



C I T Y O F S A V A N N A H
Z O N I N G B O A R D O F A P P E A L S

Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room
112 E. State Street, Savannah 11:00 AM
Minutes

November 22, 2011 Savannah Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting

Members Present: Timothy Mackey, Chairman
Brian Reese
Sidney Johnson

Staff Present: Jack Butler, Assistant Secretary
Constance Morgan, Administrative Assistant

Advisory Staff Present: Randolph Scott, City Zoning Administrator

I. Call to Order and Welcome

1. [Call to Order](#)

Chairman Timothy Mackey called the November 22, 2011 SZBA Meeting to order and explained the agenda.

II. Notices, Proclamations and Acknowledgements

Notices

2. [The Next SZBA Meeting: December 20, 2011 at 2:30 P.M. in the Arthur Mendonsa Hearing Room](#)

III. Approval of Minutes

3. [Approval of the October 25, 2011 SZBA Meeting Minutes](#)

Attachment: [October25.pdf](#)

Board Action:

Approval of the October 25, 2011 SZBA Meeting Minutes as submitted. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Sidney J Johnson

Second: Brian Reese

Sidney J Johnson - Aye

Timothy Mackey - Aye

Brian Reese - Aye

IV. Item(s) Requested to be Removed from the Final Agenda

The Consent Agenda consists of items for which the applicant is in agreement with the staff recommendation and for which no known objections have been identified nor anticipated by staff. Any objections raised at the meeting will result in the item being moved to the Regular Agenda.

V. Consent Agenda

VI. Old Business

VII. Regular Agenda

4. [201 Papy Street - Standards Variance - Embassy Suites Hotel](#)

Attachment: [Staff Report -42150.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Ortho-Zoning-Imagery.pdf](#)

Attachment: [ElevationsNS.pdf](#)

Attachment: [EW.pdf](#)

Attachment: [COA H-11-4521-2 205 Papy Street.pdf](#)

Attachment: [HDBRPart2-EmbassySuitesHotel-PLANS.pdf](#)

Attachment: [H-11-4521-2 205 Papy Street Part I.pdf](#)

Present for the petition was: Brooks Stillwell, Agent

Jack Butler gave the following summary:

The petitioner, W. Brooks Stillwell, agent for Oglethorpe Associates, in order to construct an Embassy Suites hotel, is requesting approval of variances from the Historic Review Ordinance to allow the following:

- 1) To construct a building with three (rather than the required four) entrances onto Papy Street;
- 2) To install windows that appear to be (but are not actually) the required double-hung windows; and
- 3) To construct a linear roofline on both the Oglethorpe Avenue and Turner Street sides of the proposed building which exceeds the height standard limiting the unbroken distance of roofline without a change in height by 52 feet.

The Historic Review Board has found that the proposed extent of roofline and proposed

reduced number of entrances are appropriate to the district. Staff recommends **approval** of the requested 52-foot variance in the requirement of Section 8-3030 (n)(16)e, and **approval** of the requested reduction of the number of required entrances from four to three. Staff recommends **denial** of the request to replace the required window design with faux double-hung windows.

Speaking on the petition: Brook Stillwell, attorney for the petitioner gave a brief history regarding the subject property. He stated that due to the turn in the economy the project has had to be placed on hold. From 2007 to the present, the Historic Review Board has been changed in certain respects. All three variances sought are necessitated because of changes in the Review Board that changed things that in the past were approvable and were approved in the 2007 application. The ordinance once dictated that there had to be double-hung windows in residential areas but not necessarily in commercial areas. This has changed in the interim to say that they have to be the same in all areas in the Historic District. However; the Historic Review Ordinance also says that the Historic Review Board can approve alternative materials if they are visually compatible with the Historic Building materials. The issue is are the windows that the petitioner is proposing visually compatible and can the Board grant a variance from the very technical reading of the ordinance. He added that the petitioner has spoken before the Historic Review Board with the revised plans a few months ago and the Board stated that they would have the petitioner comply with the double hung window standard and the specific item that the Board was concerned with.... as you can see double hung means that you have two panes on the glass and they slide up and down. You can also see that those windows have the visual look of a double hung window at least to a layman. The Historic Review Board pointed out that what they really wanted was to have the upper pane stick out further than the lower pane so that they are on a different plane. The reason the Board wanted this is so that when the sun shines down on the window it creates a shadow effect at the bottom of the window. He explained that the alternative window gives that same illusion. He stated that his client was hopeful that this would satisfy the Historic Review Board but some of the members of the Board felt that it needed to be even more visually compatible and their specific request was that tracks should be placed in the windows so that they would be visible. He outlined the disadvantages to having to do this and stated that the product that is before the board is the best that his client could do. He asked that the board find that this proposed product is visually compatible and allow his client to receive a variance from the strict reading of the ordinance.

Sarah Ward, Director Historic Preservation stated that she was not prepared to make comments but that she was present to hear the actions that were made, however, she added that the window presented today is the same window that was presented at the last Review Board Meeting.

Chairman Mackey asked if once the SZBA made its ruling on the petition would it rest with the Board's decision or would this petition go back to the Historic Review Board.

John Butler responded that the Historic Review Board has issued a Certificate of Appropriateness on all elements except the windows so if the variances are approved (and though he was not sure where this would leave the window) he believed that the petitioner would proceed with the building permit.

Chairman Mackey stated that he was unclear on Mr. Butler's answer.

Tom Thomson, MPC Executive Director further clarified Mr. Butler's response. He stated that if the Board ruled to approve the proposed window, the certificate of appropriateness will be issued in addition to the approval given to the rest of the project.

Board Action:

Approval of the variances outlined; 1) allow the building to be constructed with three rather than four entrances on Papy Street; 2) permit the double - PASS hung window and; 3) permit a linear roof line that exceeds the standards by 52 feet.

Vote Results

Motion: Sidney J Johnson

Second: Brian Reese

Sidney J Johnson - Aye

Timothy Mackey - Aye

Brian Reese - Aye

5. [205 Papy Street - Standards Variance - Embassy Suites Parking Structure](#)

Attachment: [Staff Report -55512.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Ortho-Zoning-Imagery.pdf](#)

Attachment: [SITE PLAN.pdf](#)

Attachment: [COA H-11-4522-2 201 Papy Street.pdf](#)

Attachment: [H-11-4522-2 201 Papy Street Part I.pdf](#)

Attachment: [EmbassySuitesParkingGarage-Drawings.pdf](#)

Present for the petition: Mr. Stillwell, Agent

Jack Butler gave the following summary:

This variance request is the same as the previous case in that the petitioner Mr. Stillwell, agent for Oglethorpe Associates is requesting approval of a variance from the roof line along Turner Boulevard of 172 feet which is a 52 feet greater than the 120 feet of unchanged roof line permitted in order to construct a parking garage. This is a parking garage associated with the hotel that will be a part of the same project and the variances effectively the same as the variance granted on the hotel. Staff recommendation if for approval.

Speaking to the petition: Chairman Mackey asked if the parking garage would be under the hotel or above it.

Mr. Stillwell responded that the garage was above ground.

Board Action:

Approval of the requested 52-foot variance in the requirement of Section 8-3030 (n)(16)e. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Brian Reese

Second: Sidney J Johnson

Sidney J Johnson - Aye

Timothy Mackey - Aye

Brian Reese - Aye

VIII. Other Business

IX. Adjournment

6. Submittal

There being no other business to come before the Board, the Chairman declared the November 22, 2011 SZBA Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jack Butler,

Assistant Secretary

The Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission provides meeting summary minutes which are adopted by the respective Board. Verbatim transcripts of minutes are the responsibility of the interested party.