



CITY OF SAVANNAH

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: Felder and Associates, Cathryn Sinclair

MPC File No.: 26-002076-COA

Address: 422 West 43rd Street

PIN: 20074 18011

Zoning: TC-1

Staff Reviewer: Rohan Urs

Date: May 27, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The petitioner is requesting approval for New Construction, Part I: Height and Mass, associated with a proposed two-story addition to 422 West 43rd Street, an existing contributing structure within the Streetcar Historic District. Due to the significant impact and scale of the proposed addition, the applicant has requested separate review of Part I and Part II. The proposal includes demolition of an existing non-contributing covered courtyard structure and construction of a new attached two-story addition. The project also includes rehabilitation work associated with the existing house.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

The subject property is a contributing structure within the Streetcar Historic District. The surrounding area is characterized by a mix of one-story and two-story residential structures, including contributing historic residences and larger-scale residential development along nearby corridors. The block contains a range of building masses and configurations, including attached and closely spaced residential forms. The existing house, hyphen and addition are all within the same lot.

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 proposed addition retains the historic character of the contributing structure by maintaining the visual prominence and primary massing of the original building. The addition remains secondary in height and is differentiated from the historic structure. Standard met.

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 addition is differentiated from the historic structure while remaining compatible with the massing, scale, and character of the property and surrounding district. The applicant is yet to address the same in terms of Part 2 and its parameters. The addition is located within the footprint of an existing non-contributing courtyard structure and does not obscure the primary historic façade. **Standard met.**

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.*

The proposed addition and rehabilitation work are located primarily at the side portions of the contributing structure and retain the primary historic form and character of the building. The proposed work appears capable of being removed in the future without impairing the essential integrity of the original historic resource. Standard met.

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.*

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.*

The proposed addition has an approximate height of 25 feet 6 inches, which remains subordinate to the existing contributing structure at approximately 29 feet in height. The proposed height is visually compatible with surrounding residential development patterns. Standard met.

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.*

While substantial in size, the proposed addition remains visually subordinate to the contributing structure through reduced height, stepped-back massing, and differentiation between the historic structure and new construction. The proposal occupies the footprint of an existing non-contributing courtyard structure and maintains the visual prominence of the historic building. Standard met.

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 addition maintains setback relationships consistent with surrounding development patterns within the district. The placement of the addition remains compatible with the established streetscape rhythm and spatial organization of nearby structures. Standard met.

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.*

The proposal maintains compatible spatial relationships between structures and preserves the general rhythm of development along the block. The addition infills an existing non-contributing courtyard condition while maintaining visual separation between the historic structure and adjacent properties. Standard met.

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 proposed roof forms are consistent with residential roof typologies found within the district and maintain compatibility with surrounding contributing structures. Standard met.

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.

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.

The proposed addition utilizes stepped-back massing and reduced height to maintain compatibility with the contributing structure and surrounding context. The proposal maintains a residential scale appropriate to the district while introducing new construction within an existing developed portion of the site. Standard met.

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.

In all other building types, the exterior expression of the height of the first story shall not be less than 13 feet and height of the upper stories shall not be less than nine (9) feet.

The first floor is expressed at approximately 13 feet in height, consistent with minimum commercial floor height standards, while the second floor is expressed at approximately 10 feet in height. The overall vertical organization remains compatible with surrounding mixed residential and commercial development patterns along the corridor. Standard met

Additions. *In addition to compliance with the Visual Compatibility Criteria and the Victorian Historic District Design Standards, additions to contributing resources shall also comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation and the following standards:*

Additions shall be subordinate in mass and height to the resource.

Additions shall not obscure any character-defining features.

Additions shall not be on the primary or front façade of the resource.

The proposed addition remains subordinate in height and mass and does not obscure the primary façade or principal character-defining features of the contributing structure. Rehabilitation work to the existing building includes restoration of historic siding and compatible window and trim replacement. Standard met.

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.

The proposal includes restoration of historic wood siding and replacement of non-historic exterior material with in-kind wood siding and trim elements. The rehabilitation work retains and reinforces the historic exterior character of the contributing structure. Standard met.

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).

If the original window material and/or configuration is unknown, or if a new window is proposed in an unoriginal opening, the new window material and configuration shall be based on historic context.

The proposal includes repair of existing historic double-hung windows and installation of new double-hung windows matching the historic configuration in-kind where modifications occur. The proposed rehabilitation work maintains the historic window character and proportions of the contributing structure. Standard met.

The following standards from the Article 5 - Base Zoning Districts apply:

(TC) Traditional Commercial District Development Standards. *Development in any TC-district shall meet the development standards as set forth below.*

TC-1 Development Standards for Permitted Uses.

TC-1, Minimum Lot Dimensions, Nonresidential.

Lot area per unit (sq. ft.): None

Lot width per unit (ft.): 20

TC-1 Maximum Building Coverage. *None*

TC-1 Minimum Building frontage (min). *70%*

TC-1 Building footprint (max sq. ft.). *5,500*

TC-1, Building Setbacks (ft), For blocks with contributing structures.

Front yard: average of block face

Side yard (interior): 10 (min). There is no minimum side yard (interior) setback for properties adjacent to any TC zoning district.

Side yard (corner): average of block face

Rear yard: 10 (min)

TC-1, Height (max). *3 stories up to 45 ft.*

Staff Report - Certificate of Appropriateness
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Monumental buildings in the Streetcar Overlay District are exempt from the maximum building footprint and maximum height standards provided that the visual compatibility criteria are met.

Based on the submitted plans, the proposed development generally appears compliant with the applicable TC-1 development standards, including lot width, setbacks, building footprint, and height requirements. The proposed addition remains subordinate to the contributing structure and compatible with the surrounding development pattern. Staff recommends that the applicant verify and confirm compliance with the minimum required 70% building frontage at the meeting.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the rehabilitation of the historic structure and New Construction, Part I: Height and Mass, for the addition located at 422 West 43rd Street as requested, as the proposal is visually compatible and meets the applicable standards.

MW: CC: RU

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.