

**HISTORIC DISTRICT BOARD OF REVIEW  
REGULAR MEETING  
112 EAST STATE STREET**

**ARTHUR A. MENDONSA HEARING ROOM**

**May 13, 2009**

**2:00 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

**HDRB Members Present:**

**Dr. Malik Watkins, Chairman  
Brian Judson, Vice-Chairman  
Reed Engle  
Sidney J. Johnson  
Richard Law, Sr.  
James Overton  
Linda Ramsay  
Joseph Steffen**

**HDRB Members Not Present:**

**Ned Gay  
Dr. Nicholas Henry  
Gene Hutchinson**

**City of Savannah Staff Members Present: Tiras Petrea, Zoning Officer**

**HDRB/MPC Staff Members Present:**

**Thomas L. Thomson, P.E./AICP, Executive Director  
Beth Reiter, Historic Preservation Director  
Julie Yawn, System Analyst  
Janine N. Person, Administrative Assistant**

**RE: CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME**

The meeting was called to order at 2:10 p.m.

**RE: SIGN POSTING**

All signs were properly posted.

**RE: CONTINUED AGENDA**

**RE: Continued Petition of Coastal Heritage Society  
Alexis Aubuchon  
H-08-4086-2  
PIN 2-0031-47-001  
301 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard  
Addition**

**Continue to June 10, 2009, at the request of the petitioner.**

**RE: Continued Petition of BWBF, Incorporated  
Richard Guerard  
H-09-4118-2  
PIN 2-0032-07-001  
342 Drayton Street  
New Construction Design Details - Part II**

Continue to June 10, 2009, at the request of the petitioner.

**RE: Continued Petition of Custom Construction Company  
of Savannah  
David A. Blich  
H-09-4125-2  
PIN 2-0032-17-003  
117 West Jones Street  
Deck and Balcony addition**

Continue to June 10, 2009, at the request of the petitioner.

**HDRB ACTION: Ms. Ramsay made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the Continued Agenda items as submitted. Mr. Judson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

**RE: CONSENT AGENDA**

**RE: Petition of Cummings, Incorporated  
Laura Scott-Adkins  
H-09-4131-2  
PIN 2-0016-36-015  
148 Montgomery Street  
Signs**

The Preservation Officer recommends **approval**.

**RE: Petition of Hinesley and Associates  
Valerie J. Hinesley  
H-09-4133-2  
PIN 2-0014-13-010  
502 East Harris Street  
Fence and Gate**

The Preservation Officer recommends **approval**.

**RE: Petition of Hansen Architects  
Eugene Maria  
H-09-4136-2  
PIN 2-0003-14-001  
412 West Bay Street**

**Drive-Thru Portico**

The Preservation Officer recommends **approval**.

**HDRB ACTION:** Mr. Judson made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the Consent Agenda items as submitted. Ms. Ramsay seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**RE: REGULAR AGENDA**

**RE: Petition of Doug Bean Signs, Incorporated agent for  
The Beach Institute  
Donna Swanson  
H-09-4123-2  
PIN 2-0014-13-010  
502 East Harris Street  
Sign**

The Preservation Officer recommends **approval**.

Present for the petition was Mr. Doug Bean.

Ms. Reiter gave the Staff report.

**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

The applicant requests approval of a projecting 27-square-foot building identification sign with an attached 9-square-foot principal use sign located at the stairs on Harris and Price Streets. The projection is 4.5 feet overall. The background is China White with flat black letters and a Saratoga Springs stripe border. The principal use sign is Saratoga Springs with black and white copy.

The building is located in an “R” zone which allows a maximum 12-square-foot projecting principal use sign and a maximum 30-square-foot building identification sign.

**FINDINGS:**

Since Price is a one-way street it is important to use the projecting sign format.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

**Approval of a building identification and principal use sign.**

**HDRB ACTION:** Mr. Engle made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the petition as submitted. Ms. Ramsay seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**RE: Petition of Dr. Lance Hemberger  
H-09-4129-2  
PIN 2-0033-01-021B  
548 East Taylor Street**

**Covered Deck Addition**

The Preservation Officer recommends approval.

Present for the petition was Mr. Sean Roach.

Ms. Reiter gave the Staff report.

**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

The applicant requests approval of a gable roof over an existing rear deck and to enclose it with screening. Two curb-mounted skylights will be inset on the eastern half of the roof. A gutter system will be attached to the eastern side.

**FINDINGS:**

1. The overall height has been reduced 2'-6" from a previous submittal. The roof no longer impacts the window on the rear of the house.
2. The wall abuts the existing concrete block wall and does not overhang the adjoining property line. A gutter is proposed to divert the water.
3. A solid vinyl Victorian style screen door is proposed. It will not be visible from the lane.
4. The trim color is to be Tabby White.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

**Approval.**

**Ms. Reiter** stated that if there is a discrepancy that an alternative could be a retractable awning for the deck that might be a compromise.

**Mr. Judson** stated that the first consideration was an after-the-fact and asked if it was remediated.

**Ms. Reiter** stated that her understanding was that it was removed.

**PETITIONER'S COMMENTS:**

**Mr. Sean Roach** stated that he did the design and didn't measure the awning because he was under the impression that Mr. Hemberger was going to remove it, which created the discrepancy.

**Mr. Engle** stated that on Page 8.4 that there were footings shown and that the new footing and a post was on a wall section, which meant they were building a new deck.

**Mr. Roach** stated that there was a span that was too long for the additional wall and was suggesting that a new post be placed there to support the weight of the new roof.

**Mr. Engle** stated that there was a new girder and decking going in.

**Mr. Roach** answered yes and said that it was showing decking but his intent was to show just the footing for the additional support.

**Mr. Engle** stated that if they were putting in a new girder and decking that they were building a new deck.

**Mr. Roach** stated that it wasn't rebuilding the entire deck, but the addition of one post along the wall. He said that previously the design showed that it was on the wall, but he was informed that they could not put it on the wall and he added the post to support it.

**Mr. Engle** asked if the stud wall would be supported by the girder and the new footings, and if they were building a new wall along the concrete block wall to carry the deck.

**Mr. Roach** answered yes. He said there would be a new wall along the concrete wall, but he felt that the middle of the span needed to have additional support. There was an existing post on the front of the deck that is attached to the building in the rear, and there needed to be something in the middle to prevent the deck from sagging from the roof addition.

**Mr. Engle** stated that his point was that if the deck was lowered two feet they would be able to lower the roof two feet, and then the question about the visibility of the roof and the intrusion would be less significant. He said if they were putting in a new girder, a new wall, and replacing the decking, then why couldn't the deck be lowered two feet and have two steps coming from the house? It seemed to him that it was all predicated on being able to walk out the back door of the house. If there were a couple of steps going down, they could lower the entire structure. It has been lowered two and one-half feet, but it was still problematic. He asked if there was a reason why the whole deck couldn't be lowered since all of the work was going to be done any way.

**Mr. Roach** stated that he was hoping not to have to rebuild the entire deck to save the owner some aggravation.

**Ms. Ramsay** stated that the section on A.4 showed that the eave extended more than what was shown in the elevation on A.3. She said that she didn't know which was correct because they were entirely different drawings.

**Mr. Roach** stated that he drew it as a general section so that the Board could have an idea about what they were planning. He said that the eave was going to have to be shortened, that he spoke with Staff and they said they didn't want the water to run over onto the neighbors, and he adjusted it and installed the gutter which created the discrepancy. They were going to adjust it in the field because they knew they couldn't extend it over the wall and didn't want additional water flowing onto the neighbor's property.

**Ms. Ramsay** stated that having the dimensions would be helpful. She said that on A.3 the door was shown without lights, and on the front cover there appeared to be a grid in the door.

**Mr. Roach** stated that it was overlaid on the existing and that there were grids on the door behind it and it bled through on the print out.

**Ms. Ramsay** stated that on the section on A.4 the foundation was shown as extending both ways. She said that she understood that the wall was against an existing masonry wall and asked how they would get the foundation under the existing stucco wall.

**Mr. Roach** stated that it wouldn't be under the stucco wall but flush against it, and that they would have to put some anchors into the base of the wall and pour it.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**Mr. William Armstrong (554 East Taylor Street)** stated that he objected to the design, height, and appropriateness of the proposed addition. He said that the first floor double-hung window was considerably higher than as shown on the drawing of the A.1 existing deck elevation by approximately 3 feet 6 inches. The proposed structure would have to be built across the double-hung window and across the glass panels next to the door. The height of the addition would be 14 feet 8 inches with a gabled roof, which was 5 feet 8 inches above the east garden wall, and the garden wall is 9 feet high, and 6 feet 8 inches above the west garden wall. The addition with two skylights would reach midway to the awning. There was a 7-inch difference on the drawing on A.3 and the cover and there were inconsistencies in the drawing.

He said that the design was a screened-in Florida room that would look fine on a suburban home, but was not in keeping with the historic character of the 19<sup>th</sup> century historic brick row. He felt that the addition as proposed was inappropriate in form, in relationship to the existing structure, and in the architectural detailing.

**Ms. Barbara Shulz (540 East Taylor Street)** stated that she did not object to the addition of a porch or a sun room, but wanted it to be more in keeping with the Historic District; especially the height. She said that her son is involved in tourism and has a vacation rental at 542 East Taylor and a lane cottage. People come to Savannah to enjoy its history and beauty, and she would like to keep it that way.

**Ms. Monique Armstrong (554 East Taylor)** stated that she and her husband have resided at this address for the past ten years and were still in love with the beautiful district. She said they have learned to appreciate it more over the years. There were proud owners in the Historic District and wished to maintain it the way it was approved. Dr. Hemberger has been a terrific neighbor, and it makes it difficult to raise opposition to the new addition proposal.

She said that she and her husband found a purpose when they moved to Savannah and became the owners of four houses in the Historic District. Their mandate was to purchase, restore, revive and maintain historic homes, and share the living experience with visitors from all over the world. It was an active business for her, they are active members of the Chamber of Commerce, and operate four private B & B's and Inns.

The views from the carriage house and the courtyard would fulfill the mandate as long as the authenticity of the unique courtyard would be preserved. She agreed with the Shulz family in their appeal for the preservation of the authenticity of the hospitality business that they operate on the west side of the road. She thanked the Board and said that their concern was about historic preservation.

**Dr. Watkins** stated that the Board was looking at design compatibility factors and it was understood that there was a long history together, but that the Board was focusing on compatibility.

**Mr. Jerry Lominack** stated that he had nothing to do with the design of the proposed addition, but that Dr. Hemberger was a personal friend and became aware of the controversy last week. He said that on behalf of Dr. Hemberger he advised them to request a continuance, and said that Dr. Hemberger was unaware of all of the discrepancies in the drawings. On Dr. Hemberger's request he was requesting a continuance.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that his concern was that all parties involved understand that one of the considerations that the Board had with something being visible within a courtyard was whether it was visible from the lane or the public road. He said it was not a consideration whether it was visible from a second story or a window overlooking another property. There seemed to be a question whether it was visible from the lane or road and the Board did not know yet because they have seen different drawings, and the petitioner was right to make sure that the drawings were right. Mrs. Armstrong's concern as far as what happened on the second floor from across the property or from the carriage house was not relevant to the Board's considerations.

**Ms. Armstrong** asked about the views from the street.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that views from the street and the lane were entirely appropriate. He said that he wanted everyone to know what the Board would look at when it came to what was visible. There were other issues but he wanted to make sure the Board wasn't confused on what would be considered when they look at it next month.

**Mr. Engle** stated that he had seen this twice and did not think that anything was visible from the lane because of the carriage house. He said they were looking at East Broad Street and it was simple if they figured out how high the concrete block wall was to know what would stick out.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that the question was what was visible from East Broad Street. He said if you were looking at a shingled roof that was in compliance, then it was not a problem. The question was what would be visible. If you see something that was historically incompatible that was visible from East Broad Street then it was a problem. If you're seeing a shingled roof that was compatible then what was under the roof doesn't matter. That was what he was trying to make sure that people understood because he was going by Staff's report as to what could and could not be seen from the lane.

**Mr. Engle** stated that he still encouraged studying and lowering the deck.

**Mr. Judson** stated that he appreciated the move to a continuance because he heavily relied on the drawings and to look at them and not accurately reflect what was going on, he did not feel able to render a decision.

**HDRB ACTION:** Mr. Judson made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review continue the petition to the July 8, 2009, meeting. Ms. Ramsay seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**RE: Petition of Turner Food and Spirits  
Neil Dawson  
H-09-4134-2  
PIN 2-0016-15-006  
38 Montgomery Street  
Temporary Stabilization**

The Preservation Officer recommends **approval**.

Present for the petition was Mr. Neil Dawson.

Ms. Reiter gave the Staff report.

**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

The applicant requests approval of alterations as follows:

West (front) elevation, north elevation, south (lane) elevation:

1. Replace windows with new wood Kolbe and Kolbe Heritage double-hung single-glazed true divided lite window, or Home South Shop-built putty glaze true divided light window with lights to match existing windows.
2. Repair or recoat existing stucco where needed.
3. Pressure wash exterior.
4. Repair cast stone lintels where necessary.

**FINDINGS:**

1. Staff has reviewed the window samples and both are suitable replacements for the existing windows.
2. The City's Property Maintenance Department has cited this structure for maintenance violations.
3. Staff recommends against painting the stucco if it can be avoided.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

**Approval.**

**PETITIONER'S COMMENTS:**

**Mr. Neil Dawson (Dawson Architect representing Turner Food and Spirits)** stated that they agreed with not repainting the building, but they want to pressure wash it. He said he like the patina and the faded nature of the stucco and wanted to retain it. The photographs show areas of concern with the stucco, primarily on the back corner or where there was a roof leader, there has been significant deterioration of the plaster and delamination from the brick. Their intent was to stabilize the building, take off loose plaster, chip it to where the plaster was well-adhered and keyed into the brick. Right now



was not a good time to develop a new restaurant downtown with the economy as it was, and they wanted to do what they could to stabilize it and secure the investment so that the City won't tear it down.

**Mr. Engle** asked if they were going to do any work on the downspouts and the scuppers.

**Mr. Dawson** stated that he would like to encourage the owner do to that, but when they get into the roof there was a series of events that cascade in terms of structural repairs that would have to be done. He said that his recommendation to the owner was that they would repair the scupper and try to get the water away from the building to eliminate vegetative growth. They don't have the money to replace downspouts and it won't be prudent until they get to the Phase I renovation of the exterior.

**Mr. Engle** stated that if they do it in the summer they would be wasting money because the stucco would rot again. He said that some of the downspouts were dumping the water which was why there was a stucco problem. They could use aluminum for temporary stabilization and it was cheap.

**Mr. Dawson** stated that it was an idea to be considered. He said that his concern was that they wouldn't want to put in something that would be of a second-class nature like aluminum or PVC that was not appropriate for the Historic District. If they could pitch the water away for now it would be better than putting up something that was not appropriate for the structure.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**Ms. Cassie Dolecki (Historic Savannah Foundation-HSF/Architectural Review Committee-ARC)** said that the ordinance stated that replacement windows on historic buildings should replicate the original historic windows in composition, design, and materials. She said that the HSF visited the site and would strongly recommend that the historic 6/6 light pattern and the predominate pattern on both street side facades be retained. They believed that the 2/2 light pattern was a more recent conversion.

#### **BOARD DISCUSSION:**

**Mr. Judson** asked the petitioner about to HSF's comment and if it was something they would consider. He asked if they had evidence that those were historic 2/2 windows.

**Mr. Dawson** stated that he spoke with Ms. Dolecki and that the 2/2 was probably a later replacement. He said they intended to replace them as they currently were, and while it didn't represent the original historic character of the building, the 2/2 windows have gained their own significance. If it was the pleasure of the Board they thought that both alternatives would be appropriate and consistent with the Secretary of the Interior Standards.

**Mr. Engle** stated that he agreed with the architect on this one. He said that the 2/2 windows have become significant in their right over time, and unless they were going to do a historic structure report and find out that they were 6/6, they didn't know and didn't have a right to force someone to do restoration. All the Board could do was to say replace in kind.

**Mr. Daniel Carey (Historic Savannah Foundation)** stated that an 1850's building was likely 6/6 and not 2/2, and he was certain about that. He said that the majority of the windows in the building were 6/6 and there were only handfuls that were 2/2. It would be more consistent and more logical to repane the 6/6 rather than introduce more 2/2 windows. The HSF had no objection to it if it was just a stipulation that they replace the windows with 6/6.

**Mr. Engle** asked if all of the windows were being replaced in-kind. He said he didn't see where they were introducing any more.

**Mr. Carey** stated that it was a mish-mash because there were a lot of windows on the second floor that were 6/6. He asked why they couldn't be consistent and make them all 6/6. He didn't know of the historic character that had been obtained for four or five windows that outweighed the 6/6 that existed throughout the rest of the building. He said that the 2/2 windows were a clear minority, and for consistency and preservation sake the 6/6 made more sense.

**Mr. Dawson** stated that there were ten 2/2 windows and 36 of the 6/6. He said that his client's preference was the 6/6 and they would keep them as they were.

**Mr. Steffen** stated that they knew of the building's age and when it was replaced. He said that when a replacement was made to the extent that they could re-establish what the building originally was, then they should. He did not think that putting in 2/2 was wrong, but having all 6/6 did a better job of restoring the historic character of the building. He appreciated the owner's efforts in saving the building from demolition.

**HDRB ACTION:** Mr. Steffen made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the petition as submitted with a condition that the windows being replaced be 6/6. Mr. Judson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**RE: Petition of Savannah College of Art and Design  
Neil Dawson  
H-09-4135-2  
PIN 2-0033-03-006  
439 East Broad Street  
Alterations**

The Preservation Officer recommends **approval**.

Present for the petition was Mr. Neil Dawson.

Ms. Reiter gave the Staff report.

**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

The applicant requests approval of alterations as follows:

South Elevation:

1. Remove upper plywood panels from second story porch, south elevation. Install insect screen. Install bead board over lower panels.
2. Remove existing chain link fencing from south side of lot.
3. Construct a one-story brick trash enclosure at the southwest corner of the parking lot.
4. Construct a one-story hip roofed brick building with three window openings infilled with aluminum louvers. Roof to be standing seam metal. Brick to be Cushwa "Shenandoah" or "Georgian" by Redland Brick Company.

5. Install aluminum louvers in existing openings in existing one-story building.
6. Install one-story flat-roofed building with brick wall.
7. Install metal picket gate. (NOTE THIS IS A CHANGE FROM THE DRAWINGS.)
8. Install metal picket fence to secure condensing units. (SEE NOTE ABOVE)

West Elevation:

1. Non-historic addition and ramp to be removed.
2. Remove plywood coverings from six windows and three transoms. Restore existing 2/2 windows and glass in existing transoms. Install fixed glass in chapel windows.
3. Install standing seam metal awning over two rear entrances.
4. Remove existing chain link fence and gate.

North Elevation

1. Install green screen on north elevation of new one-story building.
2. Replace existing chain link fence along north lot line with metal picket fence. (SEE NOTE ABOVE.)

**FINDINGS:**

Chain link is not a recommended fence or gate material in the Landmark District. The petitioner has agreed to a metal picket fence instead and will bring specifications to the meeting.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

**Approval.**

**Ms. Ramsay** stated that when she drove by the site and that there were workers on the site. She asked if this was a project that was recognized late.

**PETITIONER'S COMMENTS:**

**Mr. Neil Dawson (Agent for the Savannah College of Art and Design)** stated that they had a demolition permit and were cutting off the electrical and removing some of the interior elements that were properly permitted through the City. He said it did not involve any exterior modifications. He had a revised drawing that showed the changes Staff had discussed regarding the chain link fence, and that all of those were documented and were included on the revised set.

There was currently a stainless steel exhaust duct on the outside of the building and they realized they didn't need it. He requested that the Board allow them to remove that element from the exterior of the building. He received authorization from the client to replace the exterior doors with a five-panel door to match the original door. The current submittal showed a flat, flushed wood door, and they have authorization to do the five-panel door to match the historic panel configuration of the exterior on the front.

Ms. Ramsay asked about the sample of the fence.

Mr. Dawson stated that the elevation was modified. He said that he did not bring a sample, but had the specification sheets. At the condenser unit was a shorter fence that matched the height. The historic iron fence was on a stucco knee wall and they didn't want to mimic it. It was a different height and pattern and had a painted steel fence. There would be a gate and an eight-foot panel to be between the steel pickets. It was a modern fence and they wanted to make sure there was no confusion on the historic fence versus the new fence.

Color was not a part of the submittal but they anticipated painting it the same color. He said they may select a different color for the windows and if they did, they would bring it back to the Board or to Staff.

**HDRB ACTION: Mr. Steffen made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the petition as submitted. Mr. Engle seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

**RE: Petition of Paul Robinson  
H-09-4137-2  
PIN 2-0004-44-011  
18 & 20 West State Street  
Storefront Alteration**

The Preservation Officer recommends **approval**.

Present for the petition was Mr. Paul Robinson.

Ms. Reiter gave the Staff report.

**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

The applicant requests approval to replace the existing storefront with a new metal and glass storefront. The historic brick façade material on either side of the storefront and the transom are original and will be retained.

**FINDINGS:**

18-20 West State Street was constructed between 1898 and 1916 and replaced a frame shop. It was built with a commercial ground floor use and lodging above. The brick sill under the current storefront windows is not historic; neither is the current aluminum entry door and sidelight nor the modern glass shop windows. (New South Associates: A Cultural Resource Assessment of Proposed Sites, U. S. Courthouse Annex, Savannah, Georgia, 1996.)

It is proposed to shift the recessed entry door opening to the East, replace the door with a glass door, and drop the glass storefront to the ground for a more visible display area.

Colors: Window trim: Benjamin Moore 2163-70 "Winter Sky"; Wood door to upstairs: Benjamin Moore 2000-10 "Red"; gutter and downspout: Benjamin Moore 2119-20 "Black Berry".

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

**Approval of the alterations as proposed. Existing storefront is not the original. Alterations retain its visual appearance as a good example of a small two part commercial block.**

**PETITIONER’S COMMENTS:**

**Mr. Paul Robinson** stated that the existing storefront was not historic.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**Ms. Cassie Dolecki (Historic Savannah Foundation)** stated that they disagreed with Staff’s comments. She said that the ordinance stated that storefront entrances shall be recessed and centered within the storefront. She said that the proposed changes to this storefront violated the standard. Rather than perpetuate mistakes by past renovations and allow another interpretation of a storefront, HSF views this as an opportunity to get it right by restoring a more traditional and appropriate rhythm to the openings of this block.

**BOARD DISCUSSION:**

**Ms. Ramsay** stated that she was concerned with the non-centering of the door. She said it would have been the traditional way of doing it.

**Mr. Overton** asked what was Staff’s comment regarding the standard being met or not met.

**Ms. Reiter** stated that it was obviously not met. She said that the standard in Staff’s opinion was written for Broughton Street, and in the proposed revisions to the ordinance it would only apply to Broughton Street and not other streets. They didn’t know what the original storefront looked like. The transom was original and was being retained. The Board approved a more modern building on York Street with a similar glass storefront. The ordinance says that it should be in the center, but they didn’t know what the storefront looked like originally because this wasn’t the original storefront.

**Mr. Overton** asked if the ordinance said that it shall be in the middle.

**Ms. Reiter** answered that it did.

**Mr. Engle** stated that it would be simple to see the original fabric now that they have pulled it out. He said that since they had the original transom up, to find out where the posts for the original doors were because they had to connect to the transom and it should be evident where the original centering was. He was bothered by the glass going all of the way to the ground because it wasn’t historic and should have a base underneath the glass. He agreed with HSF and said that the Board was perpetuating a bad design by making it a modern bad design.

**Ms. Ramsay** stated that she agreed. She said that the Board approved the storefront on York Street but that it was in a block of open storefronts. These had a raised base under the glass.

**Dr. Watkins** stated that based on the dialogue, when things look up in the air, the petitioner had an opportunity to request a continuance.

**Mr. Robinson** stated that there was not an attempt to make the storefront historical because there was no evidence that the existing storefront was historical. He said that he took the example from the storefront on York Street that did not have the door centered, to be able to have a side door and a larger glass, because it was a very narrow building. Just for the commercial purpose to have a larger storefront window uninterrupted was preferable. Along the block he didn't know of any other storefronts that had the original angular entranceway and didn't see why this building should be held to that standard.

**Mr. Engle** stated that the standard was that the code was the law and the law said a centered entrance. He said that he didn't think that the building had to be restored, but that rhythm, scale, color, and pattern weren't restoration.

**Dr. Watkins** asked if Mr. Robinson wanted a vote or have time for further consideration by asking for a continuance.

**Mr. Robinson** asked for a continuance.

**HDRB ACTION:** Mr. Steffen made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the petition as submitted. Ms. Ramsay seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**RE: Petition of The Spriggs Group, P.C.  
Kenneth Spriggs  
H-09-4138-2  
PIN 2-0032-46-001  
207 East Gordon Street  
Elevator Addition**

The Preservation Officer recommends **approval**.

Present for the petition was Mr. Kenneth Spriggs.

Ms. Reiter gave the Staff report.

**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

The applicant requests approval of a new 5'-6" by 6'-1 ¼" elevator shaft and mechanical room to be placed on the east wall of the rear portion of Massie School in the boys' courtyard. The elevator and mechanical room will be constructed of concrete block, painted green, and covered with a living "green" wall. It will be minimally visible from Abercorn Street through the alley between the eastern and middle buildings and minimally visible (if at all) from the lane due to the wall and restroom building. All other proposed work consists of in-kind repairs.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

**Approval.**

**Mr. Steffen** asked about the date of the Massie building.

**Ms. Reiter** stated that there were several dates. She thought that the first was 1855 and it later expanded approximately around the 1870's.

**PETITIONER’S COMMENTS:**

**Mr. Kenneth Spriggs (The Spriggs Group representing the owner)** stated that there were three dates; the original John Norris building was in the center, the expansion was to the west, and the third expansion was to the east. He said that it went from the 1850’s to the 1880’s as the school expanded, and there was an original division with the girls on one side of the staircase and the boys on the other side. They looked at many locations and wanted to keep the distinctiveness of the three buildings. There was an earlier example of trying to put the elevator between buildings and they felt that the chosen location was worthwhile, but they would only remove one window and it functioned better for the buildings.

Trees and growth would occur around the elevator on the exterior, the azaleas would remain, and they saw it as a giant topiary. It was part of a larger project where they were preserving through cleaning and restoring the brown stone sills, the sandstone base, and other parts of the building. The elevator would be in compliance with the ADA accessibility under SPLOST funding, and through this the entire building would be accessible.

**Mr. Engle** stated that he was concerned about the plant material not being specified and if it wasn’t evergreen, then six months a year it would be a painted, stucco elevator shaft with a stainless steel trellis.

**Mr. Spriggs** stated that it was year round vegetation. He said that they were working on a combination of climbers and cross breeds that would be appropriate to the garden where some would bloom and not have a loss of leaf. They weren’t just painting the block but purging it, and the green color mix was what they wanted within the foliage. He said with the bloom and change of season it would work well.

**Mr. Reed** asked if there would be evergreen coverage all of the time.

**Mr. Spriggs** answered yes.

**Ms. Ramsay** asked if it could be a stipulation of the Board’s approval.

**Mr. Spriggs** stated that it was fine. He said they wouldn’t think of it as going dormant during the winter.

**Mr. Reed** stated that they said they would leave it up to the garden committee to decide what the material was.

**Mr. Spriggs** stated that it wasn’t an open committee decision but more of working with the species that they had within the garden and looking realistically at their maintenance.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**Mr. Daniel Carey (Historic Savannah Foundation)** stated that this petition was troubling to them not because they didn’t agree or support what needed to be done, but mostly in the context that this was an important building in the Landmark District where children came to learn about the history of Savannah and of the preservation movement in Savannah. He said that with the source of the building, the educational purposes, and its significance, they wanted the bar to be high with the building but respected the fact that there was a struggle with finances.

He said that it was troubling because it was such a large, green mass and the control of the vine needed to be dictated and followed because it was easy to get out of control and grow on other parts of the building. It would have a negative affect with what ivy did to historic stucco and brick. Maintenance would be an issue and they would want it addressed and it struck them as not an elegant solution because it was large and visible. He wondered if there was a more transparent solution with maybe some glass, a frame, and some vines in a middle-of-the-road approach with a natural screening rather than a large, green blob. These were observations and implied questions to the applicant for another solution.

**Mr. Spriggs** stated that Massie had one of the finest kept gardens on both sides in the downtown and was meticulously cared for. He said they were conscious of the growing vines and they were removing a significant amount of the vine that had grown on the stucco. They were looking at vine because it would not adhere to the masonry, but would grow on the trellis. It would stay where it was. It was not a wandering vine and the garden would be maintained regularly. Glass and other materials have equal maintenance because to look good it had to be washed regularly. The feeling of the mass was less in context and they have brought it in one-foot to 15 inches to allow for ground planting. The whole idea was to make it a piece of the garden rather than an imposition onto the building.

**Ms. Ramsay** stated that on the elevation and the photograph that the height appeared different.

**Mr. Spriggs** stated that one photograph was from the ground looking up.

**Ms. Ramsay** stated that the elevator shaft appeared to extend to right under the eave and the other drawing appeared to extend just inside of the archway.

**Mr. Spriggs** stated that the width was the same. He said that they took the trellis just a little bit past the roof because it was a shed roof. It was a very slight slope away from the building and they took the trellis up high enough to square it off just above the roof, and then they trimmed the vine around it. The idea was to keep it within the figure to keep the rhythm and feel of it. It was the smallest elevator that could be installed to meet the handicapped standards and was known as a LULA, a Limited Use Limited Access elevator. This was as tight as it could get and still make it work, but they were conscious in keeping the rhythm of the building and a major part of the project was the removing of organic growth, repointing of brick, and conservation of the stone work at the base.

**Ms. Ramsay** asked if the height shown on the elevation was correct and that the roofline came below the archway above.

**Mr. Spriggs** answered yes and said that they squared off the slope so that the actual framework came even with the top of the arch. He said that when you take the slant and get above it you can take the framework straight across. Part of it was because you have to have a certain height clearance from the bottom of the floor to the top of the elevator and that there was no other way around it. They have a device that allowed them to have a shallow pit because normally it would be a three-foot pit, and the second device they used was for the clearance from the first floor to the top, which was actually higher, but a reducing mechanism could be put in the elevator. They have reduced it in two occasions to get it as low as they could.

**Mr. Overton** asked if the ADA was requiring the elevator.



**Mr. Spriggs** stated that one of the mandates of the funding of the project was to go through the school and make it accessible to the general public. He said they were creating an accessible bathroom stall in the original outbuilding where there were two storage units without taking away the shape and look of the building. They were redoing the wooden ramp between the center building and the west building to meet the standards. One of the more challenging efforts was when you pass from building to building you open one door and it had to be hooked back, and then you go open the other door. They have built in a system, while keeping the original openings, with an actuator button that would open both doors. It would be to a point where an individual in a wheelchair could do a self tour of the entire building. There were also clientele who went to Massie and the friends of Massie who come back to visit, and they have trouble going up and down the stairs. It was not just ADA but a universal access for the elderly who want to do a tour and could use the elevator to the second floor. It was to make the buildings accessible and the first time that it would actually work. It was a major mandate along with the moisture control of the building for the SPLOST funding.

**HDRB ACTION:** Mr. Engle made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the petition as submitted with the condition that evergreen vegetation be used. Ms. Ramsay seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

## **H STAFF REVIEW**

1. Petition of Leoci's Restaurant  
Roberto Leoci  
H-09-4108(S)-2  
606 Abercorn Street  
Door Color Change  
**STAFF DECISION: APPROVED**
2. Petition of Dennis & Kathleen Regan  
H-09-4128(S)-2  
306 East President Street  
Color Change  
**STAFF DECISION: APPROVED**
3. Petition of Escada USA, Incorporated  
H-09-4130(S)-2  
51 Barnard Street  
Awning  
**STAFF DECISION: APPROVED**
4. Petition of Coastal Canvas  
Jennifer Wall  
H-09-4132(S)-2  
512 East Liberty Street  
Awning  
**STAFF DECISION: APPROVED**

5. Petition of Anna Smith  
H-09-4139(S)-2  
126 West Taylor Street  
Existing Windows/Doors  
**STAFF DECISION: APPROVED**
  
6. Petition of Richard Kit, Carmen Redman  
& Chandler Wonderly  
H-09-4140(S)-2  
537 & 539 East Perry Street  
Color Change/Shutters  
**STAFF DECISION: APPROVED**
  
7. Petition of State Bar of Georgia  
Neil Dawson  
H-09-4141(S)-2  
18 East Bay Street  
Awning  
**STAFF DECISION: APPROVED**

**I. WORK PERFORMED WITHOUT A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**

**J. NOTICES, PROCLAMATIONS, AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

**Dr. Watkins** introduces Mr. Jim Overton, the new Board member.

**K. OTHER BUSINESS**

- a. Unfinished Business
  
- b. New Business

**RE: APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS  
MEETING – March 11, 2009**

**HDRB ACTION:** Mr. Ramsay made a motion that the Savannah Historic District Board of Review approve the Minutes of March 11, 2009, as presented. Mr. Reed seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**RE: ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Historic District Board of Review the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beth Reiter,

Preservation Officer

**BR/jnp**