



CITY OF SAVANNAH

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: Samuel Kopelman

MPC File No.: 25-004778-COA

Address: 402 West 40th Street

PIN: 20073 14006

Zoning: TC-2

Staff Reviewer: Caitlin Chamberlain

Date: January 28, 2026

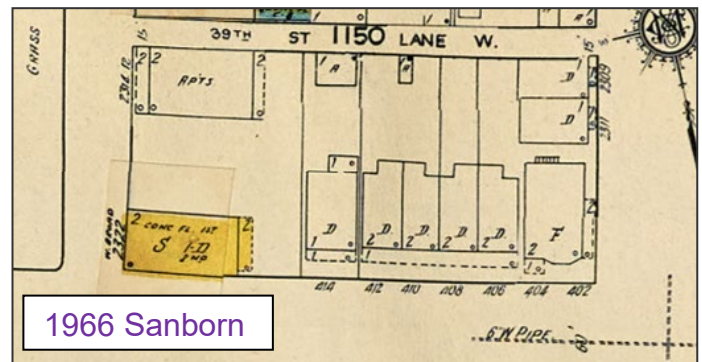
NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting approval to construct a two-story quadplex on the lot located at 402 West 40th Street. This lot currently includes the former furniture warehouse on 2324 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, and is contingent on the approval of the demolition of the non-contributing building.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

402 West 40th Street is a vacant lot within the Thomas Square-Streetcar National Register Historic District and the local Streetcar Historic District. This project is associated with the proposed demolition of 2324 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard where the plan is to construct four quadplexes along four adjacent lots, to provide housing in this area.

The surrounding context includes mostly non-contributing buildings and a mix of residential and commercial uses. There are several vacant lots along this block of West 40th Street and only one contributing two-story wood framed house remains and is across the street from this proposed new construction project. There were previous structures on this block, as seen on the 1955/1966 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. The former context shows a history of residential structures, and that is what the applicant seeks to return to this block. It is not uncommon to see rows of houses that are identical or nearly identical, as a development pattern throughout the Streetcar Historic District. The four quadplexes would provide a similar development pattern as was historically seen on this block.



PROJECT HISTORY:

This case was initially set to be presented at the October 22, 2025, HPC meeting, but the approval of the new construction is contingent upon the approval of the demolition of the non-contributing building at 2324 MLK Boulevard. However, the Commission continued that case and the petitioner requested to continue the requests for 402 and 404 West 40th Street as well.

FINDINGS:

The following standards from the Article 5 - Base Zoning Districts apply:

***(TC) Traditional Commercial District Development Standards.** Development in any TC-district shall meet the development standards as set forth below.*

TC-2 Development Standards for Permitted Uses.

TC-2, Minimum Lot Dimensions, Three- & Four-Family.

Lot area per unit (sq. ft.): 1,200

Lot width per unit (ft.): 30

The lot is 5509 square feet and 45 feet wide. The standard is met.

TC-2, Maximum Building Coverage (max). None

TC-2, Minimum Building frontage (min). 70%

The standard is met.

TC-2, Building footprint (max sq. ft.). 10,000

The building footprint is proposed to be 2922 sf; thus, the standard is met.

TC-2, Building Setbacks (ft), For blocks with contributing structures.

Front yard: average of block face

Side yard (interior): 10 (min)

**There is no minimum side yard (interior) setback for properties adjacent to any TC zoning district*

Side yard (corner): average of block face

Rear yard: 10 (min)

The setback standards are met.

TC-2, Height (max). 3 stories up to 45 ft.

The building will be two (2) stories and 31 feet.

The following standards from the Sec 7.11 - Streetcar Historic District Ordinance apply:

Visual Compatibility Criteria. To maintain the special character of the Streetcar 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.

Height. The overall height and the height of individual components of the proposed building or structure shall be visually compatible with contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related.

Width. The proportion of the overall width and the width of individual components of the proposed building or structure shall be visually compatible to the contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related.

Scale. The overall scale and the scale of individual components of the proposed building or structure shall be visually compatible to the contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related.

The height, width, and scale of the proposed building meets the standards. There are currently no contributing or residential structures along the block face. In terms of contributing buildings to which it is visually related, there is only the one contributing two-story house across the street. This is a different building type, as it was built as a single-family home whereas the new construction is a four-family home. The design of the quadplexes is appropriate for this block and will not take away from the historic character or distinctive features of the historic house across the street.

Setbacks. The setbacks of the proposed building or structure shall be visually compatible with setbacks of contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related.

The setbacks are met in accordance with the zoning ordinance for TC-2 and are also visually compatible.

Rhythm of Building or Structure. The relationship of a building or structure to the open space between it and adjacent buildings or structures shall be visually compatible with the open spaces between contributing buildings or structures to which it is visually related.

The standard is met, and this will be the case for the proposed four quadplexes spanning the four vacant lots.

Openings. The rhythm and solid-to-void ratio of the proposed building or structure shall be visually compatible with contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related.

The openings are symmetrical and balanced.

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 porch style is similar to what is seen on historic structures in the vicinity. Staff recommends adding porches to the rear elevation as well.

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 standard is met. The proposed materials are as follows:

- Siding/Trim: 4” smooth face Hardie siding
- Andersen 400 series windows
- Doors: Andalucia 6 lite wood door
- Shingles: GAF Timberline asphalt shingle in Pewter Gray
- Porch: 8” round wooden columns; wood handrails, posts, pickets, stairs
- Foundation: true stucco and brick piers

Roof Shapes. The roof shape of the proposed building or structure shall be visually compatible with contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related.

Staff recommends that the applicant explores options to further the roofline variation of the building.

Streetcar 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 Streetcar 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 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.

Height and Mass. The intent of these standards is to ensure that the height and mass are in context with contributing buildings in the same or adjacent block faces.

The height and mass shall be subdivided both horizontally and vertically to convey human scale and visual interest that reflects the traditional size of buildings.

The standard is met, but to allow for more visual compatibility staff recommends breaking up the massing.

Floor-to-Floor Heights.

In single-family detached, single-family attached, two-family attached, three-family/four-family, and townhouse dwellings, the exterior expression of the height of the first story shall not be less than 11 feet and the height of the upper stories shall not be less than nine (9) feet.

The standard is met. The floor height is 11'4" on the first story and the second story is 10 feet.

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

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

Foundations shall be constructed of brick, stone, or true stucco over concrete block piers.

The standard is met.

The space between piers may be filled with heavy gauge wood lattice with at least one-half (0.5) inch thick lattice boards, horizontal boards, brick or true stucco over concrete block. Infill material shall be recessed a minimum of three inches behind the front edge of the pier so that the piers are clearly visible and differentiated.

The space between the brick piers will be infilled with true stucco over concrete block.

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

In single-family detached, single-family attached, two-family attached, three-family/four-family, and townhouse dwellings, foundations shall be the average height of foundations on contributing buildings on the block face, or if no contributing buildings exist, shall have a minimum finished floor height of 30 inches above grade.

The standard is met.

Front porches shall have expressed piers.

The standard is met.

Beneath a wood frame building, the foundation shall be recessed and not project forward of the building plane.

The standard is met.

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

Permitted materials, Exterior walls, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources, and additions. *Brick, stone, wood, true stucco, and wood or fiber cement siding.*

Fiber cement siding is proposed. The standard is met.

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

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

Window casings and sashes shall be made of PVC, metal, wood or clad wood material.

The Andersen 400 series windows are clad wood. This is a window type that has been previously approved on many occasions for new construction.

Window glass shall be transparent with no dark tints or reflective effects (except for stained glass windows). This provision does not preclude the use of Low Emissivity or laminated glass.

The window glass is clear.

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

Windows shall be taller than they are wide, except for accent windows, which may be round or other shapes.

Windows shall be single-hung, double-hung, triple hung, awning, or casement, except for accent windows which may also be fixed or hopper.

Simulated divided light windows shall be permitted provided that the muntin is 7/8 inches or less, the muntin profile shall simulate traditional putty glazing, the lower sash rail shall be wider than the meeting and top rails, and there shall be a spacer bar in between double panes of glass. Between-the-glass, snap-in or applied muntins shall not be permitted.

Framing members shall be covered with appropriate trim; trim shall feature a header, surrounds, and pronounced sill where appropriate.

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

All of the above window standards are met, as can be seen on the drawings and the window product specifications.

Doors/Entrances, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions.

Doors/Entrances, Materials, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions.

Doors shall be made of glass, wood, clad wood or steel (without wood grain simulation).

Doors shall not have a decorative diamond inset or half-moon inset.

The door standards are met.

Doors/Entrances, Configuration, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions.

Entrances shall face the primary street on which the building is located (normally the street from which it takes its address).

There shall be a primary entrance along the primary street at intervals no greater than 60 feet.

The standards are met.

Porches, Stoops, Balconies and Decks, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions. *Front porches or covered or uncovered stoops shall be required on all entrances for new ground floor residential construction.*

Materials, Porches, Stoops, Balconies and Decks, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions.

On porches and stoops, piers and base walls shall be of the same material as the foundation wall facing the street.

Porch elements shall be constructed of brick, painted or stained wood, wood composite, precast stone, marble, sandstone, or slate.

Prohibited material: Vinyl.

The porch materials standards are met.

Configuration, Porches, Stoops, Balconies and Decks, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions.

On three and four-family and townhouse dwellings, a stoop extending a minimum of four (4) feet in depth and six (6) feet in width shall be required.

Wood portico posts shall have cap and base molding.

Balusters shall be placed between upper and lower rails, and the distances between balusters shall not exceed four (4) inches on center. The height of the railing shall not exceed 36 inches for single- and two-family dwelling units.

Front porches shall not be enclosed.

The above standards are met.

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

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

Roof coverings shall be standing seam metal, v-crimp, slate or equivalent synthetic, or architectural asphalt or similar shingles.

The standard is met with architectural asphalt shingles.

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

Gable and hip roof shall be symmetrically pitched between 4:12 and 10:12.

The roof pitch is 8:12. The standard is met.

Eaves shall extend no less than 12 inches beyond supporting walls.

Gable end rakes shall overhang at least eight (8) inches.

Soffits shall be placed perpendicular to the building wall, not sloping in plane with the roof (except for gable end rakes).

The above roof standards are met.

Mechanical Equipment and Refuse. *The intent of these standards is to ensure that mechanical equipment and refuse is appropriately sited to provide the least negative visual impact. In addition to the requirements set forth in Sec. 9.5, Screening and Buffers, mechanical equipment and refuse shall comply with the following:*

Electrical vaults, meter boxes, communications devices, and satellite dishes shall be located on the secondary or rear façades and shall be minimally visible.

Refuse storage areas for dumpsters and compactors shall be located within a building or to the side of rear of the building and screened from the public right-of-way.

There will be a screened service pad at the rear with operable wooden gates. The standard is met.

Vehicular Access.

For uses other than single- and two-family dwellings, vehicular access shall be from the lane. Where there is no lane, the Planning Director and the City Manager or his or her designee shall consult with each other to determine the most appropriate access location.

Vehicular access is via West 39th Lane, which leads to off-street parking spaces.

Fencing and Walls. *The intent of these standards is to ensure that walls and fences define outdoor spaces appropriately, separate private and public realms and add architectural interest to a building's façade. In addition to compliance with the requirements set forth in Sec. 9.6, Fences and Walls, fences and walls shall also comply with the following standards:*

Fencing and Walls, Permitted Materials. *Wood, iron, brick, true stucco over concrete block, smooth fiber cement, and extruded aluminum.*

The screened service area will consist of wooden gates.

Fencing and Walls, Configuration.

Fences or walls no more than eight (8) feet in height may be installed within the side or rear yards behind the front façade of the building.

The standard is met for the service pad screening which is below eight feet in height.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the request to construct a quadplex on the lot located at 402 West 40th Street with the following condition to be reviewed and approved by staff prior to submitting the drawings for permits, because the project is visually compatible and meets the standards.

- 1. Work with Staff on design to break up massing at the rear, include roof variability and include rear porches.**

MW: CC

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