

**CITY OF SAVANNAH  
HISTORIC DISTRICT BOARD OF REVIEW  
REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**

**STAFF DECISION**

**PETITIONER:** Barbara Treadwell  
213 East Gaston Street  
Savannah, GA 31401

**FILE NUMBER:** 16-002125-COA

**ADDRESS:** 11 Houston Street

**PIN:** 2-005-04-003

**ZONING:** RIP-A

**STAFF REVIEWER:** Sara Farr

**DATE:** April 13, 2016

<b>Certificate of Appropriateness</b>	
Historic District:	<u>Savannah</u>
File No:	<u>16-002125-COA</u>
Approval Date:	<u>4/13/16</u>
I hereby certify that these permit plans and elevations are consistent with the approved plans and elevations.	
	<u>4/13/16</u>
Preservation Officer	Date

**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

The applicant is requesting approval for after-the-fact alterations to 11 Houston Street. The alterations were to a front porch. The work includes covering the porch with flagstone and two steps on the right hand side. There is a wood stair railing and porch railing. There are also two round wood columns with a cap but no base.

**CONTEXT:**

Sanborn maps indicate that this house did not have a front porch until sometime between 1916 and 1952. In October 2006 an application (H-06-3707(S)-2) including porch alterations, including the existing columns, was approved.

**FINDINGS:**

11 Houston Street was constructed in 1807 and remodeled in 1899 and is a contributing structure within the Savannah National Historic Landmark District and the Savannah Local Historic District. The following standards from the Historic District Section (8-3030) of the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance apply:

*Preservation of historic structures within the historic district. An historic structure, and any outbuildings, or any appurtenance related thereto, visible from a public street or lane, including but not limited to walls, fences, light fixtures, steps, paving, sidewalks, and signs, shall only be moved, reconstructed, altered, or maintained in a manner that will preserve the historical and exterior architectural features of the historic structure or appurtenance thereto and are consistent with the current edition of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation published by the U.S. Department of the Interior. The visual compatibility factors [Section (m)] and the design standards [Section (n)] shall apply.*

*For the purposes of this section, exterior architectural features shall include but not be limited to the architectural style, scale, general design, and general arrangement of the exterior of the structure, including the kind and texture of the building material, the type and style of all roofs, windows, doors and signs. In considering proposals for the exterior alterations of historic structures in the historic district the documented original design of the structure may be considered.*

***Secretary of the Interior's Standards 2– Historic Character.*** *The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.*

***Secretary of the Interior's Standards 5– Distinctive Features.*** *Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*

***Secretary of the Interior's Standards 9– New Additions to not Damage.*** *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the 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 will 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 standards are met. Since a porch previously existed in this location, the historic character and distinctive features of the building will not be impacted. The porch will not damage the building and is reversible since it is alterations to an existing porch.

***Visual compatibility factors.*** *New construction and existing buildings and structures and appurtenances thereof in the historic district which are moved, reconstructed, materially altered, repaired or changed in color shall be visually compatible with structures, squares and places to which they are visually related. The following factors shall be considered in determining the visual compatibility of such a building, structure or appurtenance. These factors shall not be the basis for appeal of an adverse decision. Greater weight shall be given to adjacent historic structures.*

***Relationship of materials, texture and color.*** *The relationship of materials, texture and color of the facade of a structure shall be visually compatible with the predominate materials, textures, and colors used on contributing structures to which the structure is Visually Related.*

The standard is met. While flagstone is not normally an appropriate material, it was placed over a non-historic concrete porch so staff determined in this case it was an acceptable material. The railings and columns are wood.

*Scale of a building.* The mass of a structure and size of windows, door openings, porches column spacing, stairs, balconies, and additions shall be visually compatible with the contributing structures to which the structure is Visually Related.

The standard is not met. The porch railings sit on the porch, but they need to be raised above the porch to be visually compatible.

*Design standards.* The following design standards shall apply to new construction, additions, and alterations to historic and non-historic buildings and structures. 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.

*Balconies, stairs, stoops, porticos, and porches.* Balconies, stairs, stoops, porticos, and porches 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:

*Front stair treads and risers shall be constructed of brick, wood, precast stone, marble, sandstone, or slate.*

The standard is met. The front stair treads and risers will be wood.

*Wood portico posts shall have a cap and base molding. The column capital shall extend outward of the porch architrave.*

The standard is not met. The capital does not extend outward of the porch architrave; however it is existing. There is no base molding;

*Balusters shall be placed between upper and lower rails, and the distances between balusters shall not exceed four inches. For one and two family dwellings the height of the railings shall not exceed 36 inches.*

The standard is met. While exact measurements are not supplied, the railing is clearly no more than 36 inches tall and the spacing between balusters does not exceed four inches. The applicant must ensure the height remains 36 inches or less when raising the railing to provide clearance between the bottom and the porch.

*Front porches shall not be enclosed in any manner. Side and rear porches may be screened with fine wire mesh, lattice or shutters.*

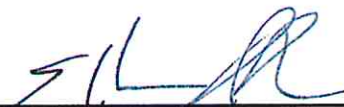
The standard is met. The porch is located in the front and will not be enclosed.

**DECISION:**

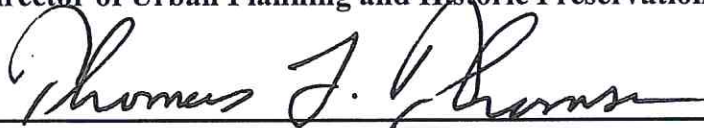
Upon the provision of the Savannah Zoning Ordinance, Section 8-3030(g)(3), the Preservation Officer does hereby approve after-the-fact porch alterations at 11 Houston Street with the following conditions:

1. A clearance of at least 2 inches is provided between the bottom railing and the porch;
2. Base molding is installed on the columns;

Because otherwise the work meets the standards and is visually compatible.

  
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Ellen I. Harris, AICP, LEED AP  
Director of Urban Planning and Historic Preservation

4/13/16  
Date

  
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Thomas L. Thomson, P.E., AICP, Executive Director  
Chatham-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission

04/13/16  
Date

This decision will expire on April 13, 2017.

**\*\*Decisions of the Preservation Officer may be appealed to the Savannah Historic District Board of Review at its next scheduled meeting.**

**\*\*Petitioner may be required to obtain a building permit and/or encroachment agreement in addition to the Certificate of Appropriateness. (Note: Prior to the issuance of the building permit, both sets of plans submitted for the permit must display the Certificate of Appropriateness stamp certifying that they are consistent with the plans approved by the Savannah Historic District Board of Review. It is the Petitioner's responsibility to submit plans for a permit to the Preservation Officer for the Certificate of Appropriateness stamp.)**

**\*\*The Certificate of Appropriateness approval card must be posted at all times during construction in a location next to the building permit card and clearly visible to the public.**

EIH: sef