



METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

“Planning the Future - Respecting the Past”

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: THE PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: MPC STAFF

DATE: OCTOBER 13, 2015

**SUBJECT: PETITION OF ARS VENTURES, LLC PETITIONER
ATTY. ROBERT MCCORKLE, AGENT FOR PROPERTY OWNERS
ALDERMANIC DISTRICT 3 – ALDERMAN JOHN HALL
COUNTY COMM. DISTRICT 2 – COUNCILMAN JAMES HOLMES
PIN 2-0078-12-003 THROUGH 006, 008, 012, 013, 016 AND 017; PIN 2-
0084-01-003 THROUGH 009; AND PIN 2-0084-02-001 THROUGH 006 AND
008 THROUGH 013 – 28 PARCELS
ACREAGE: 11.018 ACRES
MPC FILE NO. 15-005157-ZA**

GARY PLUMBLEY, MPC PROJECT PLANNER

REPORT STATUS: Initial Report

ISSUE:

At issue is a request to rezone 11.018 acres of land located between East Victory Drive, Kerry Street, Dixie Avenue, and Wicklow Street from the existing B-H (Highway Business), R-6 (Single Family Residential), and PD-N (Planned Development Non-Conforming) classifications to a B-C (Community Business) classification for the purpose of facilitating the development of a retail commercial development.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

1. **Public Notice:** As required by the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance, all property owners within 300 feet of the subject property were sent notices of the proposed rezoning and six signs were posted on the site along all abutting streets. The subject properties are not located within a neighborhood with an active property owners association. However, a notice was sent to two known active property owners associations for neighborhoods located within 1,000 feet of the subject properties. The neighborhood associations which were notified are Parkside and Live Oak. In addition to the notification process, a neighborhood meeting was hosted by the petitioner on Monday September 21st at the Huddle House restaurant. The meeting was attended by approximately 15 people, in addition to the petitioner. Most of the questions asked were related to what was being proposed and how the traffic would be impacted.

2. **Site:** The subject site is 11.018 acres in size and currently consists of 28 separate parcels of land, varying in size from 0.146 acres (6,344 square feet) to 1.208 acres (52,620 square feet). The subject site is presently divided by Munster Street, an existing public street right-of-way that extends from East Victory Drive to Kerry Street, and varies in width from 30 feet to 40 feet. The northern portion of the street right-of-way is paved and is the legal access for one of the petitioned properties. The southern portion of the right-of-way is unimproved and is not an open street.
3. **Zoning History:** The zoning of all properties that make up the subject site has remained unchanged for more than 25 years. Also, the zoning of the properties abutting the opposite side of the four streets bordering the subject site has remained unchanged for more than 25 years, with the exception of the property identified as 1650 East Victory Drive and southernmost eight properties along the east side of Victory Manor Place. The property located at 1650 was rezoned from R-6 to its current PUD-IS-B classification in 1998 and the properties along Victory Manor Place were rezoned from R-6 to their current B-H classification in 2013.
4. **Existing Land Use Pattern:** Of the 28 separate parcels that comprise the subject site, 11 are vacant; four are occupied by a restaurant and banquet facility with off-street parking; two are occupied by a commercial paint and body shop; five are occupied by a horse boarding, riding academy, and equestrian facility; and, the remaining six are occupied by single family residential structures. The land uses and zoning districts surrounding the subject property include:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Land Use</u>	<u>Zoning</u>
North	East Victory Drive	
	Antique Shop	PUD-IS-B [1]
	Undeveloped Parcels	R-6
	Single Family Residential	R-6
South	Kerry Street	
	Police Training Facility	R-6
	Telecommunications Tower site	R-6
	Horse Pasture	C-A [2]
	Recreation Field (Salvation Army)	R-I-P [3]
East	Dixie Avenue	
	Telecommunications Tower Site	B-H
	Single Family Residential	B-H and R-6
	Undeveloped Parcels	R-6
	Shopping Center	B-H
West	Wicklow Street	
	Retail Commercial (shoe store)	B-H
	Commercial (sauce manufacturing)	B-H
	Single Family Residential	R-6
	Residential Four-Family Unit	R-4 [4]

[1] PUD-IS-B	Planned Unit Development Institutional
[2] C-A	Agricultural Conservation
[3] R-I-P	Residential Institutional Professional
[4] R-4	Four Family Residential

5. **Existing B-H Zoning District:**

- a. **Purpose of the B-H District:** According to the Zoning Ordinance, “the purpose of the B-H district shall be to provide and encourage the proper grouping of roadside service areas that will accommodate the needs of the traveling public in a manner that prevents traffic congestion, traffic hazards, and blight on the streets, roads, and highways within the city.”
- b. **Allowed Uses:** Uses allowed within the B-H district appear in the attached list.
- c. **Development Standards:** The development standards for the B-H district appear in the attached table (Table 1).

6. **Existing R-6 Zoning District:**

- a. **Purpose of the R-6 District:** According to the Zoning Ordinance, the purpose of the R-6 district is “to maintain single-family dwelling density to not more than six single-family dwellings per net acre of residential land, in order to protect the property in this district from depreciating effects of more densely developed residential uses.”
- b. **Allowed Uses:** The uses allowed within the R-6 district are attached. This district is predominantly for single-family detached residential; however, limited non-residential uses are permitted that have been long-standing, traditional uses in residential areas, either as a matter-of-right (e.g., religious institutions) or with Zoning Board of Appeals approval (e.g., public and private schools (K-12) and child care centers).
- c. **Development Standards:** The development standards for the R-6 district appear in the attached table (Table 1).

7. **Existing PD-N Zoning District:**

- a. **Purpose of the PD-N District:** There is no stated purpose of the PD-N zoning district in the Zoning Ordinance. However, Section 8-3032 (a) of the Zoning Ordinance provides that “where nonconforming uses exist in districts and are found by the Planning Commission to likely continue indefinitely, it is intended to make possible the rezoning of such non-conforming uses to PD-N status as a means for encouraging improvements and controlling further development or redevelopment.”
- b. **Allowed Uses:** The allowed uses are identified at the time of rezoning the subject site to a PD-N classification.
- c. **Development Standards:** The development standards are established for the

specific use at the time of rezoning.

8. **Proposed B-C Zoning District:**

- a. **Purpose of the B-C District:** According to the Zoning Ordinance, “the purpose of the B-C district shall be to provide community shopping facilities consisting of a wide variety of sales and service facilities at locations that will be accessible to a market area containing from 35,000 to 70,000 people.”
- b. **Allowed Uses:** Uses allowed within the B-C district appear in the attached list.
- c. **Development Standards:** The development standards for the B-C district appear in the attached table (Table 1).

9. **Future Land Use Map:** The Chatham County Savannah Tricentennial Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designates the subject property as Traditional Commercial. Approval of the requested zoning map amendment would be consistent with the Future Land Use Map. The land use classification of the 28 properties comprising the 11.018 acre site is presently divided into three different land use classifications. The 10 northernmost properties extending south from Victory Drive between Wicklow Street and Dixie Avenue are presently designated as Commercial Suburban. The eight southernmost properties extending north from Kerry Street between Wicklow Street and Munster Street (unopened) are presently designated as Parks and Recreation. The remaining 10 properties extending north from Kerry Street between Dixie Avenue and Munster Street (unopened) are presently designated as General Residential. The proposed B-C zoning classification would be consistent with the 10 northernmost properties extending south from Victory Drive between Wicklow Street and Dixie Avenue. However, the proposed B-C zoning classification would not be consistent with the remaining 18 properties.

10. **Public Services and Facilities:** The subject site is served by the Savannah-Chatham Metropolitan Police Department, City of Savannah fire protection and by the City of Savannah water and sanitary sewer.

11. **Chatham Area Transit:** The subject site is served by the Chatham Area Transit System, route number 12 Henry Street. This route is located on East Victory Drive and extends along the entire width of the subject site.

12. **Transportation Network:** The property has frontage along East Victory Drive, Dixie Avenue, Wicklow Street, and Dixie Avenue. East Victory Drive is a paved five lane divided road and is classified as an arterial roadway. The remaining three streets are paved two lane roads and are classified as minor roads. The Georgia Department of Transportation Traffic Count Map dated 2014 identified a daily average of 28,900 vehicles on East Victory Drive along the subject site. Because Dixie Avenue, Wicklow Road, and Kerry Street are minor streets, there is no traffic count information available.

13. **Traffic Impact:** The zoning applicant has stated that the purpose of the zoning map amendment is to facilitate the development of a retail shopping center. A detailed traffic analysis to possibly include off-site improvements will be required, in conjunction with a

proposed development plan. However, some initial assessments of the traffic generated by the proposed development have been made. Based on the conceptual square footage of the proposed shopping center, the trips expected to be generated by the proposed development are approximately 7,221 weekday trips and 9,806 Saturday trips. The developer anticipates that 30 percent of the trips to the proposed development will be pass by trips already in the area. Based on this assumption, the number of new weekday trips will be 5,055 and the number of new Saturday trips will be 6,864. The proposed development is expected to have one right in/ right out access point on Victory Drive and two full access points on both Dixie Avenue and Wicklow Street.

The proposed traffic study, proposed by the developer, will include analyzing traffic for eight intersections for current year 2015 and the build out year in 2017. The intersections to be analyzed include: 1) Bee Road and Victory Drive; 2) Wicklow Street and Victory Drive; 3) Victory Manor Place/Dixie Avenue and Victory Drive; 4) Truman Parkway southbound ramp and Victory Drive; 5) Truman Parkway northbound ramp and Victory Drive; 6) Wallin Drive and Victory Drive; 7) Bee Road and Kerry Street; and 8) Wicklow Street and Kerry Street.

While the majority of traffic into the shopping center is anticipated to come from East Victory Drive (22 percent from the west and 31 percent from the east), there will likely be an increase in the traffic on roadways which provide alternate access to the site, such as Bee Road and Kerry Street. This will be studied in more detail with the pending traffic impact study.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. Will the proposed zoning district permit uses that would create traffic volumes, noise level, odor, airborne particulate matter, visual blight, reduce light or increased density of development that would adversely impact the livability or quality of life in the surrounding neighborhood?

Yes X No ___

(There will be increased traffic and an increase in the intensity of the development, however, proper buffering will help to mitigate some of the impacts.)

2. Will the proposed zoning district permit uses that would adversely impact adjacent and nearby properties by rendering such properties less desirable and therefore less marketable for the type of development permitted under the current zoning?

Yes X No ___

(Same comment as number 1)

3. Will the proposed zoning district permit uses that would generate a type or mix of vehicular traffic on a street or highway that is incompatible with the type of land use development along such street or highway?

Yes ___ No ___ Undetermined X

(The number of vehicular trips on Dixie Avenue, Wicklow Avenue, and Kerry Street has yet to be determined. Because of this, it is unclear as to whether the increased number of vehicular trips will be incompatible with the existing uses.)

4. Will the proposed zoning district permit uses that would generate greater traffic volumes at vehicular access points and cross streets than is generated by uses permitted under the current zoning district to the detriment of maintaining acceptable or current volume capacity (V/C) ratio for the streets that provide vehicular access to the proposed zoning district and adjacent and nearby properties?

Yes ___ No X

5. Will the proposed zoning district permit uses or scale of development that would require a greater level of public services such as drainage facilities, utilities, or safety services above that required for uses permitted under the current zoning district such that the provision of these services will create financial burden to the public?

Yes ___ No X

6. Will the proposed zoning district permit uses or scale of development that would adversely impact the improvement or development of adjacent and nearby properties in accordance with existing zoning regulations and development controls deemed necessary to maintain the stability and livability of the surrounding neighborhood?

Yes ___ No X

7. Will the proposed zoning district permit development that is inconsistent with the comprehensive land use plan?

Yes ___ No ___ Yes and No X

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the petitioner's request to rezone the property from B-H, R-6, and PD-N classifications to a B-C classification.
2. Deny the petitioner's request.
3. Approve an alternate classification.

POLICY ANALYSIS:

There are 28 individual parcels that comprise the subject site. Eleven of the 28 parcels are undeveloped. Eleven lots are occupied by a myriad of non-residential uses including a restaurant, a banquet facility, an automotive body repair shop, and a commercial stable/riding academy. Only six of the 28 parcels are occupied by single family dwellings, which accounts for only 21.4 percent of the subject site. The development pattern of the subject site has not changed for over 25 years and

will likely continue in the same manner, unless the parcels are assembled into one or a very limited number of developable parcels that can be redeveloped. This will likely require zoning a significant number of the subject properties, if not all of them. The subject site as a whole is presently underdeveloped. The rezoning and assemblage of these properties to allow a more appropriate use of the subject site with adequate protection for some of the adjacent properties would better serve the general area and the City of Savannah.

RECOMMENDATION:

The MPC staff recommends **approval** of the petitioner's request to rezone the subject site (28 parcels) from B-H (Highway Business), R-6 (Single Family Residential), and PD-N (Planned Development Non-Conforming) to B-C (Community Business) classification.

**Table 1: Comparison of Development Standards for the
Existing B-H, R-6, and PD-N Zoning Districts and
Proposed B-C Zoning District**

	B-C District	B-H District	R-6 District	PD-N
Minimum Lot Area	N/A	N/A	6,000 SF	As approved by the Metropolitan Planning Commission
Minimum Lot Width	N/A	N/A	60 feet	As approved by the Metropolitan Planning Commission
Front Yard Setback	15 feet	15 feet	25 feet	As approved by the Metropolitan Planning Commission
Minimum Side Yard Setback	N/A	N/A	5 feet	As approved by the Metropolitan Planning Commission
Minimum Rear Yard Setback	N/A	N/A	25 feet	As approved by the Metropolitan Planning Commission
Maximum Height	35 feet	N/A	50 feet	As approved by the Metropolitan Planning Commission
Maximum Building Coverage	N/A	N/A	30 percent	50 percent
Maximum Density	N/A	N/A	6 units per net acre	As approved by the Metropolitan Planning Commission