



CITY OF SAVANNAH

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: Ashley Field

MPC File No.: 26-001992-COA

Address: 420 East Bolton Street

PIN: 20044 16002

Zoning: TN-1

Staff Reviewer: Caitlin Chamberlain

Date: May 27, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting approval for rehabilitation and alterations to the historic house located at 420 East Bolton Street. The scope of work includes select clapboard siding replacement of damaged boards, caulking of existing boards to repel water issues, and miscellaneous front porch repairs including repairs to a railing baluster, one rotted front porch board and four window sash rails. The scope also includes the removal of an existing fence surrounding the rear yard to potentially open up as a parking area off of the lane.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

420 East Bolton Street was built in 1913 and is a contributing resource within the National Register Victorian Historic District and the local Victorian Historic District. The applicant provided a detailed submittal packet and noted that the east side of the house has Hardie siding which may have been installed prior to 2019.

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.*

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.*

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.*

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 above standards are met. The proposed work is focused on areas in need of repair rather than a full-scale replacement of all siding. The applicant mentioned that at some point in the past, Hardie lap siding was installed on the east elevation. It is not known when this work was done, but it is likely that it was before the 2019 overlay district was established.

The applicant clearly labeled on the drawings the areas in question, showing the deterioration of certain areas of siding that has experienced significant water damage. The application also shows which four window sash rails are proposed to be repaired as well as the replacement details for a few porch elements. This work is sensitive to the historic fabric of the majority of the building that remains in good condition.

The fence was installed sometime after a renovation in 2016 and is not historic nor has it become so. Its removal will not negatively impact the historic character of the house.

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 proposed materials are wood clapboard siding to match the existing, and wood replacement materials for items that are not salvageable such as damaged wood on some porch elements. The standard is met and is appropriate for the building and its surrounding area.

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.

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.

The applicant highlighted areas of damaged siding on the west side of the home that is requested to be replaced in kind with the same type of clapboard wood siding. There is an estimated 50 pieces of siding proposed to be installed as replacement. The whole house will then be repainted. Color is not evaluated in the Victorian historic district, but the information was included.

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 standard is met. There are four windows where the sash rails will be repaired or replaced in-kind with the same type of wood if the degradation is beyond repair. Instead of proposing to replace the entire windows, this is a favorable outcome to preserve the historic window with minor repair work.

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.

The standard is met in this case for the minor repairs of some elements such as a baluster and rotted floorboard. Wood will be used for any replacement material needed.

Parking and Paving. *The intent of these standards is to create and protect contiguous, active pedestrian street fronts. In addition to the requirements set forth in Sec. 9.3, Off-Street Parking and Loading, parking and paving shall comply with the following:*

Parking areas shall be located in the rear yard except for single- and two-family dwelling units which may also provide parking in the side yard behind the face of the front façade.

The intention of removing the backyard fence is to open up the existing concrete pad for parking. This would be in the rear yard and thus meets the standard. The applicant will also coordinate with the City's Traffic Engineering Department to ensure proper conversion to a parking pad.

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.

The parking would be accessed off of East Gwinnett Lane. The standard is met.

Staff Report - Certificate of Appropriateness
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STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the rehabilitation and alterations for the property located at 420 East Bolton 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.