



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: Jerome Elder

MPC File No.: 26-002486-COA

Address: 100 East Bay Street

PIN: 20004 10002

Zoning: D-W

Staff Reviewer: Jodie Brown, AICP

Date: June 10, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is proposing to alter the first-floor façade on the River Street side and reside the 2nd floor on the south elevation.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

Designed by Boston architect William Gibbons Preston and constructed in the Richardsonian Romanesque style in 1886, the building was built over Drayton Street. The building's underpass is supported by cast iron columns that flank a wider lane for vehicles. On the outer portion of the columns are walkways. The building presents as 6-stories along River Street with a large, centrally located Palladian style window and a highly decorative 3-stories along Bay Street. The building was designed to function as a space for the King Cotton factors (brokers serving the planters' interest in the market) to congregate and set the



market value of cotton to export to larger markets. By 1951, the Cotton Exchange was done, and the building was occupied by the Chamber of Commerce. In 1976, Solomon's Lodge No. 1 of the Free and Accepted Masons occupied the building.

At some point, in the 1960s or 1970s, the eastern walkway was enclosed to accommodate HVAC. Stucco walls were built on top of the brick pony wall leaving some of the columns exposed to the exterior

with others enclosed.

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.

The applicant is proposing to remove a stucco enclosure on the eastern walkway of the building's underpass. They will re-enclose the space with glass storefront exposing all the original columns. The open glass appearance will visually enlarge the space and return the feeling of an enlarged underpass. The non historic siding on the south side of the 2nd floor of the underpass will be removed and replaced with tongue and groove siding which is likely similar to the original appearance. The proposed work restores the historic character and is consistent with Standard 2.

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 south façade of the building is highly decorative and will not be impacted by the work. The north side of the building is quite a bit more subdued with a fairly symmetrical appearance with the exception of the large Palladin window in the center. Another distinctive feature of the north side is the cast iron columns supporting the building. The proposed work will restore the visibility of all the columns and repair the brick pony walls. The work will be consistent with Standard 5.

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 extant enclosure of the eastern walkway drastically altered the appearance and spatial relationship of the underpass. The removal and re-enclosure with glass will visually reopen the space. It will also expose previously enclosed columns. The proposed storefronts will be using a bronze panel surround and glass with a butt joint which will help distinguish the new construction from the historic. The proposed 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 work will maintain the historic elements. The new storefront could be removed in the future, restoring the original appearance. 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.*

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 use a metal storefront with a bronze finish and glass with a butt joint to span the large openings. The glass will wrap around the back side of the columns to keep them exposed to the exterior. The store front material and color will help them blend in with the extant beams.

The non historic siding on the south side of the second floor will be replaced with tongue and groove siding. After an extensive search, no one could locate photos of this area. Using tongue and groove would be appropriate for this location. However, the plans should note that the tongue and groove will be wood.

The proposed material will be consistent with this criterion.

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 non-historic material will be removed from the eastern walkway and the 2nd floor of the southern side of the underpass. Additionally, the historic brick will be repointed and the columns restored. The installation of the proposed storefront will re-introduce the spatial relationship of the original underpass, and the new material is sympathetic to historic. The proposed work is consistent with the historic district design standards.

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.

The proposed work will re-expose historic fabric. The applicant is not using any prohibited material. The proposed work is consistent with the historic district design standards.

Exterior Walls, Finishes and Treatments.

Color changes to contributing resources shall be historically appropriate.

The applicant is proposing to use Sherwin Williams Iron Ore on the tongue and groove siding. The south side of the 2nd floor has limited visibility. It cannot be seen from either Bay Street or River Street. The proposed work will re-expose historic fabric. The proposed work is consistent with the historic district design standards.

Ceramic based-coatings and sealers on wood siding shall not be permitted.

The applicant is not proposing to use any ceramic based-coatings. The proposed work is consistent with the historic district design standards.

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

The applicant did not provide any information on how the brick will be cleaned. The plans should be revised to include this information.

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.

There was never a door in this location. The area was originally an open walkway that has been enclosed for several decades. The proposed opening would be glass and recessed in the opening at the north elevation. The glass door will open up the space and restore the spatiality. The proposed work is consistent with the historic district design standards.

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 proposed storefront configuration will restore the appearance of the open eastern walkway to the underpass. The extant enclosure blocked a portion of the underpass, introduced new material (stucco) and obscured the presence of the historic columns. The proposed work will restore the brick, columns and visually restore the width of the historic underpass. The proposed storefront system will keep the metal support surrounds at the edges and use a butt joint to keep the sections between the columns as large seemingly one piece of glass. The proposed work is consistent with the historic district standards.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE the rehabilitation and alteration at 100 East Bay Street WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS, to be reviewed by staff because the work is otherwise visually compatible and meets the Standards:

- 1. Note that the tongue and groove material at the south side of the 2nd floor is wood.**
- 2. Include information on the proposed mortar type, color, and tooling.**
- 3. Provide information on any replacement brick, including a physical sample with dimensions of existing and proposed.**
- 4. Indicate how the brick will be cleaned, including product names.**

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.