



CITY OF SAVANNAH

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: Vardan Kasemyan

MPC File No.: 26-000936-COA

Address: 1021-1023 W 36th Street

PIN: 20067 09013, 20067 09014

Zoning: TR-1

Staff Reviewer: Jodie Brown, AICP

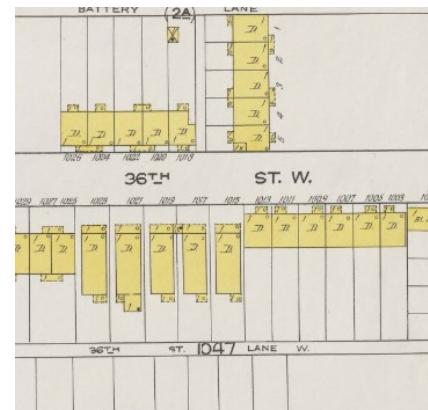
Date: March 25, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is proposing to construct a two-story duplex on two lots.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

Located mid-block on the east side of the street, the lots are located within the Battery Ward. Historically, there were two individual, one-story single-family homes at this location. Extant homes on the street are all one-story. They are either single-family, duplexes or a rowhouse. Homes that front on the street have a fairly uniform setback and the street features a slight slope. Across the street from the proposed construction are vacant lots and a single-story church. Within the district, there are one- and two-story buildings predominantly on narrow lots.



A similar project was heard by the Historic Preservation Commission in August, September and October 2025 (25-003766 COA). It was ultimately denied on 10.22.2025. Below at the left is the current front façade design and at the right is the previously designed



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 construct a two-story building over two lots. It is not clear if the lots have been combined. Homes in the immediate vicinity are one-story and located on narrow lots (24'x100'). The proposed construction will interrupt the distinctive mass and scale of the area. The proposed construction is not consistent with Standard 2.

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 immediate vicinity features one-story homes on narrow lots which is a distinctive feature of the street. The proposed construction is two stories on two lots. The proposed new construction is not consistent with Standard 5.

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 new construction is not consistent with the massing, size or scale of the extant homes on the street. The proposed work is not consistent with Standard 9.

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.

If the proposed project were permitted to be constructed and removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the environment (district) would be unimpaired. 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.*

Height. *The overall height and the height of individual components of the proposed building or structure shall be visually compatible with contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related.*

As noted, the surrounding homes are one-story on a raised foundation. Per the plans, the neighboring property at 1025 W 36th Street is 19'8" which is consistent with other contributing properties. The proposed new construction is two-stories with an overall height of 29'11". The proposed work is not consistent with this criterion.

Width. *The proportion of the overall width and the width of individual components of the proposed building or structure shall be visually compatible to the contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related.*

The majority of the homes in the immediate area are on narrow lots which makes for long/horizontal residences. The proposed construction will occupy two lots creating an overly wide residence compared to the others. The proposed work is not consistent with this criterion.

Scale. *The overall scale and the scale of individual components of the proposed building or structure shall be visually compatible to the contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related.*

The surrounding homes are one-story on a raised foundation. Per the plans, the neighboring property at 1025 W 36th Street is 19'8". The proposed new construction is two-stories with an overall height of 29'11". The proposed work is not consistent with this criterion.

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 proposed construction is setback 5' from the front property line which is similar to the house at 1025 W 36th Street. The proposed work is consistent with this criterion.

Rhythm of Building or Structure. *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.*

Extant homes on the street are either single-family, duplex or a rowhouse. There appears to be a range of open space between the buildings. The proposed project will have 10' total between the two houses. The proposed work is consistent with this criterion.

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 proposed building is consistent with the solid-void pattern present on surrounding contributing buildings. The proposed work is consistent with this criterion.

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 applicant has designed the duplex to have a smaller second floor with an inset at the north, west and east facades. The exterior wall of the 1st floor of the front room will stand proud of the second-floor balcony and the open front porch will extend out at the front. Surrounding contributing properties feature either a shed or a hipped roof at the exterior façade with the wall plane extending in line above the porch roof. The design of the proposed design is not consistent with this criterion.

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 applicant is proposing to use vertical engineered wood siding that has the appearance of T1-11, aluminum clad double hung windows from Sterling Windows and an asphalt shingle roof. The front porch will feature treated lumber for the balcony deck and a wood railing. The majority of the exterior materials are consistent with surrounding homes. The use of vertical T1-11 siding is not consistent with other contributing homes which feature horizontal lap siding. The proposed work is not consistent with this criterion.

Roof Shapes. *The roof shape of the proposed building or structure shall be visually compatible with contributing buildings and structures to which it is visually related.*

The applicant is proposing a hipped roof consistent with other contributing properties. 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.

Height and Mass. *The intent of these standards is to ensure that the height and mass are in context with contributing buildings in the same or adjacent block faces.*

The height and mass shall be subdivided both horizontally and vertically to convey human scale and visual interest that reflects the traditional size of buildings.

As noted, the surrounding homes are one-story on a raised foundation. Per the plans, the neighboring property at 1025 W 36th Street is 19'8". The proposed new construction is two-stories with an overall height of 29'11". The majority of the homes in the immediate area are on narrow lots which makes for long residences. The proposed construction will occupy two lots creating an overly wide residence compared to the others. The proposed project is not consistent with the historic district standards.

Floor-to-Floor Heights.

In single-family detached, single-family attached, two-family attached, three-family/four-family, and townhouse dwellings, the exterior expression of the height of the first story shall not be less than 11 feet and the height of the upper stories shall not be less than nine (9) feet.

The first floor has an exterior expression of 12' with a ceiling height of 10' and an additional 2' for the raised foundation. The second floor has an exterior expression of 10'. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

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 material for the foundation is not called out. The proposed project is not consistent with the historic district standards.

The space between piers may be filled with heavy gauge wood lattice with at least one-half (0.5) inch thick lattice boards, horizontal boards, brick or true stucco over concrete block. Infill material shall be recessed a minimum of three inches behind the front edge of the pier so that the piers are clearly visible and differentiated.

It does not appear that there is in-fill between the piers. This aspect should be clarified on the plans. Appropriate material for the infill includes horizontal boards, .5 inch thick wood lattice boards, brick or true stucco over concrete block.

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 applicant did not provide this information. This aspect should be clarified on the plans. The proposed project is not consistent with the historic district standards.

Front porches shall have expressed piers.

The front porch appears to have expressed piers, but the material of the piers is not called out. This aspect should be clarified on the plans. The proposed project is not consistent with the historic district standards.

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

This aspect should be clarified on the plans. The proposed project is not consistent with the historic district standards.

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

Permitted materials, Exterior walls, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources, and additions. Brick, stone, wood, true stucco, painted concrete block, precast concrete panels, metal shingles, and wood or fiber cement siding.

The applicant is proposing to use engineered wood with a T1-11 siding appearance. The proposed material is not listed as a permitted material. The proposed project is not consistent with the historic district standards.

Prohibited materials, Exterior walls, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources, and additions. Vinyl siding, aluminum siding, rolled asphalt, EIFS, one-part stucco over insulation and/or wood or metal framing, T-111, corrugated metal, unpainted exposed concrete block.

The proposed exterior material has the appearance of T1-11 siding which is listed as a prohibited material. The proposed project is not consistent with the historic district standards.

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.

The applicant is proposing to use Sterling Double Hung windows by Kolbe & Kolbe. The proposed windows are wood on the interior and aluminum on the exterior. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

Window glass shall be transparent with no dark tints or reflective effects (except for stained glass windows). This provision does not preclude the use of Low Emissivity or laminated glass.

The proposed windows appear to have no dark tints or reflective glass. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

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 windows are taller than wider. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

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

The proposed windows will be double hung. The proposed project is not consistent with the historic district standards.

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.

This information is not provided in the plans or supporting documentation. The proposed project is not consistent with the historic district standards.

Framing members shall be covered with appropriate trim; trim shall feature a header, surrounds, and pronounced sill where appropriate.

This information is not provided in the plans or supporting documentation. The proposed project is not consistent with the historic district standards.

Window sashes shall be inset a minimum of three (3) inches from the façade of a building, except for wood frame buildings.

The proposed building is a wood frame building, and this section does not apply.

All residential facades visible from a street shall incorporate transparent features (windows and doors) over a minimum of 30% of the ground floor façade.

Plans note that the ground floor street visible facades will have a transparency greater than 30%. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

Doors/Entrances, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions.

Doors/Entrances, Materials, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions.

Doors shall be made of glass, wood, clad wood or steel (without wood grain simulation).

The plans indicate that the doors will be wood and glass. It is not clear if all of the doors will have the same design. Door designs at the front and the rear should be clarified.

Doors/Entrances, Configuration, New construction, alterations to non-contributing resources and additions.

Entrances shall face the primary street on which the building is located (normally the street from which it takes its address).

Primary entrance doors face the street. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

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.*

The proposed project features a full-width front porch. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

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

On porches and stoops, piers and base walls shall be of the same material as the foundation wall facing the street.

It is not clear on the material proposed for the porch foundation. The proposed project is not consistent with the historic district standards.

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

The proposed porch will be constructed of painted wood in coal black for the deck and railing. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

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

On single-family detached, single-family attached and two-family attached dwellings, a front porch a minimum of six (6) feet in depth shall be required over a minimum of 50% of the front façade.

The proposed porch has a depth of 6'. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

Wood portico posts shall have cap and base molding.

It is not clear that the porch supports have a cap and base molding. The proposed project is not consistent with the historic district standards.

Balusters shall be placed between upper and lower rails, and the distances between balusters shall not exceed four (4) inches on center. The height of the railing shall not exceed 36 inches for single- and two-family dwelling units.

The proposed railing will be 42" high and have pickets spaced 4" on center. The proposed project is not consistent with the historic district standards.

Front porches shall not be enclosed.

The proposed project does not feature an enclosed porch. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

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

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

Roof coverings shall be standing seam metal, v-crimp, slate or equivalent synthetic, or architectural asphalt or similar shingles.

The proposed roof will be asphalt shingles. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

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

Shed and porch roofs, subordinate and attached to the primary building, shall be pitched between 2:12 and 6:12.

The front porch appears to consistent with this requirement. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

Gable and hip roof shall be symmetrically pitched between 4:12 and 10:12.

The front porch appears to consistent with this requirement. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

Eaves shall extend no less than 12 inches beyond supporting walls.

Eaves will be 2'. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

Lighting. *The intent of these standards is to ensure that light fixtures have appropriate scale, are sited appropriately, are made of appropriate materials and complement the building on which they are located. In addition to the requirements set forth in Sec. 9.8, Lighting, lighting shall comply with the following:*

Materials: Light fixtures shall be constructed of metal and/or glass.

Exterior lighting is not called out on the plans. This aspect should be clarified.

Vehicular Access.

For single- and two-family dwellings, where a site has access to a lane, the lane shall be the sole means of vehicular access to the site. Where lane access is not available, a driveway shall be permitted from the street provided that it is a ribbon strip design. The driveway shall be no wider than 12 feet and the area between the strips shall be planted with grass or plants that grow or are maintained to no taller than one-half foot.

For uses other than single- and two-family dwellings, vehicular access shall be from the lane. Where there is no lane, the Governing Body Engineer shall consult with each other to determine the most appropriate access location.

Vehicular access will be provided from the lane to a parking pad. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

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.

The proposed project will be installing a 6' wood perimeter fence with a gate at the lane for vehicular access. The fence returns will be behind the porch. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

Fencing and Walls, Configuration.

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 will be limited to 6' in height. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

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

The perimeter fence will be at the property line which is at 7' and 5' from the side facades. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

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.

The electrical meters will be located on the side of the house. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

Roof mounted equipment and HVAC units shall be screened from view from the street.

The HVAC system will be located at the side of the house behind a 6' fence. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

Refuse storage areas for dumpsters and compactors shall be located within a building or to the side of rear of the building and screened from the public right-of-way.

The refuse storage area will be within the perimeter fence and not visible from the lane. The proposed project is consistent with the historic district standards.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends **DENIAL** for the new construction at 1021–1023 West 36th Street. While some of proposed materials and detailing meet the applicable *Cuyler-Brownville Historic District Design Standards* for new construction, the overall building scale and massing remain visually incompatible with the contributing context. The double-lot width creates a continuous facade that contrasts sharply with the established rhythm, proportion, and spacing of adjacent single-lot residences.

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.