



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING REPORT

FROM: Community Development Department

BY: Jakob Allen, City Planner

SUBJECT: **COA2605-060 – Design Request for Proposed Mixed-Use Development at 261 East Main Street**

DATE: 06/18/2026

RECOMMENDATION

Historic Preservation Commission to consider the Applicant's design request for a proposed in-fill, mixed-use development at 261 East Main Street as submitted and guided by the City of Canton's Historic District Design Guidelines.

Should the Historic Preservation Commission approve the requested Certificate of Appropriateness, conditions of approval to consider are:

- 1) Any non-substantial changes may be reviewed and approved administratively.

DISCUSSION

The Applicant is proposing to construct a four-story, mixed-use building at 261 East Main Street. The proposed development consists of street-level retail, three floors of residential space and associated, underground parking. Currently, ten, two-bedroom residential units are proposed.

Exterior elevations consist of unpainted brick; cementitious lap siding; wood windows; and steel and glass entry doors and garage doors. Several patios are proposed throughout the building, all covered with metal awnings. Black exterior lighting fixtures and ceiling fans are proposed for both the commercial and residential portions of the building.

A shared driveway with the property at 291 East Main Street is proposed to access the underground parking lot, and two garden patios are planned to abut the properties at 221 East Main Street and 120 East Marietta Street.

All utilities are either located underground or on the roof and are screened from public rights-of-way.

For additional information, please see the attached application.

Phone: 770.704.1500 | Fax: 770.704.1538 | 110 Academy Street | Canton, Georgia 30114

cantonga.gov

RELEVANT HISTORIC GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

The following standards ought to be considered when reviewing this project to ensure it follows the City of Canton's Historic District Design Guidelines.

To ensure new building construction, additions and conversions respect the established character of the historic district, these guidelines should be used when designing these types of projects.

Building placement is important to ensure new buildings respect the established rhythm of development along a street. Along traditional commercial streets, such as Main Street, the continuous street wall of buildings establishes a visual character and frames the street. Along streets with residential buildings, following the established development pattern ensures new buildings respect the existing character. The following guidelines shall apply to building placement:

- 1) Align new construction with the setback and spacing of adjacent buildings. However, avoid using noncontributing, newer buildings as examples to follow when designing new construction projects.
- 2) Window size and placement, as well as storefront openings and height, should be consistent with surrounding historic building facades.
- 3) Locate on-site parking beside or behind buildings. Use side driveways and alleys to access parking areas.
- 4) Locate accessory structures such as garages, carports and sheds in side or rear yards, back from the front wall's plane.

Height and width create scale. Additionally, scale is the proportional relationship of height and width. The two scales that should be addressed in the historic district are the scale of buildings to one another and the scale of architectural features in relation to the building as a whole. When out of scale with their surroundings, or when their individual features do not have proper proportions, buildings appear out of context with their surroundings. The following guidelines shall apply to height, width and scale:

- 1) Design new construction to be similar in height, width and proportions to surrounding historic buildings. For new buildings that are wider than existing buildings, the primary façade should be divided into bays that reflect the predominant width.
- 2) Limit the number of stories to be equal to adjacent structures on either side, or no greater than, two stories greater than the tallest adjacent building. Additional stories are not appropriate if the building appears out of scale with surrounding buildings.
- 3) Building façades should reinforce a human scale. They should not have blank walls (meaning, no openings). Large blank walls or architectural features can make a pedestrian feel small and uncomfortable. Breaking up building facades with architectural details and frequent openings can provide human scale to the face of a building – making pedestrians feel more comfortable next to a building.

Once the form and building placement is established for a new building - including accessory structures - its appearance should be refined so that architectural elements such as materials, size and placement of openings, trim, cornices and other decorative features are compatible with the broader context. The following guidelines shall apply:

- 1) Design building style and features (including roof form) to be compatible with those of surrounding historic buildings. However, designing a building to exactly replicate neighboring historic buildings is discouraged.
- 2) Design the building façades so there are no blank walls.
- 3) Use unpainted brick as the predominant exterior material.
- 4) Use simple color schemes: neutral or earth tone hues for the building surface, and colors that match or complement the dominant neutral building material of the structure for the cornices and framing.

Balconies for new buildings or building additions can be acceptable. However, most historic buildings were not designed to bear bracing and weight of upper floor balconies. Because of the structural and architectural features of historic buildings, adding balconies to historic buildings is generally unacceptable. The following guidelines shall apply to balconies (including fire escapes):

- 1) Balconies on additions should be in context with the architecture of the building and surrounding buildings.
- 2) Do not add balconies on front or side façades where non originally existed. Cutting new openings into a building façade or widening an existing opening to create a balcony is not acceptable.
- 3) Existing fire escapes may be adapted into balconies.

Outdoor patios and porches can be great amenities for a building. They can expand seating space for restaurants, create a greenspace element or enliven a street with activity. However, they should be designed in context with surrounding buildings and should not conflict with the architecture of the building. The following guidelines shall apply:

- 1) Do not add a porch to front or side façades of commercial buildings where none originally existed.
- 2) Design the porch to be consistent with the architecture of the principal building.
- 3) Storefront, or "façade", patios may be added if they do not replace historic storefronts. The design should be compatible with original entrances.
- 4) Do not permanently enclose or alter the design of original porch or house foundation walls.
- 5) Situate downspouts along porch supports (or along the edges and corners of buildings) to create minimal visual disruption.
- 6) Do not enclose or fill in front porches or historic side porches that are visible from the street, with the exception of screening (as long as it is installed on the inner plane of the columns and inner side of balustrades).
- 7) Design handicap ramps to incorporate elements of the primary façade, such as continuation of a porch balustrade along the length of the ramp. Locate ramps to the side of rear of the building, where feasible, and respect the architectural style, materials and scale of the principal building.

ATTACHMENTS – COA2605-060 Application



Community Development Department

110 Academy Street, Canton, Georgia 30114
770-704-1500

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS APPLICATION

Project # COA2605-060 (staff only)

- Application Requirements:** All applications must be complete and include required support materials (listed on the reverse side of this application form). Incomplete applications will not be forwarded to the Canton Historic Preservation (HPC) for review. The applicant must submit the application and all supporting materials as the appropriate building permit option using the online permitting and licensing portal found here: <https://canton.onlama.com/>. For signs, submit the application and all supporting materials as a sign permit using the online permitting and licensing portal found here: <https://canton.onlama.com/>.
- Application Deadline:** Applications and support materials must be submitted fifteen (15) business days prior to the regular HPC meeting. Applications must be submitted to the Community Development Department.
- Application Representation:** The applicant or authorized representative of the applicant must attend the HPC meeting to support the application.
- Building Permit Requirements:** In addition to a COA application, building permits may be required from the Building Department. Building permits will not be issued without proof of a COA.
- Deadline for Project Completion:** After application approval, the COA is valid for 18 months and null and void if construction does not begin within 12 months.
- Local Resources:** [The Canton City Map](#), [The Canton Historic District Design Guidelines](#), and [The Canton Historic District Residential Design Guidelines](#) provides a boundary map of the Canton Historic District, a design review process flowchart and a list of projects that require review and approval (administrative review by Community Development Department staff or review by the Canton HPC). The Guidelines are available at City Hall and on the City of Canton website.

A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS IS REQUIRED FOR ANY MATERIAL CHANGE IN THE APPEARANCE OF PROPERTY (BUILDINGS, STRUCTURES, SITES, OBJECTS, EXTERIOR ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES) IN A LOCALLY DESIGNATED HISTORIC DISTRICT, AS AUTHORIZED BY THE CITY OF CANTON HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE.

Contact Information:

Applicant Name*: James Case Telephone: 770-896-5559
Email: james@forrplaces.com
Mailing Address: Alpharetta

*NOTE: If the applicant is not the owner, a letter from the owner authorizing the proposed work must be included. Please include the owner's telephone number and mailing address.

Property Information:

Address: 251 East Main Street
Land Lot(s): _____
District/Section: _____ Map #: _____ Parcel #: 14-0167-0129
Zoning: CBD Present Use: Empty - No Building

Scope of Work: (Check all that apply)

STAFF REVIEW:		HPC REVIEW:	
☐ Signage	☐ Eligible administrative review	☐ Addition	☐ Specimen Tree Removal
☐ Maintenance of / change in paint color	☐ Residential specimen tree removal	☐ Alteration	☐ Site Features
TYPE OF REVIEW: <u>New Construction</u>		☒ New Construction	☐ Demolition
		☐ Restoration	☐ Relocation
		☒ Commercial	☒ Residential
OTHER:			
☐ Amendment to previous COA, Project #:		☐ Other (Description): <u>Mixed Use - Conditional Use</u>	



Community Development Department

110 Academy Street, Canton, Georgia 30114
770-704-1500

Application Checklist

A complete application requires support materials. Please check the list below for which materials may be necessary for design review of a particular project.

New Buildings and New Additions

- ☒ Letter of Intent
- ☒ Site plan
- ☒ Architectural elevations
- ☒ Landscape plan (vegetation not required)
- ☒ Description of materials
- ☒ Photographs of proposed site and adjoining properties

Major Restoration, Rehabilitation or Remodeling

- ☐ Letter of Intent
- ☐ Architectural elevations or sketches
- ☐ Description of proposed changes
- ☐ Description of materials
- ☐ Photographs of existing building
- ☐ Documentation of earlier historic appearance (Restoration only)

Minor Exterior Changes

- ☐ Letter of Intent
- ☐ Description of proposed changes
- ☐ Description of materials
- ☐ Photographs of existing building

Site Changes – Parking Areas, Drives and Walks

- ☐ Letter of Intent
- ☐ Site plan or sketch of site
- ☐ Description of materials
- ☐ Photographs of site

Site Changes – Fences, Walls, and Systems

- ☐ Letter of Intent
- ☐ Site plan or sketch of site
- ☐ Architectural elevations or sketches
- ☐ Description of materials
- ☐ Photographs of site

Site Changes – Signs

- ☐ Letter of Intent
- ☐ Approved sign application
- ☐ Site plan or sketch of site
- ☐ Description of materials or illumination

NOTE: Only complete applications will be placed on the agenda for design review. All plans must be “to scale”. Reduced site plans, surveys, architectural drawings...etc. will not be accepted.

Applications should be submitted to the City of Canton Community Development Department, 110 Academy Street, Canton, Georgia 30114. Please contact 770-704-1500 for more information.

Describe the proposed project (attach additional sheets if necessary). The description should include proposed materials. [See Additional sheets attached](#)

Please divide the description whether the proposed scope of work will involve more than one type of project. *Example: 1) Addition of storage and 2) installation of sign.*

[The project is New Construction of a four story mixed use](#)

[Retail - Residential building.](#)

[There will be Signage and Landscape.](#)

Gray Reese LLC – Consulting Group – Architects

10335 Big Canoe | Big Canoe, Georgia 30143 | grayreese@gmail.com | 404.234.6002

May 11, 2026

Canton Community Development
110 Academy Street
Canton, Georgia 30114
770-704-1500

Re: Certificate of Appropriateness

Parcel ID: 14-0167-0129

On behalf of our client James Case we are pleased to present for submission our application for a COA.

We are seeking a Conditional Use Permit in an effort to add a residential component to our commercial retail use. The residential use will add an extra layer of vitality to the Central Business district by enhancing positive expanded activity while creating a stronger sense of community for all of the visitors and residents.

Our building is new construction located on an empty lot at 251 East Main Street in the CBD. The proposed design incorporates all of the applicable features of the Design Guidelines for the Canton Historic District in an effort to maintain the established the scale and fabric of the existing built environment.

Some features of note are:

- The wide East Main Street façade is broken into to two smaller more narrow widths in an effort to relate to the widths of the adjacent building fronts.
- The exterior building materials are distinct while complementing the adjacent buildings and following the Historic guidelines.
- Our storefront windows incorporate transoms and the punched windows on the upper floors are sized and patterned to confirm with the established rhythm and design of the CBD.
- We have taken advantage of our site to provided exterior patio and garden spaces for public use to enhance the local urban experience.
- Our neighbor has agreed to allow a shared driveway in order to reduce the impervious surface area and eliminate the need for a totally separate additional curb cut.
- Residential parking is underground and not in view of public spaces.
- The rubbish area is enclosed with locked doors and the space is conditioned.
- All HVAC and mechanical units are located on the roof and screened from view.

We are very excited about having been commissioned to provide a design in the beautiful Central Business District of your city. It has been a joy to experience people and places right in the vicinity of our site and we kook forward to making a positive impact for your community as we continue to work with you on the development of our proposed project.

With sincere regards,

Gray Reese, RA. 
Gray Reese Architects - LLC

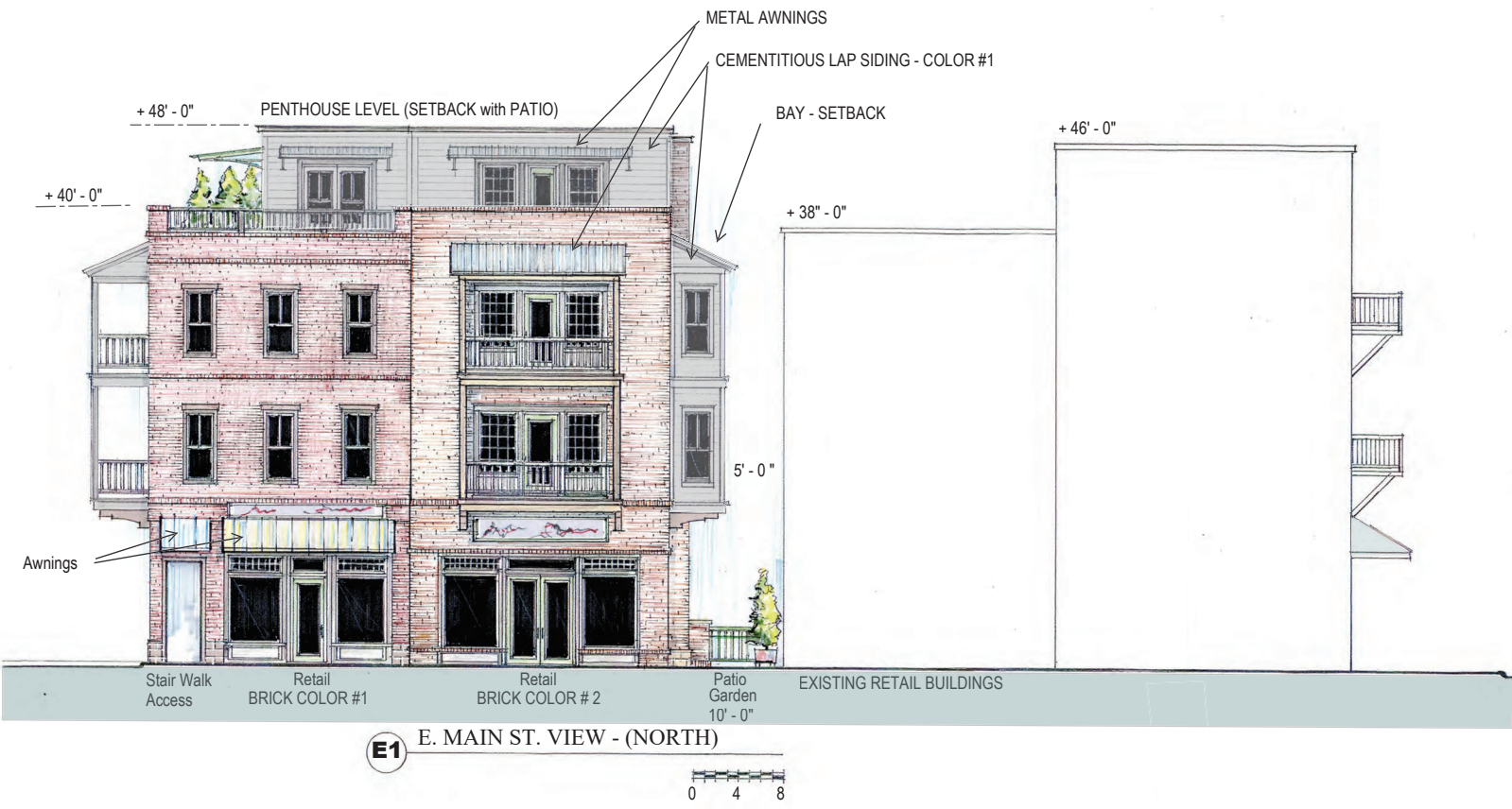
May 11, 2026



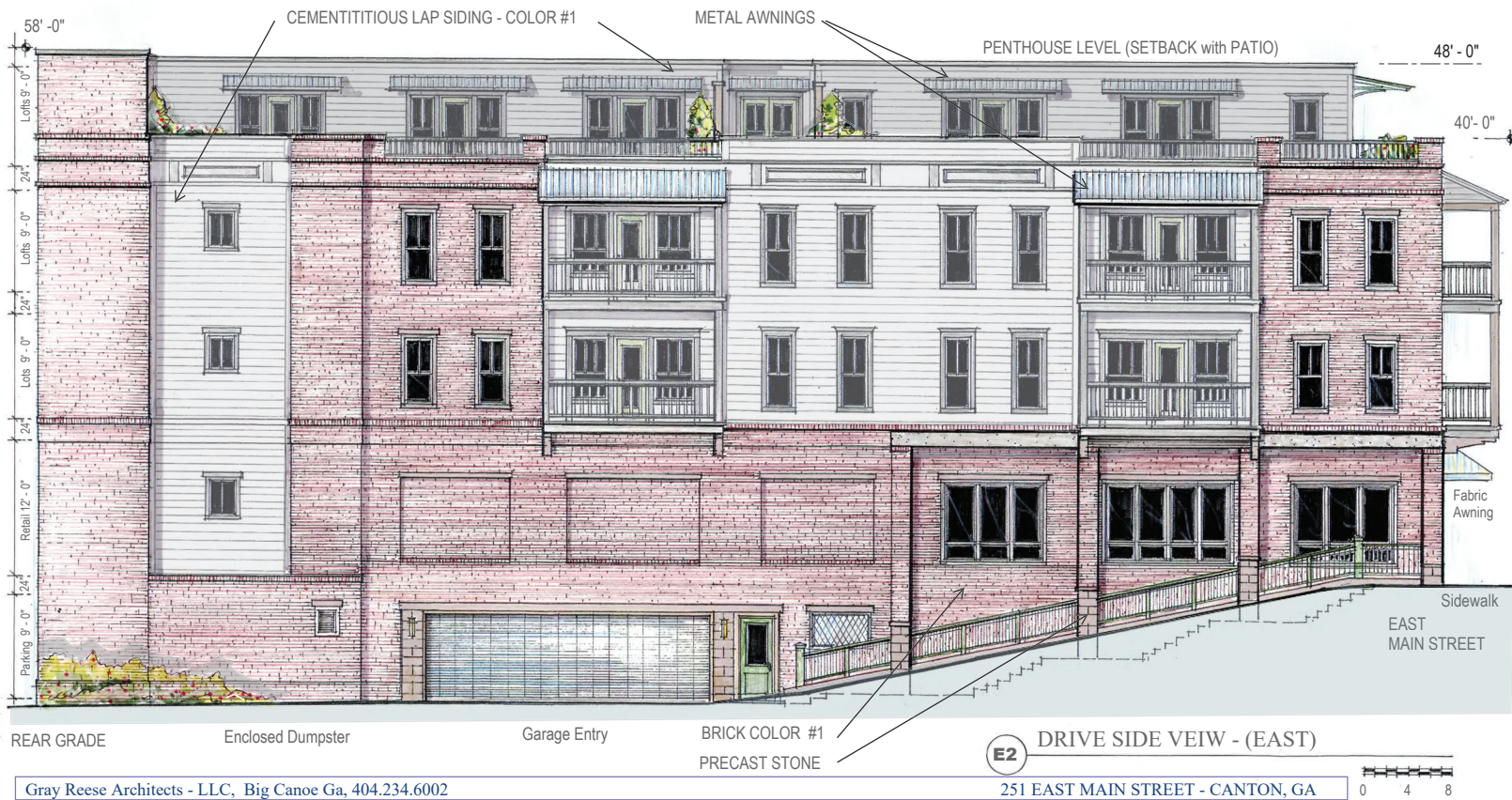
Gray Reese Architects - LLC, Big Canoe, Ga. 404.234.6002

251 MAIN STREET EAST

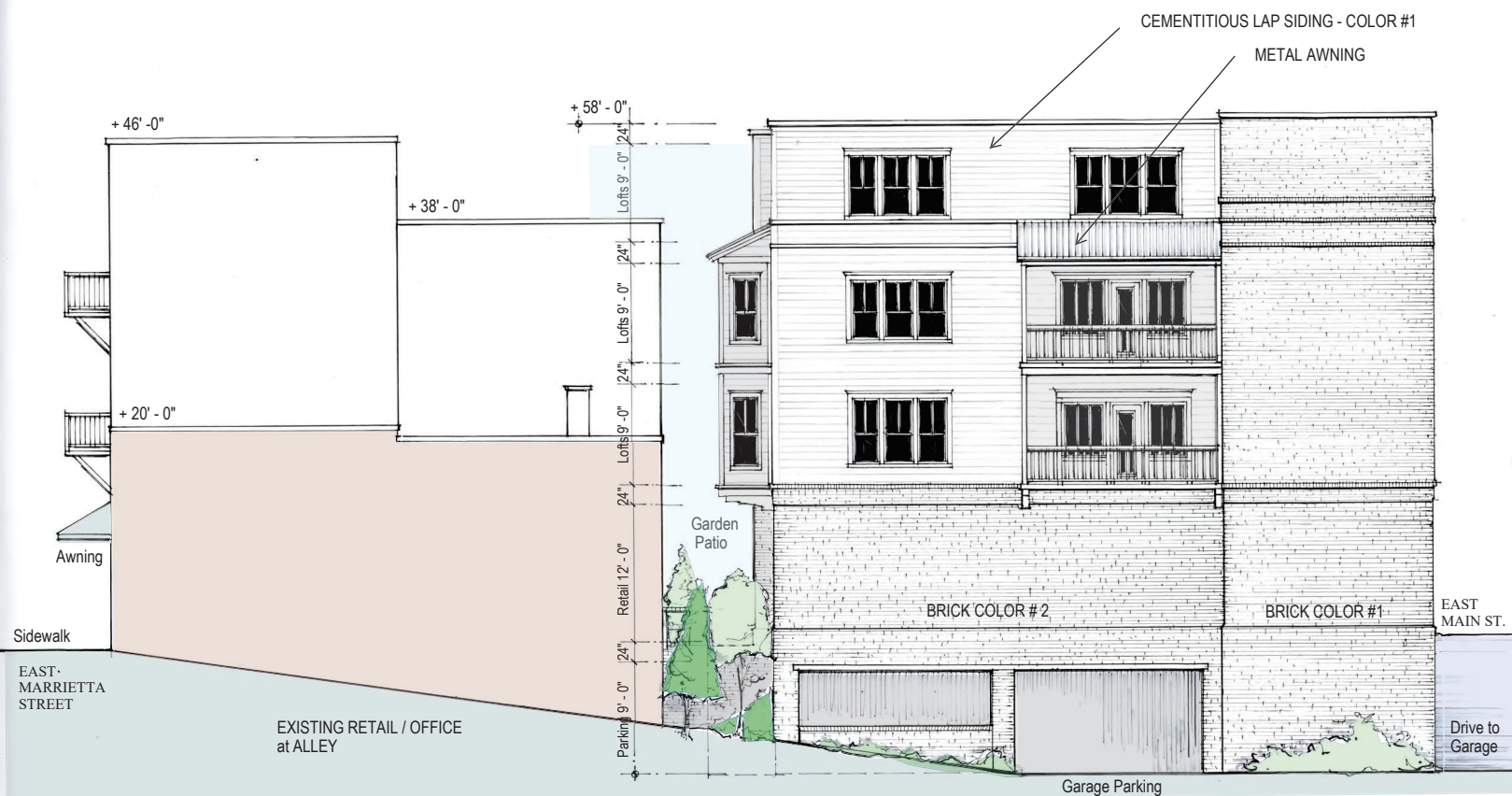
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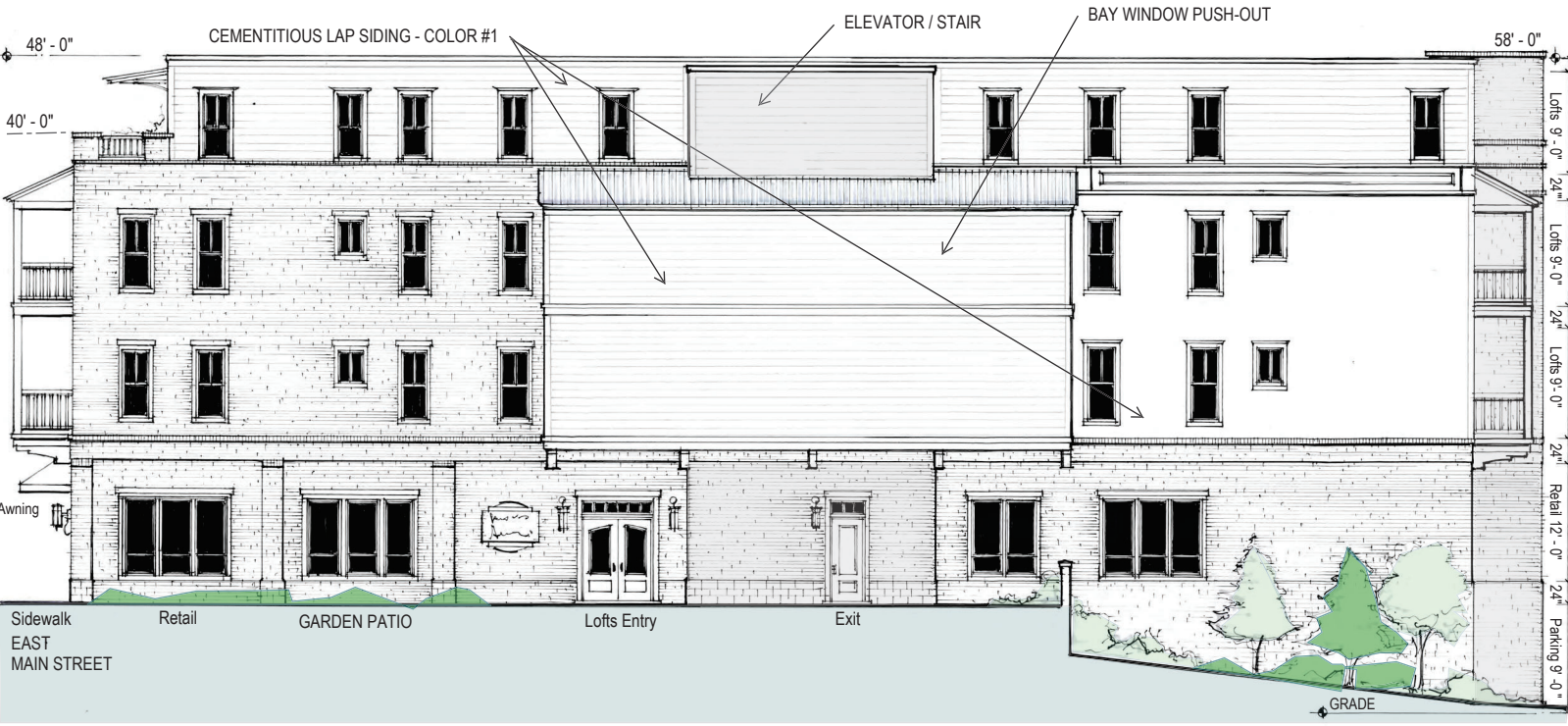
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May 11, 2026



G4 GARDEN / PATIO (WEST)

0 4 8



Garage Drive

SHARED DRIVE ELEVATION - (EAST)

East Main Street



Drive 251 East Main Street

FRONT ELEVATION (NORTH)

Garden Patio
Loft Entrance

GRAY REESE, LLC
ARCHITECTS

10335 BIG CANOE
BIG CANOE, GEORGIA 30143
404-234-6002

251
EAST MAIN
STREET
Canton, Georgia

Submission
to:
Canton Historic
Preservation Board
5-11-2026

EXTERIOR
COLOR CONCEPT

P 3

Material samples, specifications & architectural details for:

*Application for The City of Canton
for the June
HPC Review Board Work Shop*

Submitted MAY 11, 2026

for

**Canton Retail – Loft Apartments
251 East Main Street
Canton, Georgia**

For the applicant:
James Case
Forrplaces Development LLC

770-896-5559

1. Table of Contents
2. Exterior Materials – *Brick, Stone, Chimney*
3. Brick Specification
5. Exterior Materials – *Railings, Sill, Entry Doors, Garage*
6. Exterior Materials – *Stone seat wall, Brick Pavers*
7. Exterior Materials – *Lights, Bench, Driveway*
8. Exterior Materials – *Exterior Colors*
9. Exterior Materials – *Windows & Details*
10. Exterior Materials – *Windows & Details*
11. Andersen Window Specification



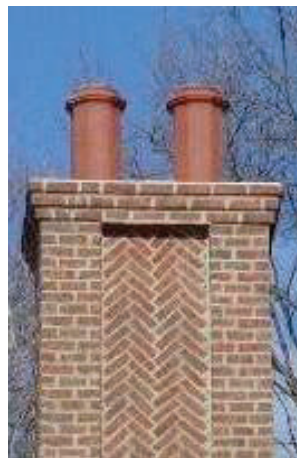
Brick sample color with grape - vine joint.



Casement window installation in brick wall with 6" recess from face of brick wall to face of window.



Brick and foundation stone joint detail.



Brick chimney & chimney pot detail.

Canton Retail – Lofts **EXTERIOR MATERIALS**

Railings, Sill, Entry Doors, Garage

May 11, 2026

pg. 5



Typical exterior porch rails & gates:

- 2" x 2" horizontal & posts
- 1" x 1" vertical pickets



Cut stone window sill detail



Steel & Glass garage doors



Steel & Glass exterior entry doors



Brick Specification:

WRIGHTSVILLE TUDOR

Lightweight **Queen size** 6024031170

Brickhaven NC

Mortar Specification:

Argos Ivory Buff

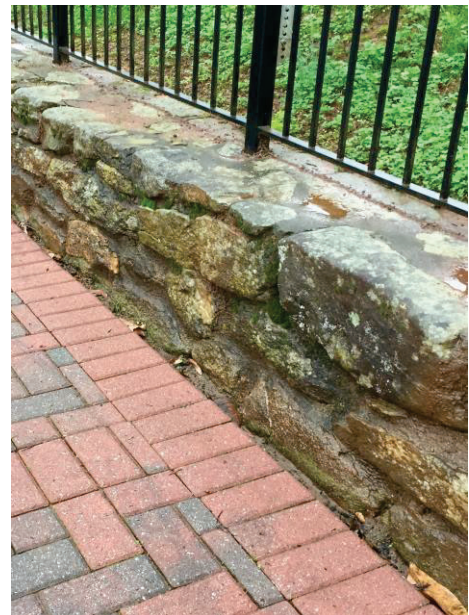
- Manufacturer – General Shale



Stone seat wall & cut stone steps with red mixed beveled pavers



Stone seat wall & cut stone steps with red mixed beveled pavers at entry & walkways



Cut stone cap detail & seat wall



Metal amenity bench 5' – 0" long



Stamped concrete with integral color – slate pattern
at driveway



Lamp for brick corner pilasters at pool
(2 foot-candles)



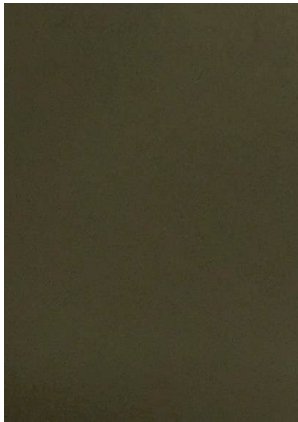
Lantern at stone in-line pilasters
(2 Foot-candles)



Typical exterior porch light
(1.5 foot-candles)



Typical exterior ceiling fan



Window Color

Andersen E- Series aluminum clad
"Clay"



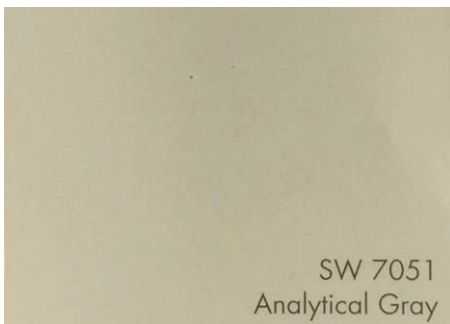
Metal Rails & Gate Color

Match: Andersen E- Series aluminum clad
"Suede"



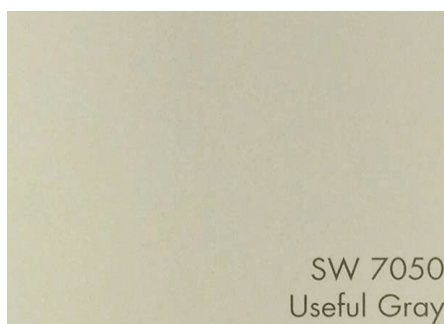
Concrete Cornice

SW 6047 – Hot Cocoa



Exterior Columns

SW 7051 – Analytical Gray



Exterior Ceiling

SW 7050 – Useful Gray



Andersen E- Series aluminum clad
wood windows – Casement Style

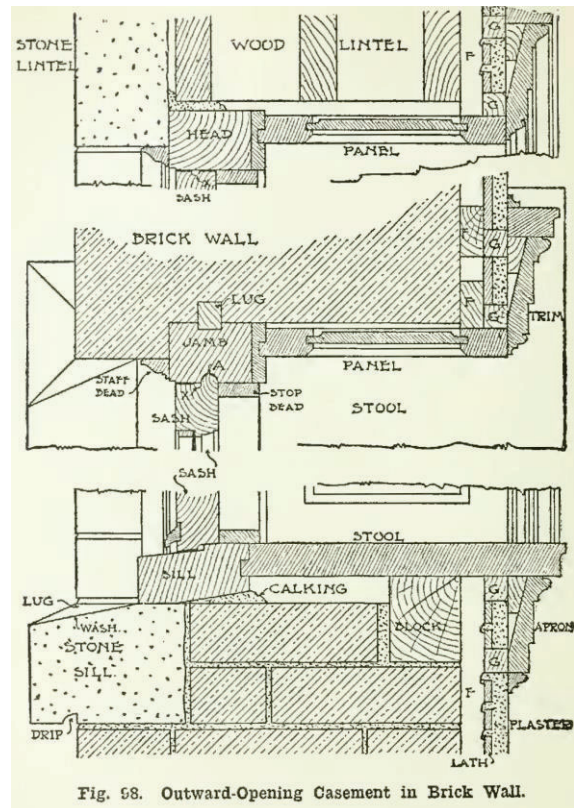
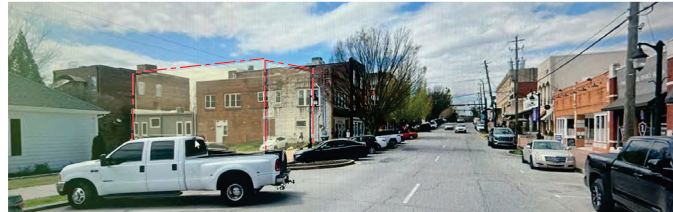


Fig. 98. Outward-Opening Casement in Brick Wall.

Window unit cross section and installation detail showing cut stone sill & Brick header. The face of the window trim is set back 6" from the face of brick wall.



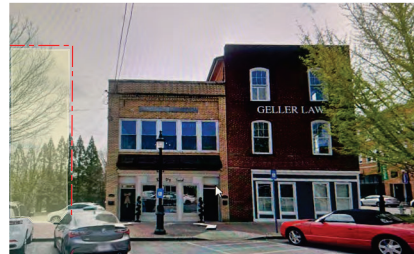
251 EAST MAIN STREET - Building Site



EAST MAIN STREET - Looking West



EAST MAIN STREET - Office Neighbor to the East



EAST MAIN STREET - Neighbor to the West



EAST MARIETTA STREET - Looking East



EAST MARIETTA STREET - Site Alley



EAST MARIETTA STREET - Looking North

 Proposed New Building Location

GRAY REESE, LLC
ARCHITECTS

10335 BIG CANOE
BIG CANOE, GEORGIA 30143
404-234-6002

251
EAST MAIN
STREET
Canton, Georgia

Submission
to:
Canton Historic
Preservation Board
5 -11-2026

SITE PHOTOS

P 1

May 11, 2026

