

**Historic Preservation Commission
112 East State Street
Savannah, GA 31401**

November 10, 2025

To the Honorable Mayor Johnson and Aldermen of the City of Savannah,

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) respectfully requests that the Honorable Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah place on the November 13, 2025 City Council agenda a motion to “Opt-In” to a formal HPC Review for the Forsyth Park Office Building project, located within the Victorian Historic District.

Although the City has cited exemption from a Certificate of Appropriateness under OCGA § 44-10-27, the HPC believes this Public-Private Partnership warrants the same review and transparency applied to all 940 privately owned historic properties in the district. A full review would ensure design compatibility, public participation, and adherence to Savannah’s Victorian District preservation ordinances.

Summary of Concerns

1. Inadequate Process:

- The new architectural design was Not formally presented by City, MPC staff, Architect, or developer.
- No City of Savannah or Architectural representative was present at the HPC meeting for the HPC to ask clarifying design questions.
- The HPC was Not given a deliberation period to discuss the project.
- The HPC was not given direction on what their “Comments” were to be based on Architectural merits or the lack of HPC oversight.

2. Incomplete Plans:

- Architectural Drawings were unreadable, un-dimensioned, and lacked streetscapes, elevations, signage, etc.
Key elements—such as 111-115 W. Walburg and the proposed refuse storage and utility plant—were missing. Will these designs and future alterations be subject to HPC Review?
- Scale, height, and massing relative to adjacent historic buildings cannot be verified.

3. Public Participation:

- Over 115 public comments were received, and many residents attended and submitted a speaker request card, but no formal agenda item for public input was provided.
 - The public comment period was added to the agenda during the meeting.
4. Demolition & Compliance Issues:
- Demolition proceeded without required documentation, salvage, or archaeological resource protection review.
 - EPA and City of Savannah ordinances may have been disregarded.

Each Point is explained thoroughly in the Attachments.

Request for Action

To uphold transparency and the integrity of the Victorian Historic District, the HPC petitions the Honorable Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah to:

- Opt-In for HPC review of the Forsyth Park Office Building project;
- Require submission of complete, dimensioned architectural plans consistent with COA Part I and II application standards;
- Schedule HPC review for the November 19 or December 17, 2025 HPC meeting.

This action would reaffirm Savannah's commitment to preservation and public engagement while allowing the project to proceed under appropriate design oversight.

Please add this Petition Letter and Attachments to the City Council Meeting Record and the HPC Comments concerning the Forsyth Park Office Buildings.

Sincerely,

Your Historic Preservation Commission