



CITY OF SAVANNAH

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: Braeden Scally

MPC File No.: 25-000223-COA

Address: 538 East Bolton Street

PIN: 20043 06006

Zoning: TN-1

Staff Reviewer: Caitlin Chamberlain

Date: February 26, 2025

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting an after-the-fact amendment for the addition and accessory dwelling unit located at 538 East Bolton Street. The original project [23-000587-COA] was for rehabilitation of the existing historic house and the construction of an addition and an accessory dwelling unit. The current after-the-fact amendment work seeks approval for one awning that connects the addition and the ADU, one small awning over the second story door of the ADU, and for the omission of windows on the east and west elevations of the new addition and ADU.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

The historic building was constructed in 1913 and is a contributing resource within the Victorian Local Historic District.

The 1916-1953 Sanborn Map shows the principal building's historic footprint, prior to the construction of the former non-historic addition. There was a wood-frame auto structure on the rear of the property, abutting the lane. Several adjacent properties are shown to have wood-frame outbuildings, most of which no longer exist. The 1955-1966 Sanborn Map shows little change on the property itself, though two adjacent outbuildings to the west are shown as being demolished between 1953-1966.

The surrounding lane context is primarily new construction and non-contributing resources. There is a row of adjacent garages on the other side of the lane which are all new construction. There is one contributing lane resource at 524-528 East Gwinnett Lane. The visibility of the rear of the property is also obscured by adjacent foliage.

The context on East Bolton Street is primarily contributing, with most principal buildings being two-story American Foursquare residences. There are also examples of non-contributing modern construction, such as 522 East Bolton Street and 525 East Bolton Street.

PROJECT HISTORY:

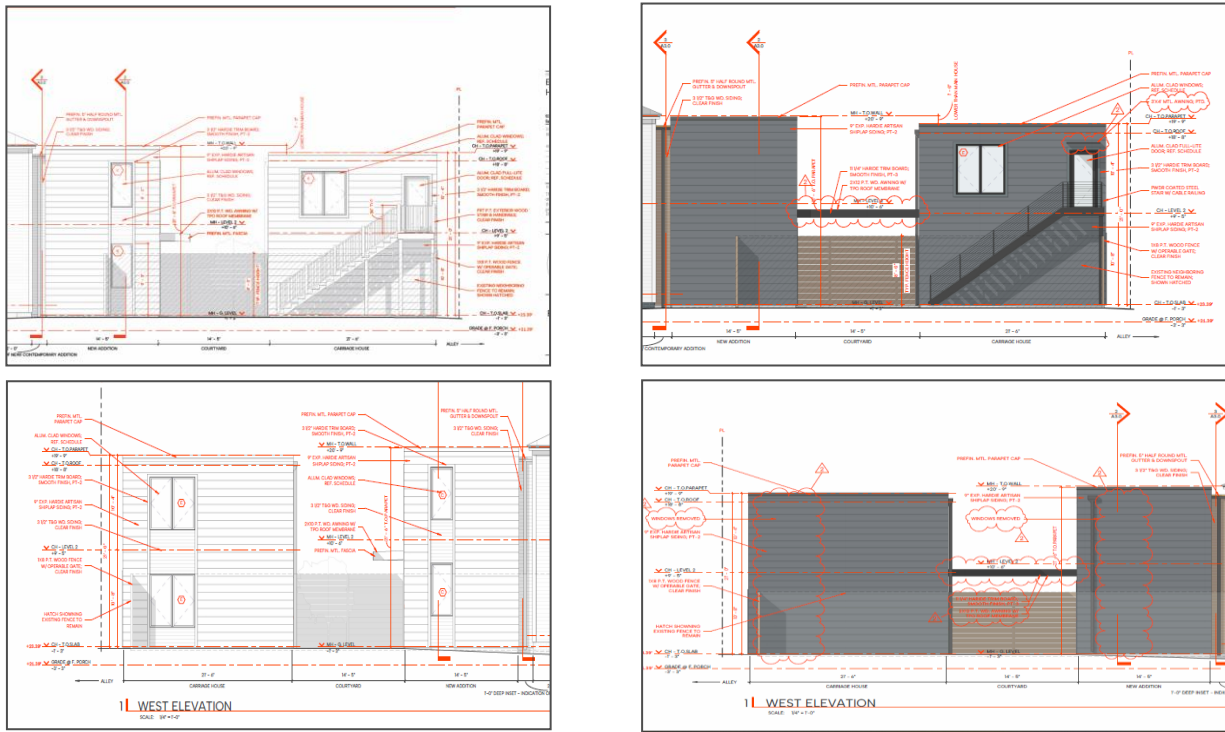
The project was first presented to the HPC on February 22, 2023 [23-000587-COA], where there were several approval conditions which led to a continuation to the March 22, 2023, HPC meeting. The decision was as follows:

The Savannah Historic Preservation Commission does hereby approve rehabilitation, additions, and new construction, small (parts I and II) at 538 East Bolton Street as requested because the work is visually compatible and meets the standards.

An amendment was filed on April 27, 2023, [23-002082-COA] to revise the design of the rear ADU stair. Originally, wood stairs were proposed but there was a request to change this to coated steel railings with a cable railing. Also included with this request was the omission of a previously proposed window. Staff noted at that time that the window was not visible from a public right-of-way and thus the change was not subject to review. This was approved at the staff level.

It was recently noticed that a few changes had been made that were not on the stamped drawings, hence the after the fact amendment request. Staff met onsite with the applicant as well as representatives from the City to view the changes in person.

The following images show the changes on the east and west elevations. The approved drawings are on the left and the changes are on the right, clouded on the drawings.



FINDINGS:

The following standards from the Sec 7.9 - Victorian Historic District Ordinance apply:

Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation. Material changes to contributing resources and resources that are eligible for listing as contributing shall be evaluated by use of the current edition of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation as published by the U.S. Department of the Interior. In considering proposals for alterations to contributing resources, the documented original design of the resource may be considered.

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

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

The standards are met. The new addition and ADU are the only areas impacted by the work. The principal historic building is not affected.

Visual Compatibility Criteria. To maintain the special character of the Victorian Historic District as identified in the architectural survey and visual analysis, new construction and any material change in appearance shall be consistent with the standards, criteria and guidelines developed for the district. The applicable criteria below shall be used to assess new construction and material changes. These criteria shall not be the basis for appeal to any board, commission or administrator described in this Ordinance, or to the Mayor and Aldermen.

Projections. Entrances, porches, and other projections of the proposed building or structure shall be visually compatible with contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related.

The awnings are both visually compatible. The standard is met.

Materials. The relationship of materials and textures of the proposed building or structure shall be visually compatible with the contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related.

The materials are wood and metal. The standard is met.

Victorian Historic District Design Standards.

New Construction, Additions, and Alterations. The intent of these standards is to ensure appropriate new construction, additions, and alterations within the Victorian Historic District. They are also intended to protect the historic integrity of contributing resources. Designs for new construction are to be consistent with contributing resources from the district's Period of Significance (1870-1923).

The following design standards shall apply to new construction, additions, alterations to contributing and non-contributing resources, and site alterations, unless otherwise specified. Though certain building materials are prescribed below, the Historic Preservation Commission 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.

Windows, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources, and additions.

Configuration, Windows, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources, and additions.

All residential facades visible from a street shall incorporate transparent features (windows and doors) over a minimum of 30% of the ground floor façade.

In the case where previously approved windows were omitted from the design of the east and west elevations of the addition and the ADU, none of the facades of the addition or the ADU are visible from the street, only from the lane. The ground level is obscured by the fence and is not visible from the lane either (even though this standard is only referring to streets, not all public rights-of-way). Further, during the site visit, being inside the addition and ADU, there are still windows in each room on the north and south elevations.

Awnings. *The intent of these standards is to ensure that awnings provide cover for pedestrians and reinforce the rhythm of bays and primary entrances within facades.*

Awnings, Materials. *Awnings shall be constructed of canvas, cloth or equivalent, metal (though not corrugated), or glass.*

The awning on the second story of the ADU is metal and the awning over the walkway between the addition and the ADU is wood. In both cases the standard is met.

Awnings, Configuration.

A minimum of eight (8) feet vertical clearance shall be maintained above the public right-of-way.

The standard does not apply since this is not a public right-of-way.

Awnings shall be structurally and architecturally integrated into the façade and shall not obscure character-defining features.

The standard is met. Also, as this is new construction there are no character-defining features that would have been obstructed. Their inclusions do not impact the principal historic structure.

Awnings shall not connect two (2) facades.

Regarding the awning that does connect the addition to the ADU, staff finds that the intent of this standard refers to commercial buildings rather than private residential property. The extension of the original awning creates a covered walkway or breezeway that may function more as a courtyard area. Also, the section below addresses how this type of configuration is allowable for ADUs.

The following standards from the Sec 8.7 - Accessory Structures and Uses apply:

Accessory Dwelling Units (not including Caretaker's Dwelling Unit). *One (1) accessory dwelling unit shall be permitted as an accessory use to a principal dwelling located in the A-1, RSF-, RTF-, RMF-, TR-, TN-, TC-, D- and PD districts. Such use is not required to be included in the gross residential density calculations. Manufactured homes, shipping containers, recreational vehicles, and travel trailers shall not be used as accessory dwelling units. For such use, the following shall apply:*

Accessory Dwelling Units, Location.

The unit may be attached to or detached from the principal dwelling.

When the unit is attached, it shall share a common wall with and have a separate entrance from the principal dwelling or be connected by a covered walkway. When the unit shares a common wall with the principal dwelling, the entrance to the unit shall be located along the side or rear façade of the dwelling. An attached accessory dwelling unit shall meet the setback standards for the principal dwelling.

The rear addition of the house is connected to the ADU via a covered walkway. This deviated from the stamped drawings where there was originally a wood awning just at the rear of the addition. A change was made to extend the awning which has created the covered walkway. Staff finds that this is still aligned with the design standards and can remain.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the after-the-fact amendment for the addition and accessory dwelling unit located at 538 East Bolton Street, from the previously approved design [23-000587-COA] as requested because the work is visually compatible and meets the standards.

MW: JM: CC

Note: This recommendation could change subject to new information provided at the Historic District Board of Review meetings. Final decisions will be made by the Historic District Board of Review at the public hearing based on information provided at the meeting, as well as information submitted for the staff recommendation.