



CITY OF SAVANNAH

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: Full Circle Properties Unlimited, LLC

MPC File No.: 25-005024-COA

Address: 623 W 36th Street

PIN: 20066 47019

Zoning: TR-1

Staff Reviewer: Rohan Urs

Date: January 28, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

Request for the repair and replacement of an existing rear deck and stairway serving a contributing residential structure on 623 W 36th St, built in 1911. The proposed work includes like for like replacement of the existing rear deck, landing, and stairway in the same location, footprint, dimensions, and configuration as the existing structure due to advanced deterioration of structural wood components. The scope of work is limited to the rear elevation and does not include any expansion, height increase, or alteration to character defining features of the primary historic structure.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

The subject property is located within the Cuyler–Brownsville Historic District, an area characterized by late nineteenth and early twentieth century residential development. The surrounding context consists primarily of contributing wood frame houses with raised foundations and secondary rear service features, including decks and stairways oriented toward rear yards or alleys. These rear elements are typically utilitarian in character and secondary to the primary street facing facades that define the district’s historic streetscape.

FINDINGS:

The residential building was constructed in 1911 and is a contributing resource within the National Register Cuyler-Brownville Historic District and the local Cuyler-Brownville Historic District.

The following standards from the Sec 7.10 - Cuyler-Brownville 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.

The proposed work does not impact the primary façade or character defining features of the contributing structure. Replacement is limited to a deteriorated rear deck and stairway, which are secondary service features. The historic character of the property is retained. This standard is met.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards 3– Physical Record. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

The replacement deck and stairway are proposed to match the existing configuration without introducing new design elements or conjectural historic detailing. The proposal does not create a false sense of historical development. This standard is met.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards 6– Deteriorated Features. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

The applicant has documented extensive deterioration of the existing rear deck and stairway, including rotted decking boards, stair treads, stringers, and support framing, making repair infeasible. Replacement is proposed in wood, matching the existing dimensions, materials, and configuration. This standard is met.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards 7– Chemical or Physical Treatments. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

No chemical or physical surface treatments are proposed as part of this project. This standard is met.

The following standards from the Sec 7.10 - Cuyler-Brownville Historic District Ordinance apply:

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.*

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 proposed work consists of the like for like replacement of an existing rear deck and stairway using traditional wood materials consistent with the existing construction. No composite, synthetic, or non-historic materials are proposed. The replacement deck and stairway maintain the same configuration, scale, and utilitarian character as the existing features and are visually compatible with contributing structures within the Cuyler-Brownsville Historic District. This criterion is met.

Cuyler-Brownsville 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 Cuyler-Brownsville Historic District. They are not intended to promote copies of the architectural designs of the past, but to encourage contemporary designs that protect and complement existing contributing resources. They are further intended to protect the historic integrity of the contributing resource.*

The following design standards shall apply to new construction, additions, alterations to contributing and non-contributing buildings and structures, 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.

Exterior walls, Alterations to contributing resources. *The intent of these standards is to ensure that exterior building walls reflect and complement the traditional materials and construction techniques of the district's architecture.*

Exterior walls shall be repaired rather than replaced, provided however, if the degree of degradation does not allow repair, the degradation shall be photographically documented and verified by the Planning Director and the replacement wall shall be of the same materials and configuration as the original wall.

If the original wall material and/or configuration is unknown, the new wall material and configuration shall be based on historic context.

The proposed work does not involve alteration to exterior building walls of the primary structure. Replacement is limited to the rear deck and stairway, which are secondary exterior features. No change to historic wall materials is proposed. This standard is met.

Porches, Stoops, Balconies and Decks, Alterations to contributing resources.

Porches shall be repaired rather than replaced, provided however, if the degree of degradation does not allow repair, the degradation shall be photographically documented and verified by the Planning Director, and the new porch materials and configuration shall be of the same material and configuration as the original.

If the original porch material and/or configuration is unknown, the new porch material and configuration shall be based on historic context.

Front porches shall not be enclosed. Side and rear porches may be enclosed with fine wire mesh, glass or shutters, provided the porch continues to read as a porch and character-defining features (including but not limited to columns, balustrades, entablature, etc.) are retained and not obscured or damaged.

The applicant has documented advanced deterioration of the existing rear deck and stairway, necessitating replacement for safety reasons. The proposed replacement is like for like, utilizing wood materials and maintaining the same footprint, dimensions, and configuration. No enclosure is proposed. The work complies with the intent and requirements of this standard.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the repair and replacement of the existing rear deck and stairway at 623 West 36th Street as requested because the work is visually compatible and meets the standards.

MW: CC: RU

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.