



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: Jennifer McConnehy
MPC File No.: 26-000713-COA
Address: 2-14 East Bryan Street
PIN: 20004 15008
Zoning: D-CBD
Staff Reviewer: Jodie Brown, AICP
Date: March 11, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is proposing to construct an enclosure for an electrical vault to house transformers on the north side of 14 E Bryan Street.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

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.

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 proposed work is located on the rear of 14 East Bryan which is listed as a non-contributor to the historic district. The historic building at 2 East Bryan St will not be impacted. The proposed work 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 proposed work is located at the rear of the property along the lane and has limited visibility from the primary facades. The historic building at 2 East Bryan Street will not be impacted. The proposed work is consistent with Standard 5.

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 area of the proposed work is located at the rear of 14 East Bryan Street. There is an existing overhang in the area that was previously approved to have mechanical equipment with a screen on top of the overhang. Below the roof, there is currently an open area with a portion fenced off for a generator. The enclosure (Georgia Power Vault) for this area will accommodate new transformers. The transformers are necessary to accommodate the new use. The enclosure will feature concrete block walls with stucco and three aluminum roller bay doors. The stucco will be painted white, and the bay doors will have a grey powder coat. The proposed materials, texture and colors are 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, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions.

Exterior Walls, Permitted Materials.

Residential exterior walls shall be finished in brick, wood, or fiber cement siding with a smooth finish or true stucco. Commercial exterior walls shall be finished in brick, true stucco, concrete formed or assembled as stone, precast concrete panels with finish to simulate stucco texture, polished stone and glazed brick or tile where similar historic examples exist along the same block front.

The applicant is proposing to sheath the exterior of the proposed addition with stucco which is consistent with other contributing buildings in the immediate area. The upper 1'8" will be open at the top of the wall to allow for air flow. The proposed work is consistent with the historic district design standards.

Exterior Walls, Prohibited materials. *Vinyl siding, aluminum siding, rolled asphalt, EIFS, one-part stucco over insulation and/or wood or metal-framing, T-111, corrugated metal, unpainted exposed CMU blocks, fiber cement panels, ceramic-based coatings and sealers on siding.*

The applicant is not using any prohibited materials. The proposed work is consistent with the historic district design standards.

Exterior Walls, Finishes and Treatments.

Colors, stains, and finishes shall be visually compatible with contributing resources within the block. If none exist, the color shall be compatible with contributing resources within the ward.

The applicant is proposing white stucco and grey overhead doors. The proposed work is consistent with the historic district design standards.

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

Location, None of the above. *If none of the above conditions apply, the building entrance shall be consistent with contributing buildings within the context.*

The proposed work is located on a secondary façade along Bay Lane. The lane features utilitarian uses with several access points via doors and garage/bay openings. The building at 30-32 East Bryan is a contributing resource with a garage/bay opening. The proposed work is consistent with the historic district design standards.

Doors, Configuration. *Door frames shall be inset not less than three (3) inches from the exterior surface of the façade of a building, excluding façades with wood siding.*

The garage/bay door is located on the exterior of the wall plane with an exterior box to house the Alpine Overhead Door. The entire wall plane will be inset underneath the existing roof line helping to reduce the visibility of the exterior box. There is a similar application at the rear of 21 West Bay which is listed as a contributor to the district. Based on the proposed use of the space (for transformers) an internal sectional door would interfere with the equipment. The proposed garage/bay door at the rear of a non-contributing building will not negatively impact the historic character of the surrounding buildings. The proposed work is consistent with the historic district design standards.

Doors, Permitted Materials. *Doors shall be made of glass, wood, clad wood or steel (without wood grain simulation).*

The proposed door is aluminum impact resistant door. The proposed door is neither approved nor prohibited, but it is consistent with a steel door which have been previously approved. The proposed work is consistent with the historic district design standards.

Doors, Prohibited Materials. *Vinyl; sliding glass doors visible from a street; steel-pressed doors simulating wood grain, half-moon, semi-circular, diamond or similar light insets; boarded-up doors or entrances.*

The applicant is not proposing any prohibited materials. The proposed work is consistent with the historic district design standards.

Staff Report - Certificate of Appropriateness
MPC File No. 26-000713-COA
2-14 E Bryan Street
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STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

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.

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.