

CHATHAM COUNTY-SAVANNAH METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION



**UNIFIED ZONING ORDINANCE
MPC SPECIAL MEETING
ZONING ASSESSMENT REVIEW**



**April 3, 2007
10:00 AM**

Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room

Members Present: Stephen R. Lufburrow, Chairman
Robert Ray, Vice Chairman
Jon Todd, Secretary
Susan Myers, Treasurer
Douglas Bean
Michael Brown
W. Shedrick Coleman
Ben Farmer
Lacy Manigault
Lee Meyer

Members Not Present: Russ Abolt
Timothy Mackey

Staff Present Thomas L. Thomson, P. E., AICP, Executive Director
Harmit Bedi, AICP, Deputy Executive Director
Charlotte Moore, AICP, Director of Special Projects
Constance Morgan, Administrative Assistant

I. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Chairman Lufburrow called the meeting to order and asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation. He announced the special meeting that has been called in order that staff may update the Board on the Unified Zoning Ordinance. He explained the agenda for the benefit of those who were attending the meeting for the first time.

II. REGULAR BUSINESS

Unified Zoning Ordinance Update, Assessment Report and Briefing

Mr. Thompson announced that staff has reached the point where products are being bought forward from the Unified Zoning Code rewrite. This is the first component of the process. Today's objective he said is to receive feedback and additional ideas from the Board.

Ms. Moore gave a slide presentation on the Zoning Assessment. She highlighted on topics such as the Assessment Outline, Why a Zoning Update?, Update Considerations (legality; what is the purpose, implementation, enforcement, education, and availability of the ordinance once adopted), Other Development Ordinances (consider policies and ordinances that have a relationship to zoning) Improve Format (use more graphics, less text; locate use schedule in each zoning district and performance standards in a separate "catch-all" section; locate bulk & height standards in one location in the zoning district; use flow charts and graphics to illustrate processes and concepts) Implement the Comprehensive Plan, What can zoning do?, Zoning Districts (too many districts; redundant districts; unnecessary districts; needed districts; flexible districts and overlay districts) Uses (principal, accessory, temporary home occupations, and nonconforming. Administration (administration Boards, Commissions, and administrators; types of reviews; comprehensive plan amendments; site plans; timing of reports; special uses; variances; pre-application meetings; and public notification) Historic Preservation, General Development Standards & Definitions, Buffering, Parking, Measurements and the Next Steps.

Mr. Farmer questioned if there is a specific dimension for a parking space. Ms. Moore replied that the standard is 9x18 but there is this unusual calculation of parking based on net leasable area.

Mr. Brown stated that he had a problem with the parking changes. If staff applied a standard planning approach to parking whole sections of the downtown would have parking lots. There needs to be a parking set of arrangements that would be conducive to good lane usage as opposed to making sure that the neighbors are fully protected. There needs to be more people that are willing to park along the peripheries and more people that are willing to ride transit. Before something is said about parking it needs to be understood what it is that staff is trying to achieve.

Ms. Moore explained how staff views the process.

Mr. Thomson explained where staff was going with the parking process. He said the problem was the inconsistency from one use to another. Another aspect is that the current parking code treats it all the same. Lastly it is unbelievable how creative people can be when they come in and try to deal with net leasable area. It is easier for staff to define the footprint and adjust the parking rate. What staff is doing is trying to make it all consistent while recognizing that downtown, mid city and suburban areas may need different parking rates for the same type of uses.

Mr. Todd commented that this was a difficult issue unless the parking is broken down by specific use.

Ms. Moore suggested staff may want to consider maximum parking spaces instead of minimum. If the developer wants to exceed the maximum he may want to consider a pervious parking surface or more trees in the parking lot. This will allow the developers the parking spaces needed.

Ms. Myers questioned if staff was looking into shared parking uses. This may work with churches and neighboring business since these have different hours of operation.

Mr. Meyer suggested remote parking with a shuttle service.

Mr. Farmer stated parking should be viewed on a case by case basis. Such a challenging case is the funeral home on Stephenson Avenue, where they are allowed forty one spaces and they have spillage onto neighboring property. At present there is no parking ordinance for funeral homes.

She stated that staff is completing component one and will finish the assessment document by putting the graphics in and finishing the Comprehensive Plan Section. The next phase will be the Administrative portion and staff will work with the Technical Committee along with City and County staff. There was a period for questions and answers.

ADJOURNMENT