

**ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

APPLICATION NUMBER..... COA-2025-12-2547

DATE..... January 21, 2026

PETITIONER..... David Matheny/ AMT as agent for Sorna Dhanabalan

REQUEST..... Raising Foundation Height

LOCATION..... 232 Satula Avenue

PROPERTY INFORMATION..... Tax Parcel # 114D3 F014, Buena Vista, RS-8

RECOMMENDATION..... Approval

REQUEST

A Certificate of Appropriateness is requested for the raising the foundation height of this structure as well as potentially extending the front porch across the majority of the width of the front plane of the home.

BACKGROUND

Parcel Status: The property is considered contributing to the Buena Vista Heights Historic District. This means that changes on the property are reviewed for their impact on the district and with concern for historic character on the subject property.

Parcel History: This project was presented to the Historic Preservation Commission for comments only at the December 2025 meeting. Previous Certificates of Appropriateness on file for this property are limited to a window replacement approved in May of this year for all but 4 of the windows on the house which also included some modification of the foundation material and a request in September to replace the four windows not included in the May decision. The September application was denied. The Sanborn Maps indicate that the existing historic structure was in place by 1918 when this mapping first included this area. A rear porch addition appears to have been made between 1964 and 1978 based on aerial photos.

Lot Features: The property is located at the northeast intersection of Satula Avenue and Yonah Avenue. The parcel has about 96 feet of lot frontage on Satula Avenue and about 104 feet of frontage along Yonah Avenue. Topographically, the parcels slopes down about 10 feet from the southwest corner of the lot at the intersection to the northeast corner at the rear of the lot.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant is requesting to raise the foundation height on the structure by 2' to achieve a lift at the front of the house where little foundation height exists. There would be some grading done at the front of the house to flatten out the yard and divert water from the front of the house, bringing it up approximately 1' of visible foundation. Elsewhere, the foundation would be visible for the entirety of the raised two feet, and new poured concrete walls and footings would be put into place.

The applicant has also noted a potential plan to expand the front porch. There would be no change in materials including wood support columns, wood flooring, and shingle roofing. The new porch would extend out toward Satula Avenue approximately 7' – it currently extends out just 4'. There would be two steps leading up to the porch that would extend out approximately 2' from the porch. The length of the

new front porch would be 32', centered on the width of the home and not the front door, which is south of center. No railings would be required.

A full width front porch does show on Sanborn Maps through 1950, so this does have historic precedent.

Staff notes that the porch extension toward Satula Avenue has only been presented through elevation drawings and no site plan has been submitted. Staff has not verified compliance with zoning setbacks or if a setback variance would be required.

RECOMMENDATION

Review of this application would utilize the general Design Guidelines, specifically Section 2F regarding foundations and Section 2D regarding porches. Staff review of the project under these guidelines is as follows:

Guideline	Met?	Comments
2F - Foundations	Yes	<i>Common foundation problems should be addressed without alteration of the foundation form.</i> Because the foundation is going to be raised by a small amount, it does not significantly change the overall look of the home or the form of the foundation.
2F.1 – Infill between Piers	Yes	The original piers are not highly discernible on the existing foundation. The use of a continuous poured foundation will not have a significant visible impact on the structure.
2D.1 - Types of Porches	Yes	A full-width front porch is appropriate for the area, and specifically for this house, as there was historically a full-width front porch on the home.
2D.2 – Elements of the Porch	Yes	The elements and materials of the porch would not change from existing and currently appear appropriate.

Staff recommends approval. The overall look of the foundation will remain similar to the current look of the home, raising it only 2' and visibly just 1' at the front due to grading. The option to extend the front porch to full-width would also be appropriate as presented given documentation in Sanborn Maps that this was the historic precedent.

This recommendation is made to address the design guidelines noted above, as well as Section 8-5-5 D (1) of the Athens-Clarke County Historic Preservation Ordinance regarding Acceptable Historic Preservation Commission Reaction to an Application for Certificate of Appropriateness.

REPORT FOR:	232 Satula Ave.	
In evaluating the attached report, the following standards, which are checked, were considered in making a recommendation. Items that are not applicable are marked as such. More detailed descriptions of each item are included in the attached report.		
REVIEWED	NOT APPLICABLE	
X		1. HISTORIC USES OF PROPERTY
X		2. NECESSITY OF PROPOSED CHANGES
X		3. INTEGRITY OF HISTORIC RESOURCE
		4. THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE CHANGE WILL AFFECT:
X		A. INTEGRITY OF THE BUILDING
X		B. INTEGRITY OF THE AREA
X		5. ORIGINAL AND CURRENT USES

Worksheet for 232 Satula Avenue

Guideline	Met?	Comments
2F - Foundations		
2F.1 – Infill between Piers		
2D.1 - Types of Porches		
2D.2 – Elements of the Porch		