CITY OF SAVANNAH
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

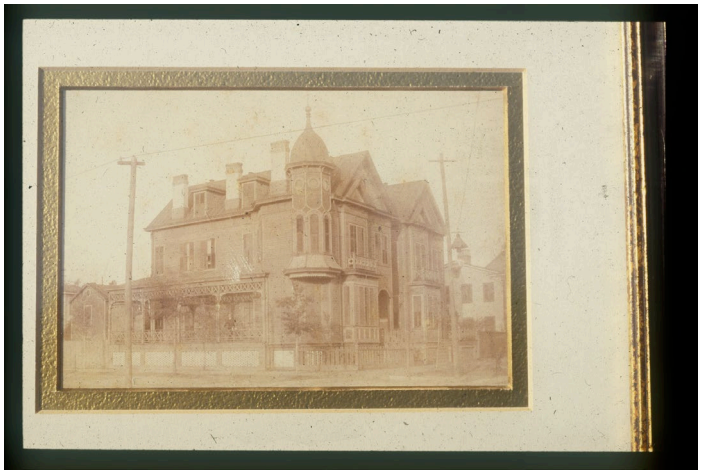
Petitioner:	**Olivia Page, LLC, Melinda Sortor**
MPC File No.:	**26-004408-COA**
Address:	**123 East Henry Street**
PIN:	**20053 10002**
Zoning:	**TC-1**
Staff Reviewer:	**Caitlin Chamberlain**
Date:	**September 23, 2026**

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting approval to rehabilitate the exterior of the building located at 123 East Henry Street. The scope of work includes:

- Removal of the non-historic sections of Permastone siding to replace with wood siding matching the rest of the house, repairing or replacing any existing wood siding beneath the Permastone
- Uncovering an existing side porch as seen in the historic photograph provided
- Window repair/replacement
- Replacement of front double-doors and basement doors
- Returning current doors to their original window openings
- Removal of fire escape

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:



123 East Henry Street was built circa 1891 and is a contributing resource within the National Register Victorian Historic District and the local Victorian Historic District.

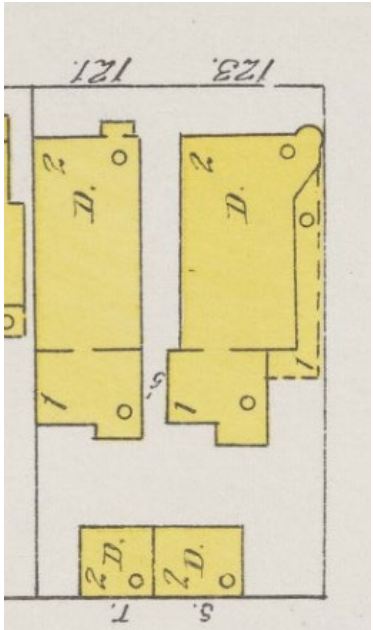
The building is situated on the corner of Henry and Abercorn Streets in a prominent location. The Queen Anne style of the building with a decorative turret stands out as a unique remaining contributing structure on this block. A photo from the late 1800s/early 1900s shows the house before it underwent several heavy-handed alterations. Some photos below show a sequence of how the historic house has changed over time. The historic photo also shows a nearly identical house, save for the

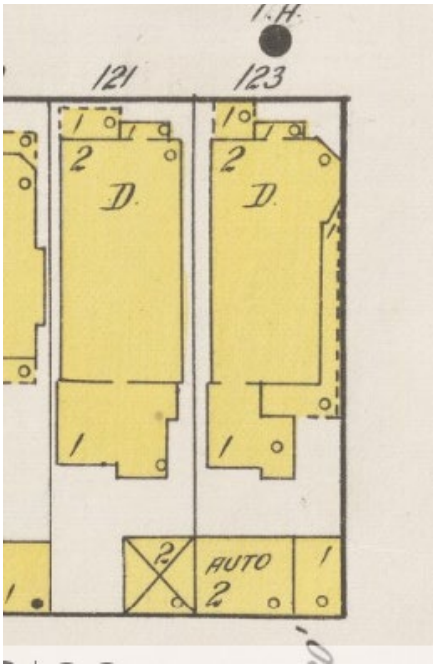
turret and side veranda, which was formerly 121 East Henry Street, as noted in Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps.

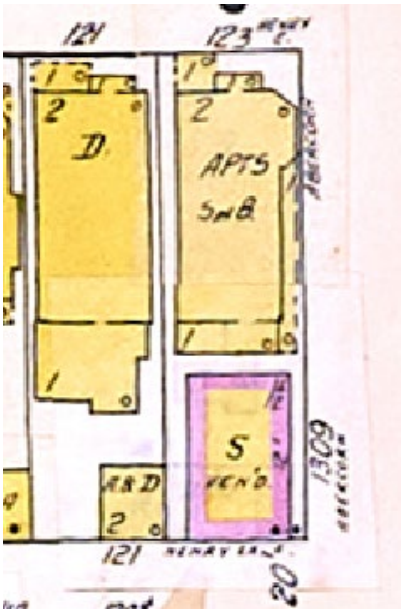
The images below are undated but show mid to late 20th century alterations to the building, including a black and white HABS photo, also undated but with a note that it was taken after 1933.

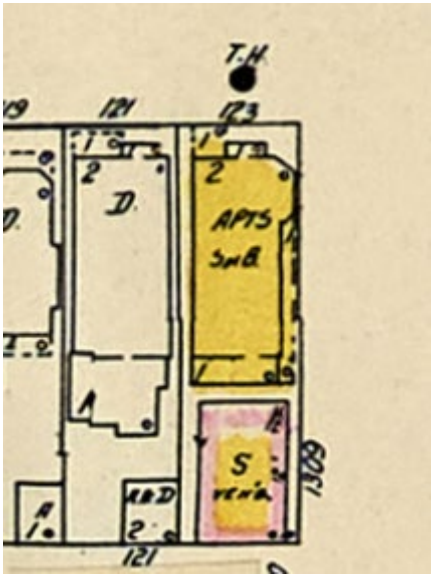
HABS No. GA-1169-55

The structure first appears on the 1898 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map and is subsequently seen on the 1916, 1953, and 1955-66 map updates as well, shown in chronological order below.









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.*

The proposal seeks to restore the lost historic character of the property due to various 20th-century alterations, and to maintain the character defining features still existent. Standard 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.*

This is not the case here. The applicant is basing proposed rehabilitation work off of a historic photograph that shows the house before it was majorly altered. Standard met.

> ***Secretary of the Interior's Standards 4– Historic Changes.*** *Most properties change over time; those changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.*

The changes, such as the Permastone siding, have not acquired historic significance and do not need to be retained and preserved. Standard met.

> ***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.*

The applicant intends to meet this standard. Staff requests more information about items such as each window, differentiating which ones can be repaired versus which windows may require a full replacement. The side porch seen in the historic photo is noted to still exist beneath the Permastone and will be reopened. Staff requests elevation drawings showing the final result and inclusion of photos that detail the current conditions and what windows may still exist on the now-interior wall that was once an exterior wall facing Abercorn Street, as well as the ornamental wood detailing on the porch.

> ***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 applicant intends to repair what can be fixed and replace any materials that are beyond repair. The applicant will work with Guerry lumber to replicate the siding in areas where it is missing or in need of replacement, so that it matches the building.

> ***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 noted to be in-kind replacements such as the horizontal wood lap siding, in-kind window repairs or custom-built wood replacements, appropriate door replacements. More information is needed regarding the door types, and any salvaged doors would still require staff approval prior to installation.

> ***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.

Foundation, Alterations to contributing resources. *The intent of these standards is to ensure that foundations match the traditional pattern of construction in height and materials and complement the craftsmanship of contributing buildings.*

Foundations 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 foundation shall be of the same materials and configuration as the original foundation.

If the original foundation material and/or configuration is unknown, the new foundation material and configuration shall be based on historic context.

Staff requests information on how the existing foundation will be handled when the side porch is restored and whether it will return to the lattice infill seen in the photo or if new wood boards will be placed between the piers as it currently exists.

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 seeks to remove the inappropriate midcentury Permastone veneer siding to re-expose the potential wood siding beneath, or to reinstall matching wood siding based on the existing historic material still intact. The standard is met in this regard, but staff also requests elevation drawings to show what the proposed changes will look like.

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.

Many windows still exist in their openings, in various conditions. Some can be repaired, but the applicant notes that there are places where the windows are gone and would need a replacement. Staff requests a window inventory detailing each elevation's windows, noting which ones are to be repaired versus proposed for replacement. This should also show the two fire escape doors that are proposed to be returned to window openings. Staff also requests information on whether there are still openings on the now-interior wall facing Abercorn Street, and how it will be handled when the porch is uncovered.

> ***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.*
>
> *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.*

It does not appear that there are any historic exterior doors remaining on the building. The submittal packet notes that there will be salvaged doors that are appropriate to the style of house, but these would still require approval before installation, thus staff requests information on door materials and specifications.

> ***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 applicant notes that the historic side porch seen in the photo still exists beneath the Permastone infill and there is an intent to reopen it. Staff requests information including photos of existing conditions, as well as whether the decorative woodwork is also still intact or if it will be recreated, as well as elevation drawings showing the end result of the proposed work.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Continue the petition to rehabilitate the historic building at 123 East Henry Street to the October 28, 2026, Historic Preservation Meeting to allow the applicant time to address the following:

1. **Provide elevation drawings to show the end result of the proposed rehabilitations, including the side porch restoration, window and door configurations and materials, and siding details.**
2. **Provide a window inventory detailing each elevation's windows, noting which ones are to be repaired versus proposed for replacement. This should also show the two fire escape doors that are proposed to be returned to window openings.**
3. **Provide photos of the current conditions of the side porch and include details about whether there are still openings on the now-interior wall facing Abercorn Street, and how it will be handled when the porch is uncovered.**

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.