



CITY OF SAVANNAH

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: Sawyer Design, Jonathan Leonard

MPC File No.: 25-004761-COA

Address: 531-533 East Gwinnett Street

PIN: 20043 06038

Zoning: TN-1

Staff Reviewer: Rohan Urs

Date: June 24, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting approval of an amendment to a previously approved New Construction, Small (Parts I and II) Certificate of Appropriateness for two attached single-family residences on the lane side of 531-533 East Gwinnett Street. The amendment proposes relocating the approved buildings on the site to align with the established setback pattern of adjacent contributing buildings along East Gwinnett Street. No changes are proposed to the approved architectural design, building height, massing, materials, window and door configuration, roof form, or site features.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

The subject properties are located on the north side of East Gwinnett Street between East Broad Street and Price Street within the Victorian Historic District. The surrounding block face contains a mix of contributing residential structures that generally maintain a consistent setback relationship along the street frontage. The previously approved residences are currently under review as an amendment to address building placement relative to neighboring contributing resources.

PROJECT HISTORY

On November 19, 2025, the Historic Preservation Commission approved New Construction, Small (Parts I and II) for two attached single-family residences at 531 and 533 East Gwinnett Street under File No. 25-004761-COA. The approved design incorporated a five-foot front setback in order to comply with the setback standards reviewed at that time. During subsequent permit review, it was determined that the applicable zoning provisions require the front setback to align with the established setback pattern of adjacent contributing buildings. The current application amends the previously approved site plan to relocate the buildings accordingly. No other substantive design changes are proposed.

FINDINGS:

The following standards from the Sec 7.9 - Victorian 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.*

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 amendment relocates the previously approved buildings to align with the established setback pattern of adjacent contributing buildings along East Gwinnett Street. The revised placement improves the visual relationship between the proposed residences and the surrounding historic streetscape. The architectural design remains unchanged from the previously approved proposal. The standard is met.

Rhythm. *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.*

Relocating the buildings to align with neighboring contributing structures maintains a more consistent street edge and reinforces the established rhythm of building placement along the block face. The amendment does not alter side yard spacing, building width, or overall massing. The standard is met.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve of the amendment proposed at 531-533 East Gwinnett Street for the revised setback location, as requested for the proposal 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.