



Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission

Arthur Mendonsa Hearing Room
May 24, 2022 ~ 1:30 PM
Minutes

MAY 24, 2022 REGULAR MPC MEETING, 1:30 P.M.

Members Present: Joseph Welch, Chairman
Karen Jarrett, Vice-Chairperson
Shedrick Coleman
Elizabeth Epstein
Jay Melder
Wayne Noha
Lee Smith
Dwayne Stephens
Tom Woiwode

Members Absent: Laureen Boles
Travis Coles
Joesph Ervin
Jeff Notrica
Malik Watkins

Staff Present: Melanie Wilson, Executive Director
Marcus Lotson, Director of Development Services
Melissa Paul-Leto, Senior Planner
Nirav Gandhi, 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

Approval of the Agenda

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Wayne Noha

Second: Shedrick Coleman

Joseph Ervin

- Not Present

W. Lee Smith

- Aye

Tom Woiwode

- Aye

| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Travis Coles | - Not Present |
| Joseph Welch | - Aye |
| Shedrick Coleman | - Aye |
| Karen Jarrett | - Aye |
| Dwayne Stephens | - Aye |
| Wayne Noha | - Aye |
| Jeff Notrica | - Not Present |
| Laureen Boles | - Not Present |
| Elizabeth Epstein | - Aye |
| Malik Watkins | - Not Present |
| Jay Melder | - Aye |

IV. Notices, Proclamations and Acknowledgements

[2. June 14, 2022 Regular MPC Meeting, 1:30 P.M., Planning Commission, Arthur Mendonsa Hearing Room, 112 East State Street.](#)

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

[3. Authorize Executive Director to Execute Contract with Consultant for the Dynamic Flood Modeling Tools \(FMT\) for Optimized CORE MPO Planning of Transportation Infrastructure Systems Study](#)

Motion

Item Postponed until June 14, 2022.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Wayne Noha

Second: Shedrick Coleman

| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Joseph Ervin | - Not Present |
| W. Lee Smith | - Aye |
| Tom Woiwode | - Aye |
| Travis Coles | - Not Present |
| Joseph Welch | - Aye |
| Shedrick Coleman | - Aye |
| Karen Jarrett | - Aye |
| Dwayne Stephens | - Aye |
| Wayne Noha | - Aye |
| Jeff Notrica | - Not Present |
| Laureen Boles | - Not Present |
| Elizabeth Epstein | - Aye |
| Malik Watkins | - Not Present |
| Jay Melder | - Aye |

[4. SPECIAL USE APPROVAL REQUEST | 2110 West Gwinnett St | File no. 21-006747-ZA](#)

Motion

Item postponed to the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting, Tuesday, June 14, 2022.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Wayne Noha

Second: Shedrick Coleman

| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Joseph Ervin | - Not Present |
| W. Lee Smith | - Aye |
| Tom Woiwode | - Aye |
| Travis Coles | - Not Present |
| Joseph Welch | - Aye |
| Shedrick Coleman | - Aye |
| Karen Jarrett | - Aye |
| Dwayne Stephens | - Aye |
| Wayne Noha | - Aye |
| Jeff Notrica | - Not Present |
| Laureen Boles | - Not Present |
| Elizabeth Epstein | - Aye |
| Malik Watkins | - Not Present |
| Jay Melder | - Aye |

[5. REZONING REQUEST | 5659 Ogeechee Rd | File No. Z-1221-000211](#)

Motion

Item Postponed to the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting, Tuesday, June 14, 2022.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Wayne Noha

Second: Shedrick Coleman

| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Joseph Ervin | - Not Present |
| W. Lee Smith | - Aye |
| Tom Woiwode | - Aye |
| Travis Coles | - Not Present |
| Joseph Welch | - Aye |
| Shedrick Coleman | - Aye |
| Karen Jarrett | - Aye |
| Dwayne Stephens | - Aye |
| Wayne Noha | - Aye |
| Jeff Notrica | - Not Present |
| Laureen Boles | - Not Present |
| Elizabeth Epstein | - Aye |
| Malik Watkins | - Not Present |

Jay Melder - Aye

[6. REZONING MAP AMENDMENT | 500 John Carter Road | Rezone from I-L to I-H | File No. 22-000807](#)

Motion

Item Postponed until September 27, 2022

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Wayne Noha

Second: Shedrick Coleman

| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Joseph Ervin | - Not Present |
| W. Lee Smith | - Aye |
| Tom Woiwode | - Aye |
| Travis Coles | - Not Present |
| Joseph Welch | - Aye |
| Shedrick Coleman | - Aye |
| Karen Jarrett | - Aye |
| Dwayne Stephens | - Aye |
| Wayne Noha | - Aye |
| Jeff Notrica | - Not Present |
| Laureen Boles | - Not Present |
| Elizabeth Epstein | - Aye |
| Malik Watkins | - Not Present |
| Jay Melder | - Aye |

[7. REZONING MAP AMENDMENT | Dillon Street | Rezone from RSF-4 to RSF-6 | 22-001625](#)

Motion

Item Postponed to the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting, Tuesday, June 14, 2022.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Wayne Noha

Second: Shedrick Coleman

| | |
|------------------|---------------|
| Joseph Ervin | - Not Present |
| W. Lee Smith | - Aye |
| Tom Woiwode | - Aye |
| Travis Coles | - Not Present |
| Joseph Welch | - Aye |
| Shedrick Coleman | - Aye |
| Karen Jarrett | - Aye |
| Dwayne Stephens | - Aye |
| Wayne Noha | - Aye |

| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Jeff Notrica | - Not Present |
| Laureen Boles | - Not Present |
| Elizabeth Epstein | - Aye |
| Malik Watkins | - Not Present |
| Jay Melder | - Aye |

[8. MAP AMENDMENT | Streetcar Historic District Boundary Amendment | Bridget Lidy for The Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah | 22-002103-ZA](#)

Motion

Item postponed until the June 14, 2022, regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Wayne Noha
Second: Shedrick Coleman

| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Joseph Ervin | - Not Present |
| W. Lee Smith | - Aye |
| Tom Woiwode | - Aye |
| Travis Coles | - Not Present |
| Joseph Welch | - Aye |
| Shedrick Coleman | - Aye |
| Karen Jarrett | - Aye |
| Dwayne Stephens | - Aye |
| Wayne Noha | - Aye |
| Jeff Notrica | - Not Present |
| Laureen Boles | - Not Present |
| Elizabeth Epstein | - Aye |
| Malik Watkins | - 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

[9. Approval of the May 3, 2022 Briefing and Regular Meeting Minutes.](#)

- [05.03.2022 Meeting minutes.pdf](#)
- [5-3-2022 MPC BRIEFING MINUTES.pdf](#)

Motion

Approval of the Briefing and Regular Meeting Minutes.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Wayne Noha

Second: Shedrick Coleman

| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Joseph Ervin | - Not Present |
| W. Lee Smith | - Aye |
| Tom Woiwode | - Aye |
| Travis Coles | - Not Present |
| Joseph Welch | - Aye |
| Shedrick Coleman | - Aye |
| Karen Jarrett | - Aye |
| Dwayne Stephens | - Aye |
| Wayne Noha | - Aye |
| Jeff Notrica | - Not Present |
| Laureen Boles | - Not Present |
| Elizabeth Epstein | - Aye |
| Malik Watkins | - Not Present |
| Jay Melder | - Aye |

VIII. Old Business

IX. Regular Business

[10. REZONING REQUEST | 241 Broadwater Lane | File No. Z-0222-000229 - Rezone from PDR-SM to R-A](#)

📎 [VICINITY MAP Z-0222-000229.pdf](#)

📎 [AERIAL MAP Z-0222-000229.pdf](#)

📎 [ZONING MAP Z-0222-000229.pdf](#)

📎 [Surface Mining Release Letter.pdf](#)

📎 [Surface Mining Imagery Overlay.pdf](#)

📎 [New Boundaries.pdf](#)

📎 [4-6.8 PDR Development Standards.pdf](#)

📎 [R-A Uses.pdf](#)

📎 [Staff Report Z-0222-000229 - 241 Broadwater Ln.pdf](#)

Mr. Nirav Gandhi, Planner, said this is a request to rezone a 2-acre portion of a property located at 241 Broadwater Lane from PDR-SM to R-A, with the intention of building a single-family home. The Area to be rezoned includes the portion that is access able between the property and Broadwater Lane.

The subject property has previously been used as a borrow pit operation. On April 19, 2022, the owners received approval from Georgia DNR to reclaim 42 acres of land, including the 2 acres in question, from the surface mining operation to be used for development. The letter is attached as Appendix A.

There are several homes already being used on the larger property, and the subject property currently

has one manufactured home placed on it. The property is intended to be subdivided with a legal access easement along an existing driveway leading to Broadwater Lane, which is a private road.

The owner wishes to zone it for single-family residential use. This is considered a downzoning and would lessen the impact of potential uses on the neighborhood, the county, and public services. Although the proposed zoning area would be "landlocked" inside another zoning district entirely (PDR-SM), it's northeastern boundary is within 100 feet of another R-A zoning district. As reclaimed surface mining land, the subject property is not usable for anything except another large-scale surface mining operation as it is currently zoned. Therefore, staff believes the R-A zoning will allow for the best use of the land.

Mr. Harold Yellin, Petitioner, said this is a three step process. Technically, this is step number two. The first step was getting DNR approval, which we did receive April 19th. DNR gave the owners the right to re-claim this property for development. The petitioner has chosen as the development, to have a single family home on 2 acres of land. Step number two is coming to the Planning Commission and Chatham County for rezoning. We no longer want this property to be rezoned for plan development reclamation surface mining but instead would like it to be rezoned R-A (Residential Agricultural). Step three will be going before Chatham County for subdivision approval. At that time we will talk about what that road needs to look like, whether it needs to be paved or not, what is required for delivery of police and fire, etc. We are before the Commission today simply to downzone from PDR-SM to R-A zoning classification.

Ms. Karen Jarrett, Vice Chairperson, said there are concerns regarding the access. This is in a flood plane and the finished floor will need to be a certain elevation. Is the purchaser of this property aware of all of this and who will be maintaining the road?

Mr. Yellin said the owner of the property is giving this property to her best friend so she will move to Savannah. They are fully aware of what is associated with this property, including the need to tie into Ft. Argyle Road.

Motion

Approval of the proposed rezoning.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Shedrick Coleman

Second: Wayne Noha

| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Joseph Ervin | - Not Present |
| W. Lee Smith | - Aye |
| Tom Woiwode | - Aye |
| Travis Coles | - Not Present |
| Joseph Welch | - Aye |
| Shedrick Coleman | - Aye |
| Karen Jarrett | - Aye |
| Dwayne Stephens | - Aye |
| Wayne Noha | - Aye |
| Jeff Notrica | - Not Present |
| Laureen Boles | - Not Present |
| Elizabeth Epstein | - Aye |
| Malik Watkins | - Not Present |
| Jay Melder | - Aye |

- 📎 [Maps Combined.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Application, File no. 22-001231-ZA.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Pages from Photos Combined.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Pages from Photos Combined-2.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Access Pattern.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Staff Report 0524.pdf](#)

Mr. Marcus Lotson, Director of Development Services, said the petitioner is requesting to rezone the subject parcel from RMF-2-20 to RMF-2-45 for the purpose of redeveloping the property as a multifamily residential complex. This petition was originally scheduled for the April 12th MPC meeting, but was removed from the agenda at the request of the applicant due to a scheduling conflict.

The subject property, which is a 1.77 - acre parcel on the north side of Victory Drive, is developed with a residential structure constructed in 1938, and is currently uninhabited. The property also includes three accessory buildings which were constructed in the same style as the principal building. The property is adjacent on the west side with the former St. Mary's Home for Girls, which now operates as the administrative offices for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Savannah. East of the subject property is a multifamily residential development originally built in 1970, which includes 150 dwelling units on 9.35 acres.

Currently the property has right-in and right-out access onto Victory Drive, which is a GDOT ROW. We believe based on conversations with traffic engineering, the majority of the trips to this property are likely to be headed East on Highway 80. That means they would be required to make a U-turn at the access point with the adjacent apartment complex in order to access the subject property and then leave exiting the property they would take a right turn onto Highway 80.

Staff finds that the existing multifamily residential zoning, including the permitted density, is appropriate at this location. In review of the substantial proposed increase in density, staff further finds that the property has limitations related to its overall size and vehicular access. From a land use standpoint, the location can support residential units; however, the limitations of the site must be factored in when considering density increases. At 1.77-acres, the proposed density would allow 79 units, 120% of the current allowance. Increased density will also increase conflicting vehicular movements on a busy, arterial roadway. Based upon the site concerns and character of the area, as well as the review criteria, staff recommends denial of the rezoning request as submitted.

Mr. Phillip McCorkle, Petitioner, said this property is already zoned multi-family. It is surrounded on two sides by multi-family, the Catholic Diocese building and the businesses across the street. It is consistent with the Comprehensive Future Land Use Map. I have checked with Victory Heights Property Owners Association, they have no objection to our request. We can develop the site with no variances. We are disappointed with the recommendation of denial by staff. The staff gave two reasons. One, the density is not consistent with the development pattern in the area and the other is traffic concerns. There has been great effort by the City of Savannah to come up with a housing action plan. The housing policy says; "they want to support higher density housing and land development". The City has already effectively done this when they adopted NewZo a couple of years ago. You can build units in the City of 450 sq. ft. which was not allowed before. Smaller units are more affordable. This is a perfect site for infill apartment development in my opinion. There has not been an apartment built within a mile of this site since 1979. The location of quality, affordable rental housing across the city, near places of employment and public transportation is important. Just like Live Oak Landing, this is a great location for workforce housing. The next issue raised by staff is traffic. We are zoned for 36 units at the current time. All of the issues that have been raised will be true whether the density is increased or not. We will not need multiple curve cuts, we will only need one. Another issue brought up was there are no median breaks, whether it is 36 units or more, it will have the same issue with a lack of a median break. There are multiple businesses on Victory Drive without a median break. Evergreen Street, which is a residential street, comes on to Victory Drive from the north and is right only. That is an entire residential neighborhood that empties into a situation like that. The Heritage Park Townhouses, they are 24 units on Victory Drive that empty onto Victory Drive, right-in, right-out only with no median break.

The go to source for traffic counts is the ITE manual. You will find that the ITE continues to improve their data. They have broken down apartments into two categories for all different types of apartments. One category is if you are near rail or not. Another category is broken down low-rise 1-3 floors, mid-rise 4-10 floors, and high-rise above 10 floors. This site will have 70% 1-bedroom and 30% 2-bedroom. The number of trips would be less than that average mid-rise unit. It will be an insignificant difference in traffic from what is allowed now.

Ms. Karen Jarrett, Vice Chairperson, said where are you going to put the 79 vehicles? Where will the building go?

Mr. McCorkle said code requires one parking space per unit. We have all the parking spaces with no variances. There is a concept in the application, it is going to be a U-shaped building within the center having the amenities. The old building will be kept as the clubhouse center for the apartment complex.

Mr. Jay Melder, City Manager, said has the petitioner given any thought about sharing the entrance with the neighboring multifamily housing that already exists? I am very sympathetic for the need for density, we need the units and there are appropriate places for density. I can see this being one if the right steps were taken.

Mr. McCorckle said they have not talked to them but that would be beneficial.

Mr. Dwayne Stephens, Board member, said we are in dire need of housing in Savannah, but traveling that thoroughfare, it creates a major safety concern for me. If we are going to put people in houses, we want to be able to get to them safely. What is the point of providing homes if you are going to potentially lose lives trying to cross an intersection like that and or make U-turns to get home?

Mr. Joseph Welch, Chairman, said he agrees with Mr. Melder, we do need more housing in Savannah but we need easier access in and out of this area. Safety is a priority.

Motion

Item continued to the July 26, 2022 regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Karen Jarrett

Second: Wayne Noha

| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Joseph Ervin | - Not Present |
| W. Lee Smith | - Aye |
| Tom Woiwode | - Aye |
| Travis Coles | - Not Present |
| Joseph Welch | - Aye |
| Shedrick Coleman | - Aye |
| Karen Jarrett | - Aye |
| Dwayne Stephens | - Aye |
| Wayne Noha | - Aye |
| Jeff Notrica | - Not Present |
| Laureen Boles | - Not Present |
| Elizabeth Epstein | - Aye |
| Malik Watkins | - Not Present |
| Jay Melder | - Aye |

[\(Community Business\) and I-L \(Light Industrial\) district - 22-001626-ZA](#)

- 📎 [COMBINED MAPS.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Application, File no. 22-001626-ZA.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Letter of Denial #1.pdf](#)
- 📎 [21-879 Durrence-Hill Tract Rezoning 05-13-2022.pdf](#)
- 📎 [AMMENDED PETITION TO REFLECT A REZONING TO THREE \(3\) ZONING CLASSIFICATIONS AS SHOWN ON THE ATTACHED EXHIBIT.pdf](#)
- 📎 [STAFF REPORT_rev05-20-2022.pdf](#)
- 📎 [K BIEBER - EMAILS 05202022.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Letter requesting 100 foot setback.pdf](#)

Ms. Melissa Leto, Planner, said the petitioner, Harold Yellin, agent for Cowen Investments, LLC, is requesting a rezoning of a parcel from a A-1 (Agricultural) district to a B-C (Community Business) in the front portion of the property, I-L-T (Light Industrial Transition) in the middle of the parcel, and I-L (Light – Industrial) to the rear of the property.

The property, 323.13 acres, is located on the north side of Fort Argyle Road and a quarter mile from the I-95 South ramp. The property identification number is 21034 01008.

- The proposed B-C zoning portion, located to the front of the parcel, would be 58.84 acres, or 2,563,070 square feet. The upland portion would be 36.64 acres, or 1,596,038 square feet. The wetland portion would be 22.20 acres, or 967,032 square feet.
- The proposed I-L-T zoning portion, located to the middle of the parcel, would be 108.64 acres, or 4,732,358 square feet. The upland portion would be 67.79 acres, or 2,952,932 square feet. The wetland portion would be 40.85 acres, or 1,779,426 square feet.
- The proposed I-L zoning portion, located to the rear of the parcel, would be 155.64 acres, or 6,779,678 square feet. The upland portion would be 118.44 acres, or 5,159,246 square feet. The wetland portion would be 37.20 acres, or 1,620,432 square feet.

The area has traditionally been rural in use with large lot sizes. The surrounding parcels near 0 Fort Argyle Road have been rezoned to I-L, I-H and B-C with some parcels remaining A-1 and R-A. The existing zoning is A-1 (agricultural). The subject parcel is adjacent to residential and commercial uses to the east, with large parcels to the west that have been rezoned to Light – Industrial and Heavy – Industrial classifications. There are five (5) residential parcels zoned R-A (Residential Agricultural) with access from Fort Argyle. Each of these properties has a single-family dwelling on them. The subject parcel encapsulates the five (5) residential parcels on three sides. Across the street from the subject parcel is the Creek Fire Resort for RV motorhomes. The subject property consists of a single parcel, 319 acres in area, located north of Fort Argyle Road. The parcel is in the A-1 (Agricultural) zoning classification. The parcel is currently an undeveloped piece of property, heavily wooded and includes wetlands.

The applicant's proposal would result in a significant change to the development pattern in the area. The development of 58.84 acres of commercially zoned property, 108.64 acres of Light Industrial Transition, and 155.64 acres of Light Industrial zoned property would create impacts that the petitioner will need to address prior to coming back to the Planning Commission for a master plan approval prior to the site development approval. The intensity of the uses is expected to continue to increase in this area, which has largely been rural for many years. The existing large tracts of undeveloped land lend to the likelihood that the redevelopment of these tracts would be of a scale that is not typical in this area. The proposed transition of three zoning classifications is a way to mitigate the uses so as not to have the B-C section transition right into Light Industrial. Instead, there would be a Light Industrial Transition area in the middle of the parcel to provide a gap from the heavier industrial uses.

Based upon the existing zoning pattern and character of the area, as well as the review criteria. Staff recommends approval with conditions of the request to rezone from A-1 to B-C, I-L-T, and I-L.

1. A master plan shall be required to come back to the Metropolitan Planning Commission prior to a site development plan approval. A 100-foot densely landscaped buffer around the residentially zoned properties.

Mr. Wayne Noha, Board member, said he was concerned about the drainage, would those issues be addressed at the Master Plan phase?

Ms. Melanie Wilson, Executive Director, said the more detailed development will be presented when the petitioner submits the Development Plan. Drainage and access will be discussed at that time.

Mr. Harold Yellin, Petitioner, said the subject property has been in the Hill and the Durrence family for approximately 50 years. The petition is to rezone the property into three separate and distinct zoning districts. The front parcel to B-C, the middle parcel to IL-T which is light industrial transitional, and the back parcel to IL, light industrial. Each of these properties together totals 320 acres which includes high ground and wetlands. There is a 150ft Georgia Power easement, there is also a 50ft Southern Natural Gas company easement. Separating the IL-T and the IL, is a 200ft easement. That 200ft easement separates us from the multi-family residential to the east. The front commercial parcel, we wanted this to be designed and graded where the commercial goes to the front and transition back to industrial. On this commercial piece, the petitioner is part owner of the Savannah Ghost Pirates, the building on the front will be an Ice Hockey rink. It will be modeled after the Igloo in Jacksonville. Staff has recommended approval with conditions, a neighbor has asked for a buffer, Mr. Cowan has readily agreed to a 100ft buffer. We welcome the opportunity to come back before the Commission with a Master Plan. We respectfully request approval from the Commission.

Ms. Sandra Grant, member of the public, said one of the concerns has been addressed, the 100ft buffer. Another concern was the soccer fields surrounding all three sides of us, what type of lights will be there and how long will they be lit? Is this something that will be monitored or will it become a hangout for teenagers all night long?

Mr. Yellin said we are in negotiations regarding the soccer fields. We do not know at this time what that will look like. When we come back for the Master Plan, if there are hours of limitation, if there are any restrictions you want to put on us at that time, we will be glad to talk about it. We just do not have anything finalized in these early stages. We are still in negotiations with the soccer league.

Alderwoman Keisha Gibson-Carter, said I am here on behalf of the Wet Chatham Community. We continuously are approached by residents in the community because of the inadequate representation with regard to these properties are annexed into the City, County representatives have little or no say in these matters. When it is before Council, we are simply left with voting on it. We recognize a lot of these petitions with developers are a little ahead of ordinances and policy. We are working trying to preclude these type of episodes. Until we address issues with regard to impact fees that will allow developers to participate and invest in the health and harmony and safety of our Commission, we want the Commission to give consideration to having that included in the Master Plans as well as the Site Development Plans. These are the issues that have been presented to me. I am here to speak as an advocate on behalf of the people in that area. I ask the Commission to give consideration when you are offering or extending approvals, you to, have concern about these same issues. Until we put forth policies regarding these issues we are continuously strapped with trying to mitigate the issues between the developers and the residents.

Mr. Joseph Welch, Chairman, asked staff, have we reached out to these neighbors and has there been any feedback?

Mr. Lotson said the zoning ordinance requires three things for us to do with a zoning petition. One of those is to send a letter to each property owner within 300ft of the petitioned property. The other is to place a newspaper advertisement and post signs on the property. All those things were done for this petition. We did receive some feedback as well as a member of the public here today to speak on this.

Oftentimes, on a case by case, we will do additional notification as the director determines as needed.

Kerri Beiber, West Chatham County Community Watch, member of the public, said I did submit a letter. We were not contacted about this property. I do understand there are black and white regulations out there that dictate who speaks or gets spoken to by the petitioners. The MPC, City Council, Mr. Yellin, everyone is familiar with the West Chatham County Community Watch and we are not far from this area. We did want to be contacted. We were asking if this could be put to a different meeting. The public signage was an issue which was part of the letter. When you are going down Ft. Argyle, the rezoning signs were posted in a way that did not face traffic. You saw them from the side. The speed limit is 55 and the sign was on a curve. There is heavy traffic out here and you have to pull over to the side of the road if you want to get out and look at those signs. The May 3rd agenda said it was to be continued, it did not have a date for that and the signs that are on Ft. Argyle still say May 3rd. Ms. Wilson brought up in the pre meeting that sometimes applications were completed in a hurry and that is true in this situation as well. On the MPC agenda for this item, it listed the PIN number as 2098003005 which is actually a PIN number off Jimmy Deloach Parkway. The staff report does have the correct PIN number. On the application itself, page 5 of 8, there is OCGA 36-67A, it is the campaign disclosure form. Page 5 of 8 of the application, those boxes are not checked yes or no. The application is stamped as been received, it has been approved. That box is not legally complete. That is a big issue. We have been trying to contact the MPC since last Tuesday. There were presentations that we wanted to include to show you with this petition. What you see is what the petitioner would like for you to see but the bigger picture will actually show you that the Ogeechee River is less than 4500 ft from this property. The Little Ogeechee River is less than 3500 ft from the property. The Ogeechee Canal Society is less than 5500 ft from this property. Even though public notice is sent out and the staff report states no one within the vicinity of these public notices really gave feedback. This affects everyone in this area, not just those people within 300 and 500ft of this property. We are going to be affected by the wetlands being taken away, flooding, traffic, and things along that line. When you live out in this area, those lights, the trees, the buffers, they turn into a whole other dimension you don't get in the city. This landscaping and the berm, that helps create odors for the landfill which it right next to. You start cutting down trees and you have lights where there were never any lights. Has an environmental impact study been done on this property? We would like to meet with the developer, have this continued, let us ask our questions.

Ms. Diane Brannen, member of the public, said she agrees with everything Ms. Beiber had to say. There is a quality of life issue that effect numerous campgrounds. There is a fair ground that is being planned, private homesteads in the Savannah Ogeechee Canal Museum and Nature Center, all of those stand to be adversely impacted unless you take extreme caution in proceeding with this development. The buffer needs to go along Ft. Argyle Road as well. There should be a community outreach meeting and consult the adjacent landowners.

Mr. Yellin said the West Chatham County Community Watch is not a neighborhood association. They are not a neighborhood group. They have a Facebook page. I am not even sure what their jurisdiction is. Seemingly it is everything west of I-95 all the way to the next county. This is the fourth time I have heard comments from this particular group. They say they support some things, I am not sure what those are, I have never heard a word of support before. I heard they want to work with us. My name was on that petition, if there were any questions about how the signs were posted they could have called me. I have been in the same place for 40yrs. same address, same phone number. If someone would have called me, I would have gladly went to the site and asked what would you like me to do with these signs, even though it is the way we have always done it. If we could have done something, I would have been happy to have done it. This group encourages delay, they don't want to see any kind of development and they want to put this off indefinitely. We are only here for the zoning. We have to know whether or not we are going forward with commercial on the front with transitional in the middle and light industrial in the back. We could come back with residential. On a site this size, we could have 6000 apartment units. I don't think that is a good idea for this site. We are here today asking for zoning and only zoning. We are going to come back for a Master Plan. At which point we are going to show the 100ft buffer which we have promised our neighbor. We will show a Development Plan. If Ms. Beiber and Ms. Brannen want to participate, my number is all over this petition. Until I am told, as a matter of law, that every petition, I have to go through this "watch dog group", that is not enforceable. In this particular case, we met twice with the MPC staff before we came before the Commission. We have not just come and ignored everyone. This took a long time to get here and that is why we are very proud to be here today with staff recommendation for approval.

Ms. Karen Jarrett, Vice Chairperson, asked, how many comments did we receive from organizations or individuals?

Ms. Leto said we received the Ogeechee Canal email prior to the March 3rd MPC meeting, where we continued the item. Recently, we received an email from Ms. Sandra, a resident.

Motion

Approval with a condition for the request to rezone from A-1 to B-C, I-L-T, and I-L.

1. A master plan shall be required to come back to the Metropolitan Planning Commission prior to a site development plan approval.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Wayne Noha

Second: Jay Melder

| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Joseph Ervin | - Not Present |
| W. Lee Smith | - Aye |
| Tom Woiwode | - Aye |
| Travis Coles | - Not Present |
| Joseph Welch | - Aye |
| Shedrick Coleman | - Aye |
| Karen Jarrett | - Aye |
| Dwayne Stephens | - Aye |
| Wayne Noha | - Aye |
| Jeff Notrica | - Not Present |
| Laureen Boles | - Not Present |
| Elizabeth Epstein | - Aye |
| Malik Watkins | - Not Present |
| Jay Melder | - Aye |

[13. REZONING MAP AMENDMENT | 1758 Grove Point Road | Rezone from R-A to B-C | File No. 22-002106](#)

📎 [COMBINED MAPS.pdf](#)

📎 [Application, File no. 22-002106-ZA.pdf](#)

📎 [exhibit-1-1750-grove-point-rd-1754-pine-grove-1758-pine-grove-file-no-22-000483-za_1.pdf](#)

📎 [traffic-impact-study-sr204-parkers-kitchen.pdf](#)

📎 [STAFF REPORT.pdf](#)

Ms. Melissa Leto- Senior Planner, said the petitioner is requesting a rezoning of a parcel from R-A-CO (Residential -Agricultural-in the County) an unincorporated zoning district to a B-C (Community Business) district within the City of Savannah at 1758 Grove Point Road. The applicant is seeking to develop a Parker's fuel station and convenience store on three adjacent parcels. On March 28, 2022, City Council approved the three parcels for annexation into the City of Savannah. Two of the three lots were rezoned to City B-C (Community – Business). The third subject lot was rezoned by the City of Savannah to R-A-CO (Residential Agriculture in the County). The reason the City did not rezone the subject property to B-C was the intent of these districts and their permissible uses are different.

In Chatham County, the initial zoning classification for the two parcels was P-B. The PB zoning district's intent

is the managed creation and allowance of districts that accommodate heavy commercial and industrial uses, through the P overlay designation in the County. The uses allowed in the zoning district are intense and include, for example, *Storage yards* and *Self-storage mini warehouses*. The City of Savannah's B-C zoning district allows for less intense uses, such as retail, restaurants, and mixed-use construction. While the B-C zoning district allows for some intense uses, these are managed through use limitations and special use permits. Chatham County's R-A zoning district allows for less intense uses and serves to protect rural areas from commercial encroachment.

While the B-C zoning district allows for less intense uses, the parcels do not currently maintain access to Abercorn Street. The assemblage has access to Grove Point Road, a collector street, and Sweetwater Station Drive, an unclassified street. The approval was given to rezone 1750 Grove Point Road and 1754 Grove Point Road from Chatham County's P-B zoning district to City's B-C zoning district. The City of Savannah approved the 1758 Grove Point Road from Chatham County's R-A zoning district to the City of Savannah's R-A-CO zoning classification.

The petitioner seeks to rezone the third lot from R-A-CO to City B-C to match the other two adjacent lots. All three lots are required for the development to provide adequate access, parking, water detention, and other site development improvements to the proposed Parker's fuel station and convenience store.

The subject property was rezoned to R-A-CO, which allows for residential and agricultural uses. During the annexation approval, the adjacent two parcels were zoned B-C. By allowing the request to rezone 1758 Grove Point to B-C, the three parcels can conform with the permitted uses allowed in the B-C zoning district. This would also align with the proposed site plan submitted to the City of Savannah during the annexation approval for a proposed Parker's fuel station and convenience store. 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 R-A-CO to B-C.

Mr. Daniel Banisrial, Petitioner, real estate Development Manager, said over the past several weeks, we have gone through great efforts to include members of the community in our efforts to design this site. We have had several community meetings with the Grove Hill and Sweetwater Station residents and HOA boards. We had 3 public outreach meetings in that community. Those meetings were very well attended and we garnered a lot of feedback from the community. We made great efforts to incorporate those comments and concerns into the on going integrations of our site plan. We are hoping to gain the Commission's approval for the rezoning. I know there is a concern about the traffic study. We have been working very closely with GDOT, with Chatham County Engineering, and with Savannah Traffic to address the concerns regarding the traffic impacts to this community. The latest iteration of the traffic impact analysis was submitted to me last week. That study was forwarded to GDOT. We had a meeting last week, at that time they had not had ample time to review the revised study. We reschedule that meeting to this coming Thursday. This plan is still conceptual. We have not finished full civil design on it yet. We are waiting on the GDOT traffic impact analysis study to be approved.

Mr. Shedrick Coleman, Board member, said as a resident of Sweetwater Station for 16 years, my concern is the egress on the main road coming off of Abercorn and to go with the option where ingress off that drive off that turn, where the left hand turn be removed as consideration to that road being really congested as it is. I do not feel that road would support that sort of traffic pattern. I am less concerned with the GDOT report as I am the growth in that area and what happens in that short stretch of road between Grove Point and

Abercorn. If we are going to try to do something to improve that connector to Abercorn, we need to do the very best that we can. There will be concessions on everyone's part, the petitioner seems to be willing to make some significant improvements to that corridor. We should have a spirit of cooperation that looks at the overall good.

Mr. Banisrial said that sentiment has been shared by others in your community. We have since removed that left hand turn off Pine Grove into our site. That access along Pine Grove is now limited to a right-in and right-out only.

Mr. Jay Melder, City Manager, said, did staff review the conditions that are on this recommendation? There were some conditions that City Council put on the approval for the annexation.

Ms. Melanie Wilson, Executive Director, said annexations are for you to place the zoning that is currently on the property to the zoning that is being annexed. Generally the past annexation presentation was more detailed than normally submitted. You would not have any conditions since that is not the purpose of annexation. It is not advertised or noticed. The conditions would come from this process and if there are any conditions that stem from the annexation that you want to add to this, this would be the appropriate time to do so.

Mr. Melder, said he would like to include the condition that the traffic analysis be completed and approve by three entities. The GDOT, Chatham County, and the City of Savannah. Is that acceptable to the petitioner?

Mr. Banisrial said yes.

Mr. Kenneth Craven, President of Sweetwater Homeowners Association, member of the public, said, I represent the members of my community as well as Grove Hill and the surrounding area. We have had three public meetings as well as a private meeting with the petitioner regarding this issue. The overwhelming response has been that this is a bad idea at this time. There have been some that think it is a bad idea forever. There has been no one who thinks this is a good idea to go ahead and move forward right now. That intersection at 204 is already problematic. Everyone in this area believes that adding that Parkers Kitchen at this time, before GDOT and the other authorities address that intersection is a bad idea. We believe this is a bad idea that will have a severe impact on an already problematic intersection. The traffic study was done on a Tuesday during COVID 19 when very few people were traveling to work. This would limit access from Sweetwater Station and Grove Point neighborhoods as well as impacting the ability of that fire station to respond to emergencies. We are going to ask that the MPC continue this until later until the intersection is improved before you allow anything further to progress.

Ms. Elizabeth Epstein, Board member, asked if this property was already appropriately zoned and Parkers can fit their development on there, would there be anything from stopping them from doing that?

Mr. Welch said no but there needs to be a traffic study done.

Mr. Banisrial said as was stated earlier, this parcel is a part of an assembling of three properties. Two of which are already appropriately zone to accommodate our use. At this point we feel we have done our due diligence to present a strong case for the rezoning of this third property. We have conducted the traffic impact analysis, we made amendments to that analysis based on not only our meetings with the residents but we have actually met with Chatham County Engineering, GDOT and Savannah Traffic. We have incorporated the comments that we have received to date in our site plans. We have made changes to the

site plans regarding our access on Pine Grove and on Grove Point road. We have also proposed recently of making improvements on Abercorn, 204 as well, to include increasing the left turn stacking to 500ft in the west bound lane and on the east bound lane we have increased the right turn stacking by 250ft. We are contemplating making other improvements on Pine Grove to include adding an additional left turn lane out of the community and making a dedicated left turn lane from Pine Grove onto Grove Point and establishing a through and right turn lane. All the other conditions are already in the works and the project won't move forward until those are approved.

Mr. Lee Smith, County Manager, said he sent a message to the County Engineering department. My engineering department has no problem working with the petition spoken of as long as they take the entrance off of Sweetwater. The 204 intersection the County has been dealing with for years.

Motion

Approval of the request to rezone the subject property from R-A-CO to B-C with the condition; Traffic Analysis from GDOT, City of Savannah, and Chatham County is complete.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Shedrick Coleman

Second: Tom Woiwode

| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Joseph Ervin | - Not Present |
| W. Lee Smith | - Aye |
| Tom Woiwode | - Aye |
| Travis Coles | - Not Present |
| Joseph Welch | - Aye |
| Shedrick Coleman | - Aye |
| Karen Jarrett | - Aye |
| Dwayne Stephens | - Aye |
| Wayne Noha | - Aye |
| Jeff Notrica | - Not Present |
| Laureen Boles | - Not Present |
| Elizabeth Epstein | - Aye |
| Malik Watkins | - Not Present |
| Jay Melder | - Aye |

X. Presentations

XI. Other Business

XII. Adjournment

14. Adjourn

There being no further business to present before the Board, the May 24, 2022 Regular Metropolitan Planning Commission Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Wilson
Executive Director

MW/sh

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.