identifying the Stucco Type. *Analysis of the historic stucco will provide useful information on its primary ingredients and their proportions and will help to ensure that the new replacement stucco will duplicate the old in strength, composition, color and texture as closely as possible. However, unless authentic, period restoration is required, it may not be worthwhile, nor in many instances possible, to attempt to duplicate all of the ingredients (particularly some of the additives), in creating the new stucco mortar.*

While it is safe to assume that a late-eighteenth or early-nineteenth century stucco is lime-based, late-nineteenth or early-twentieth century stucco may be based on either lime or portland cement. Another important factor to take into consideration is that an early lime-stucco building is likely to have been repaired many times over the ensuing years, and it is probable that at least some of these patches consist of portland cement.

Staff determined that the exterior walls of 114 West Bay Street were originally exposed masonry, with the stucco finish occurring in the 20th Century. After about 1900, most stucco was comprised primarily of Portland cement, mixed with some lime. The applicant included information about the stucco mix that is appropriate. It will be a one-part Portland Cement Stucco Mix, 2 ½ parts sand hydrated lime to not more than 15% of the cement's volume water to form a workable mix.

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.*

The original windows and storefront no longer exist. The window openings are boarded, and the storefront is a later replacement. The window openings on the River Street side are also boarded. The current enclosed second-story balcony is not historic and thus its removal and replacement will not be detrimental to the historic character of the building.

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.

The window configuration and muntin pattern does not create a false sense of historical development as the window configuration and muntin pattern appears in a 1949 photograph provided with the submittal packet.

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

The enclosed balcony on the River Street side has not acquired historic significance.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards 5– Distinctive Features. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.

The most distinctive feature on the Bay Street elevation are the columns with ornamentation which will be preserved. This is the one architectural feature still perfectly intact, and its preservation will maintain the craftsmanship that contributes to the historic character. The window openings will remain as they are with in-kind wood windows to reflect the historic photo from the Savannah Ward Notebook, and the revised storefront will match the work that was done on the existing Cotton Sail Hotel.

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 windows are missing and boarded up, but older photographs show what the window configuration was, which the new ones will match. As for the stucco, there are areas that require replacement. The stucco will be an appropriate 20th century mixture of Portland Cement and lime to match the existing. For the doors on the ground level of the River Street side, the original configuration is unknown, and the doors there currently are not the original. What is proposed for the replacement is fitted to the arched doorways and a similar style to what is there now.

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

Secretary of the Interior's Standards 10– New Additions Reversible. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if

removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

The balcony addition is differentiated from the old, much as the existing balcony is. The inclusion of the new balcony will be installed in a way that if it were to be removed in the future it would not cause issues that would damage the historic building.

Visual Compatibility Criteria. *To maintain the special character of the Savannah Downtown Historic District as identified in the architectural survey and visual analysis, new construction and any material change in appearance shall be consistent with the standards, criteria and guidelines developed for the district. The applicable criteria below shall be used to assess new construction and material changes. These criteria shall not be the basis for appeal to any board, commission or administrator described in this Ordinance, or to the Mayor and Aldermen.*

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.*

Proportion of openings. *The relationship of the width of the windows to height of windows within a building or structure shall be visually compatible to the contributing buildings and structures to which the structure is visually related.*

Rhythm of solids to voids in front façades. *The relationship of solids to voids in the façades visible from the public right-of-way shall be visually compatible with the contributing buildings and structures to which the structure is visually related.*

The standards are met. The change of the storefront on the first floor on the Bay Street elevation is proportional and maintains the original ornamental columns. The upper-level fenestration pattern will not change, and this is also the case for the windows on the River Street elevation. The proposed new storefront on the Bay Street elevation brings a more symmetrical balance to the openings, which was lost over years of alterations.

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 replacement open-air covered balcony on the River Street side will span across the rear elevation, which is comparable to other balconies in the vicinity, including on the other end of this building. The redesign of the balcony is to be more aligned with the balcony at the Fiddler's Crab House & Oyster Bar. A similar balcony configuration can be seen across Barnard Street at the Chart House, which is within view from 114 West Bay Street/115 West River Street.

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 proposed materials and colors include:

- Marvin Ultimate double-hung wood windows to match what is installed at the existing Cotton Sail Hotel, painted Sherwin Williams Greenblack, SW6994.
- Sentriclad standing seam metal porch roof
- Steel support pipe columns for new balcony structure, black, with 2' concrete base
- Wood pony wall for balcony, painted Sherwin Williams Greenblack SW 6994
- Decorative metal trim
- Early 20th Century Portland cement stucco mixture to match existing, Sherwin Williams Mindful Gray SW 7016
- Wood storefront painted black to match existing- storefront system product specs are requested by staff
- Existing columns will remain and repainted the black color to match the existing, and ornamentation will be painted gold

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.

There are areas of the stucco walls that must be replaced due to damage. This was verified by the photos included in the submittal packet and staff onsite observation.

Exterior Walls, Finishes and Treatments.

Color changes to contributing resources shall be historically appropriate.

The stucco will be repainted after the repairs are completed. The proposed color is Sherwin Williams Mindful Gray, which is appropriate and close to the existing color.

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

Any cleaning of the historic stucco should be done with the gentlest means possible.

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.

On the River Street elevation, there is a proposal for in-kind replacements of the existing doors on the ground level. They do not appear to be original. The replacement doors will be custom made to fit the arched door opening. They are similar to what is there now, and the style is appropriate for this era of building. For a commercial warehouse building that needs to also be ADA compliant, the aluminum clad wood doors are appropriately selected.

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.

A photo from the Ward Notebook from the 1960s shows the window pattern before they were boarded up. This is a match to the windows at the Cotton Sail Hotel building that were also replaced to match what had been there historically. The Marvin Ultimate wood windows have been approved for many historic rehabilitation projects throughout Downtown and are appropriate. This will also match the same windows that were installed at the Cotton Sail Hotel.

Commercial Storefronts, Alterations to contributing resources.

Original storefronts shall be repaired 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 new storefront shall be of the same materials and configuration as the original.

If the original storefront material and/or configuration is unknown, the new storefront material and configuration shall be based on historic context.

The storefronts across the buildings in this row had all undergone significant alterations. The applicant seeks to install a wood storefront system with clear glazing to match the existing, while maintaining the decorative columns that still exist.

Porches, Stoops, Balconies, Porticos, Exterior Stairs and Decks - Alterations to contributing resources.

Porches shall be repaired 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 new porch materials and configuration shall be of the same materials and configuration as the original.

The rear balcony is not historic, and its removal and replacement are appropriate for the building.

If the original porch material and/or configuration is unknown, the new porch material and configuration shall be based on historic context.

While the existing balcony is not historic, it is not uncommon to see such balconies on the buildings along River Street, thus meeting the historic context.

Prohibited materials: Fiberglass (including Perma-Cast), vinyl and PVC.

These are not proposed.

Wrought iron brackets shall not be used with wood balcony railings.

This is not being proposed.

Porches, Stoops, Balconies, Porticos, Exterior Stairs and Decks - New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions. *Porches, stoops, balconies, porticos, and exterior stairs within the public right-of-way may be permitted with the approval of the encroachment by the Mayor and Aldermen and provided that the following criteria are met:*

Porches, Stoops, Balconies, Porticos, Exterior Stairs and Decks - Materials.

Porch elements shall be constructed of brick, painted or stained wood, wood composite, precast stone, marble, sandstone or slate.

Porch elements will be painted wood.

Roofs, Contributing Resources.

Roofs, Configuration.

Original roof configuration shall be maintained.

Skylights, roof decks, pergolas and roof vents shall be permitted only on the roof plane opposite the street, or when screened from public view and shall not damage or obscure character-defining features.

The new metal coping is appropriate on the roof parapet and maintains its configuration.

Roofs, Materials.

Original roof material shall be repaired 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 new roof shall be of the same material and configuration as the original (except wood or asbestos).

Metal roofs shall have a metal drip edge covering all edges.

The metal coping is appropriate and will still have a metal drip edge on the components.

Roofs, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions.

Roofs, Configuration.

Shed roof, and porch roofs, subordinate and attached to the primary building, shall be pitched between 2:12 and 6:12. Where historically appropriate, flat roofs may be utilized.

The pitch of the balcony roof is 3:12. The standard is met.

Roofs, Materials.

Roof coverings shall be standing seam metal, v-crimp, slate or equivalent synthetic, tile, or architectural asphalt or similar shingles.

Metal roofs shall have a metal drip edge covering all edges.

A standing seam metal porch roof is proposed over the balcony, including a metal drip edge.

Additions to Contributing Resources. *Additions shall comply with the above standards and the following standards:*

Additions shall not be on the primary or front façade of the resource and shall be located to the rear of the resource or the most inconspicuous façade.

Additions shall be subordinate in mass and height to the resource.

Additions shall not obscure or damage any character-defining features.

An addition shall be sited such that it is clearly an appendage and distinguishable from the contributing building.

Additions shall be reversible with minimal damage to the contributing building.

The new balcony addition would be going in the same place as the current, non-historic enclosed balcony is now. It is on the rear of the building, which faces River Street. The placement of the balcony does not disturb any character defining features and is clearly a distinguishable appendage from the contributing building. This balcony could be removed in the future and the building repaired to leave no trace of its existence.

Mechanical Equipment and Refuse. *Mechanical equipment and refuse shall comply with Sec. 9.5.3, Screening of Service Areas, except as provided below.*

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

New mechanical screening is proposed but the applicant has provided updated sightline drawings to show how it will not be visible from the public right-of-way, screening is not required.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the proposed rehabilitation and alterations for the property located at 114 West Bay Street as requested because the work is visually compatible and meets the standards.

MW: CC

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.