



CITY OF SAVANNAH

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: Steve Roberts

MPC File No.: 25-006151-COA

Address: 507 West 35th Street

PIN: 20066 42016

Zoning: TR-1

Staff Reviewer: Alexander Merced

Date: January 28, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is proposing to replace the existing roof in-kind (Timberline HDZ Charcoal Algae Resistant Laminated High Definition Shingles); to repair brick skirting where needed in-kind; to replace irreparable sections of siding (Double 4.5in X 145in White Dutch Lap Vinyl Siding); to replace covered balcony and porch railings in-kind (2in X 2in X 36in Wood Pressure-Treated Square End Baluster); and to replace fencing and gates, with a single gate in front of the structure to the left, and a double gate in the rear abutting the lane (6ft X 8ft Pressure-Treated Pine Dog-Ear Board-on-Board Fence Panel with Black Steel Gate Hardware).

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

This residential building was constructed in 1912 and is a contributing resource within the National Register Cuyler-Brownville Historic District and the local Cuyler-Brownville Historic District. It is located on the south side of West 35th Street between MLK Boulevard and Burroughs Street and is bookended on the west by a contributing structure of similar construction which was built at the same time by the same company, and on the east by the rear property and fence line of a contributing structure that fronts MLK Blvd. Across the street lie two non-contributing structures.

At some point before 1994 the lower front porch was partially enclosed, and the house has large sections of vinyl siding that were installed before Cuyler-Brownville was a designated historic district.

FINDINGS:

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.

Roof shape and materials remain compatible, and no defining features are lost. This meets the standard.

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.

Deteriorated historic features are being repaired where possible, and where they are not, new features are compatible in design, color, texture, and materials. Pictures have been submitted. This meets the standard.

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 standards are met.

Cuyler-Brownville 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-Brownville 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.

Foundation, Alterations to contributing resources. *The intent of these standards is to ensure that foundations match the traditional pattern of construction in height and materials and complement the craftsmanship of contributing buildings.*

Foundations 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 foundation shall be of the same materials and configuration as the original foundation.

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 skirting around the house is constructed of brick. It is being repaired where it can be and replaced in-kind where it cannot, remaining visually compatible with surrounding contributing resources. This meets the standard.

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.

Prohibited materials, Exterior walls, Alterations to contributing resources. *Vinyl siding, aluminum siding, rolled asphalt, precast concrete panels, fiber cement wood siding, EIFS, one-part stucco over insulation and/or wood or metal framing, and T-111.*

There are large sections of vinyl siding on the house. Siding had been altered from the original dating back to at least 1994 when the Georgia Historic Resources Survey recorded the house as having aluminum siding. (As a side note, it is highly unlikely that the siding has been replaced since then. Staff believes that it was labeled as aluminum simply as a matter of nomenclature.) Seeing that the existing vinyl has been present since before Cuyler-Brownville was a designated historic district, mandating a total removal and replacement with appropriate siding would constitute an undue burden on the homeowner. Finally, the applicant states that only 5% of the siding needs replacing, and it is in an inconspicuous area to the rear of the house.

Because of this, we conclude that it is reasonable to allow vinyl to be used as the repair material *only* in areas where there is already vinyl, on the conditions that it is color matched to the rest of the house, and that staff is to be notified if the scope of work changes at all moving forward. Staff also notes that any areas with original wood siding must be replaced in-kind with matching wood siding.

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.

It appears that the current railings on the front porch and balcony are not original to the house. Furthermore, it is noted in the 1994 Georgia Historic Resources Survey that the lower porch was, at some point, partially enclosed, making it even more unlikely that they are original. The proposed new railing is made of the same material (wood) and is visually compatible with surrounding contributing resources. This meets the standard.

Roof, Contributing Resources.

Roof, Materials, Contributing Resources.

Original roof material 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 roof shall be of the same material and configuration as the original (except wood or asbestos).

Roofing material is shingles and is being replaced in-kind with Timberline HDZ Charcoal Algae Resistant Laminated High-Definition Shingles. This is visually compatible with surrounding contributing resources. This meets the standard.

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 or extruded aluminum.

Fencing is made of pressure-treated pine wood which is visually compatible with surrounding contributing resources. This meets the standard.

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.

Staff Report - Certificate of Appropriateness

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Side and rear fencing and gate will be eight (8) feet and six (6) feet respectively. This meets the standard.

A minimum of five (5) feet must be provided between a fence and a building where they are parallel.

The standard is met.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the work proposed for the property at 507 W 35th Street with the following condition to be reviewed and approved by staff prior to starting the project, because the work is otherwise visually compatible and meets the standards:

- 1. Ensure that the replacement siding is color matched with the rest of the house, and provide confirmation that the replacement area is on an inconspicuous part of the building, where the vinyl is only to be installed in areas that vinyl already exists.**
- 2. Ensure that any areas with original wood siding are replaced in kind with matching wood siding.**

MW: CC: APM

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