



METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

“Planning the Future - Respecting the Past”

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: May 5, 2009

TO: Metropolitan Planning Commission

FROM: MPC Staff

SUBJECT: Text Amendment to the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance
 Re: Amend Section 8-3025 (46) B&I Use Schedule
 Meredith Gaunce, Agent for Cadie McEachin
 Marcus Lotson, MPC Project Planner
 MPC File Number Z-090420-38821-2

Issue:

The petitioner is proposing a text amendment to section 8-3025 (46) of the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance in order to accommodate free standing ice vending machines which produce and distribute ice to customers on site.

Background:

The automated ice vending technology is a relatively recent phenomenon. The existing zoning ordinance addresses the storage of ice but not the automatic dispensing that has recently become possible. While these machines are not traditional structures they require the attention of governing bodies as they tend to be placed along high traffic corridors and have the potential to proliferate throughout the city.

Findings:

1. The automated ice vending business is likely to continue to grow as it is a low overhead investment vehicle and relatively few are currently operating in our area.
2. As an accessory structure automated ice vending units shall comply with all relevant development standards.
3. The petitioner worked with City staff to craft the language of the amendment and with MPC staff relative to design standards for machines placed within a Landmark Historic District.

Alternatives:

1. Approve the petitioner's request to amend the Ordinance.
2. Deny the proposed text amendment.

Policy Analysis:

Evolving technologies require us to consider matters that are not expressly delineated in our municipal codes. The proposed structures can be a valuable asset to a retail or commercial location and a convenience to the neighborhood as long as they do not detract from its character by, for example, decreasing parking or impeding public rights of way. These accessory structures must meet the development standards set forth in the Zoning Ordinance for the district in which it resides. This amendment will allow a use that will likely become more common throughout our community.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the petitioner's request to amend section 8-3025(46) of the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance by adding the language "*retail sale (limited manufacturing permitted with no off-site delivery of ice products.*"