



## Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission

Chatham County Commission Chambers  
February 25, 2020 ~ 1:30 PM  
Minutes

### February 25, 2020 Regular MPC Meeting, 1:30 P.M.

**Members Present:** Ellis Cook, Vice-Chairman  
Karen Jarrett, Secretary  
Joseph Welch, Treasurer  
Thomas Branch  
Travis H. Coles  
Tanya Milton  
Wayne Noha  
Eula Parker  
Lee Smith  
Linder S. Suther

**Members Not Present:** Joseph Ervin, Chairman  
Lacy Manigault  
Pat Monahan  
Tom Woiwode

**Staff Present** Melanie Wilson, Executive Director  
Pamela Everett, Assistant Executive Director  
Marcus Lotson, Director of Development Services  
Candra Teshome, Planner  
Jessica Hagan, Administrative Assistant

#### I. Call to Order and Welcome

#### II. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

#### III. Approval of Agenda

##### 1. Approval of Agenda

Agenda was approved as submitted.

##### **Motion**

Approval of the agenda.

##### **Vote Results ( Approved )**

Motion: W. Lee Smith

Second: Travis Coles

Ellis Cook - Aye

W. Lee Smith - Aye

Linder Suthers	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Tommy Branch	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye

**IV. Notices, Proclamations and Acknowledgements**

**Notice(s)**

[2. March 19, 2020 Regular MPC Meeting, 1:30 P.M., Planning Commission, Arthur Mendonsa Hearing Room, 112 East State Street.](#)

**Information Item(s) for Board Members**

[3. Development Plans Submitted for Review](#)

[Development Plans Submitted for Review - February 2020.pdf](#)

**V. Item(s) Requested to be Removed from the Final Agenda**

[4. REZONING MAP AMENDMENT | Diamond Causeway & Ferguson Avenue | Z-191113-00120-1](#)

**Motion**

Per the Petitioner's request this item is Postponed to the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting, March 19, 2020.

**Vote Results ( Approved )**

Motion: Tanya Milton  
Second: Joseph Welch

Ellis Cook	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Linder Suthers	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Tommy Branch	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye

**VI. Items Requested to be Withdrawn**

[5. REZONING MAP AMENDMENT | Covair Avenue | Rezone from RSF-6 to I-L | File No. 19-007065-ZA](#)

**Motion**

Per the Petitioner's request this item has been Withdrawn from the Final Agenda.

**Vote Results ( Approved )**

Motion: W. Lee Smith

Second: Travis Coles

Ellis Cook	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Linder Suthers	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Tommy Branch	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye

**The Consent Agenda consists of items for which the applicant is in agreement with the staff recommendation and for which no known objections have been identified nor anticipated by staff. Any objections raised at the meeting will result in the item being moved to the Regular Agenda. At a 12:30 briefing, the staff will brief the Commission on Consent Agenda items and, time permitting, Regular Agenda items. No testimony will be taken from applicants, supporters or opponents, and no votes will be taken at the briefing.**

**VII. Consent Agenda**

[6. Approval of the February 4, 2020 Briefing and Regular Meeting Minutes.](#)

[📎 02-4-2020 MPC BRIEFING MINUTES.pdf](#)

[📎 02.04.20 MEETING MINUTES.pdf](#)

The February 4, 2020 Briefing and Regular Meeting Minutes were approved as submitted.

**Motion**

Recommend approval of the Briefing and Regular Meeting Minutes.

**Vote Results ( Approved )**

Motion: W. Lee Smith

Second: Karen Jarrett

Ellis Cook	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Linder Suthers	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Tommy Branch	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye

Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye

7. Authorization of the "Bank Resolution for services access" to update operations to the MPC account.

**Motion**

Recommend APPROVAL to update the Bank Resolution for services access to update operations to the MPC account.

**Vote Results ( Approved )**

Motion: Karen Jarrett  
Second: Linder Suthers

Ellis Cook	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Linder Suthers	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Tommy Branch	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye

8. Authorization for the Executive Director to execute first amendment to the contract between Stage Front and the Metropolitan Planning Commission for Audiovisual Services.

**Motion**

Recommend APPROVAL for the Executive Director to execute first amendment to the contract between Stage Front and the Metropolitan Planning Commission.

**Vote Results ( Approved )**

Motion: Tanya Milton  
Second: Joseph Welch

Ellis Cook	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Nay
Linder Suthers	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Tommy Branch	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye

Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye

[9. Authorization Resolution to Apply for a Georgia Department of Natural Resources Coastal Incentive Grant For Development of the Savannah Resilience Network](#)

[MPC\\_Resolution\\_CIG-SRN\\_2020.pdf](#)

**Motion**

Recommended the Planning Commission approves the Authorizing Resolution.

**Vote Results ( Approved )**

Motion: W. Lee Smith

Second: Travis Coles

Ellis Cook	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Linder Suthers	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Tommy Branch	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye

**VIII. Old Business**

**IX. Regular Business**

[10. REZONING MAP AMENDMENT | 824 STILLWOOD DRIVE | REZONE FROM RSF-6 TO OI-E | 20-000090-ZA](#)

[Application.pdf](#)

[Exhibit A - Maps.pdf](#)

[Exhibit B - Photos of Surrounding Area.pdf](#)

[Staff Report-20-000090-ZA-MAP.pdf](#)

[Exhibit C - Street Classifications and Development Patterns.pdf](#)

**Ms. Candra Teshome, Planner**, stated the petitioner is requesting to rezone four (4) parcels bounded by Stillwood Drive, Willow Road, White Bluff Road and Greenbriar Drive identified as PINs 20690 02001, 20690 03001, 20690 03002, and 20653 03004B from the RSF-6 (Residential Single-family-6) district to the OI-E (Office and Institutional-Expanded) zoning district.

The subject sites are located within the Windsor Forest neighborhood and contain the Savannah Country Day School and its associated buildings, which is a legal, non-conforming use under the principal use *School, Public or Private (K-12)*. Each parcel was zoned R-6 prior to the implementation of NewZo, which designated the parcels RSF-6. The petitioner has stated the purpose of the requested map amendment is to bring the parcels into conformity to permit expansion of the use and/or buildings associated with the use without petitioning for nonconforming relief for each expansion.

Per Article 8 Section 8.3.14 of the *City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance*, a School, public or private (K-12) located in the RSF-6 zoning district, "...shall be located on a street classified as a collector or arterial..." (*City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance, page 8-19*). The primary access street for the parcel (824 Stillwood Drive) and all other streets that have access to the subject parcels are not classified collector or arterial. Therefore, the school and its associated activities are legal non-conforming uses. The OI- zoning districts allow *Schools, public or private (K-12)* as a use by right with no road classification restrictions.

Staff performed an analysis of four (4) private schools zoned OI-E within Savannah city limits and found the following:

1. Benedictine Military School is located on Seawright Drive and takes access from both collector and major arterial streets. The school is also adjacent to other parcels zoned OI-.
2. Calvary Day School, located on Waters Avenue, takes access from a collector street. The school is adjacent to parcels zoned for business.
3. Memorial Day School is located at 6500 Habersham Street and takes access from a residential collector street. This school is located next to other parcels zoned OI- and business.
4. The Jewish Educational Alliance takes access from Abercorn Street, but staff was unable to confirm the street's classification. This location is adjacent to commercial uses.

The above referenced private schools are each adjacent to parcels zoned for office and commercial uses and take access from a collector or arterial street. While each parcel abuts a single-family zoning district, they act as a transition between established neighborhoods and busy commercial corridors. The subject site abuts properties zoned RSF-6 and RTF on all sides and does not take access from a collector or arterial road.

Due to the legal non-conformity of the parcels any expansion of the use would require the petitioner to apply to the Zoning Board of Appeals for relief for nonconforming uses, per Article 11 Section 11.4.2(b)(i). The ordinance requires authorization by the Zoning Board of Appeals for the expansion of non-conforming uses, so the public may receive notification and the discussion takes place in a public forum at a public hearing.

The OI-E zoning district, and the OI- districts in general, allow uses by right that are too intense for this location. In addition, some of the uses would have adverse impacts on the existing, established neighborhood, such as event venues and high-density housing construction, and would detract from the established development pattern. The only restriction on the parcels in question is the road classification requirement. Further, the road classification requirements do not impair the petitioner's ability to operate, or expand, its facilities.

**Mr. Harold Yellin, agent for the petitioner,** stated the petition before you today is to make Savannah Country Day campus into a conforming NewZo district. We have requested the OI-E zoning district so we will have the same zoning district as the rest of the private schools around the area. The property consists of 65 acres with 1,040 students in 21 buildings. To my knowledge, we are the only non compliant private school in the City of Savannah. All public schools are not bound by the Zoning Ordinance. By us being a nonconforming use, every time we do something we have to go before the Zoning Board of Appeals and wait to see if there is an appeal of what happens at the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting. While all the other private schools can go straight to the building permit office to get their building permit. Any expansion of our nonconforming use can only be done with ZBA approval. Over the years, we have consistently expanded the buildings. We would be consistent with the Future Land Use Plan. We feel we shouldn't have to go to ZBA every time we would like to make any expansions. We are not planning on putting any other use on this site. It was asked in the pre-meeting why we are not asking for OI instead of OI-E and that's because of the 35 foot height restriction. Most of our buildings now exceed the 35 feet. There are other properties in the area that are zoned OI-E. The church that was originally included in the request is no longer included. We have removed that property from the request.

**Ms. Linder Suthers, Board Member,** asked when was the last renovation made.

**Mr. Yellin** replied, there are constant renovations being done but the last major one was 3 or 4 years ago.

There are plans for new buildings and renovations this year.

**No Public Comments**

**Motion**

Motion to approve the petitioners request to rezone four (4) parcels bounded by Stillwood Drive, Willow Road, White Bluff Road and Greenbriar Drive from the RSF-6 (Residential Single-family-6) district to the OI-E (Office and Institutional-Expanded) zoning district.

**Vote Results ( Approved )**

Motion: Linder Suthers

Second: Tanya Milton

Ellis Cook	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Linder Suthers	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Nay
Joseph Welch	- Nay
Tommy Branch	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Nay
Eula Parker	- Nay
Wayne Noha	- Aye

[11. DEMOLITION OF A CONTRIBUTING BUILDING: CUYLER-BROWNVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT | 905 West 40th Street | Petitioner: City of Savannah | File No. 19-005200-COA](#)

[☞ Staff Recommendation .pdf](#)

[☞ SUPP INFO 19-005200\\_.pdf](#)

**Ms. Alyson Smith, Historic Preservation Planner**, stated the applicant is requesting approval to demolish the residential building located at 905 West 40th Street. The historic building was constructed in 1925 and is a contributing structure within the Cuyler-Brownville Historic District. The building's roof has collapsed, and the building is in extremely poor condition. At Recorder's Court on August 28, 2019, the Court ordered that the City shall have the structure demolished. The Court found the building to be dilapidated, structurally unsound, unsafe, unsanitary, dangerous to human life and constitutes a hazard to safety and health by reason of inadequate maintenance, dilapidation, obsolescence and abandonment. The heirs of the property's owner have consented to demolition.

The COA application was submitted pre-NewZo; therefore, Section. 8-3029 of the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance applies.

Due to the extremely poor condition of the building and the collapse of the roof, staff did not require additional information beyond the court order and photographs.

**Mr. Joshua Downs with City of Savannah Code Compliance**, stated he was the one to put in the request for the demolition and he agrees with staff's recommendation.

**Mr. Ellis Cook, Vice Chairman**, asked if the structure was ever on fire.

**Mr. Downs**, stated no, the property just wasn't taken care of. At one point the department had to condemn it because one of the heir's was living in it with no power or water. The registered owner is deceased and the owner's daughter is in her 90s and doesn't have the means to take care of it, so they

have given us consent to go through the demolition process.

**Motion**

Approval to demolish the building located at 905 West 40th Street as requested because the building is in extremely poor condition and has received a Court Order for demolition because the existing condition has proved to the Courts be an imminent threat to public health and safety.

**Vote Results ( Approved )**

Motion: Wayne Noha

Second: Tommy Branch

Ellis Cook	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Linder Suthers	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Tommy Branch	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye

**X. Presentations**

**XI. Other Business**

**XII. Adjournment**

12. Adjourn

There being no further business to present before the Board, the February 25, 2020 Regular Metropolitan Planning Commission Meeting adjourned at 2:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Wilson  
Executive Director

MW/jh

***The Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission provides meeting minutes which are adopted by the respective Board. Verbatim transcripts of minutes are the responsibility of the interested party.***