

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

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**PETITIONER:** Jennifer Deacon  
Dawson Architects  
321 West Congress Street – Suite 301  
Savannah, GA 31401

**FILE NUMBER:** 15-006026-COA

**ADDRESS:** 512 West Oglethorpe Avenue

**PIN:** 2-0016 -22-011

**ZONING:** B-C

**STAFF REVIEWER:** Leah G. Michalak

**DATE:** December 9, 2015

**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

The applicant is requesting approval for amendments to the New Construction, Aloft Hotel, project located at 512 West Oglethorpe Avenue as follows:

- A fourth entrance has been added along the Ann Street façade and one of the two entrances at the corner of Ann and Oglethorpe has been removed.
- The building corner at Ann and Oglethorpe has been recessed in order to simplify entry into the building at this location.
- The coffee shop use at the southeast corner of the building along Oglethorpe has been expanded and changed to a restaurant use.
- The first floor interior layout/uses have been revised. This includes relocation of hotel management spaces, pool area, and the fitness area to the basement. The ground floor uses now consists of: a conference room (tactic), several lobby and seating spaces, a bar, a restaurant.
- The locations of the stairs and elevators have changed; therefore, the locations of their roof overruns have also changed.
- The doors to the outdoor seating area, behind the wall facing MLK, have changed; they are not visible from any public right-of-way.
- A vertical bay of windows has been added to the MLK façade.
- The faux wood grain fiber cement panels that were proposed to be located on the sixth floor, but were not approved by the Board at the last meeting, have been changed to horizontal composite metal panels in “TBX Silver Metallic.” This product was approved by the Board for use elsewhere on the building.

**FINDINGS:**

This project was approved by the Board at a series of meetings in 2014 and 2015 [File No. 14-005106-COA]. The Part II approval, with condition, was granted on September 9, 2015.

The following standards from the *Historic District Section (8-3030) of the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance* apply:

***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.*

***Rhythm of solids to voids in front facades.*** *The relationship of solids to voids in the facades visible from the public right-of-way of a structure shall be visually compatible with the contributing structures to which the structure is Visually Related.*

The standard is met for the additional bay of windows on the east façade.

***Rhythm of entrance and/or porch projection.*** *The relationship of entrances, porch projections, and walkways to structures shall be visually compatible with the contributing structures to which they are Visually Related.*

The standard is met for the changes to the entrance locations.

***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 for the use of the “Alpolic Materials, TBX SLVR Metallic” composite metal panels on the sixth floor instead of the previously denied fiber cement.

***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.*

***Exterior walls.*** *Exterior walls of new construction shall comply with the following:*

*Commercial exterior walls shall be finished in brick, concrete formed or assembled as stone, precast concrete panels with finish to simulate stucco texture, polished stone and glazed brick or tile where similar historic examples exist along the same block front.*

Staff recommends approval for the use of the “Alpolic Materials, TBX SLVR Metallic” composite metal panels on the sixth floor instead of the previously denied fiber cement because,

although it is not a material listed for use on commercial buildings, 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. The Board approved this material on other portions of this building previously and it's a common product used on contemporary construction.

***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.*

***Design Standards [Section (n)].*** *Should there be a conflict, the large-scale development standards shall take precedence.*

***Additional stories above the Historic District Height Map [Section (n)(2)] for non-historic Large-Scale Development.*** *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.*

The intent of the standard is met. The elevator and stair overruns overruns, which are mostly behind the roof mechanical screening, are the minimum necessary to gain access to the roof for maintenance purposes and are not for public access.

***Non-“R” Zoning Districts:*** *A maximum of one-story above the Historic District Height Map may be permitted.*

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

**The applicant has chosen the following criterion for the hotel building:**

*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.*

The intent of the standard is met. The hotel's ground floor contains active uses on the entire perimeter of the building along both Oglethorpe Avenue and Ann Street. These consist of: a conference room (tactic), several lobby and seating spaces, a bar, a restaurant.

***Entrances.*** *Entrances for large-scale development shall comply with Section (n)(5) (Entrances). When those conditions do not apply, the following standards shall be met.*

*A minimum of one (1) primary entrance shall be provided for every 60 feet of street frontage, excluding lanes. Intervals between entrances shall not be less than 15 feet nor exceed 90 feet.*

The standard is met for the changes to the entrance locations.

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

**Approve amendments to the New Construction, Aloft Hotel, project located at 512 West Oglethorpe Avenue as requested because the proposed changes are visually compatible and meet the design standards.**

**EIH: lgm**