



**METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION**

*"Planning the Future - Respecting the Past"*

M E M O R A N D U M

**DATE:** DECEMBER 12, 2017  
**TO:** THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF SAVANNAH  
**FROM:** METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION  
**SUBJECT:** MPC RECOMMENDATION

**PETITION REFERENCED:**

**Text Amendments to the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance**

**Re: Amendments to Section 8-3030 Historic District Ordinance  
including the following sections:**

- Table of Contents
- Definitions
- Application for Certificate of Appropriateness
- Design Standards
- Variances
- Amendments

**Petitioner: MPC Staff  
File No.: 17-006200-ZA**

**MPC ACTION:**

**Approval** of amendments to the City of Savannah zoning ordinance, Section 8-3030 Historic District Ordinance.

**MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

**Approval** of amendments to the City of Savannah zoning ordinance, Section 8-3030 Historic District Ordinance.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** 8 + Chairman

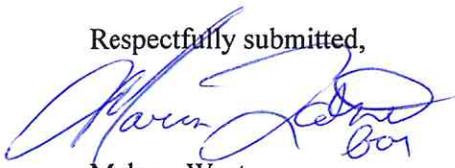
James Overton, Chairman  
Shedrick Coleman  
Travis Coles  
Ellis Cook  
Karen Jarrett  
Lacy Manigault

Linder Suthers  
Tom Woiwode

**PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:** Approve Staff Recommendation (8-1)

<b>APPROVAL Votes: 8</b>	<b>DENIAL Votes: 1</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Overton Coleman Coles Jarrett  Manigault Milton Suthers Woiwode	Cook	Ervin Hernandez Mackey Smith Welch

Respectfully submitted,



Melony West  
Interim Executive Director

/jh

Enclosure

- cc Luciana Spracher, Interim Clerk of Council
- Brooks Stillwell, City Attorney
- Lester B. Johnson, Assistant City Attorney
- Jennifer Herman, Assistant City Attorney
- Beth Barnes, Department of Inspections





## Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission

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### December 12, 2017 Regular MPC Meeting

#### **Title**

D5 - TEXT AMENDMENT | Amend Various Sections of the Savannah Historic District Ordinance | Staff Initiated Petition | File No. 17-006200-ZA

#### **Description**

An amendment to the Historic District Ordinance for the purposes of: 1) correcting typographical errors; 2) clarifying definitions; 3) adding/revising standards to address changing technologies; 4) allowing 'R' zoning districts outside the Landmark District to qualify for a bonus story; 5) strengthening the bonus story criteria, particularly in regards to the 'active use' criterion; 6) adding additional standards for large scale development; 7) providing the Historic District Board of Review (HDBR) some flexibility in the strict application of certain standards; 8) strengthening the standards applicable to Monumental Buildings to ensure the protection of the Oglethorpe Plan; 9) revising the boundaries of the "Factors Walk Character Area" to reflect the historical boundaries of Factors Walk; and 10) requiring that amendments to the Historic District Ordinance are reviewed by the HDBR in addition to MPC and City Council.

#### **Recommendation**

**Approval** of amendments to the City of Savannah zoning ordinance, Section 8-3030 Historic District Ordinance.

#### **Contact**

Ellen I. Harris

#### **Financial Impact**

#### **Review Comments**

#### **Attachments**

📎 [Staff Report-17-006200-ZA.pdf](#)



C H A T H A M C O U N T Y - S A V A N N A H

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## METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

*"Planning the Future - Respecting the Past"*

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M E M O R A N D U M

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**TO:** Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah

**FROM:** Metropolitan Planning Commission

**DATE:** December 12, 2017

**SUBJECT:** Text Amendments to the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance  
Re: Amendments to Section 8-3030 Historic District Ordinance  
including the following sections:

- Table of Contents
- Definitions
- Application for Certificate of Appropriateness
- Design Standards
- Variances
- Amendments

**Petitioner: MPC Staff**  
**File No.: 17-006200-ZA**

**Ellen I. Harris, AICP, MPC Project Planner**

### **ISSUE:**

An amendment to the Historic District Ordinance for the purposes of: 1) correcting typographical errors; 2) clarifying definitions; 3) adding/revising standards to address changing technologies; 4) allowing 'R' zoning districts outside the Landmark District to qualify for a bonus story; 5) strengthening the bonus story criteria, particularly in regards to the 'active use' criterion; 6) adding additional standards for large scale development; 7) providing the Historic District Board of Review (HDBR) some flexibility in the strict application of certain standards; 8) strengthening the standards applicable to Monumental Buildings to ensure the protection of the Oglethorpe Plan; 9) revising the boundaries of the "Factors Walk Character Area" to reflect the historical boundaries of Factors Walk; and 10) requiring that amendments to the Historic District Ordinance are reviewed by the HDBR in addition to MPC and City Council.

### **BACKGROUND**

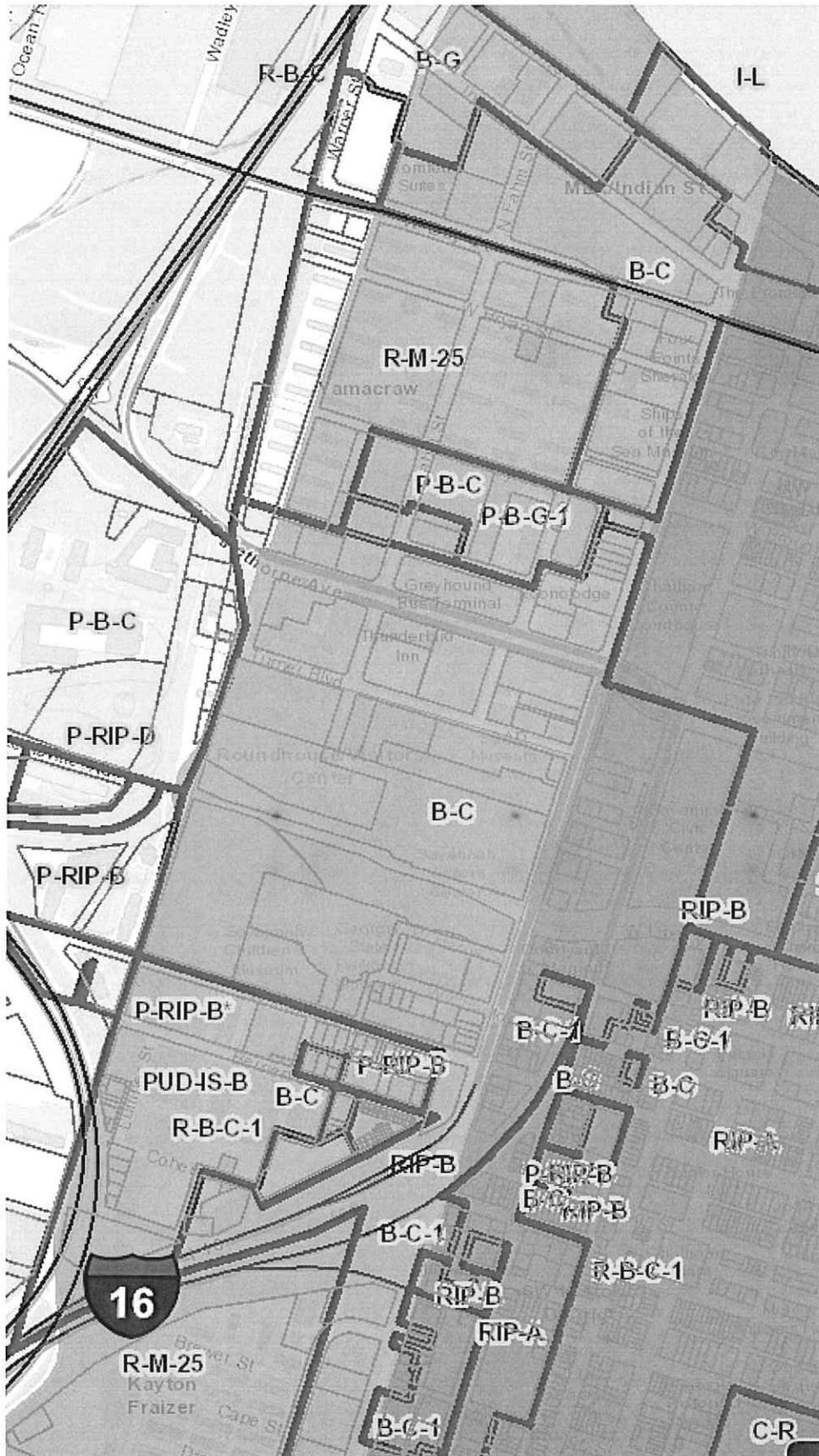
The last major update to the Historic District Ordinance was adopted in 2009 and focused primarily on the large-scale development standards. At that time, major projects in the City had slowed down

or halted altogether due to the downturn in the economy. Over the last few years, new projects have been through the review process under the new standards, and many have been constructed. In that regard, we have had the opportunity to assess the effectiveness of the 2009 revisions. Development has continued to increase every year since then and additional inconsistencies or areas of improvement in the ordinance have been identified. The HDBR has been regularly discussing these revisions in public meetings since 2016 and is ready to move forward with the review process and their implementation.

MPC staff presented the revisions at the MPC Planning Meeting on November 21<sup>st</sup> and solicited wide community feedback throughout the process, much of which has been incorporated.

### **FINDINGS:**

1. Correcting typographical errors: many of the proposed revisions correct typographical errors and ensure consistency within the ordinance, such as updating the Table of Contents with correct titles and page numbers. This is typical with any ordinance revision.
2. Clarifying definitions: additional language has been added to existing definitions and additional definitions have been incorporated. For example, the “active use” definition has been clarified and strengthened to better reflect the intent while “canopy”, “primary façade” and “shade structures” are new definitions which refer to specific terms used in the design standards.
3. Adding/revising standards to address changing technologies: several revisions address changing technologies, such as the revision to allow through-the-wall air conditioners on buildings to be incorporated into the overall design and not simply the window design. As technology changes and improves, the ordinance should reflect this, and not require petitioners to go through a separate variance process.
4. Allowing ‘R’ zoning districts outside the Landmark District to qualify for a bonus story: currently, the zoning designation determines if a building can qualify for a bonus story. In all non-residential districts, buildings can qualify for a bonus story. In residential districts (as determined by an ‘R’ in the zoning nomenclature), bonus stories are only permitted if a property is located on Oglethorpe Avenue, Liberty Street and Trust Lots. The proposed revision would allow projects to qualify for bonus stories in an ‘R’ district if also located outside the Landmark District boundaries. This area is limited to the portion of the district located west of Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. extending to West Boundary Street. Much of this area is currently B-C and therefore bonus stories are already permitted. Notably, both Yamacraw Village and Kayton Homes are R-M-25 which would not allow a bonus story. There are smaller parcels scattered throughout the area that are P-RIP-B and R-B-1 which would not allow a bonus story. This area is seeing increased development and by allowing a bonus story in the ‘R’ districts in this area, it is anticipated that there would be fewer requests for rezoning to non-residential districts. This area is also the appropriate location for larger and taller buildings, as it is outside the Landmark Historic District proper, but within close proximity.



5. Strengthening the bonus story criteria, particularly in regards to the ‘active use’ criterion: Currently, there are four criteria which may qualify a project for a bonus story. These include:
- An historic street or lane is restored and dedicated back to the City of Savannah as a public right-of-way;
  - Affordable Housing, as defined and quantified by the City of Savannah, is provided within the development and so certified by the City Manager;
  - Multiple ground floor active uses permitted in the base zoning district (including but not limited to retail, office, lobby, restaurant) span the length of the façade on all street fronting elevations (not including lanes) and maintain individual primary exterior entrances.
  - Exterior building walls incorporate 100 percent modular masonry materials [see (n) 16. f. ii. Exterior Walls] on all sides with the use of granite, marble, or other natural quarried stone over a minimum of 30 percent of all street fronting facades and roofs incorporate sustainable technologies such as green roofs, rooftop gardens, and solar roofs (including solar shingles, roof tiles, or membranes) over a minimum of 50 percent of roof area and so certified by the City Manager.

The proposed revision will combine two of the criteria into one, eliminating the provision for sustainable technologies and strengthening the ‘active use’ criterion.

This revision will ‘raise the bar’ on qualifying for a bonus story and close a loop hole in the ‘active use’ provision.

6. Adding additional standards for large scale development: Currently, large scale development is required to select two from a possible five massing standards. However, one of those massing standards is a requirement elsewhere in the ordinance for commercial buildings. Therefore, the revision proposes to only allow that massing standard for residential development.

Currently there is a maximum building footprint of 13,500 square feet within the Oglethorpe Plan Area. The proposed revision will expand that to the Landmark Historic District.

Currently there is no maximum building footprint outside of the Oglethorpe Plan Area. The proposal will create a maximum footprint of 40,500 square feet outside the Landmark District boundaries.

7. Providing the Historic District Board of Review (HDBR) some flexibility in the strict application of certain standards: Currently, any variances from the Historic District require Zoning Board of Appeals approval, after HDBR review. The HDBR regularly reviews requests for variances from the provisions which state:
- “Exterior building walls shall use window groupings (including curtain walls), columns, and/or pilasters to create multiple bays not less than 15 feet nor more than 20 feet in width.”
  - “The distance between windows shall be not less than for adjacent historic

buildings, nor more than two times the width of the windows.

The proposed revision would allow the HDBR to vary strict compliance with these two provisions provided that a historic precedent exists and the design is visually compatible.

8. Strengthening the standards applicable to Monumental Buildings to ensure the protection of the Oglethorpe Plan: Currently monument buildings, defined as *an institutional building such as a church, sanctuary, governmental building, school or institution of higher learning with the primary use as education, theater or museum, having special or unique form because of the nature of its use*, are only subject to the visual compatibility, height, and setback requirements. They are exempt from all other design standards. The proposed revisions would ensure they are also subject to the provisions requiring the preservation of the Oglethorpe Plan.
9. Revising the boundaries of the “Factors Walk Character Area” to reflect the historical boundaries of Factors Walk: Currently the Factors Walk Character Area boundaries extend to Randolph Street on the east and MLK Jr. Blvd. on the west. The proposed revisions amends those boundaries to East Broad Street on the east and Montgomery Street on the west, reflecting the historical boundaries of Factors Walk.
10. Requiring that amendments to the Historic District Ordinance are reviewed by the HDBR in addition to MPC and City Council: Currently any amendment to the Historic District Ordinance is required to be reviewed by MPC and City Council. The proposed amendment requires review by the HDBR as well. The HDBR would make a recommendation only to MPC and City Council and their recommendation would not be binding.

#### **ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Recommend approval of the amendments as proposed.
2. Recommend approval of alternate amendments.
3. Recommend denial of the proposed amendments.

#### **POLICY ANALYSIS:**

The proposed amendments provide clarity, correct errors, and strengthen the Historic District ordinance standards to ensure better quality designs within the Historic District.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**Approval** of amendments to the City of Savannah zoning ordinance as follows:

*[Text proposed to be enacted shown in red and bold. Text proposed to be removed, shown in red and strike through.]*

**I. Article B. (Zoning Districts), Sec. 8-3030 Historic District Ordinance**

**ENACT**

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(a) *Definitions.*

**Active Use.** For the purposes of this subsection, an active use is considered to be an allowed use under the zoning ordinance for a property that is open to and provides an **ongoing** activity or service for the **general public** (i.e. restaurant, retail, office, gallery, **and similar uses** ~~lobby, etc...~~); **maintains individual primary exterior entrances. Uses intended primarily for the buildings' occupants, such as meeting rooms, internal offices, hallways, storage areas, recreational facilities not open to the general public, etc., or accessed primarily from the interior, are not considered active uses.**

**Awning.** A lightweight, exterior roof-like shade that typically projects over a window or door, usually made of canvas or similar fabric on a metal frame, also may be wood, plastic or metal. **Awnings are attached to buildings, typically on a vertical surface. See also Shade Structures.**

**Canopy.** A canopy is a permanent projection over an entrance which is architecturally and structurally integrated into the design of the building.

**Green Roof.** ~~Also known as a roof garden. Vegetated roof surfaces that capture rainwater and return a portion of it back to the atmosphere via evaporation (U.S. Green Building Council). See City of Savannah Green Roof Ordinance (Section 8-1178).~~

**Historic Building Map.** ~~A catalog of Historic Buildings in map form; a copy is attached to this ordinance and bearing the designation "Historic Building Map" with the signature and seal of the Clerk of Council, adopted and approved by the Mayor and Aldermen and made a part of the zoning map of the City of Savannah as an "overlay" thereon.~~

**Historic District Height Map.** ~~A map of the Historic District showing the maximum number permissible stories up to which buildings may be constructed in defined areas; a copy is attached to this ordinance and bearing the designation "Historic District Height Map" with the signature and seal of the Clerk of Council, adopted and approved by the Mayor and Aldermen and made a part of the zoning map of the City of Savannah as an "overlay" thereon.~~

**Large scale development.** Development whose combined ground floor footprint is equal to or greater than 9,000 square feet within a single parcel ~~and/or is four stories or greater than four stories in 'R' zoning districts or is five-stories or greater in all other zoning districts.~~ In the case of an addition to an existing building, the combined footprint and height of both the existing building and the addition located on the same parcel apply.

**Primary Entrance.** ~~An~~ **pedestrian** entrance to a use that has ~~or could have~~ an individual street address. **Service doors, and emergency exits, and similar ancillary ingress/egress doors** are not primary entrances.

**Primary Facade.** **In the context of an existing building and new construction, the façade on which the primary pedestrian entrance is located. For new construction, the façade**

**must be consistent with the primary facades of the majority of contributing structures on a block and immediately adjacent blocks. For buildings on corner lots, the building may have two primary facades. In areas which feature both residential and commercial uses, the primary façade shall be consistent with the primary facades of similar uses.**

***Shade Structures.* Similar to awnings, shade structures are permanent, free standing structures intended to provide shade or shelter and are attached to the ground or horizontal surface of a building.**

***Temporary.* For the purposes of requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness, any object, structure, sign, or fence erected for fewer than 60 days within a 12-month period, or timeframe otherwise agreed upon by the Preservation Officer. The object, structure, sign, or fence physically attached to a building, structure, or the ground for greater than 60 days within a 12-month period or the agreed upon timeframe shall be considered permanent and therefore subject to the provisions of this ordinance.**

(n) ***Design standards.*** The following design standards shall apply to new construction, additions, and alterations to historic and non-historic buildings and structures **unless otherwise described herein.** 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.

- (2) ***Height.*** The number of stories as shown on the Historic District Height Map (illustrated in Figure 3) shall be permitted. Variances from the Historic District Height Map shall not be permitted. Additionally, the following standards shall apply:
  - a. Large-Scale Development [see Definitions (a)] shall also be subject to the provisions of section (n)(16), Large-sScale Development.
  - b. Stories are further clarified as follows:
    - i. Buildings throughout the Historic District, which front a street, shall be at least two stories, except in the Beach Institute Character Area or for accessory buildings which front a lane.
    - ii. Accessory buildings which front a lane shall be no taller than two stories.
    - iii. A mezzanine shall not count as a story. Mezzanines are limited in area; see Section (a) Definitions.
    - iv. A basement that is entirely underground shall not count as a

story.

- v. A crawl space or partial basement that is four feet or less above grade shall not count as a story.
- vi. Non-habitable rooftop structures such as church spires; cupolas; chimneys; tanks and supports; parapet walls not over 4 feet high; and Mechanical or Access Structures [see Definitions (a)] shall not be considered a story.
- vii. Habitable space **such as restrooms, bars, dining areas, etc.** within a roof or structures above a roof used other than to enclose stairways or elevator machinery shall be considered a story.
- viii. In calculating the dimensions of a story, the following provisions shall apply (except in cases where the floor-to-floor heights can be shown to be historically predominately lower, such as in the Beach Institute Character Area):
  - (1) Residential buildings:
    - (i) The exterior expression of the height of raised basements shall be not less than 6'-6" and not higher than 9'-6".
    - (ii) The exterior expression of the height of the first story, or the second story in the case of a raised basement shall be not less than 11 feet.
    - (iii) The exterior expression of the height of each story above the second shall not be less than 10 feet.
  - (2) Commercial buildings:
    - (i) The exterior expression of the height of the ground floor shall not be less than 14'-6".
    - (ii) The exterior expression of the height of the second story shall be not less than 12 feet.
    - (iii) The exterior expression of the height of each story above the second shall be not less than 10 feet.

- ix. For commercial buildings, stories shall be configured as provided below:
  - (1) The first story of a retail building shall be designed as a storefront [see Commercial Storefronts (n)(7)].
  - (2) Subdivide the façade horizontally into base, middle, and top. The first story shall be separated from the upper stories by an architectural feature such as a string course (i.e. projecting horizontal band) or change in material. Such feature may be placed at the top of the second story when the first and second stories have the visual appearance of a unified exterior expression.
  - (3) The height of the first story shall not be less than the exterior visual expression of the height of any single story above the first story.
  - (4) The exterior visual expression of the top story of buildings over three stories shall be distinctive from the stories below the top story.
- (5) *Entrances.* Building entrance locations shall comply with the following:
  - a. Location.
    - i. A building on a trust lot facing a square shall locate its primary entrance to front the square.
    - ii. A building on a trust lot not facing a square shall locate its primary entrance so that it fronts the same street as the other historic buildings on the same block.
    - iii. A building on a tithing block shall locate its primary entrance to front the east-west street.
    - iv. A building on Broughton Street shall locate its entrances at no greater intervals than 50 feet; provided, however, that for a corner entrance the interval to the next entrance may be increased to 60 feet.
    - v. North of Broughton Street a corner building located adjacent to a north-south service street shall have an entrance on the service street.

- vi. A building along an east-west connecting street fronting a square shall have entrances at intervals not to exceed 50 feet.
  - vii. **If none of the above conditions apply, the building entrance shall be consistent with contributing buildings within the context.**
- c. Placement. Door frames shall be inset not less than three (3) inches from the exterior surface of the façade of a building, excluding façades with wood siding.
- d. Materials
- i. Permitted: Doors shall be made of wood, clad wood, glass, or steel. For commercial storefronts see Section (n)(7).
  - ii. Prohibited: Vinyl doors; **sliding glass doors visible from a street**; steel-pressed doors simulating wood grain; half-moon, semi-circular, diamond or similar glass insets in doors; boarded-up doors or entrance ways.
- (7) *Windows, Shutters, and Commercial Storefronts.* The following standards shall apply to all development.
- a. Windows
- i. Windows facing a street shall be double or triple hung, awning, casement or Palladian.
  - ii. Historic windows, frames, sashes and glazing shall not be replaced unless it is documented and verified by the Preservation Officer that they have deteriorated beyond repair. Replacement windows on historic buildings shall replicate the original historic windows in composition, design, and material.
  - iii. The boarding of windows and/or window openings shall not be permitted [exceptions may be made for emergency situations as provided in Section on Protective Maintenance (g)(4)]. Windows and frames shall be weather-tight and free from cracks. Openings shall contain windows, doors, or storefronts.
  - iv. Double glazed (simulated divided light) windows are permitted on nonhistoric facades and on new construction, provided, however, that the windows meet the following

standards: the muntin shall be no wider than 7/8 inch; the muntin profile shall simulate traditional putty glazing; the lower sash shall be wider than the meeting and top rails; extrusions shall be covered with appropriate molding.

- v. "Snap-in" or between-the-glass muntins shall not be used.
  - vi. The centerline of window and door openings shall align vertically on the primary façade.
  - vii. All windows facing a street, exclusive of storefronts, basement and top story windows, shall be rectangular and shall have a vertical to horizontal ratio of not less than 5:3; provided, however, nothing in this section precludes an arched window being used. Accent windows may be round or other shapes. Original openings in historic buildings are exempt.
  - viii. Window sashes shall be inset not less than three inches from the exterior facade of a building, excluding exterior surfaces with wood siding.
  - ix. The distance between windows shall be not less than for adjacent historic buildings, nor more than two times the width of the windows **on primary facades. The Board may waive strict compliance with this standard where historic precedent exists within the visually-related context and is visually compatible.**
  - x. Paired or grouped windows are permitted, provided the individual sashes have a vertical to horizontal ratio of not less than 5:3.
  - xi. Bay windows shall extend to the ground unless they are oriel, beveled or are supported by brackets.
  - xii. In new construction windows shall be constructed of wood or wood clad or metal. Solid vinyl windows shall be prohibited.
- b. Shutters.
- i. Shutters shall be hinged and operable and sized to fit the window opening. The placement of the horizontal rail shall correspond to the location of the meeting rail of the window.

- ii. Shutters shall be constructed of durable wood.
  - c. Commercial Storefronts.
    - i. Storefront windows and doors
      - 1. ~~Retail~~Storefront area glazing shall be not less than 55 percent. Such glazing shall be transparent; provided, however, ~~black~~**opaque** glass may be used in the ~~sign~~ area above the storefront window transoms. Storefront glazing shall extend from the sill, or from an 18 to 24 inch tall base of contrasting **design or material**, to the lintel.
      - 2. Storefront glazing in subdivided sashes shall be inset a minimum of four inches from the face of the building; provided, however, that continuously glazed storefronts may be flush with the face of the building.
      - 3. Entrances fronting Broughton Street shall be recessed and centered within the storefront.
    - ii. Materials
      - 1. Storefronts shall be constructed of wood, cast iron, Carrera glass, aluminum, steel or copper as part of a glazed storefront system; bronze, wood, masonry, glazed brick or tile as a base for the storefront.
      - 2. Exterior burglar bars, fixed or roll-down security shutters, or similar security devices shall not be installed in any commercial storefront.
- (8) *Awnings, Canopies and Shade Structures.* Awnings, **canopies and shade structures** shall be subject to the following criteria:
- a. ~~Awnings~~ **Installations** extending above the public right-of-way shall have a minimum vertical clearance of eight feet (8') above the sidewalk.
  - b. ~~Residential awnings shall be constructed of canvas, cloth or equivalent.~~ ~~Non-residential awnings~~ **Installations** shall be constructed of canvas, other equivalent cloth, metal, or glass.

- c. Awnings **and canopies** shall be integrated structurally and architecturally into the design of the façade.
  - d. ~~and~~ **Installations shall** not obscure the character-defining features of historic façades.
  - e. The following shall be prohibited:
    - i. A single continuous awning that connects two buildings.
    - ii. Back-lit or internally lit awnings.
  - f. ~~Awnings~~**Installations** within the public right-of-way shall be required to obtain an encroachment license from the City of Savannah.
  - g. **Supports shall consist of metal or wood. PVC shall not be permitted.**
  - h. **Prefabricated shade structures not specifically custom designed for a particular site or building shall be located to the rear of the property, minimally visible, or screened from view. The maximum height shall be 11 feet and the maximum area shall be 100 square feet on any property, unless specifically required by state law for playground equipment. Colors shall be neutral.**
- (10) *Balconies, Stairs, Stoops, Porticos, and Porches.* Balconies, stairs, stoops, porticos, and porches shall be subject to the following criteria:
- a. Wrought iron brackets shall not be used with wood balcony railings.
  - b. Residential balconies shall not extend more than three feet in depth from the face of a building and shall be supported by brackets or other types of architectural support.
  - c. Stoop piers and base walls shall be the same material as the foundation wall facing the street. Infill between foundation piers shall be recessed so that the piers are distinguishable.
  - d. Front stair treads and risers shall be constructed of brick, wood, precast stone, marble, sandstone or slate.
  - e. Wood portico posts shall have cap and base molding. The column capital shall extend outward of the porch architrave.

- f. 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 railing shall not exceed 36”.
- g. Supported front porticos shall be constructed of wood unless the proposed material matches other facade details on the same building, such as terra cotta, marble, or metal.
- h. Stoop heights shall be visually comparable to other historic stoops to which they are visually related and shall not exceed 9’-6”.
- i. Front porches shall not be enclosed in any manner. **Historic** Side and rear porches may be screened with fine wire mesh, lattice or shutters, **provided that the porch continues to read as a porch and historic materials and features are retained to the maximum extent possible. Historic rear porches may also be enclosed with glazing.**
- j. Decks shall be screened from areas visible from the street.
- k. Decks shall be stained or painted to blend with the colors of the main building.
- l. Openings for new exterior basement stairs within the public right-of-way may be established in the BC-1 district provided that the following criteria are met:
  - i. A minimum of three feet (3’) of unobstructed sidewalk shall be maintained between the edge of the exterior basement stairs and the tree lawn. A minimum of six feet (6’) shall be maintained if no tree lawn is present. No portion of any tree lawn may be used for exterior basement stair space.
  - ii. New exterior basement stairs shall be placed only on a secondary façade.
  - iii. An exterior basement stair shall not dominate the exterior secondary façade of a building or interfere with the visual expression or architectural features of a building.
- m. Balconies, stoops, stairs (including basement stairs), porticos and porches within the public right-of-way shall be required to obtain an encroachment license from the City of Savannah.

- (12) *Fences, Trellises and Walls.* Fences, trellises and walls shall comply with the following:
- a. Fences, trellises and walls shall not extend beyond the facade of the front elevation except in the following cases:
    - i. A building set back on a trust lot with a front garden;
    - ii. A building set back on an east-west street with a front garden.
  - b. The height of any fence, trellis, or wall shall not exceed 11 feet or the maximum permitted in Section 8-3051. **Rooftop trellis' may exceed 11 feet in height, provided they are visually compatible.**
  - c. Walls and fences facing a public street shall be constructed of the material and color of the primary building; provided, however, iron fencing may be used with a masonry structure.
  - d. A masonry base shall be used with iron fencing.
    - i. Wood fences shall be painted or stained.
    - j. Trellises shall be wood, metal or wire.
    - k. Barbed wire, razor wire, chain link, vinyl, and PVC fencing are prohibited.
- (13) *Lanes, garages and carriage houses.* Lanes, **garages** and carriage houses shall comply with the following:
- a. In historic carriage houses or accessory structures, original entry dimensions shall not be modified.
  - b. Where carriage houses are to be expanded in depth, such expansion shall not occur on the lane side of the building.
  - c. New carriage houses and garages may have up to a five-foot setback to allow a turning radius into the garage.
  - d. Garage openings shall not exceed 12 feet in width.
  - e. Where garage doors front streets or are adjacent to sidewalks, they shall resemble carriage house doors.
  - f. Roofs shall be side gable, hip with parapet, flat or shed hidden by a

parapet.

- g. Carriage houses, garages, and accessory buildings shall be located to the rear of the property, even in the case that there is no access from a lane.
- h. Sloped aprons to garages and carriage houses shall not be erected on the public right-of-way.

(14) *Parking Areas.* Parking areas shall comply with the standards set forth in Section 8-3081 through Section 8-3083 and the following:

- a. Access to parking shall be from lanes or north-south service streets. When a property does not front a lane or north-south service street, parking may be accessed from east-west connecting streets or trust streets.
- b. Parking within the ground floor of a building shall be set back a minimum of 30 feet from the property lines along all public rights-of-way (not including lanes). This standard does not apply to structured parking on the same lot as single family and two-family residential dwellings that are on a corner lot with lane access or on a parcel that does not have access to a lane.
- c. Curb cuts shall be permitted only where access to a lane does not exist, unless required by the City Traffic Engineer or the Georgia Department of Transportation for commercial uses.
- d. Curb cuts shall not exceed 20 feet in width.
- e. Where intersected by a new driveway, the sidewalk shall serve as a continuous uninterrupted pathway across the driveway in materials, configuration, and height.
- f. Asphalt strips or tabs shall not be permitted. Loose paving materials, such as crushed shell or gravel, shall not be permitted within 18 inches of the public-right-of-way.
- g. **Vehicle and pedestrian drop-off areas shall not be accommodated within the footprint of the building on the primary facade.**

(15) *Service Areas, Utilities and Mechanical Systems.* Service Areas, Utilities and Mechanical Systems shall comply with the following:

- a. Electrical vaults, meter boxes, ~~and~~ communications devices, **and similar equipment** shall be located on secondary and rear facades and shall be minimally visible from view.
  - b. HVAC units shall be screened from the public right-of-way.
  - c. Through-the-wall air conditioners may be installed in new construction when they are incorporated into the design ~~of the window system~~ and screened by a decorative grate.
  - d. Refuse storage areas shall be located within a building or shall be screened from the public right-of-way.
  - e. Alternative energy source devices, such as photo voltaic panels, may be permitted on new construction and non-historic buildings. Such devices may be permitted on historic buildings provided they are not visible from a street fronting elevation, excluding lanes.
- (16) *Large Scale Development.* Large-Scale Development [see Definitions (a)] shall comply with the following standards. New construction on Factors Walk and monumental buildings shall be exempt from Large-Scale Development standards.
- a. Visual Compatibility Factors [Section (m)].
  - b. Design Standards [Section (n)]. Should there be a conflict, the large-scale development standards shall take precedence.
  - c. Footprint. Building footprints shall not exceed 13,500 square feet within the ~~Oglethorpe Plan Area (See Figure 2)~~ **National Historic Landmark District boundaries. Building footprints shall not exceed 40,500 square feet outside the National Historic Landmark District boundaries.** Multiple buildings with building footprints equal to or less than ~~13,500 square feet~~ **the maximum permitted** may be constructed for shared use(s).
  - d. Mass. A minimum of two (2) of the following devices shall be incorporated into the design:
    - i. Subdivide Horizontally (**for residential buildings only**). Subdivide the façade horizontally into base, middle, and top (Figure 4). The first story shall be separated from the upper stories by an architectural feature such as a string course (i.e., a projecting horizontal band) or change in material. Such architectural feature may be placed at the top of the second story when the first and second stories have the visual

appearance of a unified exterior expression.

- ii. Multiple Volumes. Use multiple detached volumes made up of two or more separate forms to break up the building into two or more structures (Figure 5).
  - iii. Roofline Variation. Frontage may be continuous, provided that the roofline shall be varied through the use of volumetric forms and roof shapes of varying heights. The roofline shall provide a minimum one-half story height variation within the street fronting façade (Figure 6).
  - iv. Setback Standard. Incorporate setbacks within the façade. Setbacks between street fronting walls shall be at least 24 feet wide and eight (8') feet deep and contain windows in the walls perpendicular to the street (Figure 7). Setbacks shall extend to the ground or begin immediately above the ground floor.
  - v. Recess Standard. Incorporate recesses within the wall plane. Building frontage shall be limited to 30 feet with recesses of at least 12 feet in width and four feet (4') in depth (Figure 8). Recesses shall extend to the ground or begin immediately above the ground floor.
- e. Height.
- i. Large-Scale Development shall be subject to the Height standards in Section (n)(2) and the provisions of Table 1. The base zoning district determines if the property is in an "R" zoning district ("R" zoning districts have the word "residential" in the zoning district nomenclature) (See Section 8-3025, Development Standards). ~~For the purposes of this subsection, R-B-C and R1P-C follow the standards for "R" zoning districts.~~
  - ii. Additional stories above the Historic District Height Map [Section (n)(2)] for non-historic Large-Scale Development.
    - 1. The following properties are eligible for an additional story on the area of the building that is unaffected by Table 1. ~~All Mechanical or Access structures shall be contained within the additional story.~~
      - (i) 'R' Zoning Districts: A maximum of one-story above the Historic District Height Map may be permitted

for properties located on Oglethorpe Avenue, Liberty Street, and Trust Lots **and outside the National Historic Landmark District boundaries.**

- (ii) All other Zoning Districts: A maximum of one-story above the Historic District Height Map may be permitted.

**2. Access above the bonus story shall be the minimum necessary for mechanical maintenance and repairs only. Only one point of access (excluding hatch access) shall be permitted above the bonus story.**

3. One or more of the criteria below must be met to qualify for an additional story:

- (i) An historic street or lane, as identified on Figure 2, is restored and dedicated back to the City of Savannah as a public right-of-way;
- (ii) Affordable Housing, as defined and quantified by the City of Savannah, is provided within the development and so certified by the City Manager;
- (iii) Multiple ground floor active uses permitted in the base zoning district (including but not limited to retail, office, lobby, restaurant) span the length of the façade on all street fronting elevations (not including lanes) and maintain individual primary exterior entrances. This option is not available for the upper story residential use within the B-C and B-G districts. See Sec. 8-3025(b)(4)b. For every 60 feet of street frontage, a separate active use shall be incorporated. At least 50% of active use space shall be designed so that their primary entrance is only accessed from the exterior. Additionally, exterior building walls incorporate 100 percent modular masonry materials [see (n) 16. f. ii. Exterior Walls] on all sides with the use of granite, marble, or other natural quarried stone over a minimum of 30 percent of all street fronting facades.**
- ~~(iv) Exterior building walls incorporate 100 percent modular masonry materials [see (n) f. 2. Exterior Walls] on all sides with the use of granite, marble, or other natural quarried stone over a minimum of 30 percent of all street fronting facades and roofs incorporate sustainable~~

~~technologies such as green roofs, rooftop gardens, and solar roofs (including solar shingles, roof tiles, or membranes) over a minimum of 50 percent of roof area and so certified by the City Manager.~~

f. Exterior Walls

i. Configuration

1. The frontage of buildings shall be divided into architecturally distinct sections no more than 60 feet in width with each section taller than it is wide.
2. Exterior building walls shall use window groupings (including curtain walls), columns, and/or pilasters to create multiple bays not less than 15 feet nor more than 20 feet in width. **The Board may vary this spacing requirement if historic precedent exists within the visually-related context and it is visually compatible.**

h. Windows and Doors.

- i. Façades fronting streets shall incorporate windows and doors over the following minimum percentage of surface area:
  1. Ground level ~~retail~~ **commercial** uses – 55 percent;
  2. Ground level residential uses – 25 percent;
  3. Ground level all other uses – 35 percent; and
  4. Upper levels all uses – 20 percent.
- ii. Window sashes and door frames shall be inset not less than four inches (4”) from all façade surfaces.
- iii. Materials. Wood, clad wood, and metal windows shall be permitted. Solid vinyl windows shall be prohibited.

(17) *Monumental Buildings.* Monumental Buildings shall comply with:

- a. **The Streets and Lanes provisions as set forth in subsection (n)(1).**
- b. The height requirements as set forth in subsection (n)(2).

- c. Setbacks as identified in subsection (n)(4).
- d. The visual compatibility factors as set forth in subsection (m).

(18) *Character Areas.*

- a. *Factors Walk.* The boundaries of the Factors Walk Character Area are the Savannah River on the north; the centerline of Bay Street on the South; the centerline of ~~Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard~~ **Montgomery Street** on the West and the centerline of **Randolph East Broad Street** extended on the East. Development within the Factors Walk Character Area shall comply with the following:
  - i. New construction along Factors Walk shall front both Bay Street and River Street at their respective levels. Entrances to uses above River Street shall be from upper and lower Factors Walk or from private property; provided, however, entrances to end units may front onto the public ramps.
  - ii. A 10 foot pedestrian setback shall be provided along the river's edge and on the north side of River Street.
  - iii. New construction north of River Street shall be placed perpendicular to the river and shall not exceed two stories in height, unless otherwise indicated on the height map as amended August, 2014.
  - iv. Buildings shall be made of brick, ballast stone or wood;
  - v. New construction on the south side of River Street shall not exceed three stories or 45 feet above Bay Street. ~~However, a building or buildings that meet the definition for Large-Scale Development are eligible for a maximum of one additional story above the Historic District Height Map provided that one or more of the following criteria in section [(n)(16)e.(ii)2.] are met.~~
  - vi. ~~New construction on Factors Walk is exempt from commercial and large-scale development standards.~~

(p) *Variances.*

- (7) Time Limitation. If a variance is granted by the Board to the Zoning Board of Appeals, such variance shall be valid one year from the date of the decision granting the variance. **Variances are project specific.** A one-time extension

may be granted by the Board for a period up to twelve months from the date of expiration provided that:

- a. The original determination has not expired at the time of application for an extension is filed; and
- b. The site or building conditions on the subject property and adjacent properties, and criteria supporting the decision to grant the variance, have not changed.

Upon expiration of the extension, the applicant must reapply for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

- (q) Amendments. Amendments to this ordinance shall first be reviewed by the Historic District Board of Review and a recommendation provided to the Planning Commission and City Council.**