



CITY OF SAVANNAH

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: Ethos Preservation, Kim Campbell

MPC File No.: 26-001010-COA

Address: 1201 Abercorn Street

PIN: 20053 03001

Zoning: TN-1

Staff Reviewer: Alexander Merced

Date: March 25, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant would like to amend the previously issued COA, file # 24-002994-COA. The changes include replacing the current ADA entry door on the rear of the building and installing new handrails on the main front steps to comply with life/safety requirements. These are additional scopes of work that were not part of the original COA.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

The building was constructed in 1887 and is a contributing resource within the National Register Victorian Historic District and the local Victorian Historic District.

1201 Abercorn Street was constructed in 1887 per the state survey, but a brief history of the building found in MPC files would suggest a later date of construction. The history reads:

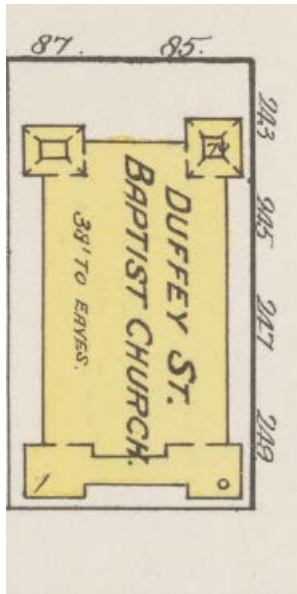
The structure now known as Asbury United Methodist Church was constructed in 1896 as Duffy Street Baptist Church at a cost of \$9,500. The first church at this site, constructed in 1886, was badly damaged by a storm and was rebuilt. The Asbury United Methodist congregation formed in 1871 according to a plaque on the church. The Duffy Street Baptist Church congregation purchased the building sometime between 1927-1945 because they celebration by burning the mortgage on November 4, 1945.

The State Survey notes that the building underwent various unknown alterations ca. 1896. The alterations as well as the varying dates of construction may be due to the damage to the structure and the work necessary to repair it.

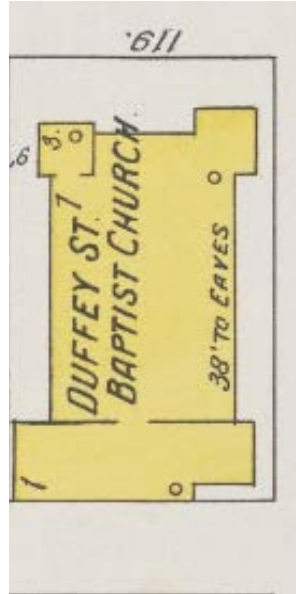
Additional alterations were carried out in 1911 according to the State Survey. The survey states that “it is known that there were alterations/additions at this time – probably the small one-story addition along Duffy Street.”

Sanborn Maps

The Sanborn Maps show that the one-story portion that now faces the lane was altered between 1888 and 1898. Changes made to the building during this time were possibly due to damage to the structure.



1. 1888 Sanborn Map



2. 1898 Sanborn Map

Multiple alterations were carried out between 1898 and 1916 to include the construction of a one-story rear addition, a one-story side addition facing Duffy Street, extensive alterations of the one-story element facing the lane (or its complete removal and construction of a new two-story addition), alterations to the corner towers, and a front addition.



2. 1916 Sanborn Map showing significant changes

FINDINGS:

The following standards from the Sec 7.9 - Victorian 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.

No historic features will be removed. The standard is met.

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 existing ADA door is non-historic, and the handrails are necessary in order to meet life/safety requirements, plus they will be minimally intrusive to the building. The standard is met.

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.

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 standards are met.

Victorian 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 Victorian Historic District. They are also intended to protect the historic integrity of contributing resources. Designs for new construction are to be consistent with contributing resources from the district's Period of Significance (1870-1923).

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.

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.

The existing ADA door is a flush steel door that has been painted and is not historic. The new door will be a custom-built wood paneled door. The standard is met.

This door replacement was not included in the original scope of work.

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.

The opening and configuration will remain unchanged. As stated above, the new door will be wood paneled. The standard is met.

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 previous front handrails were non-historic and will be removed per the previous proposal. The new handrails are a life/safety matter, and three sections of 1.5" metal railing will be installed on each of the two front stairs. The standard is met.

Prohibited materials, Porches, Stoops, Balconies and Decks, Alterations to contributing resources. Fiberglass (including Perma-Cast), vinyl and PVC.

As stated above, the new handrails will be made of metal. The standard is met.

Staff Report - Certificate of Appropriateness
MPC File No. 26-001010-COA
1201 Abercorn St.
March 25, 2026

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the proposed COA Amendment for work at 1201 Abercorn Street as requested because the new work is visually compatible and meets the standards.

MW: JM: APM

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.