



CITY OF SAVANNAH

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: Ward Architecture, Josh Ward

MPC File No.: 26-003246-COA

Address: 629 West 37th Street

PIN: 20073 07004

Zoning: TR-1

Staff Reviewer: Caitlin Chamberlain

Date: July 22, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting approval for a rehabilitation project of the vacant property at 629 West 37th Street. The project was initially approved by the HPC in 2021 [21-004004-COA], which has since expired. It had been reviewed and approved at the staff level. Some work on the accessory dwelling unit had been completed before the COA expired, including the installation of windows and a new roof. The overall project intends to follow the Secretary of the Interior Standards in order to receive tax credits.

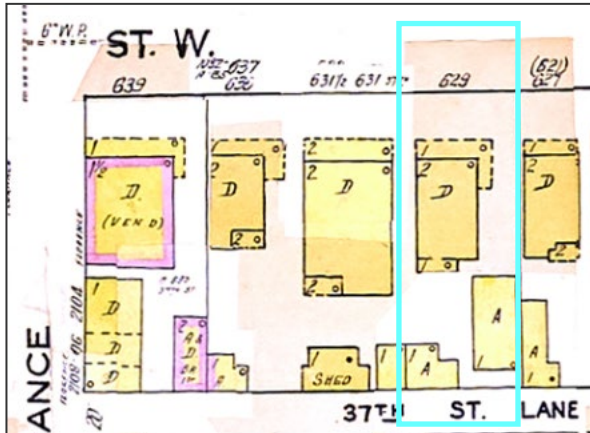
The scope of work remains the same and covers the principal dwelling and the one-story accessory dwelling unit, and includes:

- Removal of non-historic decorative metal columns and railing pickets
- Removal of non-historic aluminum windows to be replaced with wood TDL 1/1 windows
- Installation of a new wood paneled door in the front entry and new wood and glass door will be installed at the rear elevation
- Complete the construction of a partially built rear porch to include 6" wood box columns with 2" square pickets and wood tongue & groove decking
- Repair existing metal roof on the main house
- Repair and repainting of damaged wood siding and trim only in areas where necessary

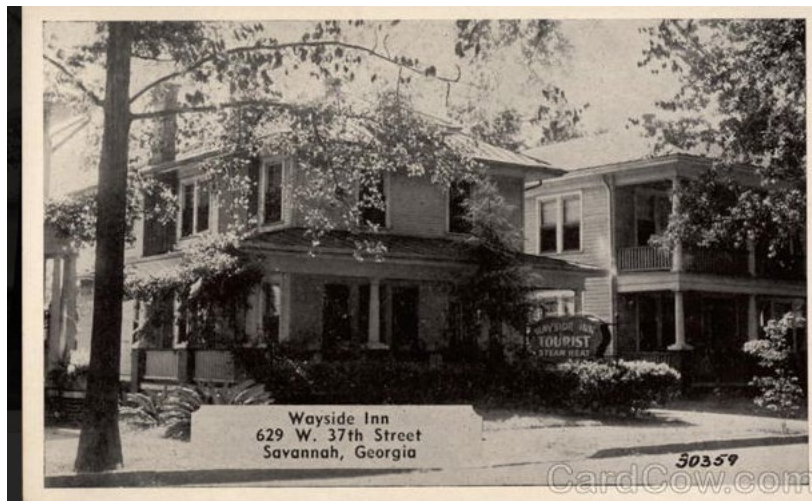
CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

629 West 37th Street was constructed in 1919 and is a contributing resource within the National Register Cuyler-Brownville Historic District and the local Cuyler-Brownville Historic District. The date of the accessory structure is unknown, but the 1953 Sanborn Map shows two one-story wood framed garages at the rear of this property. It is listed as contributing. The footprint of the existing

accessory building appears in the same area as one of the earlier garages. The images below are from the 1953 Sanborn Map and a current aerial view.



In the 1930s, the building was converted into a tourist home, called The Wayside Inn. There are historic images of the building while it functioned as the short-term rental, which provides historic context for the restoration.



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.*

Proposed work aims to restore the historic character of the building by removing metal porch columns and railings that were later modifications to the house.

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 standard is met.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards 4– Historic Changes. *Most properties change over time; those changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.*

The metal porch elements are not historic in their own right nor are the currently boarded up aluminum windows, which were modifications made beyond the period of significance which ends in 1937.

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 standard is met. Features such as the metal roofs of the main house and accessory structure, as well as wood siding will be repaired in areas where needed, which allows for the majority of the historic material to remain.

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 standard is met, per the plans.

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.*

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 replacement of the windows and doors will be in existing openings. There are no new openings proposed and the original visual compatibility of these openings will be maintained.

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 removal of the metal porch elements and replacement with more historically accurate wood columns and railings is visually compatible, especially with the house next door which very closely resembles the subject property and still has its wood columns intact.

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 materials are visually compatible.

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.

There is existing wood siding that appears to be original. Some areas are in need of repair or replacement, and this will be spot treated only in small areas where it is required. The replacement siding will be a match to what is there and painted to blend in with the existing.

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).

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.

For the main house, the windows are boarded up. The submittal packet notes that there are aluminum windows installed beneath that will be removed and replaced with double hung 1/1 wood windows that are appropriate to the time period of this building. A historic photo from 1937 confirms that the windows were 1/1.

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.

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.

Wood doors are proposed as replacements which meets the standard. In the 1937 image it is difficult to see what the front door looked like but a wood panel door like what is being proposed is appropriate. The transom and sidelites will be maintained.

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.

The original porch configuration is known, based on the 1937 image and will be returning to this form. The standard is met. A rear porch that was partially rebuilt will be completed with square box columns and wood railings and balusters. The proposed restoration work 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).

Metal roofs shall have a metal drip edge covering all edges.

The proposal is to repair the existing metal roof in areas where it is needed. The condition is such that it can be repaired rather than replaced. The metal drip edges will also remain and be replaced if needed.

Roof, Configuration, Contributing Resources.

Original roof configuration shall be maintained.

The work will maintain the original roof configuration.

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.

Chain link may be permitted in the rear yard but not along any street.

Plastic or metal slats used in chain link shall not be permitted.

A wood fence is proposed on the site plan. The standard is met.

Fencing and Walls, Configuration.

Fences or walls no more than 36 inches in height may be installed within the front yard.

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 fence is only for the side and rear yards, and proposed to be 6' in height, thus the standard is met.

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

The new fence is proposed to go into the location of the chain link fence. Chain link is no longer permitted to be on the side yard, and is visible from the street so the replacement in the footprint of the chain link fence is acceptable.

Staff Report - Certificate of Appropriateness
MPC File No. 26-003246-COA
629 W. 37th St.
July 22, 2026

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the proposed rehabilitation and alterations to the buildings located at 629 West 37th Street as requested because the work is visually compatible and meets the standards.

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.