

SAVANNAH BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS



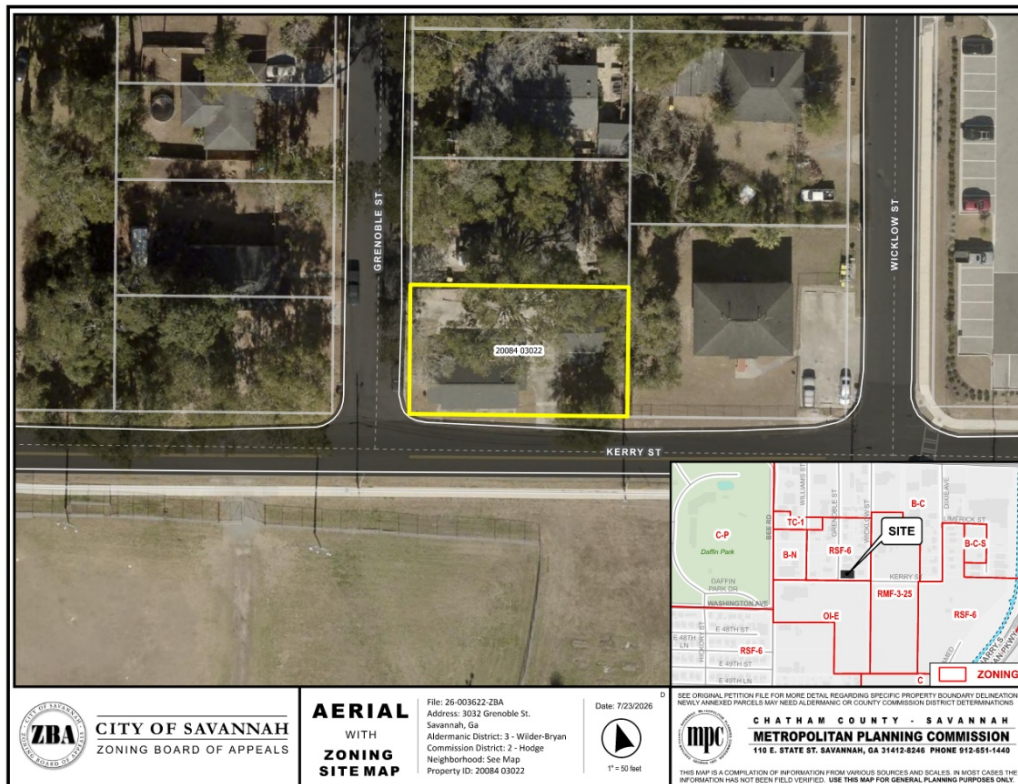
STAFF REPORT

MPC FILE NO.	26-003622-ZBA
MPC STAFF	Ashley Catterton
DATE	August 27, 2026
PETITIONER	Kevin Sullivan
ADDRESS	3032 Grenoble Street
PARCEL ID	20084 03022
ALDERMAN DISTRICT	3 – Linda Wilder-Bryan
CHATHAM COUNTY	
COMMISSION DISTRICT	2 – Malinda Scott Hodge

BACKGROUND

This variance request involves a 0.17-acre tract located at 3032 Grenoble Street measuring approximately 7,405 square feet with a lot width of 67 feet and depth of 113 feet. The property is currently zoned Residential Single-family-6 (RSF-6) and is situated within the Dale Terrace/Olympus/Victory Square neighborhoods.

The Petitioner is requesting a variance for an existing 520-square-foot Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) that was lawfully permitted and completed before adoption of the current ADU building-footprint limitation. The request would allow the existing ADU to remain at approximately 57% of the principal dwelling's building footprint, or 520 square feet, rather than the currently permitted maximum of 40%, or approximately 365 square feet—a difference of approximately 17%, or 155 square feet.



Aerial & Site Map for 3032 Grenoble Street



Existing ADU Photo #1 located at 3032 Grenoble Street



Existing ADU Photo #2 located at 3032 Grenoble Street

FACTS & FINDINGS

- A building permit (21-05821-BR) was issued for the construction of the one-story, 520-square-foot ADU following an application submitted on June 28, 2021. The structure received a Certificate of Completion on April 27, 2022. The current ADU building-footprint limitation was subsequently adopted on May 25, 2023. Accordingly, the ADU was lawfully established before the current dimensional standard took effect.
- The existing dimensional nonconformity was identified following an application to establish separate electrical meters for the principal dwelling and ADU.
- There was no existing previously approved conceptual site layout or plot plan submitted with this variance request. However, pictures listed from Zillow were provided by the Petitioner.
- The existing ADU does not conform to the building-footprint limitation subsequently established by **Section 8.7.4(d)(i)**, which limits an ADU to 40% of the principal dwelling's building footprint.

Section 8.7.4(d)(i). *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. In the A-1, RSF-E, RSF-30 and RSF-20 districts, the maximum building footprint shall be 40% of the building footprint of the principal dwelling or 1,000 square feet, whichever is less. In buildings with multiple dwelling units, the footprint percentage calculation shall be based on the footprint of a single dwelling unit.*

- **The primary dwelling was built around 1995 with a main building footprint of approximately 912 square feet. The existing 520-square-**

foot ADU exceeds the maximum 40% building footprint of the principal dwelling unit (which is approximately 365 square feet) by 17%, or 155 square feet.

- According to the Floodplain Management Report, the AE (High Risk) 100-year Flood Zone is located within 300 feet of the subject property.
- Adjacent zones within 500 feet are RSF-6, Neighborhood Business (B-N), Office and Institutional Expanded (OI-E), and Residential Multi-family-3-25 (RMF-3-25).
- According to Chatham County-Savannah Comprehensive Plan (Plan 2040), the subject property is located within the Urban Transitional Character Area. This area includes the Cuyler-Brownville Historic District, established neighborhoods such as Ardsley Park and Victory Heights, and commercial corridors on Abercorn Street and Victory Drive. Urban Transitional areas are identifiable by more automobile-oriented, suburban style residential areas that still provide access to urban amenities and public transit. Most neighborhoods are also pedestrian-oriented with well-used sidewalks, parks, and open spaces. Redevelopment and infill development opportunities are prevalent in this character area.
- The Future Land Use for the subject property is “Residential-General” which in Plan 2040 states that these are areas with a wide range of residential uses including multi-family dwellings, attached dwellings, small lot single-family dwellings, and mixed-use with upper story residential at densities greater than 10 units per gross acre.

CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL

The Zoning Board of Appeals may grant variances to certain development standards per Section 3.21.10 based on the following criteria:

a. General Consistency

The variance shall be consistent with the intent of this Ordinance and the Comprehensive Plan and shall not be injurious to the neighborhood or otherwise detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare.

MPC Comment: *The existing ADU was lawfully permitted and completed before adoption of the current 40% building-footprint limitation. The ADU use is consistent with the Residential-General Future Land Use designation and the range of housing options supported within the Urban Transitional Character Area. Because the structure has existed since 2022 and no adverse effects associated with its size have been identified, allowing it to remain at its existing footprint does not appear injurious to the neighborhood or otherwise detrimental to public health, safety, or welfare. The requested relief is therefore generally consistent with the intent of the Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan.*

b. Special Conditions

- i. Special conditions and/or circumstances exist which are peculiar to the land, buildings or structures involved and which are not applicable to other lands, buildings or structures in the same zoning district.

MPC Comment: *A special circumstance exists with respect to the existing structure because the 520-square-foot ADU was lawfully permitted and completed before adoption of the current building-footprint limitation. As a result of the subsequent regulatory change, the existing ADU now exceeds the maximum footprint permitted under the current Ordinance despite having been legally established under the standards applicable at the time of construction.*

- ii. The special conditions and/or circumstances do not result from the actions of the applicant.

MPC Comment: *The special circumstance did not result from an action taken in violation of an applicable zoning requirement. The ADU was permitted and completed before the current 40% building-footprint limitation was adopted. The need for relief therefore results from a subsequent change to the Zoning Ordinance rather than from the construction of the ADU contrary to the dimensional standards in effect at that time.*

- iii. The special conditions and/or circumstances are not purely financial in nature to allow the applicant to use the land, buildings or structures involved more profitably or to save money.

MPC Comment: *The special circumstance is not purely financial in nature. The request concerns the application of a subsequently adopted dimensional standard to an existing ADU that was lawfully permitted and completed before the standard took effect.*

c. Literal Interpretation

Literal interpretation of the provisions of the regulations would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same zoning district under the terms of the Ordinance and would result in unnecessary and undue hardship on the applicant.

MPC Comment: *Literal application of the current 40% building-footprint limitation to the existing ADU would require alteration or removal of a portion of a structure that was lawfully permitted and completed before that limitation was adopted. Under these circumstances, strict application of the current standard would create an unnecessary and undue hardship unrelated to any violation of the dimensional requirements in effect at the time of construction.*

d. Minimum Variance

The variance, if granted, is the minimum variance necessary to make possible the reasonable use of land, buildings, or structures.

MPC Comment: *The requested variance is the minimum relief necessary to retain the*

existing ADU in its lawfully established configuration. The request is limited to the existing 520-square-foot building footprint and would not authorize an expansion of the structure beyond its current dimensions.

e. Special Privilege Not Granted

The variance would not confer on the applicant any special privilege that is denied by this Ordinance to other lands, buildings, or structures in the same zoning district.

MPC Comment: *Granting the requested variance would not confer a special privilege denied to other similarly situated properties. The relief would recognize the existing dimensions of an ADU that was lawfully permitted and completed before adoption of the current limitation and would not authorize additional enlargement of the structure.*

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Due to new information provided after the completion of this report, MPC Staff recommends **a denial or to continue** the requested variance to allow the existing 520-square-foot Accessory Dwelling Unit to remain at approximately 57% of the principal dwelling's building footprint rather than the currently permitted maximum of 40%, or approximately 365 square feet until the next City of Zoning Board of Appeals (SZBA) meeting scheduled on September 24, 2026.

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