



CITY OF SAVANNAH

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: Janet Lewis

MPC File No.: 26-004364-COA

Address: 2412 Burroughs Street

PIN: 20073 27018

Zoning: TR-1

Staff Reviewer: Alexander Merced

Date: September 23, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant would like to demolish the fire damaged and condemned contributing structure at 2412 Burroughs Street.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

The building was constructed in 1911 and is a contributing resource within the National Register Cuyler-Brownville Historic District and the local Cuyler-Brownville Historic District. It sits on the east side of Burroughs Street along West 40th Lane and sits on a block composed mostly of contributing buildings.

The building sustained severe fire damage on 06/11/2026. The inspection report performed by Michael Rose on the following day, 06/12/2026, noted extensive damage throughout, with roof collapse, wall collapse, and floor collapse. Full demolition was recommended, and the building has been condemned.

FINDINGS:

The following standards from the Sec 3.18.8 - HPC Criteria for Relocation or Demolition apply:

Criteria for Relocation or Demolition.

Evaluation Required. Any non-contributing resource must first be evaluated and considered for contributing status prior to issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness for relocation or demolition (See Sec. 3.16.4.b.).

Sec. 3.16.4.b. Classification of Resources and Criteria for Resource Designation. All resources within the District shall be classified and designated on the District's

“Historic District Contributing Resources Map.” All resources shall be identified as contributing or non-contributing as follows:

Contributing. All resources identified on the “Historic District Contributing Resources Map” having historic significance shall be considered “contributing” and worthy of preservation and shall be classified as “historic” for purposes hereunder.

The building is listed as a contributing resource.

Period of Significance. Contributing buildings include those within the current Period of Significance, possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and meet one of more of the following criteria:

Are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or

Are associated with the lives of significant persons in our past; or

Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

Have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in historic or prehistory.

Although this building is listed as contributing, due to the extensive fire damage, the character defining features and historical integrity of the building have been lost. Aside from that, the building is not associated with any particular events or individuals that warrant special significance.

Criteria. *The Historic Preservation Commission shall determine that at least one of the criteria below has been satisfied when a contributing resource is proposed for relocation or demolition.*

The relocation or demolition is required to alleviate an immediate threat to public health or public safety;

As noted by the building inspection performed after the fire, the property is open and unsecured, with extensive damage throughout that includes the collapse of the roof, walls, and floor. Full demolition was recommended, and the building has been condemned.

The relocation or demolition is required to avoid exceptional practical difficulty or undue hardship upon the owner of the property if all the following conditions are also satisfied:

The applicant has provided evidence sufficient to demonstrate that the application of the standards of this Section deprives the applicant of reasonable economic return on the subject property; and

The undue hardship is not of the property owner’s own making.

The applicant would be left with the non-developable and condemned remains of the current structure that has been damaged beyond repair due to fire.

Conditions. *In granting a Certificate of Appropriateness for relocation or demolition, the Historic Preservation Commission may impose, in addition to those listed below, reasonable conditions as will mitigate the negative effects of the relocation or demolition.*

Staff recommends the following conditions:

1. Determine whether any materials can be salvaged for reuse.
2. Document the building as per the City of Savannah's Policy for Documenting Buildings Prior to Demolition.

Demolition. *In the case of the demolition of a contributing principal building, a Certificate of Appropriateness must first be issued for the new construction of the replacement building prior to approval of the demolition.*

In this case, the demolition is requested due to immediate threat and thus can override the need for a concurrent COA for new construction.

Application Requirements. *Except where a resource or portion of a resource poses an immediate threat to public safety, all applications for relocation or demolition of a contributing or non-contributing resource shall include the following information:*

Contributing Resource.

A detailed explanation for the relocation or demolition and why it cannot be avoided;

The demolition is proposed because of severe and irreparable fire damage.

Information documenting the construction date, history and development of the property;

The building was constructed in 1911. No other relevant information has been found.

A report from a Georgia-licensed structural engineer with demonstrated experience in historic renovation, restoration, or rehabilitation, as to the structural soundness of the contributing resource. The report shall also identify any dangerous structural conditions;

As noted previously, Michael Rose from the City of Savannah inspected the building, noted the dangerous conditions, and recommended full demolition.

A fair market value appraisal of the property from a Georgia-licensed property appraiser. The appraisal shall include a full market sales report to include comparable sales;

Due to the severity of the fire damage, the above is not applicable in this case.

The amount paid for the property; the remaining balance on any mortgage or other financing secured by the property; and, the annual debt service for the previous two (2) years;

According to SAGIS, the property was last purchased in 1981 for \$2,800. The building has been vacant for a number of years and there is no outstanding mortgage or debt balances that staff is aware of.

If the property is income producing, the annual gross income from the property for the previous two (2) years; the itemized operating and maintenance expenses for the previous two (2) years; and depreciation deduction and annual cash flow before and after debt service for the previous two (2) years. The Historic Preservation Commission may require details of past rental history;

The property has been vacant for a number of years and is not income producing.

The selling price asked and offers received within the previous two (2) years; the most recent assessed values of the property and real estate taxes (if applicable); and, evidence of listing for sale;

There have been no recent attempts to sell the property. According to SAGIS, the most recent appraisal value for the land and building was \$57,600, although that was before the structure fire.

Any economic incentives and/or funding available to the applicant through federal, state, local or private programs.

Due to the severity of the fire damage, the above is not applicable in this case.

Demolition Due to Immediate Threat. Any order for demolition by the City Manager of his or her designee in whole or in part, of any contributing resource within a local historic district or local historic property due to a dangerous, hazardous or unsafe condition shall not be issued until the order has been reviewed and signed by a Georgia-licensed structural engineer, Planning Director and City Manager.

As noted previously, Michael Rose from the City of Savannah inspected the building, noted the dangerous conditions, and recommended full demolition. Additionally, the City of Savannah has condemned the building. Due to these factors, the above requirements are not applicable in this case.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the demolition of the fire damaged and condemned contributing structure at 2412 Burroughs Street with the following conditions because it otherwise meets the standards for contributing demolition due to immediate threat to public health and safety:

- 1. Determine whether any materials can be salvaged for reuse.**
- 2. Document the building as per the City of Savannah's Policy for Documenting Buildings Prior to Demolition.**

MW: CC: APM

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.