



SAVANNAH HISTORIC DISTRICT
BOARD OF REVIEW

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: Felder & Associates, Nick Hennig

MPC File No.: 26-004689-COA

Address: 313-316 West River Street

PIN: 20003 09007

Zoning: D-W

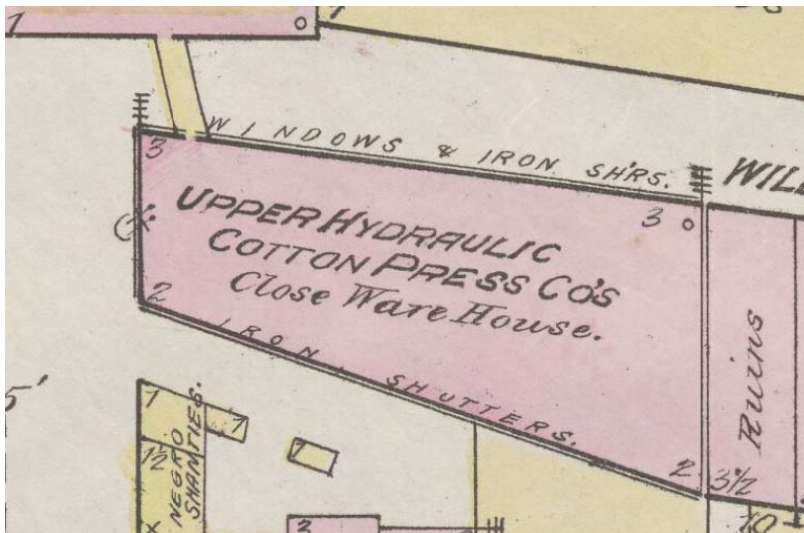
Staff Reviewer: Jodie Brown, AICP

Date: October 14, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting approval to install new storefront systems, railings at the entrance and balconies, new awnings, new roof top mechanical equipment, window repair, and new entrance steps/landings.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:



Located between River Street and Lower Factors Walk, the brick warehouse is two-stories. It was constructed ca. 1823-1850 (1884 Sanborn to the left) and it is in the Wharf Lots-East of Lincoln. The subject building is listed as a contributing resource within the National Historic Landmark District and the local Savannah Downtown Historic District.

The Historic Savannah Foundation holds an easement on the property. The project

received a COA on December 11, 2019 (19-004089-COA) and January 11, 2023 (22-005856-COA) for exterior improvements.

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 not modifying any of the existing openings. Windows will be repaired on the third floor along River Street and bay openings (second floor on River Street and first floor on Lower Factors Walk) which currently have wood shutters sheathed with metal which will be retained and storefront style doors/windows would be installed. Existing stoops on the west and south facades will be removed and reconstructed. Railings will be installed at the large openings and there would be new rooftop mechanical equipment. The proposed work is fairly innocuous and will not negatively impact the historic character. The proposed work is consistent with Standard 2.

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 applicant is proposing to repair existing windows and repair and maintain the existing wood/metal shutters. Both items are in a state of disrepair that requires attention before further deterioration. The proposed work is consistent with Standard 6.

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 proposed work will maintain the historic openings and materials. The windows will be maintained along with the wood/metal shutters. The new storefront system will be constructed of aluminum which is compatible with the historic building. The railings will be metal with metal mesh and the metal awnings will be thin and attached to the building with hangers. The new items will be compatible but distinct from the historic materials. The proposed work is consistent with standard 9.

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 proposed new materials are compatible with the historic character of the building. The aluminum storefront mimics the historic characteristics with thicker rails and stiles. The proposed railing is distinct, but compatible with railings found on contributing and non-contributing buildings as there is a wide variety of designs. The proposed work is 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.

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.

On the first floor along Lower Factors Walk there will be four historic wood/metal shutters that will remain in place. The doors will be opened and an aluminum storefront system with double doors, side lights and a transom will be installed in the opening. On the River Street side (north) one opening will have a similar treatment, while a second opening has non-historic doors. The non-historic doors will be removed and replaced with doors that match proposed doors. The proposed work is consistent with historic district design standards.

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).

The applicant will be repairing two double-hung windows on the 3rd floor on the north side. The proposed work is consistent with historic district design standards.

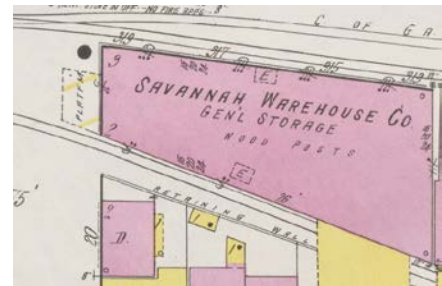
Commercial Storefronts, Alterations to contributing resources.

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

The building was originally a warehouse without any storefront systems. The proposed storefronts will be installed into existing openings and are consistent with other doors. The proposed work is consistent with historic district design standards.

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.



Based on the Sanborn Maps, in 1884 there was no landing on the west side of the building. By 1916, a large platform is shown on the Sanborns which is different from what is currently shown on the building. By 1950 through 1973, a smaller “wood platform” is noted on the Sanborns. The current landing shows concrete block which indicates that this is a non-historic element.

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

The applicant intends to construct a new board form stairs and landing with a cast in-place concrete deck. The railing around the deck and stairs would match those proposed for the balconies. A smaller similar styled landing would be located on the southwest and southeast corner along Lower Factors Walk. The proposed materials are not out of place with the surrounding buildings both contributing and non-contributing.

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

The applicant will not be using any prohibited materials.

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

The applicant will not be using any wrought iron brackets for the balconies.

Awnings, Canopies, and Shade Structures. Awnings, canopies and shade structures 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:

Awnings, Canopies, and Shade Structures, Configuration.

Installations extending above the public right-of-way shall have a minimum vertical clearance of eight (8) feet above the sidewalk.

It is not clear that the canopies will be at least 8' above the sidewalk. This should be clarified on the plans.

Awnings and canopies shall be integrated structurally and architecturally into the design of the façade.

The awnings will be anchored to the wall and secured with steel hangers to the wall.

Installations shall not obscure the character-defining features of historic façades.

The awnings have a thin profile and will not obscure and character-defining features.

Back-lit (internally lit) awnings shall be prohibited.

The awnings will not be backlit.

Awnings shall not connect two (2) facades.

The awnings do not connect two facades.

Awnings, Canopies, and Shade Structures, Materials.

Installations shall be constructed of canvas, other equivalent cloth, metal, or glass.

The proposed awning will be constructed of metal.

Supports shall consist of metal or wood. PVC shall not be permitted.

The hangers that connect to the building will be metal.

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.

Plans indicate that new mechanical equipment will be added to the west side of the building. While it appears that it will be blocked by the parapet on the west, it may have some visibility on from Williamson Street. Screening should be added around the mechanical equipment.

Lighting. *In addition to the requirements set forth in Sec. 9.8, Lighting, the following standards apply:*

Configuration: Light fixtures shall be compatible with the scale of the subject property and with the character of the district.

Lighting is indicated on the plans, but there is no information on the proposed light fixtures. This information should be included in the plans.

Materials: Light fixtures shall be constructed of metal and/or glass.

Lighting is indicated on the plans, but there is no information on the proposed light fixtures. This information should be included in the plans.

Source Type: White light source only.

Lighting is indicated on the plans, but there is no information on the proposed light fixtures. This information should be included in the plans.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE the rehabilitation and alteration work for the property at 313-316 West River Street WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS to be approved by staff because the work is otherwise visually compatible and consistent with the standards.

- 1. Provide spec sheets for the proposed lighting.**
- 2. Revise the plans to include screening around the mechanical equipment.**
- 3. Clarify the height of the awnings.**

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.