



Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission

Arthur Mendonsa Hearing Room
October 12, 2021 ~ 1:30 PM
FINAL Agenda

October 12, 2021 Regular MPC Meeting, 1:30 P.M.

Members Present: Joseph Welch, Chairman
Karen Jarrett, Vice-Chair
Travis H. Coles, Secretary
Malik Watkins, Treasurer
Eula Parker
Laureen Boles
Elizabeth Epstein
Joseph Ervin
Ruel Joyner
Jay Melder
Wayne Noha
Lee Smith
Dwayne Stephens
Tom Woiwode

Staff Present: Pamela Everett, Assistant Executive Director
Marcus Lotson, Director of Development Services
Melissa Paul-Leto, Planner
Sally Helm, Administrative Assistant
Julie Yawn, Systems Analyst

I. Call to Order and Welcome

II. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

III. Approval of Agenda

[1. Approval of Agenda](#)

Motion

Approve the agenda as submitted.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Wayne Noha

Second: Karen Jarrett

Joseph Ervin - Aye

W. Lee Smith - Aye

Tom Woiwode - Aye

Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Dwayne Stephens	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye
Ruel Joyner	- Aye
Laureen Boles	- Aye
Elizabeth Epstein	- Aye
Malik Watkins	- Aye
Heath Lloyd	- Not Present
Jay Melder	- Aye

IV. Notices, Proclamations and Acknowledgements

[2. November 2, 2021 Regular MPC Meeting, 1:30 P.M., Planning Commission, GO-TO- WEBINAR \(VIRTUAL\) to access go to: www.thempc.org or Arthur Mendonsa Hearing Room, 112 East State Street.](#)

Notice(s)

[3. October 12, 2021 Personnel Committee Meeting - Executive Session, 11:30 A.M., Jerry Surrency Conference Room, 112 East State Street.](#)

[4. October 12, 2021 Swearing-in of MPC Officers by Judge Timothy Walmsley, Chatham County Superior Court, 1:30 P.M., MPC Arthur Mendonsa Hearing Room, 112 East State Street..](#)

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

[5. ZONING MAP AMENDMENT | Sweetwater Station | Rezone from R-A - to RSF-4 | File No. 21-003991-ZA](#)

Motion

This item is Postponed to the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting, Tuesday, November 2, 2021.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Wayne Noha

Second: Karen Jarrett

Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Dwayne Stephens	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye

Wayne Noha	- Aye
Ruel Joyner	- Aye
Laureen Boles	- Aye
Elizabeth Epstein	- Aye
Malik Watkins	- Aye
Heath Lloyd	- Not Present
Jay Melder	- Aye

[6. REZONING MAP AMENDMENT | 5313 Skidaway | Rezone from RSF-10 to O-I | File No. 21-004900](#)

Motion

This item is Postponed to the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting, Tuesday, November 2, 2021.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Wayne Noha

Second: Karen Jarrett

Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Dwayne Stephens	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye
Ruel Joyner	- Aye
Laureen Boles	- Aye
Elizabeth Epstein	- Aye
Malik Watkins	- Aye
Heath Lloyd	- Not Present
Jay Melder	- Aye

[7. REZONING MAP AMENDMENT | 700 Christopher Drive | Rezone from OI-E to RMF-2-40 | File No. 21-005198-ZA](#)

Motion

This item is Postponed to the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting, Tuesday, November 2, 2021.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Wayne Noha
Second: Karen Jarrett

Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Dwayne Stephens	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye
Ruel Joyner	- Aye
Laureen Boles	- Aye
Elizabeth Epstein	- Aye
Malik Watkins	- Aye
Heath Lloyd	- Not Present
Jay Melder	- Aye

[8. SPECIAL USE PERMIT | 2110 Montgomery Street, Suite A | Packaged Alcohol Sales | File No. 21-005177-ZA](#)

Motion

This item is Postponed to the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting, Tuesday, November 2, 2021.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Wayne Noha
Second: Karen Jarrett

Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Dwayne Stephens	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye
Ruel Joyner	- Aye
Laureen Boles	- Aye
Elizabeth Epstein	- Aye
Malik Watkins	- Aye
Heath Lloyd	- Not Present

Jay Melder - Aye

[9. MINOR SUBDIVISION VARIANCE REQUEST | 8624 Old Montgomery Road - Easement Width | File No. SUBD 0621 - 000140](#)

Motion

This item is Postponed to the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting, Tuesday, November 2, 2021.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Wayne Noha

Second: Karen Jarrett

Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Dwayne Stephens	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye
Ruel Joyner	- Aye
Laureen Boles	- Aye
Elizabeth Epstein	- Aye
Malik Watkins	- Aye
Heath Lloyd	- Not Present
Jay Melder	- 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

[10. Approval of the September 21, 2021 Briefing and Regular Meeting Minutes.](#)

[📎 09-21-2021 MPC BRIEFING MINUTES.pdf](#)

[📎 09.21.2021 Meeting Minutes.pdf](#)

Motion

Approval of the Briefing and Regular Meeting Minutes.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Dwayne Stephens

Second: Jay Melder

Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Dwayne Stephens	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye
Ruel Joyner	- Aye
Laureen Boles	- Aye
Elizabeth Epstein	- Aye
Malik Watkins	- Aye
Heath Lloyd	- Not Present
Jay Melder	- Aye

[11. Approve the "Deposit Account Resolution and Authorization for Business Entities" to update the check signers for the MPC bank account.](#)

[☞ Resolution to Authorize access to Treasury Services2021.pdf](#)

[☞ 2021 Resolution for Treasury Account Access to add TWest.pdf](#)

Motion

APPROVAL to update the check signers for the MPC bank account.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Eula Parker

Second: Wayne Noha

Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Dwayne Stephens	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye

Wayne Noha	- Aye
Ruel Joyner	- Aye
Laureen Boles	- Aye
Elizabeth Epstein	- Aye
Malik Watkins	- Aye
Heath Lloyd	- Not Present
Jay Melder	- Aye

[12. Authorize Executive Director to Execute and file FY 2023 FTA Transit Planning Grant \(Section 5303\)](#)

[📎 FY23 Section 5303 MPC Board Memo.pdf](#)

[📎 FY23 Section 5303 MPC Authorizing Resolution.pdf](#)

Motion

APPROVAL of authorization for the Executive Director to Execute and File FY 2022 FTA Section 5303 Transit Planning Grant.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Karen Jarrett

Second: Eula Parker

Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Dwayne Stephens	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye
Ruel Joyner	- Aye
Laureen Boles	- Aye
Elizabeth Epstein	- Aye
Malik Watkins	- Aye
Heath Lloyd	- Not Present
Jay Melder	- Aye

VIII. Old Business

IX. Regular Business

[13. SPECIAL USE PERMIT | 2301 Montgomery Street | Vehicle Sale, Rental, and Leasing | File No. 21-004407-ZA](#)

[📎 site visit.pdf](#)

- 🔗 [AERIAL MAP 21-004407-ZA.pdf](#)
- 🔗 [FLU MAP 21-004407-ZA.pdf](#)
- 🔗 [LABEL MAP 21-004407-ZA.pdf](#)
- 🔗 [TAX MAP 21-004407-ZA.pdf](#)
- 🔗 [VICINITY MAP 21-004407-ZA.pdf](#)
- 🔗 [ZONING MAP 21-004407-ZA.pdf](#)
- 🔗 [Application.pdf](#)
- 🔗 [FW_ Petition Against File No_ 21-004407-ZA.pdf](#)
- 🔗 [Staff Report.pdf](#)

Ms. Melissa Paul-Leto, Planner, stated the petitioner is requesting approval of a Special Use pursuant to Section 3.10 of the Savannah Zoning Ordinance to establish a vehicle sales, rentals and leasing use. The Special Use process includes review by the Planning Commission and the Savannah City Council. Should a permit be granted by the City of Savannah, it will be governed by the permit enforcement criteria outlined in Article 3 of the Savannah Zoning Ordinance.

This item did receive one letter of opposition from a resident who received notice for the special use request. The letter mentions a history of noise disturbances and loud music several nights per week. The appearance of the existing structure is close to blight and they are concerned the cars will overflow onto on-street parking spaces.

The subject property is located at 2301 Montgomery Street, on the corner of Montgomery and W 39th Streets, in the Thomas Square Historic Neighborhood. The parcel is .08 acres, or 3,484.8 square feet, and includes the following structures: a one-story structure with an attached carport, a detached carport, and a shed, the remaining parcel is surfaced in concrete. The subject property is located across the street from residential properties on Montgomery Street. The parcel abuts an abandoned one-story residential structure and is located across the street on W 39th Street from Wells Park. The property includes approximately eight (8) off-street parking spaces, which can be accessed from Montgomery Street. Based on the 1953 and 1966 Sanborn Maps, the subject property was a residential parcel with a dwelling unit and transitioned to a used auto sales establishment. It was most recently a car washing establishment.

Based on the Size of the parcel and the number of vehicles being proposed, the proposed plans are unclear as to whether the parcel would provide enough space for the proposed special use. The subject property is in an area that is developed with primarily residential uses mixed with some retail uses and a city park. Both the zoning classification and the land use designation are compatible with the proposed special use. However, the property appears to not be able to accommodate the request regarding adequate space. The petitioner states there was a car lot at this location 20 years ago. The historic development pattern included a residence on this lot. Residential use is more adequately accommodated on a lot of this size, which is 30ft wide and 117ft long.

The special use process allows the Planning Commission and the Mayor and Aldermen to consider individual circumstances and apply conditions if necessary. It also allows the City Council to manage the permit issuance based on the ongoing compliance of the permit holder to include revocation if necessary. Staff finds that the subject site cannot likely support the proposed use. Staff recommends denial of the request to establish a vehicle sale, rentals and leasing establishment at 2301 Montgomery Street based on the criteria for a special use permit.

Mr. Omeer Vincent, Manager/Business Partner, stated the property was a car lot for 20 years and whoever had it turned it into a car wash. That is where all the music and problems came from. They want to turn the property back into a car lot.

Mr. Jay Melder, City Manager, asked the petitioner if they planned on doing any repairs.

Mr. Vincent said no.

Ms. Karen Jarrett, Board Member, asked how many cars they think they will accommodate there and

will there be a driveway to get the cars in and out.

Mr. Vincent said there will be approximately 8-10 cars. This will be like the previous car lot. He also added like the K and L which is also on Montgomery Street. People cannot drive through there when cars park on Montgomery Street.

Mr. Joseph Welch, Chairman, asked what the hours of operation would be and how many days per week.

Mr. Vincent said 10-4 Monday through Friday.

Mr. Melder asked if there were any plans to improve the structures on the parcel.

Mr. Vincent said they are talking to the landlord about painting the building, putting in flowers, etc.

Mr. Wayne Noha, Board Member, asked if there was a way the number of cars can be limited should this pass.

Mr. Marcus Lotson, Director of Development Services, stated once this goes to City Council, should they approve the request since this is a special use, they can apply conditions related to number of cars, hours of operations or anything of that nature.

Mr. Dwayne Stephens, Board Member, asked if this was just sales or based off of the agenda, it shows sales, rental, and leasing.

Mr. Vincent said it would be just sales.

Mr. Lotson said the reason the wording is like that in the staff report is because of the use in the Zoning Ordinance is Vehicle Sales, Rental, and Leasing.

Mr. Malik Watkins, Board Member, will there be any process for the improvements to the building on site, that will need to be approved by the Historic District Review Board.

Mr. Lotson said yes, if there were any changes proposed for the building on the site, it would need to go through review for those changes.

No Public Comments

Motion

The Board motioned for this item to be continued to the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting, November 2, 2021.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Jay Melder

Second: Dwayne Stephens

Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Dwayne Stephens	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye

Wayne Noha	- Aye
Ruel Joyner	- Aye
Laureen Boles	- Aye
Elizabeth Epstein	- Aye
Malik Watkins	- Aye
Heath Lloyd	- Not Present
Jay Melder	- Aye

[14. ZONING MAP AMENDMENT | 500 Grove Point Road | Rezone from RSF-6 to RSF-5 | File No. 21-005167](#)

[📎 Maps Combined.pdf](#)

[📎 21-344_ Revised Master Plan_50' LOTS - REVISED MASTERPLAN.pdf](#)

[📎 Staff Report 5167.pdf](#)

Mr. Marcus Lotson, Director of Development Services, stated the petitioner is requesting to rezone the subject property from RSF-6 (Single family residential) to RSF-5 (Single Family residential). The difference in the two districts is the minimum lot width and lot area requirements identified in the table below. The request is being made to allow an alternative lot and home size. There are a total of 87 lots proposed in the identified phases to be rezoned. However, the total maximum number of lots approved in the Master Plan, 445, does not change.

The property is a part of the Sweetwater Station subdivision, a single family detached residential subdivision. The Sweetwater Station Subdivision is being built out in phases, consistent with a Master Plan originally approved in 2005. The majority of the master planned area is zoned RSF-6, and a smaller portion is zoned RSF-5. The existing RSF-5 portion includes 90 single family residential lots, most of which are platted at or near the 50-foot lot width minimum. As these lots were existing at the point the current zoning ordinance was adopted, the appropriate districts were applied to accommodate the lots and ensure that they are conforming.

The subject property abuts a lake and existing single family residential lots to the east. The properties to the north and south are separated by a rail line. The existing residential lots, some of which are yet to be developed, are generally 60 feet in width and 100+ feet in depth and are zoned to accommodate these lot sizes. As mentioned, a portion of the neighborhood is zoned to accommodate 50-foot lot widths and is built-out generally to those standards. The proposed RSF-5 zoning classification would permit a similar development pattern to an existing portion of the subdivision. Although the subdivision has two access points to Grove Point Road, all access to leave the neighborhood is at the signalized intersection of Sweetwater Station Road and Abercorn Extension. This portion of Grove Point road ends at the railroad tracks.

The subject property is within a single-family neighborhood with a somewhat homogenous development pattern. The pattern could be continued on the subject property with the development standards of the RSF-5 zoning classification, which already exists within Sweetwater Station. Should the RSF-5 classification be established here, the development standards allowed by that class would be compatible with existing lots.

Based upon the existing zoning pattern and character of the area, as well as the review criteria, Staff recommends approval of the request to rezone the subject property from RSF-6 to RSF-5

Neil McKenzie, Petitioner, agrees with everything Mr. Lotson presented. He is respectfully requesting the Board approve the RSF-6 to RSF-5. The purpose is for the pricing of the homes and keeping in line with the rest of the market. These smaller lots will make this possible.

Mr. Wayne Noha, Board Member, asked about the PDR SM, what is that and is the owner of that property the same as the petitioner?

Mr. Lotson said the owner, per the Tax Assessor's records, is not the same owner. PDR SM is a zoning

designation for surface mining. (removing dirt for the purpose of construction).

Ms. Karen Jarrett, Board Member, asked what the petitioner will do with the leftover property if the size of the lot is reduced 1000sq ft and they keep the same density.

Mr. McKenzie said the cap density there is 445 on this master plan. If this map amendment is approved, it will bring this phase to 87 additional lots. That will bring the total count of lots in this place to 424, which is under the max density that is currently approved.

No Public Comments

Motion

Approval of the request to rezone the subject property from RSF-6 to RSF-5.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Wayne Noha

Second: Dwayne Stephens

Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Dwayne Stephens	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye
Ruel Joyner	- Aye
Laureen Boles	- Aye
Elizabeth Epstein	- Aye
Malik Watkins	- Aye
Heath Lloyd	- Not Present
Jay Melder	- Aye

[15. ZONING MAP AMENDMENT | Ogeechee Road Multifamily | Rezone request from PUD-BC to R-3-25 | File No. Z-0921-000173](#)

[☞ Access Easement Agmt to Enterprise Bank 8-15-18.pdf](#)

[☞ Access Points.pdf](#)

[☞ Maps Combined.pdf](#)

[☞ Context Aerial.pdf](#)

[☞ Development Progress.pdf](#)

[☞ Staff Report 0173.pdf](#)

Mr. Marcus Lotson, Director of Development Services, stated the petitioner is proposing to rezone a portion of a tract of land from PUD-B-C (Planned Urban Development - Community Business) to R-3-25 (multifamily residential). The subject property is located in the southwest quadrant of the intersection of Ogeechee Road and Chatham Parkway. The parent tract is 30.45 acres in size and the proposed portion

to be rezoned is 20 acres in the southern section of the parcel. The dividing line is an existing county canal. The subject portion is bounded on the south by a rail line and does not abut any existing uses. The petitioner's stated intent is to develop the subject properties as a residential apartment community. The R-3 zoning district allows one-family, two-family and multifamily residential, as well as certain civic uses, churches, and schools. The total size of property proposed to be rezoned is 20 acres. Density is calculated as buildable area, which would eliminate approximately five acres due to existing wetlands and approximately 15% of the remainder for parking, streets, landscaping, and stormwater management. The balance of land in this scenario would be 12-13 acres. The number of residential units is likely to range between 250 – 325. Because a site plan has not been presented for review at this time, the number of achievable lots is not guaranteed but cannot exceed the approved density for the site.

The proposal includes rezoning only a portion of the lot and maintaining the commercial zoning adjacent to existing commercial development. Commercial and residential development in the Ogeechee Road and Chatham Parkway corridors has increased in recent years as the western portion of the county continues to grow. There have been at least five rezoning requests for multifamily residential in the corridors over the last three years. This is due in part to the availability of large tracts of land and commercial services in the area.

The subject property is currently zoned commercial, which would allow uses such as grocery stores, hotels, restaurants, and retail, all of which could be developed on the remaining unchanged portion of the property. The portion proposed to be rezoned can accommodate multifamily residential. The adjacent commercial developer has entered into an agreement to construct a vehicular access and utility easements to serve the subject property, which will have access to both Ogeechee Road and Chatham Parkway.

Based upon the existing zoning pattern and character of the area surrounding the subject property, as well as the review criteria; staff recommends approval of the request to rezone the identified property from PUD-BC to R-3-25 with the following conditions:

- Any development of the subject property shall include access to both Chatham Parkway and Ogeechee Road being built to County standards.

Mr. John Royers, Petitioner, stated the property is under contract to a development group. The proposal to rezone most of the property for multi family makes sense because the property does not have good exposure for commercial use. The northern 10 acres will be used to create a buffer from the commercial use to the multi family. After you take out the wetlands and the developable acres, it's around 12 acres. The sensitivity to the number of units in there, due to traffic, will be addressed.

Mr. Wayne Noha, Board Member, said he would like the words "existing access" to be added to the condition and not create another access point to Chatham Parkway.

Mr. Lee Smith, County Manager, said the county does have a concern about the existing use of Chatham Parkway. It is on a curve, and there is a bridge situation. He would like the county's staff to be able to voice the county's concern before any action is taken.

Mr. Jefferson Kirkland, County Engineering Dept., said the Chatham Parkway access, due to its position, close to the heavily traveled intersection, the slope of the approach to the 1 pass over the railroad, creates a concern for Chatham County Dept. of Engineering. Large commercial vehicles, by their nature, cannot accelerate rapidly up that slope when they enter traffic. That creates a back up that could potentially be dangerous in that intersection and for motorists traveling south on Chatham Parkway through that intersection.

It may be necessary to limit the types of vehicles that are allowed to make that right turn onto that sloping approach. In the staff report, it mentioned a drainage project that was undertaken by the County to relieve a drainage issue in the area. That is not entirely true. Chatham County did some work in the Red Gate Farms area, but does not address a bigger problem, where the County canal goes under the railroad track to the southwest of this area. There is a culvert there that is undersized that causes some severe backing of water. The County has not been able to conduct a repair or a rehabilitation in this area, due to complications with the railroad. While there were drainage projects conducted in this area, they have not addressed sufficiently the major concern that has been ongoing in this area for many years.

Ms. Karen Jarrett, Board Member, asked if the drainage problem described, will back water up on this property or an adjacent property.

Mr. Kirkland said yes, it backs water up on this property and could potentially impact other properties.

Ms. Jarrett asked if further development of this property would just exacerbate that problem. Is the property in a flood plain.

Mr. Kirkland said it could, he is not sure if the area is in a flood plain. Obviously, whatever happens here would have to meet current stormwater standards but there is a known issue there. He just wants to make sure everyone is aware, the historical problem there is not resolved.

Mr. Ruel Joyner, Board Member, said instead of thinking of this land having a flood issue, could it be the exact opposite? If the board approves the petition they have to make sure the proper work is done to make this viable. Make the land where it can be developed (put in a retention pond or whatever).

Mr. Kirkland said one concern is there is talk that this might annex into the City and the drainage system is largely owned and operated by the County in this area. Once a property gets annexed, the County is limited on its ability to make comments and recommendations to the design.

Ms. Jarrett asked if it would be helpful for the County Engineering Dept. to meet with the developer and see if they can work out some of these issues.

Mr. Smith said that was a great idea, yes they do need to meet.

Ms. Jarrett and Mr. Smith suggested continuing the item to the next regularly scheduled planning meeting.

Mr. Royers said they have spent the 2 years with the County Engineers office with Mr. Bill Nicholson, with the County's help on a \$400,000 drainage project. The canal does not flood the way it used to. A lot of that had to do with upstreaming water. If you go out there today, the canal is down 4-5ft from where it used to be. The end of the canal goes underneath the railroad track, where you would put a retention pond to hold the water. That entire canal, which is a mainline canal for the County, goes underneath the railroad track. Trying to get CSX to put a new pipe under that railroad track is not going anywhere. The drainage project that the County did has transformed the property.

Mr. Joseph Welch, Chairman, asked when was the last request to CSX was.

Mr. Royers said he is not sure, the County made that request.

Mr. Welch asked Mr. Kirkland if the County has that information and if they could meet with the developer and have some kind of review back to the MPC Board on November 2nd.

Mr. Kirkland said there are a couple different departments, the development group and the drainage group that each have a part in this. But, they should be able to get back with some answers at the November 2nd meeting.

Ms. Jarrett asked if those groups included transportation as well.

Mr. Royers and Mr. Smith both said yes.

Mr. Welch said the major concerns are the traffic, taking the trees out and turning onto Chatham Parkway. They are at higher risk for accidents and not being able to come up further with an entry into Chatham Parkway with the hill going higher and higher.

Mr. Joyner asked if data could be obtained on this project.

Mr. Malik Watkins asked can we get staff's opinion on the fact that we are discussing development issues, but this petition is about rezoning.

Mr. Lotson said, as is common with rezoning petitions, we find ourselves becoming more aware of development issues that probably exist, but haven't been determined to what degree they exist yet. We understand that stormwater in every area is an important function of development and that will need to be addressed. To Commissioner Joyner's point, when this property is developed, whoever does it, whether it be under the current zoning or new zoning, they will have to meet the standards that are required for their property. They will need to see if it has any implications on adjacent properties. Those things will be determined through that process, in this case, with the stormwater engineering department.

As it relates to the access point that was under discussion here, Chatham Parkway from the property. This is an existing ROW currently being used for access onto Chatham Parkway. The location from a traffic engineering standpoint, probably not ideal, but it does exist and people are using it now. How can you mitigate the problems that Mr. Kirkland discussed? All these issues are part of a larger process before you get a building on the property.

If action is taken today, that action is a recommendation in this case, to the County Commission. This information will be forwarded to them; they would address the issues from there.

Ms. Jarrett asked if the residential use is a more intense, or less intense use than the commercial use that the property is currently zoned.

Mr. Kirkland said he believes it's more intense.

Mr. Lotson said it was a difficult question to answer without a development plan. You could potentially have a very intense commercial use that would generate a certain number of trips based on the uses that are here. If you have a large number of dwelling units, that will also cause a lot of traffic. It is very dependent on how the property gets developed.

Ms. Jarrett asked, as far as the drainage uses go, are the commercial uses required to provide retention to the same level as residential.

Mr. Lotson said yes.

Mr. Woiwode said the zoning approval is one step. The next step would be a master plan which involves traffic, drainage, engineering, etc.

Mr. Lotson stated, whether the property is rezoned or not, any applicant that brings a development plan for this property would go through the processes that Mr. Woiwode is talking about. To be fair to the County, one thing they expressed and it is a concern, is that if the plans are developed and the property gets annexed into the City of Savannah, those reviews and decisions in terms of how things are developed/approved are handled by City staff and the questions become, how are the County issues that were raised going to be dealt with.

Mr. Smith suggested delaying this petition until the next regular scheduled meeting. Annexing are occurring county wide, traffic and water are being dumped in the County's system. The County then becomes responsible in the unincorporated area. The property can be developed, but there needs to be more discussion between County Engineering, MPC staff, and the developer.

Public Comments

Mr. Jay Andrews, Developer/Owner of Sherwin Williams equipment supply building, Duncan Doughnuts, and Firehouse building (all are adjacent to the petitioner) stated, he is providing the access points for the petitioner. He completely supports the requested zoning.

Motion

The Board motioned for this item to be continued to the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting on November 2, 2021

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Wayne Noha

Second: Karen Jarrett

Joseph Ervin	- Aye
W. Lee Smith	- Aye
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Dwayne Stephens	- Aye
Eula Parker	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye
Ruel Joyner	- Aye
Laureen Boles	- Aye
Elizabeth Epstein	- Aye
Malik Watkins	- Aye
Heath Lloyd	- Not Present
Jay Melder	- Aye

X. Presentations

XI. Other Business

XII. Adjournment

[16. Adjourn](#)

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.