



CITY OF SAVANNAH

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: Custom Building Developments, Deidrick Cody

MPC File No.: 26-002125-COA

Address: 106 West 31st Street

PIN: 20066 07008

Zoning: TN-2

Staff Reviewer: Caitlin Chamberlain

Date: June 24, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting approval for rehabilitation and alterations for the property located at 106 West 31st Street. The scope of work includes 450 square feet of siding replacement, the repair of four windows, and replace a front porch beam due to rot by water damage.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

106 West 31st Street was built in 1913 and is a contributing resource within the Thomas Square-Streetcar National Register Historic District and the local Streetcar Historic District. It is next to a vacant lot which makes it highly visible from the corner of Whitaker and West 31st Streets. At some point, the house was covered in asbestos shingles. There are portions of this that have fallen off, exposing at least some of the original clapboard siding beneath.



PROJECT HISTORY:

This project was first presented at the May 27, 2026, Historic Preservation Commission meeting where the HPC Decision was as follows:

The Savannah Historic Preservation Commission does hereby continue the rehabilitation and alterations request for the property located at 106 West 31st Street to the June 24, 2026, Historic Preservation Commission Meeting to allow the applicant time to address the following:

- 1. Provide clear photographs of each window proposed for repair and provide more details about the repair work per window.*

The applicant provided clearer photographs of each of the four windows to be repaired and stated that they will be taken to a window repair shop.

- 2. Provide a sample of the fiber cement shingles to present at the next meeting, for analysis and determination of next steps.*

A sample was not provided. However, at the last meeting the applicant mentioned that the shingles on the building are not asbestos but rather fiber cement just like what is being proposed for the replacement, thus it would be an in-kind replacement to what was installed in 2000. The proposed replacement material, GAF Weatherside fiber cement siding is specifically designed to replicate the look of old asbestos siding and is an appropriate selection.

FINDINGS:

The following standards from the Sec 7.11 - Streetcar 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 work being proposed is focused specifically on areas where there is damage that needs to be either repaired or replaced. This is aligned with maintaining the historic character of the building, though it was compromised when the asbestos shingles were installed.

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 fiber cement shingles that were installed in the early 2000s have not become historic in their own right but after approximately 25 years there are some areas in need of replacement.

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.*

There are requests to replace some rotted wood on a front porch beam, to repair rotted wood on four windows which will help maintain the distinctive features of the property.

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, and the applicant has provided clearer photos of the windows in question. The replacement of a rotted porch beam is appropriate in this case because of the condition of the wood. The replacement fiber cement shingles can be approved in this case because they are replacing something that was already installed and are not historic.

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.*

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.*

Overall, the repair work is proposed to be undertaken with in-kind materials where replacement is necessary. The materials are the wood for the windows and the porch beam, and the fiber cement replacement shingles for the exterior walls.

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.

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 are various areas on the building where the shingles have either fallen off or have deteriorated. It is acceptable to spot repair areas where shingles are missing or are in bad shape.

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.*

Fiber cement is a prohibited material on historic buildings. However, staff finds in this case it can be supported due to the fact that there are already fiber cement shingles on the house and only a partial replacement is proposed. Further, replacing with asbestos shingles that the fiber cement had eventually replaced is not an option.

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 proposes to repair four windows on the side of the building that faces Whitaker. The work includes replacing 1x6 trim around windows, removing window sashes, and replacing in-kind with the same wood. They will then be primed and painted to match the rest of the windows on the building. Photographs now show the extent of the damage and which windows.

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.

A damaged wood beam is proposed to be replaced in kind with wood. The standard is met.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the rehabilitation and alterations request for the property located at 106 West 31st 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.