



Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission

Arthur Mendonsa Hearing Room
November 10, 2020 ~ 1:30 PM
Minutes

November 10, 2020 Regular MPC Meeting, 1:30 P.M.

Members Present: Ellis Cook, Chairman
Joseph Welch, Vice-Chairman
Karen Jarrett, Secretary
Eula Parker, Treasurer
Michael Brown
Travis H. Coles
Joseph Ervin
Tanya Milton
Wayne Noha
Lee Smith
Linder S. Suthers
Tom Woiwode

Members Not Present: Lacy Manigault
Tommy Branch

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

Advisory Staff:

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: Karen Jarrett

Second: Travis Coles

Ellis Cook	- Aye
Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Linder Suthers	- Aye
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye
Michael Brown	- Aye

IV. Notices, Proclamations and Acknowledgements

[2. November 10, 2020 Finance Committee Meeting, 11:30 A.M., GO-TO- WEBINAR \(VIRTUAL\) to access go to: www.thempc.org.](#)

Ms. Eula Parker, Treasurer, stated the Finance Committee met today at 11:30. We discussed the finances and everything is in order and nothing is out of the ordinary. We are planning on meeting for December, prior to the City's meeting so we can discuss the budget. We will then get back with the Board.

Notice(s)

[3. November 24, 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

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

📎 [MPC Case Update - City.pdf](#)

📎 [MPC Case Update - County.pdf](#)

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

[5. ZONING MAP AMENDMENT | 135 Hampstead Avenue | Rezone from RMF-2 -30 to PD \(Planned Development\)](#)

Motion

The petitioner has requested that this item be postponed to the November 24th Planning Commission Meeting.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Joseph Ervin

Second: Tanya Milton

Ellis Cook	- Aye
Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Linder Suthers	- Aye
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye
Michael Brown	- Aye

[6. ZONING MAP AMENDMENT | 8427-8518 Whitfield Avenue | Rezone from R-1 & R-2 to R-3](#)

Motion

The petitioner has requested that this item be postponed to the December 15th Planning Commission Meeting.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Joseph Ervin

Second: Tanya Milton

Ellis Cook	- Aye
Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Linder Suthers	- Aye
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye
Michael Brown	- Aye

[7. ZONING MAP AMENDMENT | 1902 & 1920 Waters Avenue & 1111 E 36th Street | Rezone from TC-1 & TR-3 to PD Planned Development | 20-003664-ZA](#)

Motion

The petitioner has requested that this item be postponed to the November 24th Planning Commission Meeting.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Joseph Ervin

Second: Tanya Milton

Ellis Cook	- Aye
Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Linder Suthers	- Aye
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye
Michael Brown	- 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

[8. Approval of the October 13, 2020 Briefing and Regular Meeting Minutes.](#)

📎 [10.13.20 MEETING MINUTES.pdf](#)

📎 [10-13-2020 MPC BRIEFING MINUTES.pdf](#)

The minutes were approved as submitted.

Motion

Approve the Briefing and Regular Meeting Minutes.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Joseph Ervin

Second: Travis Coles

Ellis Cook	- Aye
Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye

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

VIII. Old Business

[9. ZONING MAP AMENDMENT 5820 OGEECHEE ROAD - REZONE REQUEST FROM R-A TO B-N - Z-0720-000051](#)

- 📎 [Application.pdf](#)
- 📎 [AERIAL MAP Z-0720-000051.pdf](#)
- 📎 [VICINITY MAP Z-0720-000051.pdf](#)
- 📎 [ZONING MAP Z-0720-000051.pdf](#)
- 📎 [FLU MAP Z-0720-000051.pdf](#)
- 📎 [2020 Aerial Map.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Zoning Report Updated.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Street View.pdf](#)

Mr. Jordan Holloway, Development Services Planner, stated the petitioner is requesting to rezone 5820 Ogeechee Road from the R-A Zoning District to the B-N Zoning District.

At the September 1, 2020 MPC meeting, this item was continued in order for MPC Staff and the petitioner to analyze if there was a way to accommodate this use within the current zoning district. The petitioner was cited by Chatham County for operating a business on a residentially zoned property. Staff made the petitioner aware of the home-based business parameters of the ordinance; however, it is the petitioner's intent to operate fully as a nonresidential use. Upon further analysis and communications with the Petitioner, all other potential solutions were exhausted, as the Petitioner is only amenable to a rezoning which would allow business usage, the ability to accommodate employees, and the ability to accommodate subcontractors.

5820 Ogeechee Road is a conforming 1.09-acre parcel in the R-A Zoning District. The parcel is a remnant property due to the widening of Ogeechee Road, and has very odd lot dimensions. Owners of the property and business would like to make the property a full-time office for their painting company, which would accommodate subcontractors and employees.

The R-A Zoning District allows for certain non-residential type uses that are compatible with the surrounding area and overall character of a rural-residential area. However, an "office use" is not compatible based upon review of existing ordinances. By rezoning the subject property to B-N, it would allow a multitude of uses that are distinctly incompatible with the surrounding area that is also zoned R-A. The intensity of uses, as well as trips generated, due to a change in zoning could create road and access issues for the subject parcel. The intensity of uses could also be detrimental to future points of access to the adjacent parcels. Finally, two accessory structures exist on the subject property that would be non-conforming, based on their location, should the property be rezoned to the B-N Zoning District. It is in direct opposition to the intent and regulations set forth by the ordinance to create a non-conforming parcel and / use. Should this parcel be rezoned and redeveloped, appropriate buffering would be needed to

protect future development on the surrounding parcels.

Mr. Calvin Norris, petitioner, stated he would like the Board to consider to approve the request. There are several business along Ogeechee Road. Some are similar and some are not. We would like to be able to accommodate our employees, sub-contractors and be able to get signage.

Ms. Tanya Milton, Board Member, asked if there is another use he would like on this property?

Mr. Norris, stated no. We want to use this location for business/office space.

No Public Comments

Motion

Deny the rezoning request brought forth by the petitioner based on the rezoning criteria and based on the fact that a nonconforming condition would be created if rezoned.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Karen Jarrett

Second: Tom Woiwode

Ellis Cook	- Aye
Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Linder Suthers	- Aye
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye
Michael Brown	- Aye

[10. SPECIAL USE REQUEST - 2305 AUGUSTA AVENUE - SHELTER / TRANSITIONAL CENTER](#)

- 📎 [Maps.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Building Exhibit.pdf](#)
- 📎 [WSCO Letter for Salvation Army Property.pdf](#)
- 📎 [West Savannah Residents and Concern Citizens Submittal.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Woodville Community Letter of Support.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Historic Site Exhibit.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Staff Report-0512-ZA-Special Use 111020.pdf](#)
- 📎 [MPC letter \(002\).pdf](#)
- 📎 [MPC letter_11102020.pdf](#)

Mr. Marcus Lotson, Director of Development Services, stated the petitioner is requesting approval of a Special Use pursuant to Section 3.10 of the Savannah Zoning Ordinance to establish the following uses found in Article 5 Principal Use Table:

-Shelter, Emergency: A facility which is owned and operated by a not-for-profit organization for the purpose of providing temporary overnight shelter, sleeping accommodations, meals on an emergency basis, and/or a variety of social services and/or medical services designed and intended to assist those housed in the facility to obtain permanent housing and to care for themselves.

-Shelter, Transitional: A shelter that is owned and operated by a not-for-profit organization to provide temporary residences, and which may provide by referral or may provide on the site a variety of social services and/or medical services designed and intended to assist those housed in the facility to obtain permanent housing and to care for themselves. Includes Family Violence Shelters as defined by Georgia Administrative Code 290-5-46.

The petitioner is the Salvation Army Center of Hope and the request is pursuant to the planned location of a new community shelter at the 12.18-acre site. The Special Use process includes review by the Planning Commission and the Savannah City Council. Should the uses be approved, a permit will be granted by the City of Savannah which will be governed by the permit enforcement criteria outlined in Article 3 of the Savannah Zoning Ordinance.

The subject property is located at 2305 Augusta Avenue and consists of two undeveloped parcels north of Old West Lathrop Avenue and west of the Interstate 516 on-ramp. The site is located within the West Savannah community. The petitioner had originally made application in January of 2020 but requested that the application be withheld. A meeting was held between the petitioner and members of the nearby neighborhood association to apprise them of the proposed request.

The General Provisions for Special Uses identify the purpose of the process and are as follows:

- Special uses within each zoning district are uses that would not be appropriate generally or without restriction but which, if controlled as to number, area, location or relation to other uses may be appropriate in a particular zoning district.
- A special use permit shall be required for all special uses (identified with an "S" designation) as set forth in the permitted use table in [Sec. 5.4, Principal Use Table](#) or as part of a use condition in [Article 8.0, Use Standards](#).
- Specific use standards may be applicable to the approved special use.
- Any use or activity on the property not specifically permitted by [Article 5.0, Base Zoning Districts](#), or the special use permit as modified, shall be deemed unlawful and subject to [Article 12.0](#).

The special use provisions of the Savannah Zoning Ordinance are designed to allow the reviewing authorities to consider the establishment of uses in zoning districts, where the use may be appropriate, but should not be allowed by right. The review criteria outlined in Section 3.10.8 are the standards for considering a special use. In review of the standards, it appears that the subject property and proposed uses meet the requirements.

The current zoning of the property is such that many other intense uses can be established at this location by right. The uses include hotels, hospitals, convenience stores, major vehicle repair, event venues, restaurants, and others. It should be noted, however, that these uses cannot occur while the property is owned by the Housing Authority due to strict Federal guidelines.

The location of the subject property is fairly isolated from nearby residences, and the development pattern in the immediate vicinity consists primarily of commercial and industrial uses. While the proposed use is substantial in terms of scale, it is not the kind of use that creates significant intensity from a land use perspective, as might happen with other uses permitted by right in the zoning district.

Mr. Michael Brown, Interim City Manager, asked in your staff work what area plans have an effect on this site and vice a versa? Did you consider or do you know of any housing, redevelopment or other plans that would be effected by this project?

Mr. Lotson, replied we did look at a number of other planning efforts that have taken place in this area, including the West Savannah Revitalization Plan which I believe began in 2007. There were charrettes held regarding this overall area but, as I recall based on the information I had available, this particular property was not involved in that planning effort but the general neighborhood was. In our review, the proposed use, in terms of its relationship to the criteria, we felt it met the criteria and also would be a benefit to the neighborhood as a whole.

Mr. Brown, asked what were the boundaries of the other plan?

Mr. Lotson, stated his understanding the reason these particular properties were not included in those discussions is that they are under the ownership of the Housing Authority.

Mr. Brown, stated he has had some feedback that there are plans in place for West Savannah and I want to make sure. Is the western portion of it in the Woodville neighborhood?

Mr. Lotson, stated there has been some lack of clarity as to the exact boundaries of where the West Savannah neighborhood ends and where the Woodville Community begins. We have had feedback from both of those organizations regarding this petition. My understanding is that the West Savannah neighborhood went to the railroad track and, if that's correct, this property would be within those boundaries.

Mr. Brown, asked if he has seen anything in the West Savannah plan that had a conflict between this site plan development and the West Savannah Plan?

Mr. Lotson, replied, while looking through that plan, the best way to categorize the feelings about this property was a number of neighbors and stakeholders that were involved in that process were desiring other uses for this property, but those were not adopted plans. The owners of this property were not part of that discussion.

Mr. Brown, asked if the department of Housing Urban Development have a role in the decision of selling this property and did they have any rules that they need adhered to?

Mr. Lotson, stated his understanding is that they do have certain criteria they have to meet in order to sell property in terms of the uses that will be allowed on that property.

Mr. Brown, asked if there was any contact with the Woodville Community?

Mr. Lotson, stated yes, there was contact with the Woodville Community. The petitioner met with the community.

Mr. Brown, stated he thinks that some of the residents in West Savannah wish to preserve the ability for monumental recognition of the Weeping Times site and the Ten Broeck racetrack. Does this overlap the boundaries of that site?

Mr. Lotson, stated no.

Mr. Brown, asked if the racetrack property has been designated historically in any formal process?

Mr. Lotson, stated no.

Mr. Brown, asked if he could get some information on how that could be done. Between the City staff and MPC, I would like to begin the process of saying what are the boundaries and are there any burial sites on this property. I would like to begin a process of information presentation to say how do you officially designate this as a historic site: How would it be done? What category would it be in? I would like to ask the petitioner to acknowledge that the City would like to see them and the neighbors be parties to that if there is something on the petitioner's site that would support the preservation development. I'm asking staff to get some kind of written communication to me that acknowledges this issue needs review and I will ask City staff to work with you to produce a report about how an official historic status may be obtained for the Ten Broeck racetrack.

Mr. Lotson, stated yes, and that is based on some work that the City did. I believe it was the Archivist some years ago, as well as some public information, that is available about the history of the site.

Mr. Brown, stated can you please send that information to me, the MPC Board and the presidents of West Savannah and the Woodville Community.

Mr. Lotson, stated yes.

Mr. Phillip McCorkle, agent for the petitioner, stated that he would like the MPC Board to vote on this matter today. Since the last meeting, myself and Major Egan had a meeting with about twelve pastors from the West Savannah area. It was a great meeting and we had great support from the all the pastors, except for one gentlemen. The reason I think this got tabled six weeks ago is because an elected official, who will really have a vote on the final say so on this application, spoke and asked that it be tabled with no direction as to what will be accomplished. The property is zoned B-C and transitional shelters are an allowed use if special use criteria are satisfied. The six criteria listed in NewZO have been satisfied. As it has already been discussed, nearby there is the Ten Broeck racetrack where the Weeping Time slave auction took place which is certainly historically important to this community, but it is not the location of the slave auction. I personally went to the City archive and researched the location of the Weeping Times slave auction, and this is not the location where it took place. We have modified our plan to accommodate by making a view corridor, and also changed the access to our site so in case something would be built for the Weeping Times or designated as a historic site.

Ms. Earline Davis, Executive Director of the Housing Authority of Savannah, stated the Housing Authority submitted an application to HUD in 2015. As part of that application, there was a letter of support signed by then- Mayor Edna Jackson dated June 15, 2016 and a resolution from the Housing Authority of Savannah Board dated June 17, 2015. HUD approved the sale of the property to the Salvation Army. I have that letter dated November 22, 2017. The Housing Authority staff was a part of the West Savannah Revitalization Plan, but the land of the Housing Authority was excluded. There were several things noted in the plan that was needed, including single family housing which we have built, transitional housing and this is in keeping with the plan, and senior housing, which we built.

Major Paul Egan, Salvation Army, stated that the current site no longer fits their needs. Our hope is to put a multi-million dollar facility on this property that could house up to 180 people. We want to be able to help them move forward with their lives. We would have emergency sheltering and also continue all the programs we currently have at our current location.

Mr. Brown, asked how close is the current location to any neighborhoods?

Major Egan, replied if you go out the west side of our property, there is a church then we go into housing. a few streets over.

Mr. Brown, asked if they have had any conflicts with the neighbors?

Major Egan, stated none.

Mr. Brown, asked, if you have trouble, what would be your plan to manage those?

Major Egan, stated typically I would make sure we are all on the same page and understand each other. We do have a 24 hour receptionist that can answer the door. We will not house anyone intoxicated with drugs or alcohol. We also do a background check to make sure there are no sex offenders before anyone can stay with us.

Mr. Brown, asked would you agree to have a process if there are complaints about your clientele to work with the people who are complaining and do you have a mechanism to adjust the behavior of your clientele?

Major Egan, stated yes absolutely. The people that stay here have to be moving forward with their lives. We are not interested in having people here to make the place worst. No one is allowed to sleep outside

around the building or on our property, even if you are a resident. The people here have a case manager and we make sure they are working or out looking for work. We are trying to help people get through life, not just a month. We would be happy to speak to neighbors to make sure they feel good about the way the Army looks and the way people we have coming and going.

Mr. Brown, asked that the record reflect that Major Egan stated there will be a commitment by the organization to deal forthrightly with any complaints about clientele with the clientele and the complainant. What was your process for your site decision?

Major Egan, stated we had a few individuals on our local Advisory Board that went out for a few years to look for a place for us to move to that would accommodate what we would like to do. We then started the process with the Housing Authority. They have a lot of criteria that needed to be met for us to purchase the property. That process took awhile and, in May of 2018, they let us know we were able to buy the property.

Mr. Brown, asked was this plan apart of any plan for homelessness or transitional housing in Savannah?

Major Egan, stated yes, we work consistently with Community Care, Continuing Care and the Homeless Authority in making sure we coordinate with them. I know these properties were looked at before my time and we knew if it came available we would want to build here.

Mr. Brown, asked Mr. McCorkle if he knew the name of the pastor that objected to this.

Ms. Davis, stated it was Pastor Gordon.

Public Comments:

Pastor Larry Gordon, spoke in opposition. He believes that what the community wants should be part of the criteria. I spoke with a lot of people that didn't know it was coming in their community.

Mr. Tyrone Ware, spoke in favor. He has lived in the Woodville Community for 59 years. He sees a need for this facility. The Salvation Army has the capacity to do things in this community that on one else can. They will help people transition to a better life in our community. We have a lot of homeless in the community.

Mr. Ellis Cook, Chairman, read a letter from Ms. Bowers stating she was not able to attend the meeting today, but she is still against the project.

Ms. Marsha Buford, president of the West Savannah Neighborhood Organization, spoke in favor. It is still the overall consensus of the West Savannah Community Organization to support the project. We believe this project will be an asset to the community and not a liability. We believe this would benefit the County as a whole. We, as a neighborhood, believe we can work effectively with the Salvation Army in conjunction with progress in our neighborhood.

Motion

Approval of the Special Use request to establish the following uses at 2305 Augusta Avenue.

Shelter, Emergency

Shelter, Transitional

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Travis Coles

Second: Joseph Welch

Ellis Cook	- Aye
Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Linder Suthers	- Aye
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye
Michael Brown	- Aye

IX. Regular Business

X. Presentations

XI. Other Business

XII. Adjournment

11. Adjourn

There being no further business to present before the Board, the November 10, 2020 Regular Metropolitan Planning Commission Meeting adjourned at 3:07 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.