



CITY OF SAVANNAH

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: Janice Holloway

MPC File No.: 26-003235-COA

Address: 903 West 38th Street

PIN: 20073 02024

Zoning: TR-3

Staff Reviewer: Jodie Brown, AICP

Date: July 22, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant previously received approval (21-006460-COA) to rehabilitate and alter the rear façade of the subject property. The approval has expired and the applicant wants to obtain a new COA. The work will entail restoring the exterior facades and extending the rear one-story addition.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

Constructed mid-block in 1920, the house is located in the Demere Ward. The subject house appears to have American Four Square influences. It is two-stories with a full width front porch. The porch is supported by tapered columns on top of stuccoed brick bases. The porch has a hipped roof with a gable roof on the right side over the front door. The main entrance is accessed via brick stairs. It features a single flush door flanked with wood and glass sidelights under a single light transom. To the left of the front entrance is a tripartite window. The first floor has horizontal wood siding and the second floor is sheathed with wood shingles. Windows are symmetrically placed on each façade.

According to the Sanborn Maps, sometime between 1953 and 1966, a one-story addition was added to the rear of the house. At some point after 1966, a portion of the one-story addition was removed. The Period of Significance for Cuyler-Brownville is from 1867 to 1937 which makes the one-story addition non-contributing.

The subject building is listed as a contributing resource within the National Register Cuyler-Brownville Historic District and the local Cuyler-Brownville Historic District.

FINDINGS:

The following standards from § 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 applicant is proposing to restore the exterior of the historic portion of the house and construct a small one-story addition off of an existing addition. The proposed work is consistent with Standard 2.

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 is proposing to repair the exterior materials on the historic portion of the house. Any replacement materials will be in-kind. The proposed work is consistent with Standard 3.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards 9– New Additions to not Damage. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

The proposed addition will be located off of an existing addition that was constructed after the Period of Significance. The proposed addition could be removed in the future without damaging the historic house. The addition will be stepped in slightly at each corner, but the siding would be the same as the existing house. The exposure on the siding should be modified to help distinguish the existing construction from the new.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards 10– New Additions Reversible. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

The applicant intends to retain the existing rear wall openings and use them for access to the new addition. The two windows will be cut down to allow access. If the addition were removed in the future, the previous openings would be visible, and the exterior could be restored. The proposed work is consistent with Standard 10.

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.*

For the most part the applicant intends to restore the exterior materials. They will be repairing and replacing materials in-kind. Materials for the proposed addition are in line with the code. The proposed work is consistent with this criterion.

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.

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 applicant intends to restore the exterior materials by repairing and replacing in-kind where it cannot be repaired. The proposed work is consistent with this historic district design standard.

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.*

The applicant is not proposing to use any prohibited material on the historic portion of the house. The proposed work is consistent with this historic district design standard.

Windows, Alterations to contributing resources.

Windows shall be repaired rather than replaced, provided however, if the degree of degradation does not allow repair, the degradation of each window shall be photographically documented and verified by the Planning Director, and the new window shall be of the same materials and configuration as the original (including single-glazed and true-divided lights, when appropriate).

The applicant intends to repair the existing windows. Currently all windows are covered with plywood. The proposed work is consistent with this historic district design standard.

If the original window material and/or configuration is unknown, or if a new window is proposed in an unoriginal opening, the new window material and configuration shall be based on historic context.

The new windows at the addition will be aluminum-clad 2/2 double hung windows. The proposed work is consistent with this historic district design standard.

Doors/Entrances, Alterations to contributing resources.

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

The front door is currently a flush door. It is not clear if the door will be replaced. The applicant should provide clarification on the front door.

If the original door material and/or configuration is unknown, or if a new door is proposed in an unoriginal opening, the new door material and configuration shall be based on historic context.

The rear door would be wood and glass with 4 lights on the top and two vertical recessed panels on the bottom. The proposed work is consistent with this historic district design standard.

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.

They plan to remove the stucco from the foundation and the lower portion of the porch columns. There is no information on how the stucco will be removed, brick replacement, mortar or tooling method.

It also appears that a low pony wall on either side of the front steps was removed between 2022 and 2025. The applicant did not indicate if this will be rebuilt. As it was removed without a permit, the pony wall should be reconstructed.

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

The applicant intends to retain and repair the columns and install a wood picket baluster. It is not clear that the house originally had a railing on the front porch. A similar house at 907 West 38th

Street (two doors to the west) does not have a railing. The applicant should provide documentation that a railing was originally present.

Prohibited materials, Porches, Stoops, Balconies and Decks, Alterations to contributing resources. *Fiberglass (including Perma-Cast), vinyl and PVC.*

The applicant is not proposing to use any prohibited material. The proposed work is consistent with this historic district design 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).

The applicant intends to retain the existing roofs. The proposed addition will have a shed roof with TPO. The proposed work is consistent with this historic district design standard.

Additions. *In addition to compliance with the Visual Compatibility Criteria and the Victorian Historic District Design Standards, additions to contributing resources shall also comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation and the following standards:*

Additions shall be subordinate in mass and height to the resource.

The proposed addition will be located at the rear of an existing non-historic one-story addition. The shed roof will tuck underneath the hipped roof of the previous addition. The proposed work is consistent with this historic district design standard.

Additions shall not obscure any character-defining features.

As previously noted, the addition is located at the rear of an existing non-historic one-story addition. The proposed addition will not obscure any character-defining features. The proposed work is consistent with this historic district design standard.

Additions shall not be on the primary or front façade of the resource.

The proposed addition is located at the rear of the house. The proposed work is consistent with this historic district design standard.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE the request for the rehabilitation of, and alterations to, the building at 903 West 38th Street, including a rear addition, **WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS**, because the work is visually compatible and meets the standards.

1. Modify the siding exposure on the proposed addition to distinguish between the historic portion and the new construction.
2. Clarify any work to the front door.
3. Provide information on how the stucco will be removed, replacement bricks, type of mortar and tooling.
4. Reconstruct the pony wall at the front porch.
5. Provide documentation that a railing was historically present on the front porch.

MW: CC: JB

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.