



Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission

Arthur Mendonsa Hearing Room
June 9, 2020 ~ 1:30 PM
Minutes

June 9, 2020 Regular MPC Meeting, 1:30 P.M.

Members Present: Joseph Ervin, Chairman
Karen Jarrett, Secretary
Joseph Welch, Treasurer
Travis H. Coles
Tanya Milton
Wayne Noha
Eula Parker
Lee Smith
Linder S. Suthers

Members Not Present: Ellis Cook, Vice-Chairman
Thomas Branch
Lacy Manigault
Pat Monahan
Tom Woiwode

Staff Present: Melanie Wilson, Executive Director
Pamela Everett, Assistant Executive Director
Marcus Lotson, Director of Development Services
Christy Adams, Director of Administrative Services
Jessica Hagan, Administrative Assistant
Julie Yawn, Systems Analyst

Advisory Staff: Bridget Lidy, City of Savannah Director of Planning and Urban Design

I. Call to Order and Welcome

II. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

III. Approval of Agenda

1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as submitted.

Motion

Approve the agenda as submitted.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Wayne Noha

Second: Karen Jarrett	
Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Linder Suthers	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye

IV. Notices, Proclamations and Acknowledgements

Notice(s)

[2. June 30, 2020 Regular MPC Meeting, 1:30 P.M., Planning Commission, GO TO WEBINAR \(VIRTUAL\) to access go to: www.thempc.org.](#)

Information Item(s) for Board Members

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

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

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

Motion	
The petitioner has requested this item be continued until the next regularly scheduled MPC meeting.	
Vote Results (Approved)	
Motion: Linder Suthers	
Second: Joseph Welch	
Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Linder Suthers	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye

VI. Items Requested to be Withdrawn

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

[5. Approval of the May 19, 2020 Briefing and Regular Meeting Minutes.](#)

📎 [05-19-2020 MPC BRIEFING MINUTES.pdf](#)

📎 [05.19.20 MEETING MINUTES.pdf](#)

The minutes were approved as submitted.

Motion

Recommend approval of the Briefing and Regular Meeting Minutes.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Wayne Noha

Second: Travis Coles

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

VIII. Old Business

[6. REZONING MAP AMENDMENT | 716 Highland Drive | Rezone from RSF-10 to O-I | File No. 20-001742](#)

📎 [Maps.pdf](#)

📎 [Street View.pdf](#)

📎 [Context Aerial - Highland Park.pdf](#)

📎 [716 Highland Dr - Street View.pdf](#)

📎 [2020-05-18_HighlandDr_PresBrds.pdf](#)

📎 [Staff Report-20-001742-ZA June 9.pdf](#)

📎 [Lisa Jones 7207 Madiso Avenue re; Highland Drive 06082020.pdf](#)

Mr. Marcus Lotson, Director of Development Services, stated the petitioner is requesting to rezone 716 Highland Drive from an RSF-10 (Single Family Residential) zoning classification to an O-I (Office - Institutional) zoning classification.

A petition was heard for 714 and 716 Highland Drive by the Planning Commission during the May 19th meeting. The petitioner requested to continue the hearing and have the request reconsidered to exclude 714 Highland Drive.

716 Highland Drive is a residentially zoned parcel, located on the northwest corner of the intersection of

Highland Drive and Waters Avenue. It is developed with a single family residential structure built in conjunction with the Highland Park Subdivision, which was constructed beginning in the 1970s. The Highland Park subdivision was developed as an exclusively single family detached residential subdivision, where parcels are generally between 8,000 and 10,000 square feet in size. The only nonresidential use in the subdivision is a day care center at the southwest corner of the intersection of Highland Drive and Waters Avenue.

The subject property and the neighborhood have served as residential single family uses for many years. Although many commercial uses have developed around it, the neighborhood has remained stable and viable through this transition. Commercial development along an arterial roadway can place redevelopment pressures on residences, specifically corner lots that abut major arterial roads. Fortunately, the size of the property at 716 Highland Drive will allow it to be adequately buffered from the street.

While it is accurate that most properties that abut Waters Avenue between Eisenhower Drive and Mall Boulevard are nonresidential, staff does not find justification to rezone the subject property to a nonresidential classification. Staff finds that a rezoning would likely lead to negative impacts on the existing single-family residential neighborhood and apply undue redevelopment pressures on other parcels within Highland Park.

Mr. Ed Garvin, agent for the petitioner, stated that the buyer wants to completely renovate the building and has already spent close to twelve thousand dollars on a survey, engineering, floor plans and exterior views. We have handed out about 20 of those to the neighbors. We understand this zoning could be used for anything allowed in the district, but the buyer has already invested money for this use. The wishes of everyone in the neighborhood was that the access point be off Waters and not Highland Drive, which we agree to. We come back to you today with what the people in the neighborhood want and voted for and that's to rezone 716 Highland Drive with no access to Highland Drive. The parking will be on the north side of the property. A real estate office will be a nice quiet addition to the neighborhood.

Ms. Karen Jarrett, Board Member, asked what happens if we approve this rezoning request and the access from Waters Avenue gets denied. I cannot vote in favor of this until they have the access from Waters approved by the City of Savannah. Has the Waters Avenue access already been approved by the City?

Mr. Garvin, stated we cannot get that approved until the rezoning is approved.

No Public Comments

Motion

STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION: DENIAL of the requested rezoning from an RSF-10 (Single Family Residential) zoning classification to an O-I (Office Institutional) zoning classification.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Karen Jarrett

Second: Travis Coles

Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Linder Suthers	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye

IX. Regular Business

[7. REZONING MAP AMENDMENT | 1147 E. President Street | Rezone from B-C to RMF-2 | File No. 20-002276-ZA](#)

📎 [Staff Report-20-002276-ZA 1147 E. President.pdf](#)

📎 [1147 E President Slides.pdf](#)

📎 [Maps President.pdf](#)

Mr. Marcus Lotson, Director of Development Services, stated the petitioner is requesting to rezone approximately nine acres from a B-C (Community Business) zoning classification to an RMF-2-35 (Multifamily Residential – 35 units per acre) zoning classification.

The subject site is located south of President Street and east of the Wessels - Hitch Housing Authority residential development. It is west of the Bilbo Canal and has frontage on the unopened city right-of-way designated "Normandy Street."

The petitioner is proposing to remediate the site, removing all debris and potentially contaminated soil, and to re-fill the site preparatory to development. The proposed rezoning has been submitted to accommodate multifamily residential development.

In 2017, the property was rezoned from the Light Industrial classification to the current Community Business classification (**file no.17-001310-ZA**). That rezoning was adopted by the Mayor and Aldermen pursuant to a proposed hotel development of approximately 600 rooms across 5 hotel buildings.

The subject property is designated "Downtown Expansion" on the Future Land Use Map of the Tricentennial Comprehensive Plan. This designation is consistent with the proposed zoning, as dense residential development is recommended to exist within the Downtown Expansion areas.

The subject site is located within an area where mixed use residential development is occurring. The uses permitted within the requested zoning district would not adversely impact the existing properties within the general area. In addition, the opportunity to have the site remediated from an environmental standpoint is an important community benefit.

Mr. Harold Yellin, agent for the petitioner, stated the requested zoning classification and density are identical to two other apartment complexes recently built in this area. Once rezoned we will be able to meet every development standard requirement in NewZo. We don't anticipate any variances. We believe this development will be a tremendous community benefit.

No Public Comments

Motion

MPC staff recommends Approval of the petitioner's request to rezone the subject site from the existing B-C (Community Business) zoning classification to an RMF-2-35 (Multifamily Residential - 35 units per acre) zoning classification based on the findings identified in the staff report.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Travis Coles

Second: Joseph Welch

Joseph Ervin

- Aye

W. Lee Smith

- Aye

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

[8. REZONING MAP AMENDMENT | 450 Fort Argyle Road | Rezone from I-L to I-H | File no. 20-002281-ZA](#)

[☞ Staff Report-20-002281 450 Fort Argyle Road.pdf](#)

[☞ Maps Fort Argyle.pdf](#)

[☞ Fort Argyle Slides.pdf](#)

Mr. Marcus Loston, Director of Development Services, stated the petitioner is requesting to rezone approximately 80 acres from a Light Industrial zoning classification to a Heavy Industrial zoning classification.

The subject site is a portion of a larger tract that abuts the existing Waste Management Sanitary Landfill. The property is currently zoned Light Industrial, but is undeveloped. The petitioner is proposing to obtain the identified portion for the purpose of using it to serve as a surface mine to provide soil for covering the existing landfill.

The I-H district is established to provide sites for activities which involve large-scale warehousing, processing, manufacturing facilities, major transportation terminals and waste-related facilities that have a greater impact on the surrounding area than industries found in the IL-T and IL districts. It is the intent of this district to provide an environment for industries that is unencumbered by nearby non-industrial development.

The subject site will, upon redevelopment, be recombined with the larger landfill site that has access to Little Neck Road. Little Neck Road is a Minor Arterial roadway that connects Ogeechee Road through to the City of Bloomingdale.

The Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designates the subject property as Industrial. The proposed I-H zoning district is compatible with this land use designation.

It is unlikely that the uses permitted in the proposed zoning district would adversely impact the nearby uses located within the area. The area is characterized by large undeveloped tracts of land.

Mr. Harold Yellin, agent for the petitioner, stated as part of the landfill operation we do need borrow pits because the soil is used for landfill cover material. The landfill is covered on a daily basis. The 80 acres that's before you today is located in the City of Savannah and has always been governed by the City Ordinance and now its governed by NewZo. The Superior Landfill next door was previously located in Chatham County, but in 2019, it was annex into the City. By Annexation law, the larger tract was not rezoned to I-H immediately; instead, it kept its zoning designation of PDR-SL(CO). By Annexation law, the larger tract must remain PDR-SL(CO) for at least one year. For right now, there will be two different zoning districts that will govern the landfill operations. The one year should expire October 2020 and we have already had discussions with MPC staff to rezone the larger tract to the I-H district. We also agree with Mr. Lotson that in October 2020 with the rezoning request, we will also submit a new General Development Plan for both sites.

No Public Comments

Motion

MPC staff recommends Approval of the petitioner's request to rezone the subject site from the existing I-L (Light Industrial) zoning classification to an I-H (Heavy Industrial) zoning classification based on the findings identified in the staff report.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Karen Jarrett

Second: Travis Coles

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

X. Presentations

[9. City of Savannah \(COS\) - Savannah Canal District](#)

☞ [Savannah Canal District - Master Plan Update PRESENTATION 6.9.2020.pdf](#)

Ms. Bridget Lidy, City of Savannah Director of Planning and Urban Design, gave a presentation on the Savannah Canal District Master Plan Update. The Canal District Master Plan consists of two critical documents that should guide the future of the area. The Master Plan is a document that focuses on the process, vision, and design recommendations for the Canal District. The Action Playbook is a document that focuses on the actions needed to implement the Master Plan in an equitable and inclusive way.

Next Steps

Present to Planning Commission - June 9, 2020

Virtual Aldermanic District Meetings weeks of June 22 - June 29, 2020

Consideration by City Council - July 9, 2020

XI. Other Business

XII. Adjournment

[10. Adjourn](#)

There being no further business to present before the Board, the June 9, 2020 Regular Metropolitan Planning Commission Regular Meeting adjourned at 3:42 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.