



MPC Headlines

A Quarterly Publication of the Metropolitan Planning Commission

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

WINTER 2007/2008

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Happy Holidays!!!

Bull Street one of '10 Great Streets in America'

By Charlotte Moore, AICP, Director of Special Projects

The American Planning Association has selected Bull Street as one of "10 Great Streets in America" for 2007. The selection was made as part of National Community Planning Month which is celebrated each October to recognize those who work to make great communities.

The portion of Bull Street selected (City Hall to Forsyth Park) contains a number of physical elements that help to create a vibrant and unique "sense of place" unlike any other in the country. Among the elements cited for this honor: the variety of architectural styles; the five squares that provide public greenspace (Johnson, Wright, Chippewa, Madison, and Monterey); the numerous monuments that honor Savannah's citizens and history; the extensive hardscape, such as lighting, benches, sidewalks, and granite curbing; and, the mixture of land uses that line the street.

The late Mills Bee Lane, IV, a champion for the Landmark Historic District, deserves recognition for this honor as he was instrumental in the revitalization of Bull Street in the 1990s. His generous financial contributions provided or restored much of the hardscape that we enjoy today.

Bull Street is a wonderful example of great urban design



Students on a field trip at Madison Square, one of the highlights of Bull Street

that has evolved and adapted to change. In fact, a portion of the corridor, including Johnson and Wright squares, dates back to the 1733 plan for Savannah that was created by General James Edward Oglethorpe, founder of the Colony of Georgia.

Other streets selected include well-known North Michigan Avenue in Chicago, Ocean Drive in Miami Beach, and St. Charles Street in New Orleans. As this is a national honor, the APA estimates that approximately 33 million people were made aware of Bull Street through various media reports.

For more information about the award, please visit www.planning.org/greatplaces/streets/bullstreet.htm

Director's Corner

Dear Reader,



This is the season for joy, family, and reflection on our circumstances. As this year comes to a close, we see that it has been significant for the MPC Board and staff. We are thankful for our successes and our progress. In this issue we share information about our updating of the zoning codes, awards and recognition received by the community and staff, and also ways to protect our cultural and natural resources. On behalf of the MPC Board and staff, we wish you a Happy Holiday and successful New Year.

Thomas L. Thomson, P.E., AICP
Executive Director

Other 2007 "Great Streets in America"

Canyon Road
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Delmar Loop
University City/St. Louis, Missouri

Main Street
Northampton, Massachusetts

Monument Avenue
Richmond, Virginia

North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois

Ocean Drive
Miami Beach, Florida

St. Charles Avenue
New Orleans, Louisiana

South Temple Street
Salt Lake City, Utah

125th Street
Harlem, New York City, New York



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'A workshop to review the draft material has been scheduled for the MPC Board at 11:00am on December 11'

'Designation as a local historic district provides significant protection of historic resources through a design review process.'

New Component of Unified Zoning Ordinance Nearly Complete

*Courtland Hyser, AICP,
Land Use Planner*

MPC staff continues to make progress on writing a new zoning ordinance for Savannah and unincorporated Chatham County. The project, known as the Unified Zoning Ordinance, seeks to update and modernize zoning, with the ultimate goals of improving zoning regulations and making the ordinance easier to use and understand.

MPC planners are nearing the completion of the Administrative Procedures section of the ordinance. This section identifies the various review authorities associated with zoning administration and establishes their role in the process. It also establishes how the

process works for every type of zoning-related review, including rezonings, site plan reviews, and various types of permits. Draft materials for the section have been thoroughly reviewed by a Technical Committee of volunteers.

A workshop to review the draft material has been scheduled for the MPC Board at 11:00 a.m. on December 11, with additional workshops for the Chatham County Commission and Savannah City Council to be scheduled at a later date. Draft work will be posted at www.thempc.org following this review process.

The Administrative Procedures section that MPC staff

is currently wrapping up is also known as Component Two of the six-component Unified Zoning Ordinance project. The first component, an assessment report that analyzed the current zoning ordinance, was completed in June. The next two components, zoning districts and development standards, are scheduled for 2008, with a complete draft of the Unified Zoning Ordinance expected by the end of that year.

In 2009, MPC will begin the final two components of the process: public review, followed by adoption by the Chatham County Commission and the Savannah City Council.

What's in a Name? 'National Register Historic District' and 'Local Historic District'

*Ellen Harris,
Preservation Planner*

If you live in Chatham County, you are doubtless aware of the numerous historic resources in the area. You may also live in or know people who live in an 'historic district'. But what does the term 'historic district' really mean?

There are actually two types of historic districts: a National Register Historic District and a local historic district. The difference between the two is substantial; both in terms of what responsibilities it entails for the property owner, and also what sort of financial assistance is available.

A National Register Historic District is a historic district that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is essentially a federal list of historic sites in the U.S. wor-

thy of preservation. It is maintained by the U.S. Department of the Interior and, in Georgia, is administered by the Historic Preservation Division (HPD) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Listing as a National Register Historic District identifies and recognizes the historic significance of an area. It qualifies property owners within the district for certain federal and state tax incentives for qualified rehabilitations. It provides limited protection from the effects of federally funded projects, but provides no protection from privately funded projects, including demolition of or inappropriate alterations to historic buildings. There are currently twenty National Register Historic Districts in Chatham County. A complete list can be found at www.nationalregisterofhistor

icplaces.com/GA/Chatham/districts.html. For more information on how to apply for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, visit www.gashpo.org.

A local historic district is an area designated as historic and worthy of preservation by the *local* governing body. Designation as a local historic district provides significant protection of historic resources through a design review process. Every local historic district has a unique set of design guidelines which help to protect historic resources from demolition and inappropriate alterations, while also ensuring new construction is compatible with the character of the district. In local historic districts, all changes to the exterior of a building, new construction, and demolition require a

(Continued on page 3)



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GPA Award Presentation

CUTS/MPO receives Georgia Planning Association Award

*Jane Love
Transportation Planner*

At the Fall 2007 Georgia Planning Association (GPA) Conference, MPO staff accepted GPA's annual award for Innovative and Effective Planning Process for the development of the [Transportation Amenities Plan and Context Sensitive Design Manual](#). The Plan and the Manual establish policies and tools needed to protect Savan-

nah's most cherished scenic corridors and ensure that future road building takes place in concert with community values. MPO staff initiated the process in 2003 with community stakeholders to develop the policies and guidelines in response to mounting public dissatisfaction with tree canopy loss in road widening and bridge replacement projects.

Strategies developed during the planning process are currently

being carried out through the MPO's Congestion Management Process and Long Range Transportation Plan.

The Georgia Planning Association is the Georgia chapter of the American Planning Association (APA).

For more information, go to <http://www.thempc.org/Transportation/ContextSensitiveDesign.htm>

GIS Day is Savannah's First

Jason Lee

SAGIS and sponsors organized the first annual geographic information systems (GIS) Day in Savannah on November 14, 2007. Attendance to the inaugural event exceeded expectations, totaling 200 students and 100 business leaders from around the Coast. A total of 22 participants contributed with booth displays and staff. SAGIS Director Noel Perkins attributed the success to the current necessity of GIS to Savannah and the Coast's municipal and business worlds. SAGIS received GIS Day proclamations from Chatham County Commission Chairman Pete Liakakis and

City of Savannah Mayor Otis Johnson.

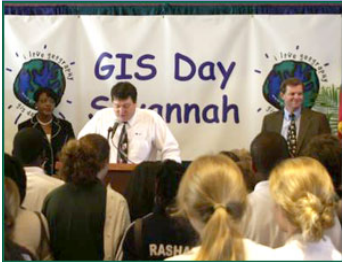
GIS Day is dedicated to the introduction of GIS to local students and also to promote the capabilities and of GIS for public and private usage. Savannah's GIS Day celebration was part of a larger, ninth annual International GIS Day that fell in the middle of National Geographic's International Geography Awareness Week.

SAGIS and sponsors invited local area public and private 8th grade students and presented DeRenne Middle School with a state of the art GIS Lab (ESRI, Leica and LizarTech software systems,

which are primary GIS programs).

Speakers included Dr. David Frost, Director of GA Tech/Savannah; Chairman Jon Todd of the Metropolitan Planning Commission; Sean Brandon, Assistant to the City Manager, City of Savannah; and Dr. Thomas Lockamy, Superintendent of the Savannah Chatham County Public School System.

The event was made possible by the generosity of local business, governmental agencies and educational entities around the Coast.



SAGIS Director Noel Perkins and MPC Chairman Jon Todd speaking at GIS Day

Historic Districts (continued)

Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) before a building permit is issued. Regular maintenance and in-kind repairs, color changes, and changes not visible from the public right-of-way do not require a COA.

There are currently four local historic districts in Savannah: Savannah Landmark Historic District, Victorian District, Cuyler-Brownville District, and Mid-City District. The Eastside local historic district is pending. In unincorporated Chatham County, there are two properties

designated:

New Ogeechee Missionary Baptist Church and Maridon. For more information on local historic districts, including maps of districts, design guidelines, application forms, and how to apply to become a local historic district, visit www.thempc.org.

The two designations complement each other, so most local historic districts are also National Register Historic Districts. Listing as both a National Register Historic District and a local historic district qualifies property owners for significant tax incentives for qualified

rehabilitations, while also providing real protection for historic resources in the district.

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www.tnempc.org

United
Way



*“consider
decorating a live
tree that can be
transplanted into
your landscape
after the holidays”*

Please contact Jason Lee (jlee@thempc.org) for comments or subscription information.

MPC Contributes 100% to United Way

*Charlotte Moore, AICP,
Director of Special Projects*

MPC staff generously contributed \$7,715.44 to the 2008 United Way campaign. This amount repre-

sents a 26% increase from the 2007 campaign, and is the most money pledged by staff in the past seven years. Staff also set a new participation record for the agency as each full-time staff mem-

ber—32 in total—made a contribution. If you would like to learn more about the United Way of the Coastal Empire, please visit www.uwce.org.

‘Tis the Season for Tips

*Bethany Jewell
Water Resources Planner*

The 2007 holidays have begun. As we gather with friends and family during this season of giving, let us remember a few simple strategies on lessening our holiday’s impact to the natural world.

Alternative Wrapping Paper: The holiday image of packages neatly wrapped under the tree brings smiles to every child and parent. When wrapping those special gifts this year consider reusable gift bags, recycled old paper bags or reusable cloth grocery bags. Steer away from the temptations of glossy metallic and plastic finishes on wrapping paper that are toxic for children and the environment. Reusing and recycling packages benefits the environment and our wallets.

Grease Disposal: Holidays are always a time of cooking. Improper disposal of grease can cause health hazards, damage home interiors and threaten the environment. Grease enters the sewer from household drains, as well as from poorly maintained grease traps in restaurants and other businesses. Scrape grease and food scraps from trays, plates, pots, pans, utensils and grills into a can

for trash disposal (or recycling where available). Never pour grease down sink drains, garbage disposals or into toilets.

Reducing Energy Consumption: Bright lights seem to unite those holiday feelings in us all. However, there are ways we can still enjoy these symbols of the holiday while reducing our energy consumption. If purchasing lights, choose energy efficient LED lights. And using timers on indoor and outdoor lights can save a tremendous amount of energy and money. When decorating your home consider limiting the amount of lights you use. Using homemade wreaths and garlands brighten doorways without the expense on your budget or the environment. Bringing in seasonal decorations such as pine cones, branches and flowers offers us a chance to use nature’s gifts to adorn our homes.

Alternative Gifts: Instead of struggling with purchasing gifts, consider making donations to charities in the recipient’s name. Or consider donating your time and talents as a gift. For busy parents, the simple gift of babysitting cannot be matched. Making homemade crafts and baked goods is always a thoughtful gift. Being mindful of waste as we purchase and

wrap gifts benefits ourselves as well as our loved ones.

Recycling: There are numerous opportunities for recycling during the holidays. Recycle holiday cards by cutting along the center edge and using them as postcards. And when that big moment of opening packages arrives, have two bins alongside the bag for trash to easily separate reusable wrapping papers and bags and reusable ribbons and bows as gifts. Once presents are opened, the bins are sorted and ready for storage until next year.

Recycling the Holiday Tree: The day has come and the lights and tinsel have been taken off the tree. Now what? Chatham County and City of Savannah offer tree chipper recycling programs throughout the County in the first part of January. However, if you’re unable to make it out to one of these events, placing the tree near your curb on your scheduled day for yard waste collection will ensure it gets recycled back into mulch. Just be sure to take off all decorations and tinsel that can otherwise pollute our storm drains. Or consider decorating a live tree that can be transplanted into your landscape after the holidays.