



CITY OF SAVANNAH

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: VP2 Design, Victor Pluznyk

MPC File No.: 26-001624-COA

Address: 306 East 34th Street

PIN: 20053 40008

Zoning: TN-2

Staff Reviewer: Caitlin Chamberlain

Date: September 23, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The petitioner is requesting approval for the construction of a new accessory dwelling unit (ADU) located in the rear of 306 East 34th Street. A Certificate of Appropriateness was issued for this project in 2023 [23-000062-COA], but the COA has since expired, and the ordinance changed shortly after the approval regarding size regulations for ADUs.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

306 East 34th Street is a two-story wood frame single family house located within the Streetcar Historic District. 306 East 34th Street was built in 1918 and is a contributing resource within the Thomas Square-Streetcar National Register Historic District and the local Streetcar Historic District.

The rear yard of the building is currently used as parking with access from a mid-block lane. The surrounding buildings are primarily residential and two-story in nature. As part of the earlier COA scope of work, demolition of a non-contributing shed was also approved, which has been completed.

PROJECT HISTORY:

The application was first presented at the April 22, 2026, Historic Preservation Commission meeting as a re-application of the expired previously approved COA. The decision was as follows:

The Savannah Historic Preservation Commission does hereby continue the request to construct a two-story accessory dwelling unit at the rear of the property located at 306 East 34th Street to the June 24, 2026, Historic Preservation Commission Meeting to address the following:

1. *Scale down the footprint of the ADU to be 40% or less of the footprint of the principal building; or apply for a variance recommendation request from the HPC to the Zoning Board of Appeals.*

The applicant opted to apply for a variance through the City of Savannah's Zoning Board of Appeals. The staff recommendation was to deny the variance request (attached to agenda), but the Board approved the request to increase the maximum footprint from 40% of the building footprint, to approximately 86%. The reason for this large increase is that under the old ordinance, the 40% rule was for the percentage of the total square footage of the principal building rather than just the footprint.

2. *Confirm that there is not a closet in the room labeled as an office to ensure there is only one bedroom in the ADU.*

The applicant has confirmed that this would be an office, not a second bedroom, as a means to attract renters who are young professionals, that an office space would be seen as an asset. However, the plans do have a notation about a Murphy bed in the office space, thus staff recommends that this is confirmed as an office and that the final set of drawings reflect that this is not a secondary bedroom.

FINDINGS:

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

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

TN-2 Development Standards for Permitted Uses.

TN-2, Minimum Lot Dimensions, Single-family Detached.

Lot area (sq. ft.): 3,000

Lot width (ft.): 30

The standards are met, the lot width is 45 feet and total lot area is 6,248 square feet.

TN-2, Maximum Building Coverage. 60%

TN-2, Minimum Building frontage. 70%

The standards are met, the proposed total building coverage will be 1,393 square feet of the allowed 3,748 square feet which calculates to a building coverage of 22%. The building frontage is pre-existing.

TN-2, Building Setbacks (ft), For blocks with contributing structures.

Front yard: average of block face

Side yard (interior): 3 (min)

The standards are met, the proposed side yard (interior) setback is 5'-1" to the west lot line and 8'-11 7/8" to the east lot line.

TN-2, Maximum Height. 3 stories, not to exceed 45 ft.

The standard is met, the main ridge height of the proposed carriage house will be 24'-3 1/4."

Additional Requirements Applicable to all TN Districts.

Accessory structures with a roof must be located in the rear yard.

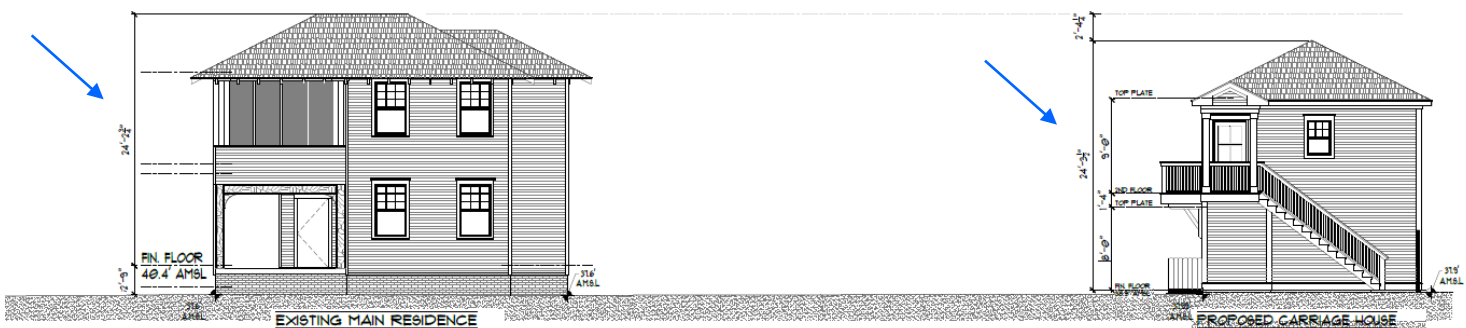
The standard is met.

The following standards from the Sec 7.11 - Streetcar Historic District Ordinance apply:

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.*

The standard is not met. According to the drawings, the main ridge height of the proposed carriage house will be 24'-3 ¼" where the height of the principal building is 24'-2 ¾" which is nearly identical in height with the ADU being the slightest bit taller. This is not visually compatible and atypical of historic accessory structures which are historically shorter in height. Staff recommends that the applicant confirm the heights are depicted accurately, and if so, should be adjusted to meet the standard.



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.*

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.*

There are currently no contributing buildings fronting the lane of which to compare, however, in relation to the principal house the standard is not met in the sense that accessory structures are to be subordinate to the principal building and this reads as equal in size, per the drawings as seen below.



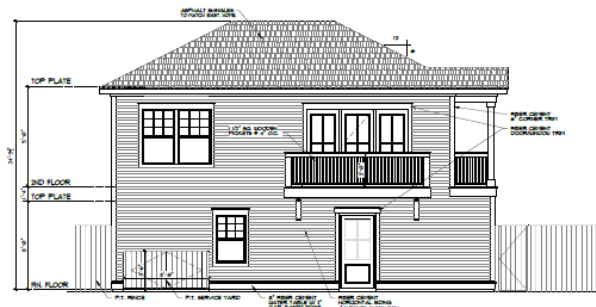
FRONT ELEVATION - MAIN HOUSE
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



SOUTH ELEVATION - PROPOSED
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



FRONT ELEVATION - MAIN HOUSE
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



NORTH ELEVATION - PROPOSED
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

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 standard is met. The proposed setbacks meet the development regulations for TN-2 and will be visually compatible.

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 fenestration patterns of the proposed carriage house are off center and do not replicate a symmetrical pattern that would be more visually compatible with the historic buildings in the vicinity. However, this is most prevalently seen on the north elevation which faces the house and will not be highly visible. The other three elevations visible from the lane are more aligned in a way that is visually compatible while not trying to be an exact copy of the historic house.

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 visually compatible and are listed below per the petitioner:

- Foundation- 4" slab with true stucco finish
- Siding- Fiber Cement Horizontal Siding
- Shingles- GAF Timberline HDZ architectural asphalt shingles
- Windows- Windsor Pinnacle Aluminum Clad Wood
- Garage Door- Wayne Dalton Garage Door, Metal
- Door- Wood

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 gable roof is visually compatible with the surrounding contributing buildings. It has limited accessibility and visibility from the lane and street.

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.

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, and wood or fiber cement siding.

The standard is met, see specification above under materials.

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, and unpainted exposed CMU blocks.

These materials are not proposed.

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 standard is met, see above under materials.

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 standard is met.

Solid vinyl windows are prohibited.

These are not proposed.

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.

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

The standards are met.

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.

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

The standards are met.

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).

Doors shall not have a decorative diamond inset or half-moon inset.

The standards are met, see above under materials.

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.

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

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

Prohibited material: Vinyl.

The standards are met.

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

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.

Per the drawings the standards are met.

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 standard is met.

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

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

The standard is met, the pitch will be 6:12.

Eaves and rakes on accessory buildings and dormers shall overhang at least eight (8) inches.

The standard is met, the eave will be 12”.

Soffits shall be placed perpendicular to the building wall, not sloping in plane with the roof (except for gable end rakes).

The standard is met.

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.

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

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 standards are met, the service yard for the equipment will be hidden from the public right-of-way. The meter box will be located on the east façade of the proposed carriage house.

Accessory Structures. *(including garages, carports and accessory dwellings units, excluding fuel canopies). In addition to compliance with the Visual Compatibility Criteria and the Victorian Historic District Design Standards, accessory structures shall also comply with the requirements set forth in Sec. 8.7, Accessory Structures and Uses, and the following standards:*

New accessory structures shall be located in the rear yard.

The standard is met, the structure will be in the rear of the principal structure.

New accessory structures shall be in scale with other contributing accessory structures on the lane.

The standard is met, there are not any existing contributing accessory structures on the lane.

The height and mass of the primary building shall not be exceeded by any new accessory structure on the same parcel.

The standard is not met. Per the drawings, the proposed ADU would be slightly taller than the primary building.

Accessory structures shall not be more than two (2) stories tall

The standard is met.

Garage openings shall not exceed 12 feet in width.

The standard is met. Each opening is 8 feet wide.

New accessory structures may have up to a five (5) foot lane setback to allow a turning radius into the garage.

The standard is met, a 2'-0 1/8" setback is proposed from the lane.

Side yard setbacks for new accessory structures shall be a minimum of three (3) feet.

The standard is met, both side yard setbacks will be over 5 feet.

The following standards from the Sec 8.7 - Accessory Structures and Uses apply:

Accessory Structures and Uses, Generally. *All accessory structures and uses shall be consistent with all standards of the base zoning district (Article 5.0), any applicable overlay district (Article 7.0) and any applicable use standards (Article 8.0), except as expressly set forth below. Accessory structure and uses shall:*

Be accessory and clearly incidental and subordinate to a permitted principal use. No accessory use may be established on a site prior to the establishment of a permitted principal use.

The standard is not met. The height is noted to be roughly 2" taller than the principal use which will visually make it look either slightly taller or equal in height, neither of which meets the standard of being accessory to the principal building.

Be located on the same property as the principal use or structure.

The standard is met.

Not involve uses or structures not in keeping with the character of the principal use or principal structure served.

The standard is met.

A parcel shall include only one accessory dwelling unit or one caretaker's dwelling unit.

There will be only one ADU.

Accessory Dwelling Units (not including Caretaker's Dwelling Unit). *One (1) accessory dwelling unit shall be permitted as an accessory use to a principal dwelling located in the A-1, RSF-, RTF-, RMF-, TR-, TN-, TC-, D- and PD districts. Such use is not required to be included in the gross residential density calculations. Manufactured homes, shipping containers, recreational vehicles, and travel trailers shall not be used as accessory dwelling units. For such use, the following shall apply:*

Accessory Dwelling Units, Location.

The unit may be attached to or detached from the principal dwelling.

The ADU will be detached.

Detached accessory dwelling units shall meet the same side-yard setback requirement as the principal structure. Such units shall be separated from the principal structure by at least 10 feet.

Per the drawings, there is more than 10 feet between the main house and the ADU.

Accessory Dwelling Units, Building Size.

The building footprint of the accessory dwelling unit shall be a maximum of 40% of the building footprint of the principal dwelling not to exceed 700 square feet.

The standard is not met. The initial project was approved in April 2023, before the new ordinance took effect for ADUs. At that time, the standard was that the maximum ADU size could be up to 40% of the habitable area of the principal dwelling, which did meet the old standard. But with the current code, the size of the ADU greatly exceeds this.

The footprint of the house is 747 square feet, and the proposed ADU is 646 square feet. In order to meet the standard, the ADU footprint would need to be scaled down to 298.8 square feet. Staff initially recommended that the applicant either scaled down the ADU footprint to meet the standard or apply for a variance recommendation request from the HPC to then be heard by the Zoning Board of Appeals. The applicant opted to apply to the ZBA for the footprint variance, which was granted.

The accessory dwelling unit shall contain no more than one (1) bedroom.

The floor plans show one bedroom. However, the room labeled as an office looks to potentially have a closet space on the plans on page 4 of the submittal packet and on page 8 of the submittal packet, there is a notation for a Murphy bed in the office room. The applicant has stated that the intent is to have an office space in the structure, but staff recommends revising the drawings to confirm this.

Accessory Dwelling Units, Architectural Style. *Such use shall be designed in a similar architectural style as the principal dwelling. If the site is located within an overlay district, the standards of the overlay district shall apply.*

The architectural style of the proposed ADU is similar to the principal dwelling.

Accessory Dwelling Units, Parking and Access.

If parking is provided for the accessory dwelling, it shall be provided on the same lot on which the principal dwelling is located.

The parking will be the garage level of the ADU in the form of a three-car garage.

Accessory Dwelling Units, Height.

Accessory dwelling units shall not exceed 25 feet or the height of the principal building, whichever is less.

The ADU is 24'3 ½" and the principal building is 24'2 ¾" which means that the height of the ADU slightly exceeds the height of the principal building.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Continue the request to construct a two-story accessory dwelling unit at the rear of the property located at 306 East 34th Street to the October 28, 2026, Historic Preservation Commission Meeting to allow the applicant time to address the following conditions to ensure the standards are met:

- 1. Confirm the full height the height of the principal building to show that the ADU is less than the height of the principal building to meet the ordinance.**
- 2. Revise the width and scale to ensure that the ADU is subordinate to the principal building.**
- 3. Confirm that the office room is not a bedroom by updating the drawings to omit the Murphy bed and the potential closet space.**

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.