



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: Coastal Canvas, Austin Webb

MPC File No.: 26-004194-COA

Address: 601 Esat River Street

PIN: 20005 02006

Zoning: D-W

Staff Reviewer: Jodie Brown, AICP

Date: September 9, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting to install an illuminated blade sign on the north façade of the building.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

Located on the south side of River Street, the hotel was constructed in 2024 within the Wharf Lots-Trustees Garden Ward. The building is 8-stories with a brick and stucco exterior.

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

FINDINGS:

The following standards from §9.9.17 - Special Sign Districts apply:

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).

Table 9.9-5 Signs Allowed in Historic Special Sign Districts					
Sign Type	Savannah Downtown Historic and City Market	Broughton Street	Factors Walk	Neighborhood	Plant Riverside
✓ = Sign Type Allowed * = Sign Type Allowed for Nonresidential Uses Only -- = Sign Type Not Allowed COA = Certificate of Appropriateness Required					
Allowed Without a Permit					
Agriculture Sign	--	--	--	--	--
Building Marker	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bulletin Board Sign	✓	✓	✓	✓	--
Construction Sign	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Directional Sign	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Historical Marker	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Memorial Sign	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Parking Directional Sign	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Parking Regulation Sign	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Temporary Sign Not Requiring a Permit	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Permit Required					
Building Signs					
Incidental Sign	✓COA	✓COA	✓COA	✓COA	✓COA
Canopy or Awning Sign	*COA	*COA	*COA	*COA	✓COA
Under-Canopy or Under-Awning Sign	*COA	*COA	*COA	*COA	✓COA
Above-Canopy or Above-Awning Sign	*COA	*COA	*COA	*COA	✓COA
Hanging Sign	*COA	*COA	*COA	*COA	✓COA
Marquee Sign	*COA Downtown Historic District Only	*COA	--	--	--
Projecting Sign	*COA	*COA	*COA	*COA	✓COA
Signs Painted on Walls	*COA	*COA	*COA	*COA	✓COA
Window Sign [1]	*	*	*	*	✓COA
Wall Sign[1]	*COA	*COA	*COA	*COA	✓COA
Ground Signs					
Decorative Pole Sign	*COA	*COA	*COA	*COA	--
Decorative Post Sign	--	--	--	--	--
Monument Sign	*COA	--	--	*COA	--
Multi-tenant Sign	*COA	--	--	*COA	--

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

Sign Illumination.

Signs shall not be illuminated unless specifically indicated below.

Signs in the City market Sign District of in any TN- district or the D-R district shall not be internally illuminated.

The property is located outside of the City Market Sign District. It is also located with D-W zoning, therefore the sign may be illuminated.

Enclosed lamp, neon, or exposed fluorescent lighting shall not be permitted within any D-R or TN- zoning district or within the Factors Walk Sign District.

The subject building is located within D-W zoning. The proposed sign will have white LEDs with ½” thick push-thru acrylic letters. The proposed sign is consistent with this criterion.

Where illumination is permitted, reverse silhouette or “cut-out” letters are encouraged to reduce glare where back lighting is applied.

The proposed sign will have white LEDs with ½” thick push thru acrylic letters. The proposed sign is consistent with this criterion.

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.

The applicant is proposing to install one projecting sign on the south side of the building. The proposed sign is consistent with this criterion.

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

The applicant did not provide a site plan showing the location of the sign and its proximity to the curb. Using the SAGIS measuring tool, it appears that the sign will be over 3’ from the curb line. The proposed sign is consistent with this criterion.

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-W, D-X, I-L, I-LT Zoning Districts:

40 sq. ft.: Wall sign (max)

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

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

The projecting wall sign will be 10.5SF and will project 2’ from the wall plane. The proposed sign is consistent with this criterion.

In addition to the above maximum sign size requirements for buildings with over 75 feet of lot frontage, one (1) additional square foot of wall sign area shall be allowed for every two (2) linear feet of building frontage within the D-CBD, D-C and D-X districts.

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

8 ft.: Monument

12 ft.: Decorative Pole

The applicant is only proposing one sign.

In lieu of a ground, projecting or wall sign permitted above, a non-illuminated decorative pole sign not exceeding 10 square feet in size may be installed in the

grass plat between the curb line and sidewalk area if such site and sign design are jointly approved by the City Manager or his or her designee in accordance with Traffic Engineering Department Procedure No. 30.6-1, Installation of Private Signs on Public Right-of-Way, Park and Tree Director in accordance with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Section A300 (Pruning Standards) and the Savannah Downtown Historic Board of Review in accordance with this Ordinance.

The applicant is not proposing to install a sign in the area between the sidewalk and the curb.

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 proposed sign is located on the 1st floor of the building on the north side. The proposed sign is consistent with this criterion.

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

The sign will be located 8' above the pedestrian walkway. The proposed sign is consistent with this criterion.

Ground, projecting and wall signs in D-C, D-CBD, D-W, 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 proposed sign is consistent with this criterion.

Staff Report - Certificate of Appropriateness
MPC File No. 26-004194-COA
601 E River Street
September 9, 2026

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE the installation of one illuminated sign on the north façade at 601 East River Street AS SUBMITTED 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.