



CITY OF SAVANNAH

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: Square Property

MPC File No.: 26-002456-COA

Address: 534 East 32nd Street

PIN: 200546 28009

Zoning: TN-2

Staff Reviewer: Jodie Brown, AICP

Date: June 24, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The property was previously approved in 2025 under 25-002207-COA for the construction of a new single-family home. During construction, there were in-field changes that were not reviewed for a COA. The applicant is requesting an After-the-Fact COA, to address these modifications which include changes to some windows, stucco on the stem wall, the addition of exterior light fixtures, the elimination of brackets at the rear stoop roof, the increase in the length of the perimeter fence, repositioning and screening of the HVAC.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

The subject building is located mid-block on 32nd Street between Habersham and Plant Streets in the Barry Ward.

The subject building was constructed in 2026 and is a non-contributing resource within the Thomas Square-Streetcar National Register Historic District and the local Streetcar Historic District.

FINDINGS:

The following standards from §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 project was previously reviewed to ensure that the proposed new construction would be appropriate for the historic district. During the construction phase, there were several minor modifications made. These modifications do not negatively impact the overall character of the building, and they are still compatible with surrounding homes. The proposed work is consistent with Standard 2.

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.*

With the exception of the stem wall and screening for the mechanical equipment, the applicant utilized the same materials already approved. The stem wall was originally approved for brick, but the applicant used a stucco finish with a sand finish. Due to flooding issues, Development Services required that the mechanical equipment be elevated. Previously, the equipment was on a concrete pad on the ground. With the new design the mechanical equipment, is raised on a stand and screened with wood lattice. The materials are consistent with this criterion.

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.

Foundation, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions.

Foundation Materials, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions.

Foundations shall be constructed of brick, stone, or true stucco over concrete block piers.

The applicant used stucco over concrete on the body of the stem wall. The foundation at the porch was completed as previously approved. The work is consistent with this standard.

Slab-on-grade foundations shall be allowed where the slab has been built up to a minimum of 30 inches.

The height of the originally approved foundation was maintained.

Foundation Configuration, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions.

In single-family detached, single-family attached, two-family attached, three-family/four-family, and townhouse dwellings, foundations shall be the average height of foundations on contributing buildings on the block face, or if no contributing buildings exist, shall have a minimum finished floor height of 30 inches above grade.

The height of the originally approved foundation was maintained.

Front porches shall have expressed piers.

The front porch foundation design was not altered.

Beneath a wood frame building, the foundation shall be recessed and not project forward of the building plane.

The originally designed foundation was maintained; it was just finished in a different material.

Windows, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources, and additions.

Materials, Windows, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources, and additions.

Window casings and sashes shall be made of PVC, metal, wood or clad wood material.

Two windows on the west façade were altered from what was previously approved. The material of both windows is consistent with the previously approved windows.

Configuration, Windows, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources, and additions.

Windows shall be taller than they are wide, except for accent windows, which may be round or other shapes.

The two windows on the west façade that were altered included one on the second floor that was originally a three light fixed window that was 18" x 2'10" and was changed to a 2' x 3' single hung 3/1. On the first floor, at the middle of the façade, the small window that was originally approved as a 3' x 2'10" was changed to a 2'4" x 4' single hung 3/1 window. The modified windows are consistent with this standard.

Windows shall be single-hung, double-hung, triple hung, awning, or casement, except for accent windows which may also be fixed or hopper.

The altered windows are single hung. The proposed work is consistent with this standard.

Simulated divided light windows shall be permitted provided that the muntin is 7/8 inches or less, the muntin profile shall simulate traditional putty glazing, the lower sash rail shall be wider than the meeting and top rails, and there shall be a

spacer bar in between double panes of glass. Between-the-glass, snap-in or applied muntins shall not be permitted.

The modified windows are consistent with this standard.

Porches, Stoops, Balconies and Decks, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions. Front porches or covered or uncovered stoops shall be required on all entrances for new ground floor residential construction.

Materials, Porches, Stoops, Balconies and Decks, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions.

Porch elements shall be constructed of brick, painted or stained wood, wood composite, precast stone, marble, sandstone, or slate.

At the rear porch stoop, the small gable roof was originally designed with brackets. The porch roof was constructed without brackets. The remaining elements were constructed as approved. The slightly different design is consistent with this standard.

Mechanical Equipment and Refuse. The intent of these standards is to ensure that mechanical equipment and refuse is appropriately sited to provide the least negative visual impact. In addition to the requirements set forth in Sec. 9.5, Screening and Buffers, mechanical equipment and refuse shall comply with the following:

Electrical vaults, meter boxes, communications devices, and satellite dishes shall be located on the secondary or rear façades and shall be minimally visible.

Due to concerns over flooding, Development Services requested that the mechanical equipment be raised off the ground. The applicant responded by building a wood base that the equipment could sit on and introduced screening material around the HVAC. To further enclose the wood base, the fence was extended. The equipment is on a secondary façade near the rear of the house. The work is consistent with this 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, and extruded aluminum.

The applicant was previously approved for a wood fence. The applicant extended the length of the fence to enclose the wood base for the HVAC equipment. The extension is still consistent with the original material and only to the middle of the house. The work is consistent with this standard.

Staff Report - Certificate of Appropriateness
MPC File No. 26-002456-COA
534 E 32nd Street
June 24, 2026

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE the request for After-the-Fact modifications for the property at 534 East 32nd Street AS SUBMITTED because the work is visually compatible and meets the Standards.

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.