



S A V A N N A H H I S T O R I C D I S T R I C T
B O A R D O F R E V I E W

REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Petitioner: Brad Grant, SCAD
MPC File No.: 26-001296-COA
Address: 126 East Gaston Street
PIN: 20032 45007
Zoning: D-R
Staff Reviewer: Jodie Brown, AICP
Date: April 8, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is proposing to alter an existing fence and gate on the east side of the property located at 126 East Gaston Street.

CONTEXT/SURROUNDING AREA:

The property is located on the northwest corner of Gaston and Abercorn Street in the Calhoun Ward. Designed in the Italianate style, it was constructed in 1882. The structure was recently renovated under 21-0055500 COA which included work at the main house and the construction of a rear addition and an accessory building.

The subject building is a contributing resource within the National Historic Landmark District and the local Savannah Downtown Historic District.

FINDINGS:

The following standards from §7.8 - Savannah Downtown 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 applicant is proposing to alter the existing fence and gate on the east side of the property. The existing fence is approximately 7'10" tall with a single arched wood gate between two pillars. The single wood gate appears to be a newer addition based on Google street view. The proposed alterations are located on a secondary façade and will have a limited impact on the historic character defining features of the house. The proposed work is consistent with Standard 2.

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.*

It appears that the fence has been in place for some time, but it is not clear that it is original to the house. The extant pillar that is in line with the rear of the house will be maintained and a new opening with taller pillars will flank the new opening. The proposed work will not negatively impact the historic character of the house, nor will it damage the resource. The proposed work is consistent with Standard 9.

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 fence alteration is easily reversible and will not impact the integrity of the house. The proposed work is consistent with Standard 10.

Visual Compatibility Criteria. *To maintain the special character of the Savannah Downtown 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.*

Relationship of materials, texture and color. *The relationship of materials, texture and color of the facade of a building or structure shall be visually compatible with the predominate materials, textures, and colors used on contributing buildings and structures to which the structure is visually related.*

The applicant is proposing to use stucco to match the existing fence. The area of alteration will have tall pillars capped with limestone that flank an arched pair of wood doors set within the wall. The pillars will be 2'5" taller than the existing fence. The wood doors will have angled wood planks and a limestone surround. The overall height of the pillars is approximately 9'6" and the doors will be 7'10". The proposed materials and design are consistent with those current used on the fence and the house. The arched used on the gates is consistent with the numerous arched used on the historic resource. The proposed work is consistent with this criterion.

Savannah Downtown Historic District Design Standards. *The intent of these standards is to ensure appropriate new construction, additions, and alterations within the Savannah Downtown 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 resources.

The following design standards shall apply to new construction, additions, alterations to contributing and non-contributing buildings and structures, unless otherwise specified. Though certain building materials are prescribed herein, the Board 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.

For the purposes of evaluating the visual compatibility and design standards of exterior fenestration, where voids (windows, doors, and storefronts) in the exterior façade are substantially blocked by interior walls or built-in furniture, these may be considered part of the exterior wall if they are built within three feet of the exterior wall. For example, if an interior wall is built abutting the storefront, that interior wall is impacting the exterior design of the fenestration and may be subject to review by the Historic Board of Review.

Fences, Trellises and Walls. *Fences and walls shall comply with Sec. 9.6, Fences and Walls except as provided below:*

Fences, Trellises and Walls, Configuration.

Fences, trellises or walls shall not exceed 11 feet in height; however, where adjoining walls exceed 11 feet, any new wall may be constructed to the height of the existing wall. Rooftop trellises may exceed 11 feet in height, provided they are visually compatible.

No portion of the proposed fence alteration exceeds 11'. The proposed work is consistent with this historic district design guidelines.

Fences, trellises and walls shall not extend beyond the facade of a building except in the following cases:

A building set back on a trust lot with a front garden;

A building set back on an east-west street with a front garden.

The proposed fence alteration is located on the side of the house and does not impact front façade. The proposed work is consistent with this historic district design guidelines.

Where permitted, fences or walls shall not exceed 48 inches within the front yard.

The proposed fence alteration is located on the side of the house and does not impact front façade. The proposed work is consistent with this historic district design guidelines.

A minimum of five (5) feet must be provided between a fence and a building where they are parallel.

The proposed fence alteration is located on the side of the house which is a corner lot and does not impact front façade. The proposed work is consistent with this historic district design guidelines.

Fences, Trellises and Walls, Materials.

Fences and walls facing a public street shall be constructed of the material and color of the primary building; provided however, iron or extruded aluminum fencing may be used with a masonry structure.

The applicant is proposing to construct the modifications the same color as the historic house. The proposed work is consistent with this historic district design guidelines.

Prohibited: Chain-link, vinyl, PVC, corrugated metal, barbed wire, razor wire.

The applicant is not proposing to use any prohibited materials. The proposed work is consistent with this historic district design guidelines.

Staff Report - Certificate of Appropriateness
MPC File No. 26-001296-COA
126 E. Gaston Street
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STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE the request for a fence and gate modification on the property at 126 East Gaston Street AS REQUESTED because the work is visually compatible and meets the Standards.

MW: CC: JB

Note: This recommendation could change subject to new information provided at the Historic District Board of Review meetings. Final decisions will be made by the Historic District Board of Review at the public hearing based on information provided at the meeting, as well as information submitted for the staff recommendation.