



SAVANNAH HISTORIC DISTRICT BOARD OF REVIEW

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: Brian Moss

MPC File No.: 26-004189-COA

Address: 38 Barnard Street

PIN: 20004 36010

Zoning: D-CBD

Staff Reviewer: Caitlin Chamberlain

Date: September 9, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting approval for storefront alterations and new signage for the business located at 38 Barnard Street. The scope of work includes a color change, rehab of the doors, add arched muntins in storefront windows, window decal signs, awning with signage, and one projecting sign.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

38 Barnard Street is the end unit of a row that spans from 30-38 Barnard Street. The two-story brick commercial building with five storefronts was constructed in 1920-1930 and is a contributing resource within the National Historic Landmark District and the local Savannah Downtown Historic District.

The storefronts have changed at various times, as evidenced in the photos below. The storefront at 38 Barnard Street had been recessed at one point, and it looks like the storefront windows and framing have also been altered. The earlier photos show that there was a unified look to all of the storefronts, where the more recent photos show the variations that have occurred.

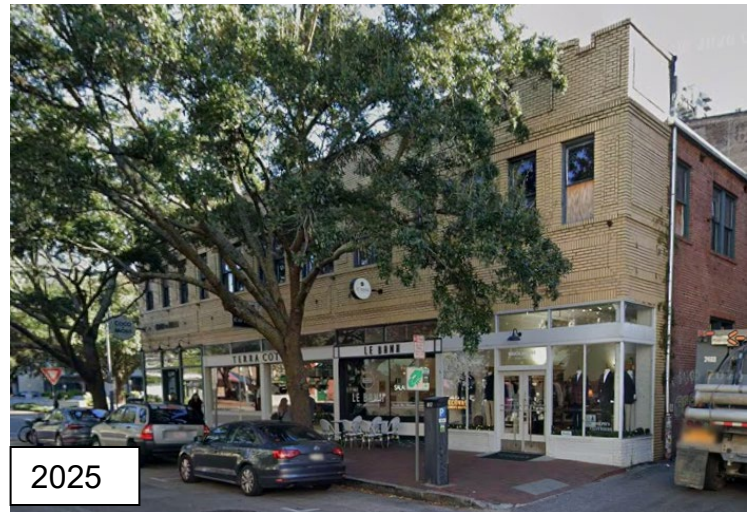




Above images undated, circa 1980s-1990s



2012



2025

FINDINGS:

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 proposed work does not change the existing configuration of the storefront, which has been altered over time and is not the original 1920s storefront. The rest of the building, including the historic brick and second story windows will remain as-is. There is an area of brick proposed to be painted but this is already-painted brick and is limited only to that lower storefront section.

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 standard is met. The doors on the building are not original to the site and do not read as a distinctive feature, but they will be altered in a way that is compatible.

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 inclusion of the arched muntins are adhesive and removable, thus will not damage the existing storefront windows and are reversible. The awning, window decals, and projecting sign could also all be removed.

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 standard is met. Proposed materials include:

- Paint color for wood storefront, doors, and already-painted brick to Behr “Bay Water,” a muted sage green color.
- Door logos – “Shop Moss” in gold metallic vinyl decals
- Border on door lites – gold metallic vinyl decals
- Deadbolt- Home Decorators Collection, square brushed gold single cylinder
- Door handles – Custom made iron, white and gold
- Arched muntins -painted cedar

- Storefront decals – gold metallic vinyl decals
- Awning – canvas fabric in “Pistachio” green to match the paint color
- Projecting sign – metal bracket in matte metallic bronze, with PVC sign face with a green background and gold metallic lettering to match window decals

Signs. Signs, where permitted, shall be visually compatible with contributing buildings and structures to which they are visually related.

The standard is met.

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.

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.

The photos from the 1930s are not clear enough to determine what the original doors on 38 Barnard looked like, but the existing set of double entrance doors does not appear to be historic. The applicant proposes to alter the existing doors with wood paneling, new handles, and single lites which is appropriate to the site.

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 storefront has been altered over time but the configuration of the existing will not be changed. The arched muntins are reversible should the need arise to remove them in the future and will not destroy the storefront framing. The color change to the storefront is appropriate.

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:*

The applicant will need to apply for an encroachment permit for the awning and projecting sign, through the City's Real Estate Services Department.

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.

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

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

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

Awnings shall not connect two (2) facades.

The above standards are met.

Awnings, Canopies, and Shade Structures, Materials.

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

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

The awning is canvas with a metal frame. The standard is met.

The following standards from the Sec. 9.9.17 - Special Sign Districts apply:

Special Sign Districts. *In Addition to the requirements of Sec. 9.9.1 through 9.9.13, signs in the following special sign districts shall comply with the provisions of this Section, provided that where such provisions are in conflict with any requirements of Sec. 9.9.1 through 9.9.13, the requirements of this section shall prevail.*

Historic Special Sign District Boundaries.

Savannah Downtown Historic Sign District. *The Savannah Downtown Historic Sign District shall include any area location within the Savannah Downtown Historic Overlay District, with the exception of City Market, Broughton Street, Factors Walk, and Plant Riverside Sign Districts.*

Signs Allowed in Historic Special Sign Districts. *Sign types in historic special sign districts shall be allowed in accordance with the following table. Regardless of sign type, with the exception of decorative pole signs and signs painted on walls, non-illuminated signs that are three (3) square feet in size or less shall be permitted without a sign permit (COA).*

Special Sign Standards for the Savannah Downtown Historic, City Market, Broughton Street, Factors Walk and Neighborhood Sign Districts.

Canopy or Awning Signs.

In addition to a ground, projecting or wall sign, one (1) such sign shall be permitted per business per building façade where an entrance is located providing public access to said business, except in the D-R zoning district where such sign is not permitted.

Only one awning sign is proposed and is in the D-CBD zoning.

Such sign shall not exceed more than one (1) square foot of sign area per horizontal linear foot of canopy of awning, or a maximum of 20 square feet, whichever is less. Provided, however, in no case shall the aggregate sign area exceed the maximum wall sign area permitted per frontage.

The standard is met at 6.4 square feet.

Signs on any side of an awning shall be considered a single sign.

The logo is only on the front part of the awning.

Window Signs.

This sign shall be allowed in addition to a permitted ground, projecting or wall sign.

Such signs may be attached, erected, etched or painted on a window of a building or structure.

The sum of such signs shall not exceed 10% of the window area of each façade.

The window decals will be attached to storefront and door windows and will be less than 10% of the window area of this façade.

Ground, Projecting and Wall Signs.

Savannah Downtown Historic and City Market Sign Districts.

Ground, Projecting and Wall Signs. Only one (1) ground, projecting or wall sign shall be permitted for each business establishment. Where a business establishment fronts on more than one (1) street or pedestrian walkway providing public access to the establishment, one (1) wall or projecting sign for each frontage providing public access shall be permitted.

Only one projecting sign is proposed.

No portion of a sign shall be erected within two (2) feet of a curb line.

The standard is met.

The aggregate sign area shall not exceed a size of more than one (1) square foot of sign area per linear foot of lot frontage along a given street or shall meet the following size requirements, whichever is the most restrictive:

D-C, D-CBD, D-X, I-L, I-LT Zoning Districts:

30 sq. ft.: Ground or Projecting Sign (max)

The projecting sign is 5.78 square feet.

6 ft.: Projecting Sign Distance from Wall or Ground Sign Width (max)

The standard is met.

Wall and projecting signs shall be erected only on the signable area of the structure and shall not project over the roofline or parapet wall elevation of the structure.

The standard is met. This is on the wall in an appropriate area not projecting over the parapet wall elevation.

No portion of a projecting sign shall be less than eight (8) feet above the pedestrian walkway.

The sign is 12 feet above the sidewalk.

Ground, projecting and wall signs in D-C, D-CBD, D-X, I-L, and I-LT districts may be illuminated in accordance with Sec. 9.9.6 and 9.9.17.g.i.

The sign is not illuminated.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the proposed rehabilitation and alterations to the business located at 38 Barnard 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.