Savannah Historic District Board of Review

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

March 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
Melissa Rowan, Vice Chair
Shedrick Coleman
Karen Guinn
Mariel Hamer
Robert Helm
Sabrina Nagel
Sara Woodfield

MPC Staff Present: Caitlin Chamberlain, Director of Historic Preservation
Jodie Brown, Principal Planner
Alexander Merced. 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 Russell Finland | 26-000090 COA | 409 E Hall Street | Replace decking

Jodie Brown prepared the Staff report regarding the applicant's requested proposal to replace to the deck boards at the front porch of the house. Constructed mid-block on the south side of Hall Street, the house is located in the Stephens Ward. The house was constructed in 1892 and designed as a duplex. It is one of three similar duplexes that line the street. It was designed in the Colonial Revival style with a hipped roof and a centrally located dormer. The exterior is sheathed with rusticated block. The front façade features a full-width porch supported by Tuscan columns and an upper uncovered deck. Fenestration consists of a wood and glass main entrance with a transom, diamond patterned French doors and 2/2 double hung windows.

The subject building is listed as a contributing resource within the National Historic Landmark District and the local Savannah Downtown Historic District.

Staff recommended to APPROVE the request to replace the deck boards on the front porch

in-kind on the property at 409 East Hall Street AS REQUESTED because the work is visually compatible and meets the Standards.

Motion

The Savannah Historic District Board of Review does hereby APPROVE the request to replace the deck boards on the front porch in-kind on the property at 409 East Hall Street AS REQUESTED because the work is visually compatible and meets the Standards.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Melissa H. Rowan

Second: Karen Guinn

Karen Guinn	- Aye
Melissa H. Rowan	- Aye
Thomas L. Thomson	- Abstain
Sabrina Nagel	- Aye
Sara Woodfield	- Aye
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Mariel Hamer	- Aye
Robert Helms	- Aye

2. Petition of Studio Mc+G Architecture, Jennifer McConney-Gayoso | 26-000713-COA | 2-14 E Bryan Street | Enclosure

Jodie Brown prepared the Staff report regarding the applicant's proposal to construct an enclosure for an electrical vault to house transformers on the north side of 14 E Bryan Street. Located on the north side of Johnson Square within the Derby Ward, there are two high-rise properties. At the northeast corner is the Savannah Bank and Trust which was considered one of the city's earliest high-rises. Designed in the Neo-Classical style, the building was constructed in 1911. Designed in tripartite composition, the building features a 4-story marble base, an unadorned middle section and upper floors clad in glazed white terra cotta. The main entrance to the building is off of Bull Street and is announced with two, 3-story Corinthian columns flanking the door. This building is listed as a contributing resource to the National Historic Landmark District and the local Savannah Downtown Historic District. Immediately to the east of the Savannah Bank and Trust is an International style 10-story building that was constructed ca. 1976. This building is listed as a non-contributing resource to the National Historic Landmark District and the local Savannah Downtown Historic District.

Staff recommended to APPROVE the request for a rear façade enclosure on the property at 2-14 East Bryan Street AS REQUESTED because the work is visually compatible and meets the Standards.

Motion

The Savannah Historic District Board of Review does hereby the request for a rear facade enclosure on the property at 2-14 East Bryan Street AS REQUESTED because the work is visually compatible and meets the

Standards.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Melissa H. Rowan

Second: Karen Guinn

Karen Guinn	- Aye
Melissa H. Rowan	- Aye
Thomas L. Thomson	- Abstain
Sabrina Nagel	- Aye
Sara Woodfield	- Aye
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Mariel Hamer	- Aye
Robert Helms	- Aye

3. Petition of Whitfield Signs, LLC | 26-000404-COA | 15 West Broughton Street | Illuminated Sign

Alexander Merced prepared the Staff report regarding the applicant's request to install one illuminated wall sign. The building was constructed in 1867 and is a contributing resource within the National Historic Landmark District and the local Savannah Downtown Historic District. It is located within the Broughton Street Sign District.

Staff recommended to approve the proposed sign at 15 West Broughton Street as requested because it is visually compatible and meets the standards.

Motion

The Savannah Historic District Board of Review does hereby approve the proposed sign at 15 West Broughton Street as requested because it is visually compatible and meets the standards.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Melissa H. Rowan

Second: Karen Guinn

Karen Guinn	- Aye
Melissa H. Rowan	- Aye
Thomas L. Thomson	- Abstain
Sabrina Nagel	- Aye
Sara Woodfield	- Aye
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Mariel Hamer	- Aye
Robert Helms	- Aye

4. Petition of Michael Roach, Coastal Contracting | 26-000064-COA | 301 East Huntingdon Street | Window Replacements

Alexander Merced prepared the applicant's request to replace 13 windows. The building was constructed in the 1980’s and is a non-contributing resource within the National Historic

Landmark District and the local Savannah Downtown Historic District. It sits on the corner of E Huntingdon Street and Lincoln Street and is bordered on the East and South by non-contributing rowhouse structures. Contributing structures lie across both Huntingdon and Lincoln Streets.

Staff recommended to approve the window replacements at 301 East Huntingdon Street as requested because much of the existing non-contributing building is already non-conforming, therefore in-kind replacements are reasonable.

Motion

The Savannah Historic District Board of Review does hereby approve the window replacements at 301 East Huntingdon Street as requested because much of the existing non-contributing building is already non-conforming, therefore in-kind replacements are reasonable.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Melissa H. Rowan

Second: Karen Guinn

Karen Guinn	- Aye
Melissa H. Rowan	- Aye
Thomas L. Thomson	- Abstain
Sabrina Nagel	- Aye
Sara Woodfield	- Aye
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Mariel Hamer	- Aye
Robert Helms	- Aye

5. Petition of Signs of the South | 26-000723-COA | 31 West Congress Street | Non-Illuminated Sign, Color Change, Awnings

**This petition was heard on the Regular Agenda, due to Board member questions.

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Alexander Merced prepared the Staff report regarding the applicant's request to change the exterior paint color, reupholster and change the color of the three awnings, and install signage, including a non-illuminated wall sign, translucent window stripes, and an entry door logo. The building was constructed in 1851 and is a contributing resource within the National Historic Landmark District and the local Savannah Downtown Historic District. The address is part of a three-story commercial building at the corner of Congress and Whitaker with storefronts that wrap around the ground floor on both streets. It sits across Congress from the parking lot and drive-thru ATM of a contributing bank building, and next door to a non-contributing commercial building.

Staff recommended to approve the work proposed for 31 West Congress Street as requested because it is visually compatible and meets the standards.

Woodfield asked about a color sample. Petitioner provided as requested.

PETITIONER'S COMMENTS:
Deborah Bowen, petitioner, had no comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:
There were no public comments.

BOARD DISCUSSSION:
There was concern expressed about the sign size. However, the Board deemed the new presentation to be satisfactory.

Motion

The Savannah Historic District Board of Review does hereby approve the work proposed for 31 West Congress Street as requested because it is visually compatible and meets the standards.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Sabrina Nagel

Second: Karen Guinn

Karen Guinn	- Aye
Melissa H. Rowan	- Aye
Thomas L. Thomson	- Abstain
Sabrina Nagel	- Aye
Sara Woodfield	- Aye
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Mariel Hamer	- Aye
Robert Helms	- Aye

6. Petition of Doug Bean Signs | 26-000674-COA | 33 Bull Street | Illuminated Sign

**This item was moved to the Regular Agenda, due to Board member questions.

Caitlin Chamberlain prepared the report regarding the applicant's request for approval to install one (1) double-sided internally lit projecting parking sign at the parking garage on 33 Bull Street. The sign will match those found on other City public parking garages. 33 Bull Street is a non-contributing resource within the National Historic Landmark District and the local Savannah Downtown Historic District. It is a commercial multi-use building that sits on the corner of Bull Street and Broughton Street.

Staff recommended approve the proposal to install one (1) illuminated projecting sign for the parking garage located at 33 Bull Street as requested because the work is visually compatible and meets the standards.

Helms wanted to ensure that the sign was the same size as the other signs for this purpose.

PETITIONER'S COMMENTS:
The petitioner was not present.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:
There was no public comment.

BOARD DISCUSSSION:
There was no board Discussion.

Motion

The Savannah Historic District Board of Review does hereby approve the proposal to install one (1) illuminated projecting sign for the parking garage located at 33 Bull Street with the following condition because the work is otherwise visually compatible and meets the standards:

1.Staff to confirm that this sign is the same size as the other wayfinding parking signs on other garages in the City.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Robert Helms

Second: Sara Woodfield

Karen Guinn	- Aye
Melissa H. Rowan	- Aye
Thomas L. Thomson	- Abstain
Sabrina Nagel	- Aye
Sara Woodfield	- Aye
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Mariel Hamer	- Aye
Robert Helms	- Aye

7. Petition of Sottile & Sottile, LLC, Craig Clements | 26-000712-COA | 3 West Gordon Street | Rehabilitation & Alterations

Caitlin Chamberlain prepared the report regarding the applicant's request of approval for rehabilitation and alterations for the historic property located at 3 West Gordon Street. Scope of work includes:

-Roof replacement Inclusion of skylights not visible from public right of way
-Repairs to brick masonry and stucco
-Repairs to historic ironwork
-Window and door repair/replacement Restoration of a historic window on west elevation, 3rd floorConverting an existing window to a door on third story rear porchRestoring a door that existed historically on second story rear porch
-Repairs to historic garden wall and fences
-Remove corrosion and repaint fire escape

3 West Gordon Street, The Noble Hardee Mansion, was built in 1860/1884 and is a contributing resource within the National Historic Landmark District and the local Savannah Downtown Historic District. The house sits on the corner of Bull and Gordon Streets and faces Monterey Square. Construction of the house began in 1860 by Noble Hardee, but he did not live to see its completion in 1869. Originally designed as a double house in the Italianate style, the structure underwent a large-scale renovation in 1884.

Staff recommended to approve the proposed rehabilitation and alterations for the property located at 3 West Perry Street as requested because the work is visually compatible and meets the standards.

Motion

The Savannah Historic District Board of Review does hereby approve the proposed rehabilitation and alterations for the property located at 3 West Perry Street as requested because the work is visually compatible and meets the standards.

Vote Results (Not Started)

Motion: Melissa H. Rowan

Second: Karen Guinn

IV. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

8. Adopt the March 11, 2026 Historic District Board of Review Agenda as presented.

Motion

The Historic District Board of Review motioned to approve the March 11, 2026 HDBR agenda as presented, with 26-00763 and 26-000674 from Consent moved to the Regular Agenda, and move 26-000715 to before item 13.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Melissa H. Rowan

Second: Karen Guinn

Karen Guinn	- Aye
Melissa H. Rowan	- Aye
Thomas L. Thomson	- Abstain
Sabrina Nagel	- Aye
Sara Woodfield	- Aye
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Mariel Hamer	- Aye
Robert Helms	- Aye

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

9. Approve the February 11, 2026 HDBR Meeting Minutes as presented.

Motion

The Historic District Board of Review motioned to approve the February 11, 2026 HDBR Meeting Minutes as presented.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Melissa H. Rowan

Second: Mariel Hamer

Karen Guinn	- Aye
Melissa H. Rowan	- Aye
Thomas L. Thomson	- Abstain

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

10. Petition of Brick House Interiors, LLC | 26-000695-COA | 402-408 Bull Street | Color Change

Motion

Continue

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Karen Guinn

Second: Melissa H. Rowan

Karen Guinn	- Aye
Melissa H. Rowan	- Aye
Thomas L. Thomson	- Abstain
Sabrina Nagel	- Aye
Sara Woodfield	- Aye
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Mariel Hamer	- Aye
Robert Helms	- Aye

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

Motion

Continue

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Karen Guinn

Second: Melissa H. Rowan

Karen Guinn	- Aye
Melissa H. Rowan	- Aye
Thomas L. Thomson	- Abstain
Sabrina Nagel	- Aye
Sara Woodfield	- Aye
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Mariel Hamer	- Aye
Robert Helms	- Aye

12. Petition of Robert Johns | 25-006062-COA | 207 Bull Street | Alteration - ADA Ramp

Motion	
Continue	
Vote Results (Approved)	
Motion: Karen Guinn	
Second: Melissa H. Rowan	
Karen Guinn	- Aye
Melissa H. Rowan	- Aye
Thomas L. Thomson	- Abstain
Sabrina Nagel	- Aye
Sara Woodfield	- Aye
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Mariel Hamer	- Aye
Robert Helms	- Aye

VIII. REQUEST FOR EXTENSION

IX. REGULAR AGENDA

13. Petition of Kimley-Horn | 26-000710-COA | Multiple Addresses | Cell Tower Modifications

Jodie Brown presented the applicant's request of approval for the removal of existing small cell equipment and subsequent installation of proposed updated small cell equipment. The applicant submitted requests for 36 applications to review existing upgrades. Of the 36 only 4 of them are not located within the public right-of-way (ROW) plus one pole that is not owned by the City of Savannah. All the cell towers will be reviewed under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The 4 cell towers that are not located within the ROW including the pole not owned by the city will be reviewed for a COA while the remaining 36 cell towers within the ROW are not within the purview of the HDBR.

Properties not in ROW
-621 Drayton Street, building-C
-1 W River Street, building-NC
-200 West Congress Street, building-NC
-110 East State Street, building-NC
-111 Barnard Street, pole

Staff recommended to APPROVE the request to replace the cell tower equipment for the properties located at 621 Drayton Street, 1 West River Street, 200 West Congress Street, 110 East State Street, and 111 Barnard Street AS REQUESTED because the work is visually compatible and meets the Standards.

Guinn stated from a visual compatibility standpoint, they are not visual compatible, they stand out. If it is a city policy, the City should decide. Board has no direction or appropriateness provided to Staff. **Brown** responded they are to review as any other modification.

Nagel asked about the details of the contracts in place with the City that outline what has to be accepted by HDBR.

Guinn suggested that the Chair can write a letter of concern. **Pamela Everett** stated it will be on the March 31, 2026 MPC agenda. **Thomson** asked will Kimley-Horn representative be in person.

PETITIONER'S COMMENTS:
Chris Mills, Verizon petitioner, stated they are all modifications. Stated they can screen around the garage cells. Converting small cells to co-locatable upgrades.

A representative for Verizon stated all existing modifications are to provide better coverage in the downtown area. Will be in a conceal shroud; will not able to see antennae. Can do a complete conceal, though they try to avoid because it will require greater height and diameter. They are willing to make them as visually compatible as possible. **Nagel** stated this is an opportunity to make it visually better as the pole changed the aesthetic of the corner when initially installed.

Woodfield stated the poles are easier to see than the buildings.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:
Bill Stanton, citizen, stated one of the poles is right outside of his house. The proposed expansion will be 12 inches from his bedroom window. They emit radiation. Would like the health data provided to the public. The mass proposed is approximately five times greater than existing. Opposed: create alternatives and safety data.

Katherine France, citizen, stated the pole is 14 feet from her apartment structure. The American Cancer Society suggests 30 feet for safety. They are visually significant in prominent locations and not visually compatible. The Board and City are not powerless. State law states new colocations must compliment local law/standards. She is opposed specifically to the 321 Abercorn proposal.

Steven Gerber stated at least eight units in the building less than 30 feet from the tower

Yoryos Yeracaris stated the poles do not taper off to the top; very obtrusive

Andrew Jones, Oglethorpe Plan Coalition, stated the architect guiding the engineers is missing to help create a creative design to solve the issue.

Chris Mills responded that they are governed by the FAA and FCC regarding radio output. The safety signs are already there. They are actively looking into more concealing designs.

BOARD DISCUSSION:
The Board stated that looking at volume and scale, the best design should be used to protect integrity. All should be flushed mounted, less mechanical. Not enough clarity was provided from the petitioner. The proposed does not fit in the historic district; this is an opportunity to make it better.

One Board member stated there are complex issues that need to be addressed as to what is the best for the city. Small cell towers exist to keep large cell towers from coming Downtown. They are not going away; someone will be impacted. What is best for community as a whole should be considered and taken seriously. The Board stated the design could be better; Verizon should provide other options as used in other cities. The petition should be continued.

Motion

The Savannah Historic District Board of Review does hereby DENY the request to replace the cell tower equipment for the properties located at 621 Drayton Street, 1 West River Street, 200 West Congress Street, 110 East State Street, and 111 Barnard Street AS REQUESTED based on the incompatibility of the project as outlined in the ordinance and the visual compatibility standards.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Karen Guinn

Second: Melissa H. Rowan

Karen Guinn	- Aye
Melissa H. Rowan	- Aye
Thomas L. Thomson	- Abstain
Sabrina Nagel	- Aye
Sara Woodfield	- Aye
Shedrick Coleman	- Nay
Mariel Hamer	- Nay
Robert Helms	- Aye

14. Petition of Homestead Architecture, Pete Callejas | 26-000715-COA | 317 East Jones Street | Rear Addition

**This petition was moved to the third item on the Regular Agenda.

Caitlin Chamberlain presented the applicant's request of approval to install an addition at the rear of the building located at 317 East Jones Street. The proposed addition would be attached to an existing non-historic addition. The request also includes the installation of two new doors on the front elevation as well as a color change for the front portico and window trim.

317 East Jones Street was built in 1868 and is a contributing resource within the National Historic Landmark District and the local Savannah Downtown Historic District. It is on the left end of three attached brick rowhomes, or on the right end when looking from the lane where the addition is proposed. All three of the houses have been altered on the rear elevation over time, which is evidenced by the Sanborn Maps. The 1888 map shows a one-story wood porch on the rear. By 1898, it is noted as a two-story wood porch (see Staff Research document for maps). The current configuration of the rear elevation is wood lap siding infill on the former porches, creating interior spaces. The rear elevations of the two connecting properties have been altered further in the last 20 years, based on COA records.

Staff recommended to approve the request to install an addition, install new front doors, and the color change for the front portico and window trim, at 317 East Jones Street with the following condition to be submitted to staff for review and approval, because the work is otherwise visually compatible and meets the standards:
1. Select an approved door type on the addition to replace the proposed sliding glass doors.

PETITIONER'S COMMENTS:
Pete Callejas, petitioner, stated the clients request for sliding door to utilize as much space as possible. Designed as French style doors on the back of the addition to the historic

structure.

Chamberlain responded it can be seen from public right-of-way, thus the recommendation.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
There was no public comment.

BOARD DISCUSSSION:
The Board stated the Ordinance needs to be followed and supported Staff recommendation. It is a tasteful addition, no concerns as it is new construction with a privacy wall. One member expressed concern with the front door. Adding a door with six lights under the transom is not a good look for Jones Street. The 'prairie' style front door may need to be adjusted. That could be handled at Staff level.

Motion

The Savannah Historic District Board of Review does hereby approve the request to install an addition, install new front doors, and the color change for the front portico and window trim, at 317 East Jones Street with the following condition to be submitted to staff for review and approval, because the work is otherwise visually compatible and meets the standards:

1. Work with staff to revise the front door to be more visually compatible and meet the standards.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Sabrina Nagel

Second: Shedrick Coleman

Karen Guinn	- Aye
Melissa H. Rowan	- Aye
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

15. Stamped Drawings Report - March

16. Inspections Report - March

XIV. OTHER BUSINESS

XV. ADJOURNMENT

17. Next HDBR Pre-Meeting - Wednesday April 8, 2026 at 12pm - 112 East State Street

18. Next HDBR Meeting - Wednesday April 8, 2026 at 1pm - 112 East State Street

19. Adjourn

There being no further business to present before the Board, the March 11, 2026 Historic District Board of Review meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted.

Caitlin Chamberlain
Director of Historic Preservation

/bm

The Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission provides meeting minutes which are adopted by the respective Board. Verbatim transcripts of minutes are the responsibility of the interested party.