



Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission

Arthur Mendonsa Hearing Room
January 17, 2023 - 1:30 pm
Minutes

JANUARY 17, 2023 MPC MEETING

Members Present: Dwayne Stephens, Chairman
Tom Woiwode
Michael Kaigler
Jay Melder
Wayne Noha
Karen Jarrett
Travis Coles
Jeff Notrica
Laureen Boles
Shedrick Coleman

Members Absent: Joseph Welch
Malik Watkins
Elizabeth Epstein
Joseph Ervin

Staff Present: Pamela Everett, Assistant 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

IV. Notices, Proclamations and Acknowledgements

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

[1. MAP AMENDMENT | Wild Heron Road | Rezone from A-1 to RMF-1 and RSF-4 | 22-002692-ZA](#)

Motion

Item removed from the final agenda..

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Travis Coles

Second: Wayne Noha

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

[2. MAP AMENDMENT | 340 Buckhalter Road | Rezone from R-A \(County\) to RMF-1-12 | 22-005069-ZA](#)

Motion

Item removed from the final agenda.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Travis Coles
Second: Wayne Noha

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

[3. ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT | Accessory Dwelling Units| 22-005883](#)

Motion

Item removed from the final agenda

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Travis Coles

Second: Wayne Noha

Joseph Ervin	- Not Present
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Not Present
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Dwayne Stephens	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye
Jeff Notrica	- Aye
Laureen Boles	- Aye
Elizabeth Epstein	- Aye
Malik Watkins	- Not Present
Jay Melder	- Aye
Michael Kaigler	- 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 Items Requested to be Withdrawn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

[4. Approval of the November 29, 2022 Meeting Minutes](#)

[📎 11.29.2022-Meeting minutes \(1\).pdf](#)

Motion

Approval of the November 29, 2022 meeting minutes

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Travis Coles

Second: Wayne Noha

Joseph Ervin	- Not Present
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Not Present
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Karen Jarrett	- Aye

Dwayne Stephens	- Aye
Wayne Noha	- Aye
Jeff Notrica	- Aye
Laureen Boles	- Aye
Elizabeth Epstein	- Aye
Malik Watkins	- Not Present
Jay Melder	- Aye
Michael Kaigler	- Aye

5. Approval of the December 20, 2022 Meeting minutes

📎 [12.20.2022 Meeting minutes.pdf](#)

Motion

Approval of the December 20, 2022 meeting minutes.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Travis Coles

Second: Wayne Noha

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

VIII. Old Business

IX. Regular Business

6. MAP AMENDMENT | 5106 SKIDAWAY RD | 22-005903-ZA | REZONE FROM RSF-6 TO OI

- 📎 [Residential Conversions.pdf](#)
- 📎 [VICINITY MAP 22-005903-ZA.pdf](#)
- 📎 [ZONING MAP 22-005903-ZA.pdf](#)
- 📎 [AERIAL MAP 22-005903-ZA.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Street View.pdf](#)

📎 [Staff Report 2.pdf](#)

Mr. Nirav Gandhi, Planner, said the petitioner is requesting to rezone the subject property at the 5106 Skidaway Road from RSF-6 (Residential Single Family) to OI (Office Institutional.) The subject property is a 1.14-acre parcel that is currently zoned RSF-6 for residential single-family homes. In 2009, a zoning determination was made by the City Zoning Administrator at the time that a proposed Tennis School qualified as a “Private School” use, and therefore was permitted in the R-6 (now RSF-6) zoning district. This determination allowed the use to be established without rezoning. MPC staff disagreed with the determination, but the decision stood, and the use was established. The owner now intends to sell the property to Ms. Nicole Mason. Ms. Mason is seeking an OI (Office Institutional) Zoning because she intends to open up a by-appointment bridal boutique and florist shop, removing the tennis court. These uses are both permitted in the OI district. The property directly to the south of the subject property is also zoned OI. The rest of the neighborhood is zoned RSF-6, while the neighborhood across Skidaway Road is zoned RSF-10.

The intent of the District under the **existing** zoning: “The RSF- districts are established to preserve and create areas of single-family detached development. The five districts (RSF-30, RSF-20, RSF-10, RSF-6, RSF-5, and RSF-4) within the RSF- designation provide for varying development standards but generally permit the same uses. A limited number of nonresidential uses are allowed that are compatible with single-family residential uses.” Some of the permitted uses for this district are a single-family residence, a park, a community garden, a municipal fire or police station, a golf course, and uses accessory to a residence. A full list of permitted uses is attached. The intent of the District under the **proposed** zoning: “The Office and Institutional (“OI”) district is established to allow office uses as well as a limited number of other uses that are compatible with an office environment. The OI district is intended to be located in close proximity to Nonresidential districts and may be used as a transition between such areas and Residential districts.” Permitted uses include, but are not limited to, offices, child/adult care centers, medical institutions, event venues, utilities, pharmacies, banks, and more. A full list of permitted uses is attached.

The Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map designates the subject property as Residential Suburban Single Family. The proposed district is not consistent with this classification. Nonresidential uses are common fronting along this portion of Skidaway Road. Neighborhood scale nonresidential uses are compatible when located on arterial streets such as this one.

Staff feels the range of uses permitted in the OI zoning district are mostly compatible with the residential nature of the area. Many lots along this portion of south Skidaway Road are OI or B-N and mix well into the existing single-family neighborhoods. While a single-family home on this property is perfectly possible, because of the large size of the property and difficulty to subdivide it, it is impractical to use the entire 1.14 acres for a single home. Skidaway Road is also a major thoroughfare between the islands area and the downtown area, so office and commercial uses could theoretically pose an issue concerning the already heavy traffic. However, as the property has been used commercially for years, it is unlikely that any of the possible uses would significantly increase traffic issues.

Along this portion of Skidaway Road (within two blocks north and south), there are 16 properties with frontage on Skidaway Road being used for nonresidential uses in the B-C, B-N, and OI zoning districts. While a single-family home on this property is possible, because of the size and orientation of the property it would be difficult to effectively subdivide into lots similar to those around it. As it currently exists, it is impractical to use the entire 1.14 acres for a single home. The property has also been used commercially for the past 15 years, and it is possible the OI zoning district would actually decrease the intensity of the use at this site going forward.

Per the Zoning Ordinance, the proposed zoning district is created to:

“...allow office uses as well as a limited number of other uses that are compatible with an office environment. The OI district is intended to be located in close proximity to Nonresidential districts and may be used as a transition between such areas and Residential districts.”

OI has a range of uses beyond what the applicant intends to use it for, with some of the more intense ones being a post office, office, bank, or event venue. With the large size of the property it could easily accommodate these uses and the associated parking if required in the future. An event venue would,

however, likely be a bad fit for this residential area due to the noise associated with it in the evening time. A small office building made from a converted home would be expected and compatible with this area as well. Staff recommends approval of the proposed rezoning of RSF-6 to OI.

Mr. Jay Melder, City Manager, said, it is my understanding that OI is not presented for the parcel Future Land Use Map. Can you provide us the process for updating the Future Land Use Map when zoning decisions like this could potentially be made that is contradictory or not in line with the Future Land Use Map.

Mr. Marcus Lotson, Director of Development Services, said the process in a case where the Board and the Council find that a piece of property is out of line with the designation for Future Land Use, a Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment can be filed to change that designation. Specific to the subject property, in my opinion, this is not inconsistent with the designation as a neighborhood scale, non-residential uses are appropriate in a residential Land Use Designation. We would not recommend larger scale non-residential uses at this location because of that Comprehensive Plan issue. To answer the question, there is an amendment process by which a petition can be made to change the Land Use Designation for the property.

Mr. Gandhi said as you mentioned, there was not an OI designation in the Comprehensive Land Use Map, which is true, there is an Institutional Use, that was reserved for things like Libraries, Museums, Schools, and things like that. That is a gap in comparing the OI zoning district with our Land Use Map. This is just one of those neighborhood scale non-residential uses that fit in with the land category.

Ms. Karen Jarrett, Board Member, said it is not common for us to change the Land Use Map Designation is it? We can do it, but we don't generally do it.

Mr. Lotson said we, the City, County, and MPC, about the importance of changing the map on an individual parcel basis rather than going through the normal update process. I think where we are now, I believe all parties agree that it is more important for us to go through the normal update process with the five-year updates, to give a more Comprehensive look at areas versus individual pieces of property.

Ms. Jarrett said, once you get to the Comprehensive Plan review, is there a way to identify all the properties that we have rezoned over the years?

Mr. Lotson said yes, we did that in the recent Comprehensive Land Use update.

Ms. Melanie Wilson, Executive Director, said we are in the process of updating the Future Land Use Map, we will identify those properties.

Mr. Lotson said what Ms. Wilson was referring to was, the ongoing review of current Future Land Use Map and addition to that, the process of changing Land Use designations during the rezoning process. If someone was petitioning for something that is completely inconsistent with the Future Land Use Map, then they could file a FLUM request change in conjunction with the zoning and those items could be heard simultaneously.

Mr. Robert McCorkle, representing the petitioner, said this property has been in commercial operation for 15 years even though it has been zoned RSF during that time period. It has a commercial parking lot on Skidaway Road with two entrances. This is similar to other commercial uses in residential conversions up and down Skidaway Road. Also on Derenne, Waters, and other streets that are similar. As mentioned by staff, there are 16 commercial uses in residential conversions within two blocks of the existing property. Skidaway is marked with OI, BN, and BC for these various uses. I actually rezoned the property immediately adjacent to this, the neighboring property to OI several years back. My clients intended use, as mentioned, was the relocation of Ivory and Beau, a Bridal Boutique that is currently on 2111 Price Street. I want to make a note about the business, the intention is by appointment only business. they also do floral design and wedding planning there. They do not host those things. It is also not a florist shop, in the traditional sense, it's not a retail shop that is open to the public. She does intend to construct a building in the back, behind where the tennis courts are, that would allow for preparing the flowers and making the arrangements so they can be taken to weddings from that site. This is the kind of property that OI is designed to address and designed for. There is a lane immediately to the north which creates a bit of a buffer between this property and the residences. We tried to reach out to the residential area, I did not get a response back from the contacts, but it is my understanding that there has been a couple of calls in from neighbors who have been supportive of what we are doing. I don't think people want to listen to tennis balls being struck day and night behind their houses necessarily as opposed to having bridal boutique or some other OI type of office use in that location. With all of that, I would ask for your support of staff's recommendation for approval.

Motion

Approval of the proposed rezoning from RSF-6 to OI.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Wayne Noha

Second: Travis Coles

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

[7. MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT | 1901 Benton Boulevard | 22-003026](#)

- [2022.11.23 Pooler Site Plan.pdf](#)
- [2022.11.28 MPC Letter from Developer.pdf](#)
- [2022.10.20 GDOT Correspondence.pdf](#)
- [Aerial and Street View.pdf](#)
- [Staff Report .pdf](#)

Mr. Marcus Lotson, Director of Development Services, said the petitioner is requesting MPC approval of an amendment to the Godley Station Master Plan (Godley Station North), a planned community within a PD (Planned Development) zoning district. The specific property is on the east side of Benton Boulevard abutting Jim Benton Court. The petitioner is proposing to change the land use designation from light industrial to commercial for the establishment of a childcare center.

The Godley Station Master Plan was initially approved by the MPC on October 30, 1996 in conjunction with the rezoning of the Godley Tract on October 30, 1996. On November 21, 1996, the Mayor and Aldermen approved the rezoning of this tract from R-A (Residential-Agriculture) to PUD-C, including the initial Master Plan. The Tract was rezoned to PD (Planned Development) with the adoption of NewZO, but the approved Master Plan still governs development within planned area.

On occasion, properties within a Master Planned area are built out quickly and the approved uses remain unchanged. However, because of various factors in marketing trends, needs, and economic constraints, changes to Master Plans are often necessary. Such changes are not unusual as Master Plans are typically not static. The proposed Amended Master Plan does not confer development rights to the applicant; the City of Savannah plan review process will still need to be adhered to if the proposed amendment is approved. Staff finds that the proposed change will not allow uses that are incompatible with the surrounding area or that are likely to have negative impacts. Based on the previously stated findings, the proposed Amended Master Plan is not likely to be detrimental to the properties within the

immediate area or the larger community. The subject property is an undeveloped and wooded parcel. Adjacent developed parcels are warehouses. In the immediate vicinity are retail centers on the corners opposite the site. These are neighborhood scale facilities that provide food, convenience retail, gas, and personal services for residents in the area. The closest residential use is a multifamily development on Spring Lakes Drive approximately one-half mile north of the subject property. In general, the development pattern around the subject property is industrial (warehousing & outdoor storage) and neighborhood scale retail. The proposed land use change would be consistent with the development pattern in the vicinity. With continued growth in the multifamily sector in and around the Godley Station community, there is a need for commercial land use classifications and the majority is currently industrial. Access to the site, as shown on the attached General Development Plan, will be via a full access curb cut on Benton Boulevard. This access point will align with an existing access point across Benton on the eastern side. An additional right in-right out only curb cut will be along Jimmy DeLoach Boulevard. These access points have been conceptually approved by the City of Savannah Traffic Engineer and the Georgia Department of Transportation. Although the immediately adjacent properties are primarily industrial and commercial, there is a significant amount of single family residential within a 1 ½ mile radius, including The Highlands at Godley Station, The Farm, The Hunt Club and the Villages at Godley Station. In addition, there are existing and under construction multifamily apartments in the area. These residential uses are more compatible with commercial services than they are with Light Industrial.

On occasion, properties within a Master Planned area are built out quickly and the approved uses remain unchanged. However, because of various factors in marketing trends, needs, and economic constraints, changes to Master Plans are often necessary. Such changes are not unusual as Master Plans are typically not static.

The proposed Amended Master Plan does not transfer development rights to the applicant; the City of Savannah plan review process will still need to be adhered to if the proposed amendment is approved.

Staff finds that the proposed change will not allow uses that are incompatible with the surrounding area or that are likely to have negative impacts. Based on the previously stated findings, the proposed Amended Master Plan is not likely to be detrimental to the properties within the immediate area or the larger community. This area has grown quickly in terms of the industry. The Truck traffic is a significant concern, the applicant will speak regarding conversations with GDOT and Traffic Engineering. Staff's opinion, in terms of a Land Use Designation, commercial would be more appropriate at this intersection. Two of the four intersections at this location, are already commercially designated. With those findings, we are recommending approval of the change from Light Industrial to Commercial as a Land Use Designation within the Godley PD.

Ms. Karen Jarrett, Board Member, said, again we are changing the Future Land Use designation for this property, correct?

Mr. Lotson said, what is being requested is a Land Use change. The Godley area is within a Planned Development. It was originally approved back in the mid 90's and rezoned to a Planned Development by the City of Savannah. Within the Godley PD, each parcel has a Land Use designation. It may be commercial, it may be industrial, and it may be Institutional. Those were all identified, this particular piece of property had been identified as Light Industrial, the petitioner is proposing to change that designation to commercial. If adopted, that would allow them to submit Site Plans to the City of Savannah for a commercial development.

Mr. Jay Melder, City Manager, said I would view this as a very positive development pattern from a Light Industrial to Commercial use given the residential zoning and development that we have seen in the Highlands area. Is that part of the reason for MPC staff approval?

Mr. Lotson said, that is one of the main reasons that we recommend approval in this case. The significant growth in the residential sector, both within the City of Savannah and within the City of Pooler, it's going to require that there be some commercial services that are available for those residents. The other piece of that is the diminishing some of the land that is already identified for Industrial. It is significant in that area which drives the truck traffic in that area.

Mr. Josh Yellin, representing the petitioner, said today, what we are having is solely a Master Plan amendment. It is not an approval of a Site Plan, it's not an approval of the building. It is to change the color on the map from Industrial to Commercial. This site has been listed as Industrial since the Godley

station PUD was in effect. I do not believe this site ever when through some of the processes that you have seen for the other properties to change to Industrial to put a warehouse there. It has always been designated as in Industrial Parcel. What is unique about this property is, this portion of Benton Blvd is prohibited from truck traffic. There was some concern in the pre meeting about the possible interactions between a daycare and truck traffic. Starting at Jimmy DeLoach and going north, trucks are not permitted therefore we do not have that concern. This is one of the last steps in the process in terms of getting this site ready for commercial development. When I was initially brought on board, we went out and reached to International Paper, they were the original developer of all this area. We had to work with their development and legal team to get a deed of release for this parcel. They agreed it should no longer be an Industrial Site. We then had to reach out to the developer, the current declarant of the site, Landmark 24, we had to seek their approval. They also agreed this is no longer useful as an industrial property. This should be a commercial property. We then reached out to the adjacent property owners who will be continuing the development of site. They have agreed that they will not develop as Industrial property. This is better suited as commercial. We are here today to ask for your approval to change the Master Plan to allow the commercial use on this site. We have been working with our project engineer, Scott Burns, Declerance Project Engineer (EMC), GDOT, and the City of Savannah, all working on how the traffic will align and how the entrances will face. That is still a work in progress. The preference from the City of Savannah is that we move the entrance to the existing curb cut located further to the north of the property and then have a longer frontage road access drive which will help take some of those cars off of Benton that are coming to the daycare. We will continue to work with the City of Savannah and GDOT to find the best access points for this site. We do respectfully request approval of this Master Plan amendment so that we can develop this site as a commercial instead of Industrial use.

Ms. Karren Jarrett, Board member, asked if the Site Plan would come back before this Commission for review?

Mr. Lotson said is an official submittal is made and it meets the requirements of the ordinance, it would not be required to come back before the Planning Commission. If they are seeking a variance or some other relief, it may have to approved by this body.

Motion

Approval of the proposed Amended Master Plan for the property at 1901 Benton Boulevard.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Travis Coles

Second: Wayne Noha

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

[8. MAP AMENDMENT | 1401 Paulsen Street | Rezone from TN-3 to TC-1 | 22-005905-ZA](#)

- 📎 [Combined Maps.pdf](#)
- 📎 [1401 Paulsen Street - Letters of Support.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Application.pdf](#)
- 📎 [1401 Paulsen Street - Photos.pdf](#)
- 📎 [STAFF REPORT.pdf](#)
- 📎 [TheLaundry_InteriorInspiration.pdf](#)

Ms. Melissa Leto, Senior Planner, Development Services, said the petitioner, Josh Yellin as Agent for Liz Massey, is requesting a rezoning of a parcel from an TN-3 (Traditional Neighborhood-3) district to a TC-1 (Traditional Commercial-1) district at 1401 Paulsen Street to renovate an existing two-story building into a restaurant. The petitioner is also requesting a Special Use permit to allow for a microbrewery. The subject property is located on Lot 10, in the second Municipal District. The municipal address is 1401 Paulsen Street. The subject parcel has streets on four sides and does not abut any properties. The parcel measures approximately 0.18 acres, or 7,840.8 square feet, in lot area and contains approximately 33-feet of frontage and approximately 219-feet in length. The subject parcel includes an existing two-story building, situated on the corner of East Anderson Street and Paulsen Street. The building historically operated as a laundromat built circa, 1940-1949. It is currently being used as a storage space by the property owner. The property is currently zoned TN-3 (Traditional Neighborhood-3) and is located within the Midtown neighborhood. Besides the existing two-story building, the remaining portion of the land is vacant. The petitioner intends to renovate the building into a diner style restaurant and is applying for a Special Use Permit to allow for a microbrewery. The properties surrounding the subject parcel are mostly residential single-family homes and are located within the TR-2 (Traditional Residential-2) zoning district. The closest TC-1 zoning district is located to the east of the property, approximately three blocks away on Waters Avenue.

The petitioner has conducted two neighborhood meetings on-site. The first meeting was held on December 9, 2022, with the second meeting being held the next day, December 10, 2022. Both meetings had an attendance of twelve (12) people. Prior to and after the neighborhood meetings, the petitioner received over 193 letters of support for the proposed rezoning and Special Use Permit requests. The site has access onto East Anderson Street, which is classified as a collector road. Other streets bounded by the subject property are Paulsen Street, Vine Street, and East 33rd Street which are classified as local roads. All three receive minimum traffic impact, as most of the traffic comes from drivers commuting to their residences. The subject parcel has access to the City's public water, sewer, and stormwater systems. The property is currently served by CAT. The closest bus stop is to the east at East Anderson Street, approximately 560-feet away. The second bus stop is to the west, approximately 655-feet away from the subject property. The Chatham County-Savannah Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designates the subject parcel as Residential-Single Family. The proposed TC-1 zoning classification is for a neighborhood diner and microbrewery uses. The Residential-Single Family Future Land Use designation includes non-residential uses that are compatible with the residential character and scale of the neighborhood. "The TN-3 district is intended to ensure the vibrancy of historic residential neighborhoods with traditional development patterns characteristic of Savannah from approximately 1890 to 1946 during the streetcar and early automobile eras. The district is intended to allow limited neighborhood-serving uses and mixed uses located in predominately residential areas." The TN-3 district has predominantly non-residential uses with the exemption of upper story residential.

The petitioner is requesting a rezoning of a parcel from an TN-3 (Traditional Neighborhood-3) zoning district to a TC-1 (Traditional Commercial-1) district at 1401 Paulsen Street to renovate an existing two-story building, formerly a laundromat, into a restaurant and microbrewery. The petitioner is requesting a Special Use permit to allow for a microbrewery within the proposed restaurant. The petitioner has conducted two neighborhood meetings. The first meeting was held on December 9, 2022, at the subject site. The second meeting was held the following day, December 10, 2022. At both meetings, a total of

twelve people attended. The petitioner answered any questions the attendees had regarding the rezoning and Special Use permit.

The parcel has streets on four sides and does not abut any properties. The slice of TN-3 zoned properties consists of eight (8) parcels, including the subject parcel. The parcels include non-residential uses to accommodate the surrounding TR-2 zoned neighborhood. It is also located within three (3) blocks to the east from a TC-1 zoned area off Waters Avenue. The Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designates the subject property as Residential-Single Family. The proposed TC-1 zoning classification is for a neighborhood diner and microbrewery uses. The Residential-Single Family future land use designation includes non-residential uses that are compatible with the residential character and scale of the neighborhood. Staff is recommending approval of the request to rezone from TN-3 to TC-1.

Mr. Josh Yellin, Representing the Applicant, said the owner, nor their family, of a brewery in the state of Georgia, can hold any other alcohol license. They cannot license as a bar, they cannot license as a restaurant, a package store, or convenient store. The only other application they can make is for a Brewery. This is the same relationship that Southbound Brewery has with their sister restaurant, Hop Atomica, completely different feel, completely different branding, but it is what we have to do under the state regulations. While we are calling ourselves a Microbrewery today, this site will function as a restaurant and the intent was to open up a classic americana diner but to serve alcohol there, we must be a Microbrewery. The proposal is to have a limited microbrewing space with two beers brewed that will be served in the restaurant. What is unique about this as well is that because of it being a microbrewery instead of a restaurant, they cannot serve any other alcohol onsite. It can only be the diner beers that are served here. They cannot have a distributor come in and start bringing in liquor, wine, and other beer. What they make, it what they serve onsite. It is inherently restrictive. The other component of this rezoning request to TC-1 is, they want to have the diner and a retail grocery component. We are in an area that is slightly limited by way of commercial uses by way of eating establishments and grocery stores. Not to say we can come in and fill the void of a Kroger or any grocery store, but the intent was to have a portion of this site dedicated to having household goods. This property has been vacant for years. If you look at the development of this area, this property was a laundry mat. All of the uses up and down this area were industrial and commercial uses. There are no neighbors immediately adjacent to us. We are adequately buffered, adequately protected. The use that we are proposing is withing keeping of the history of this site. We do have 193 letters of support for this petition. The owners of this project have done a good job with Two Tides. They have gone out and become a great member of the City of Savannah business community and a great member for the area. the first letter of recommendation was from Professor Susan Jackson, the immediate neighbor to Two Tides. She is the only residential property owner directly across from Two Tides. This immediate residential neighbor supports the owners. She supports the applicants and knows that based upon their past business; they will do a great job in this location with the new endeavor. We ask that you support staff's decision and approve this request today.

Ms. Karen Jarrett, Board member, asked, did the 193 signees know that the intent was for this site to be a 24hr restaurant?

Mr. Yellin said yes, the intent was always to be a 24hr restaurant, but we understand the concerns from staff. We are seeking a compromise. The business plan that was proposed was with the idea of being able to serve the community at hours where people are traditionally not served. There are a lot of community members in this area, just based upon the nature of work, are getting off work at this time and would like to have a nice clean place to come to eat. We are trying to be accommodating to everyone. We do understand the concerns around the 24/7.

Mr. Wayne Noha, Board member, asked, does staff have copies of those letters of support for the record?

Mr. Yellin said yes. There are more coming in as well. There were two neighborhood meetings that were held on December 9th and 10th. There were approximately 12 people that attended the meetings. Those that were in attendance were supportive.

Ms. Elizabeth Epstein, Board member, asked, did the school being in the area weigh in on your decision not to sell distilled spirits?

Mr. Yellin said we are not allowed to do that regardless. But, yes, if this site were to not be a microbrewery and some other applicants were to come in, distilled spirits would not be permitted here either due to the proximity to the school. As a microbrewery or even a convenient store, the distant requirement is 100yds. We are 300-400ft away. We made sure to check those.

Mr. Jay Melder, City Manager, asked, how does the applicant intend to meet the parking requirements.

Mr. Yellin said, we are currently working with your staff on the parking requirements for this site. The Microbrewery license does not have a corresponding parking total. We are working with staff to determine what the parking requirements would be. Are we treated as a restaurant or are we treated as a Microbrewery? How do we fit in the kitchen space, how do we fit in the brewery equipment space? The rear of the site is currently vacant. The applicant does intend to put in biking racks. By putting in bike/moped racks there is a 25% reduction to that parking requirement. We believe we are looking at approximately 6-7 spaces that would be required at most.

Mr. Dwayne Stephens, Chairman, said there is a member of the public, Ms. Amy Grove, that would like to go on record saying they support the project.

Mr. Jason Combs, President of the Thomas Square neighborhood association, the 193 letters she got was with little to no effort. I think if she would have really tried, she would have gotten 1000 letters of support. I am here to speak on behalf of those letters and support. I have been in Starland for 20yrs. I have been the President for the past 2 years. I can speak to what a wonderful part of the neighborhood Two Tides has been. I want to bring up a point, not just the building itself, but their stewardship of the ROW when they have events. They have been very responsible with that. The fact that they brought up the residential neighborhood across the street, that speaks volumes. I would support anything she wanted to do anywhere.

Motion

Approval of the request to rezone from TN-3 to TC-1.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Travis Coles

Second: Wayne Noha

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

📎 [1401 Paulsen Street - Letters of Support.pdf](#)

📎 [Combined Maps.pdf](#)

📎 [1401 Paulsen Street - Photos.pdf](#)

📎 [Staff Report.pdf](#)

📎 [The Laundry Menu.pdf](#)

Ms. Melissa Leto, Senior Planner, Development Services, said the petitioner is requesting approval of a Special Use pursuant to Section 3.10 of the Savannah Zoning Ordinance to establish a microbrewery within a restaurant. The Special Use process includes review by the Planning Commission and the Savannah City Council. Should the use be approved by Council, 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 parcel has streets on four sides and does not abut any properties. The parcel measures approximately 0.18 acres, or 7,840.8 square feet, in lot area and contains approximately 33-feet of frontage and approximately 219-feet in length. The subject parcel includes an existing two-story building, situated on the corner of East Anderson Street and Paulsen Street. The building historically operated as a laundromat built circa, 1940-1949. It is currently being used as a storage space by the property owner.

The property is currently zoned TN-3 (Traditional Neighborhood-3) and is located within the Midtown neighborhood. Besides the existing two-story building, the remaining portion of the land is vacant. The petitioner intends to renovate the building into a diner style restaurant and is applying for a Special Use Permit to allow for a microbrewery. The properties surrounding the subject parcel are mostly residential single-family homes and are located within the TR-2 (Traditional Residential-2) zoning district. The closest TC-1 zoning district is located to the east of the property, approximately three blocks away on Waters Avenue.

The petitioner is proposing a 24-hour diner/restaurant. The city regulates operational hours for businesses selling alcohol from 7:00 a.m. until 3:00 a.m. Based on the location of the property and surrounding residential properties, staff recommends the hours of operation be the following:

- Sunday through Thursday – 6:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m.
- Friday and Saturday – 6:00 a.m. until 11:00 p.m.

There will be no loss, destruction, or damage to any item of historic importance. Based upon the compatibility with the Comprehensive Plan, and the ability to meet the criteria for a special use permit; Staff recommends approval of the request with conditions.

1. The Special Use permit shall be nontransferable.
2. Operational hours: (Sunday through Thursday - 6:00am until 10:00pm and Friday & Saturday- 6:00am until 11:00pm).

Mr. Jay Melder, City Manager, said, I agree with the conditions that staff has recommended. Is the petitioner agreeable to a third condition, which would be to supply the City of Savannah with a safety plan with their hours of operations which is 24 hours a day. This is something that someone who was opening up a bar or lounge would have to submit. This is something fairly straight forward but could go a long way with some of the concerns we may see at City Council in terms of safety and security for a 24hr restaurant in the area.

Mr. Yellin said yes. If we can figure out the hours and the recommendation that is going to City Council, the applicant would be happy to put together a safety plan or good neighbor agreement. From Two Tides, they have a safety plan in place, which would be very similar. As indicated, we were looking for some flexibility regarding the hours of operation. The intent for this project was to be a 24/7 diner so they can maximize the food options for the area and to serve an underserved segment of the community where the nearest restaurant open with these hours is the Waffle House on Presidents Street or Abercorn. The initial proposal and what we did want to discuss regarding the operational hours, we would still like to have the opportunity to serve food 24/7 and shut down, as required by city of Savannah alcohol

ordinance. We are happy to have a conversation regarding the alcohol sales component. If we went through this rezoning to TC-1 for a restaurant without alcohol, we would be permitted to serve for the full extent of the City Ordinance. It is only when we bring in the alcohol that we have to come with the Special Use approval. We are trying to find that balance where they can make their business plan work, to have the 24/7 diner. We are happy to discuss the alcohol sales component. We would like to separate the food conversation and the alcohol conversation.

Mr. Wayne Noha, Board Member, asked, where the letters of support people aware of the 24hours of operation?

Mr. Yellin said yes.

Mr. Melder said from a city administration perspective, it would be permitted to have a restaurant by right, 24hrs a day as it would we just approve that zoning. I don't think from an administrative point of view there would be an issue having a restaurant operating 24hrs a day. I was under the impression that the condition put on the hours of operation were just for the microbrewery ie: the alcohol sales, to be limited from 6am to 10pm Sunday through Thursday and 6am to 11pm on Friday and Saturday. I don't think I would oppose an amendment to that and let City Council have the discussion about alcohol sales ending at 12pm Sunday through Thursday and 1pm on Friday and Saturday. As an MPC Board member, I could be in support of a condition that read like that providing we include the third condition, a safety plan for those hours of operation.

Ms. Jarrett, asked, how many of those letters came from people in the neighborhood?

Mr. Yellin said more than half of the letters were from residents in the area.

Ms. Laureen Boles, Board member, said my concern is not the business itself or the hours of operation, it is the two of them together will bring outside neighbors beyond the 100 or so there. They could be coming from everywhere.

Mr. Tom Woiwode, Board member, asked, there are hours of operation serving alcohol during one set of time frames, then there are 24hrs of operation, can these two things co-exist?

Mr. Yellin said I do not believe that will be an issue. For any restaurant in the city, they have a similar issue regarding Sunday sales and the brunch bill that was recently passed. If you want to go downtown and have brunch, if the restaurant opens at nine and you are there at nine, they cannot serve you alcohol, you have to wait until 11am. Administratively this is a common occurrence for every alcohol license in the City of Savannah. It would not be an issue to turn off the point-of-sale machine to stop the sale when needed.

Mr. Shedrick Coleman, Board member, said, I agree with most of the comments that have been made especially regarding the hours of operation. I believe the issue of how the 24hr use effects the neighborhood needs to be countered with the configuration of the streets and everything around it. Anderson Street is one way, you come up Paulsen Street and most of the parking being to the back side with no real serious residential direct neighbors to the site. With that case, I do not see this project creating high traffic demand even in the middle of the night, however popular it is. The routes in are very diverse, I do not see this impacting even the few houses that are in that area.

Mr. Dwayne Stephens, Chairman, said, I am a proponent of the creativity especially as the city is growing and we are drawing a more diverse population. I do echo some of the concerns as far as being able to manage the cutting off of the alcohol sales. I do understand there are other businesses that are not allowed to sell within a certain timeframe, but I can only imagine what the policing would look like in trying to make sure there is adherence. I hear clearly, this property owner has been good stewards of their properties thus far, but they are not the ones that are in the building all the time. There are concerns as to how enforceable this may be. I am not against the idea of a 24/7.

Mr. Yellin said they did look at other locations, this site is ideal from the points made, being surrounded by four streets, and by not being in line in a residential block. On East Broad in one direction and Waters in the other direction, there are currently existing convenient stores that are selling package alcohol sales that have hours of operation that are later then what has been proposed. When we saw the proposal for

the hours, we thought surely, we will be better neighbors and provide a better product.

Mr. Travis Coles, Board Member, asked, what were the hours that you were proposing for the alcohol sales?

Mr. Yellin said, Sunday through Thursday 7am to midnight with Friday and Saturday until 1am.

Mr. Woiwode asked, is the recommended times for the operation of the establishment or just for the serving of alcohol?

Ms. Leto said the recommended times from staff is based on the operational hours of the restaurant. If it opened at 6am, they would have to wait until 7am to provide beer.

Ms. Jarrett asked, you said the use should not be transferable, correct?

Ms. Leto said yes in all Special Use permits, the person who is leasing and gets the license. If the business was sold, the new owners would have to go through the process for Special Use for alcohol sales again. A 24hr restaurant would be allowed no matter what under the current zoning.

Mr. Melder asked, should City Council approve the zoning this Body just approved, the applicant by right would be able to have a 24hr restaurant? The fact that they are coming before MPC and then to City Council for a Special Use permit, for a microbrewery, is the only vehicle by which we would be able to attach a condition that limits their rights as property owners to operate an establishment under 24hrs. It might be more appropriate for this Body to restrict the hours of alcohol sales or the operation of the microbrewery vs. the operation of the diner itself.

Mr. Stephens said for the record, Amy Grove, member of the public, is in support of this Special Use. Ms. Grove does not wish to comment, she just wants her support on the record.

Mr. Michael Condon, owner of the property, said this particular building I feel in love with when I first came to Savannah. I have put the building back together of the course of time and looked very carefully for a specific type of tenant to rent to. We live in that neighborhood and are very familiar with our neighbors. Many people that live in that area have lived there over 50yrs. We wanted to put something special there. We want a place to go to have some breakfast or lunch. I have said no to more than a dozen people who have asked to rent this building. We want someone who respects the history of the area. When Liz came to us and asked if we would work with her, we were delighted. Their business is very well regarded in the community, and they have done a wonderful job of building community in Starland. I am familiar with their business model. We have worked together to try and present something the neighborhood would be excited about, and they are. People are still excited about walking to have a bite to eat.

Mr. Jason Combs, member of the public, said this business will add what we call "eyes in the street" when there is activity going on, it provides safety in the neighborhood. I want to add to what you were talking about earlier. It's called the third place. The first place is home, the second place is work, this is the third place, a place to walk to eat and hang out. I believe this will be a benefit to the neighborhood.

Ms. Liz Massey, project owner, said I want to speak specifically regarding restricting the alcohol sales. I have lived in Savannah a little over 10yrs and the entire time I have been here I have been in the service industry. I am definitely very aware specifically on Sundays about the regulations of working in a restaurant or cafe and not being able to sell alcohol until 12:30. I was the manager of Foxy Loxy Cafe for four years, we dealt with that all the time. It is from a management standpoint, as simple as, in the back end of a computer, pressing a button that doesn't even allow staff to ring up the alcohol until the time that I set on the computer. In addition, I am not the type of boss to just open these businesses all over town and not be involved. I am sure my husband can speak to his dismay, how much I work and how much I do. How much time I do spend in the businesses I open. This is definitely something where I am on-site and have eyes on everything that is happening at all times. We have been very fortunate to have retained about 90% of our staff from the entire time that Two Tides has been open. Most of my staff members have worked for me for over 5yrs. A good portion of these employees will also be working at this new venture. They are very aware of my safety plans, strict policies, and due diligence to work for a business like Two Tides and similarly The Laundry.

Motion

Approval of the request for a Special Use Permit for a Microbrewery at 1401 Paulsen with conditions.

1. The Special Use permit shall be nontransferable.
2. Alcohol Sales at the establishment would cease at 12am, midnight, Sunday through Thursday and 1am Friday and Saturday. (1am really being Saturday and Sunday)
3. The Applicant complete a security plan and good neighbor agreement to be on file with the City of Savannah.

These conditions only apply to the alcohol sales. The 24/7 restaurant is by right with the approved zoning.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Jay Melder

Second: Wayne Noha

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

[10. REZONING MAP AMENDMENT | 1800 E. 63rd Street | Rezone from RSF-6 to RMF-2-20 | 22-004421](#)

- 📎 [Maps Combined.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Contour Exhibit.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Context.pdf](#)
- 📎 [North Truman.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Pre Truman Parkay Aerial Image.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Street Sections.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Concept Plan ver 1.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Staff Report 4421.pdf](#)

Mr. Marcus Lotson, Director of Development Services, said the petitioner is requesting to rezone the subject parcels to the Residential Multifamily designation (RMF-2-20) with the intent of developing the property as apartments on the east side of the Truman Parkway and

north of Reuben Clark Drive. The proposed density is 20 units per acre. The property is currently zoned RSF-6 (Single Family Residential), the applicant is requesting the RMF-2 (Residential Multifamily) zoning district. The site is undeveloped and has been the subject of proposed rezonings in 2000 and 2003 which proved unsuccessful. Additionally, a 2013 rezoning request resulted in a conditional approval by the Planning Commission but was withdrawn prior to a hearing by City Council due to unresolvable development issues. The petitioner originally applied in September to rezone the PIN 20104 30014 only but continued the hearing for the purpose of finalizing an option on the adjacent property so that it could be included on the request. The proposed primary access is from Reuben Clark Drive. Reuben Clark Drive is a public / private section of road that extends from DeRenne Avenue, adjacent to Jenkins high school, and bridges the Truman parkway. It then crosses through Memorial Hospital and intersects with Waters Avenue. The only portion of the road that is public right of way is where it extends from Derenne Avenue to the subject property. The portion that bisects the subject property, the bridge, and the portion that traverses through Memorial Medical Center is private. The primary use is for access to the hospital, including emergency services. However, the entire road operates as if it is public. Currently the only other intersecting street is a service road into the high school. The applicant intends to access the subject properties at two locations on either side of the private section of the road near the top of the hill.

The subject property, historically, abutted the Casey Canal. The canal basin separated the nearby neighborhoods from the neighborhoods to the west and the property which includes Memorial Hospital. The construction of the Truman Parkway rerouted the canal and Reuben Clark drive was constructed to provide additional access to the hospital. The developers of the residential subdivisions east of the subject property appear to have recognized the fact that the areas closer to the canal were not appropriate for construction. The succeeding years also did not result in any development in the area, apparently due to the same development issues. In the last 22 years, three previous zoning petitions have been filed resulting in either denial of the request, or those petitioners being unable to address development issues, thereby leaving the site as it is today. Often sites present too many issues to allow them to be built out to the maximum allowed by zoning due to mitigating factors like cost of development, access, environmental impact, or feasibility. Staff finds that some of these factors are present in this case.

The neighborhood largely was developed in the post war period circa 1950's. It consists primarily of smaller single-family residences on 5000-6000 sq ft lots. The properties south of 62nd street are generally larger lots in the 8000-10,000sq ft size but also single-family in terms of the development pattern. The areas along the Truman Parkway, on the east side, it is largely undeveloped. We think that has a lot to do with the former location of the Casey Canal, which has been realigned. This was largely a very wet area which is why the development stopped. the subject properties are bisected by that before it was redirected, and the Truman Parkway was built. One of the things that staff looked at closely, was the nature of the development pattern in the adjacent neighborhoods. The proposed development at 20 units per acre, could allow a significant increase in the terms of the area density. The petitioner, in our discussions, has indicated that all though they provided a concept plan that shows potentially two buildings within this area, it is their belief that the primary building is the most likely. There were two shown as a possibility but based on conversations, it is likely that they would come only with one building. Residential density in terms of the zoning district, could allow up to 20 units per acre, should they be able to develop it on that site. Another key feature in the area is the power easement that bisects the property. Through previous zoning efforts on this property in 2000, 2003, and 2013, none of those projects came to fruition due to the development issues on the site. It is a very difficult site to develop with any significant density. Comparing this to other multifamily developments we have seen, it is very unique for the purpose of trying to fit it on this property.

The proposed zoning may adversely affect the use and usability of nearby properties, due to the change in the residential density and scale of development as well as potential environmental issues related to the loss of vegetation. The zoning proposal is not compatible with the present zoning pattern. There are not examples of multifamily residential density in the area similar to what is proposed. There are not existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property which give supporting grounds for approval. Based upon the existing zoning pattern and character of the area, as well as the review criteria, staff recommends denial of the rezoning request as submitted.

Mr. Shedrick Coleman, Board Member, said, it is clear there is not going to be any single-family development of that piece of property. To say that no one gets the opportunity to develop it

because it's difficulty, is not a reasonable assumption that this Board can make. The rezoning of this property, if it were done by this Board, only opens the door to the possibility of a developer coming up with a successful solution that meets the scale. The scale of a building or whatever this development is, will never be a single-family scale. There has to be some area where we are able to moderate between what is compatible scale wise and being able to make a project work on the property. Should we as a group, shut the door on that opportunity because we feel that compatibility is what we are going to be what drives us rather than give someone the opportunity to develop something that is compatible. I don't feel it is appropriate for us to deny a rezoning based on the difficulty of coming up with a solution.

Mr. Lotson said I agree with that is the issue. Having looked at this for quite a while, unfortunately, we are placing the burden on the Board to make that decision. I would say, generally, if this were a 6-acre piece of land that was totally flat and contiguous to the neighborhood, from a zoning standpoint, we would probably have the same opinion as it relates to this particular zoning designation that they are requesting today.

Mr. Coleman said the constraints create mean, that you have to go to a very different solution to make the project and the site viable. We need to be open to those opportunities.

Ms. Karen Jarrett, Board member, asked, do they even have access to this private road? Do they have an agreement with the property owners?

Mr. Lotson said yes. The portion of the property that is within the boundaries of the parcel are part of the agreement they have with the current property owners, including the roads.

Ms. Jarrett said the other thing that really concerns me is the fact that we do have a piece of property which is in a flood plain, and part of it is in the X flood plain but only a very small part. The rest of it is in an A flood plain. They will either have to elevate the building or they will have to fill the land. I have real issues when it comes to filling land around here. When you fill land, that water goes somewhere. Considering the fact that most of the area is pretty developed, are we pushing the water into the residential neighborhood?

Mr. Lotson said, that is always a challenge for us to make those kinds of determinations at a zoning hearing. The City has all these rules in place to manage stormwater flow, to detain and retain stormwater. Should this property get developed whether it be by this applicant or future applicant, it will be their responsibility to meet those requirements. We do all know that even with those requirements, things do happen in terms of impact with stormwater. I don't think we can make those determinations today.

Ms. Jarrett said, the final thing is the compatibility with the neighborhood and whether the neighbors have really had an opportunity to see what is being proposed.

Mr. Lotson said over the time the applicant has had this petition before us, they have made numerous attempts to visit with the neighbors out here. There unfortunately not a neighborhood association. I have been copied on emails to that effect. There has not been, to my knowledge, what you would consider, a neighborhood meeting.

Mr. Jay Melder, City Manager, said, if the parcel was viable for single family residential, it likely would have been built out at the same times as the neighborhoods to the east. It is an odd property, one thing I want to make sure I heard correctly, in staff's explanation of the parcel, you said only about 10% of it would be developable land.

Mr. Lotson said yes. We do not have a survey information at this point. Looking at the exhibit, the applicant has gone in and found the areas that are most buildable. Out of the 20ish acres that are here, really all you have is what is immediately adjacent to Reuben Clark Drive.

Mr. Melder said, so approximately 2 acres of developable land out of the 20. Can you review again the issue and possible solution the petitioner has with the easement on the road?

Mr. Lotson said my understanding is that they would essentially leave Reuben Clark Drive as it is. However, as the owner of the portion between the bridge and where it approaches Jenkins High School, they would use it as a drive to access their properties. If building two were to be built, they would create

direct access from Reuben Clark Drive to a parking area on the side before you approach the Truman Bridge.

Mr. Melder asked, in your opinion, how would you achieve some sort of compatibility with the neighbors on 62nd street?

Mr. Lotson said finding a creative architect that can transition from the homes that exists within the neighborhood on 62nd and 63rd streets and make a similar product on the property and possibly create a denser product. Creating some kind of transition or potentially a substantial buffer, if that were possible. That would have to be done through a Site Planning process which is not before us.

Ms. Lauren Boles, Board member, asked what is the proposed Future Land Use?

Mr. Lotson said the Future Land Use is split on this piece of property. It is residential general in the area where building one is being proposed. The rest of the property has a Conservation Designation.

Mr. Wayne Noha, Board Member, said, one of my concerns is, it stated there was not any community input. Where was this sign posted for advertisement?

Mr. Lotson said, I do not know. I visited the site when this was originally petitioned. Signs were posted then on Reuben Clark Drive and on 63rd Street. There was a new application filed to include the second parcel and I did not visit it after that point. Letters were sent out. We have spoken to residents in this area. They were generally opposed to the multifamily zoning. There were less than 5 phone calls received from residents in the area.

Mr. Melder asked, would you think knowing that the parcel is split, is the petitioners request in line with the Future Land Use Map?

Mr. Lotson said the request to rezone the property is not. If you look at the Future Land Use Map, two thirds of the overall site that is part of the rezoning, is within a Conservation Designation. One third of the property being Residential General.

Mr. Melder asked, because the parcel is split in two between two uses of a Future Land Use Map, would any rezoning be compatible?

Mr. Lotson said a rezoning could be compatible with the bounds essentially of the area that is designated Residential General.

Mr. Melder said in the same token, if a petitioner comes back and wants to rezone it Residential, and it not matching the Conservation portion of the FLUM, a petitioner coming back to rezone it Conservation, it would not be in line with the Residential General.

Mr. Travis Coles, Board Member, said for disclosure, I live at 1806 East 63rd street and my fiancé lives at 1802 East 63rd street. If this concept plan were to go in, essentially, he would have a parking lot 10ft on the other side of the property line. As far as the signage goes, because I live at that dead end street, yes there is a sign there, but the six of the neighbors that live at that dead end street see that sign, nobody else does. There is also another sign that was posted at the end of Coasta Rica, most of the traffic that comes through our neighborhood comes through Springhill so none of them would have seen that. As far as viability of single-family homes go on the corner of 63rd and Springhill, two homes were just built at a price point of \$400,000 each. As far as viability of the land goes, you could put a dozen houses on the upland part of this property at \$400,000 a piece. I think that would more than cover the asking price of the land currently that is \$450,000. Saying that multifamily is a good option for this neighborhood, that is not true. Saying it couldn't be single-family is not true. There is viability for single-family on this parcel.

Ms. Boles said the positioning of the signs and letters would lead to why there were only five responses.

Mr. Lotson said I almost always here from people saying, I received the notice but either it didn't look like anything I was concerned about, or I thought it was junk mail. There are all kinds of reasons people don't respond to things. I think we understand the Land Use issues and when something is happening, we get

involved but I don't know if that is as true for the general public. We do our due diligence in terms of the notifications. Our procedure is that the letters go to the property owners. If there is a renter at the residence, they may not receive the letter. It may go to a property owner at a different address. There are a lot of moving parts when it comes to the public notice procedures.

Mr. Coleman said you only put the sign on the property. If the property doesn't have exposure to some of the streets that may be more frequented, that is beyond the purview of this Board. You cannot worry about that. I think if the petitioner places the signs in the most prominent locations on their property, that is the best they can do. They can't take it beyond that. I do not think we can penalize any petitioner over the fact that the sign may not be viewed from a street that is not directly adjacent to that property. The notices out to the adjacent property owners is one of the best ways. It gets beyond the actual site.

Mr. Noha said the reason that I brought up the signage is, I wanted to make sure it was on 63rd because that is the given address. I believe it has to be on the given address.

Mr. Lotson said the way the ordinance reads essentially that, the sign as Mr. Coleman said, has to be on your property, the petitioner's property and be visible from the nearest ROW. In this case, 63rd street.

Mr. Boles asked, is building one in the Residential General Future Land Use and building two in the Conservation area?

Mr. Lotson said yes.

Mr. Robert McCorkle, Representing the Petitioner, said I want to mention, my client Columbia Ventures, has over 30yrs of experience of developing multifamily apartment projects as well as infill use mixed developments across multiple states including Georgia, Florida, and Colorado. Experience is important as it relates to this specific piece of property. As we have discussed here today and as you have read in the staff report, there is a significant amount of discussion about the complexity of the development of this site. With regard to the site, it is a complex site to develop. It is a very expensive site to develop. We do not believe that means that it should never be developed or that it can't be developed. What it does mean, it will never be developed for single family residential homes. I understand Mr. Coles comment about the additional homes, I understand they are \$400,000 a piece. The total site maximum that is actually developable on this is approximately 3-acres. If we did quarter acre lots and we develop twelve houses on this piece of property at \$400,000 each, that's approximately \$4.8 million. The cost of the land and the moving of the Georgia Power line, which has to be moved at about \$1.5 million plus the acquisition cost of the land from the owners, our client will have 4 to 5 million dollars' worth of funds into the land and movement of the power line. Even if we sold 12 houses for \$400,000, we wouldn't even cover the cost of the development of the land side of the deal much less, building and marketing the homes. The question is, is this land ever going to be developed or will it sit vacant forever? As mentioned, only a small portion is developable, 3 acres. The only real option here is some type of commercial development or a multifamily development. I do not think commercial is viable here when you start looking at what it costs on the price of the land depending on what you would build there. We are left with multifamily as the highest and best and only use for this property. It is a good location for a multifamily project in the sense that it is incredibly centrally located in the city. It is immediately adjacent to a hospital and to multiple schools. It is easily accessed. Additionally, there are unique characteristics to specific to this site that make it an interesting site and a good site we believe, for a multifamily. The first at which is Rueben Clark Drive, we will be accessing the property directly onto a public road. The private portion of the road is contained within the southern lot of the two lots that we are here today to rezone. When we acquire that property from Memorial Hospital, which we have under contract, we will be acquiring the road. We will own the road. We will give an easement to Memorial so they can continue to use the road for rear access to the hospital and for ambulance traffic. When we acquire this property, if the property is in fact rezoned, that road will only serve two pieces of property. The way the school has been redesigned, there is no other property to access on this road other than Memorial and what will be our project. There is a back door to the school that is a gated service entrance. It is not an entrance for delivery or drop off for the school. There will be essentially two users for this road. I think this is significant because we are not planning on putting traffic into the neighborhood and its surroundings. I think that is a very important distinction. We originally applied for this with just the northern piece. We worked very hard with Memorial to get them to sell us the property and agree to our project. That separates this project from all the other previous applications as I understand it. None of the other applications included Memorial to my knowledge. By doing that, we have changed the project, we are no longer putting traffic onto 63rd or 65th

streets or any other streets into the neighborhood. We essentially have our own access drive. I believe that is what separates this from previous applications which is one of the subject matters that was brought up. We have a very nice wide entrance on Derenne Avenue where traffic will come in and out of. The second factor I wanted to mention is, the property is mostly wetlands. The good news about the wetlands is that they expand out beyond our piece of property. They cover everything to the south. We have Truman Parkway to the west, to the north, this is all forested wetlands. There is a large buffer to the north. We believe this natural buffering will be a positive thing. We are not going to have as many residential neighbors in this particular location as we might otherwise have. There are only three that are immediately adjacent. the conceptual Site Plan that we propose is very conceptual in nature. It was an exercise in seeing what could possibly be built on this site. It was not taking into consideration full site plan or anything else. As I have mentioned before, we cannot spend money on the Site Plan until we know whether or not we can build the multifamily project. We understand there is a lot of work to do on the back end of what this is ultimately going to look like. This building was truly put here as a conceptual thought of, if we could even put anything anywhere else on the property, where could it go? This is the only location. The primary development and what we are concerned about, is this 3-acreage area. We will have to work our way through these various issues if we get to Site Plan like I mentioned. The second building is highly unlikely, it is most likely to be just the one project.

There is no use that anyone could rezone any of the parcels in the Conservation area that would be consistent with the FLUM. More importantly, I want to point out that in the FLUM, there are three residential categories that are available. Residential General, Residential Single Family, and Residential Suburban Single Family. All of this north and east of the property, is Residential Suburban Single Family. It is designated for Future Land Use as being very much Single Family. These are areas identified where single family detached residential dwellings with density not above 5 units per acre. That is the permitted use within that FLUM category. Our property in the area which we plan to develop is not residential single family, it is not the other type of Residential Single Family which allows higher density. It is actually Residential General. Residential General is defined as areas with a wide range of residential uses including a multifamily dwelling, attached dwellings, small lot single family dwellings with densities greater than 10 units per acre. The only residential Future Land Use option that allows multi family is Residential General which is what this is. I just want to be clear, not only is this zoning allowing multifamily here, but it is also distinct from the immediately surrounding area. the staff report as discussed says at the end, "often sites present too many issues to allow them to be built out to the maximin allowed by zoning due to mitigating factors like cost of development, access, environmental impact, or feasibility". Staff finds that some of these factors are present in the case. The staff report also references elevations, access to the property, and generally the cost of development as being the primary concerns. Additionally, I did speak to one neighbor who raised an issue about the concern of cutting down trees and the impact that it might have on the wildlife in the area. Access, as I mentioned before, access is not an issue to this site. We have great access that is essential private to use directly out to Derenne. Because we have added this Memorial property to it and engaged Reubon Clark into our development in a direct manner. The only access to this property other than the manner in which we are proposing to develop it based on our contracts, is through 63rd street. As far as elevations are concerned, we do understand that height is a concern maybe for people on the street. It is notable that the property is lower as you go off the end of 63rd street onto our property. The zoning district that exists for those adjacent properties is 40ft in height. What is allowed in the district that we are asking for, is 50ft. Our elevation change will make up for the other 10ft. The allowed height, as zoned, is not very different. Environmental Impact, we are only going to develop approximately three acres of the twenty-one. The vast majority of the trees will remain. The wildlife habitat for the animals that live there will remain. When you drive by on Truman Parkway, you will still see a bunch of trees. With regard to stormwater, which is an environmental impact as well, it was mentioned that the property was split between X and A. Properties are developed in AE zones all the time. There are specific standards we have to address with regards to stormwater. We will still have to allow 63rd street to drain through our property and get to where it is going. The Army Corp will oversee what we do with regards to the flood plain mitigation or anything else that is necessary to be done. Ultimately, we have access, we have access to public utilities, we believe the project is consistent with the FLUM. We are asking as Mr. Coleman mentioned, for the City and for this Commission to open the door to see if this property can be developed. We have a need for housing in this city. We do have significant buffering in almost every direction, we have our own private access to the property, there won't be cars being put into any neighborhood or smaller streets, this is a great location for this project.

I have not received any direct calls from anyone regarding this project. Staff has done a great job in sending out notices. I did try to call who is listed as the contact for the neighborhood association in the

area, I was unable to get a response for a while. I finally reached the person, they said they were not involved with the association anymore. They gave me the name of another person whom they thought might be involved. I reached out to them and talked to them on a couple of occasions. They were not directly on the board but would get me in touch with someone who could set it up. I said these are my times, please let me know of some meetings. No one ever got back to me. Brigette Lidy reached out to me because a specific person had raised a question about the wildlife and the environmental impacts of the site, the day she gave me the information, I called the individual and had a conversation with her. I believe they live nearby. I made as much effort as I am able to make to reach out to the neighbors in addition to posting the signs and advertising in the paper. I believe we did meet all of the requirements of the ordinance. We are asking for approval of the rezoning of the property.

Mr. Travis Coles, Board member, asked, did you speak to any of the three property owners or residents that are immediately adjacent to where you are planning to put this building?

Mr. McCorkle said my understanding is that Victoria, who I talked to last week, is one of the houses that is immediately adjacent to the property. I did not directly look up a phone number and call the individual residents next door, no.

Mr. Coles said I can tell you the one that is most effected is not Victoria or whoever you are referencing. The second most effected would be my fiancé, Trey Norris, he was never contacted. The property owner Mark Fountain was never contacted. The three residents who will be most affected were not contacted.

Mr. McCorkle said I contacted the one person whose information I was given. I did not contact any of the others, no. I assumed they received letters which would also mean they had access to the application and known we made it. Often times when we do these, people reach out to me as neighbors reach out to me all the time because my name is on the application. My contact information is on the application. The contact information of the owner is on the application. To my knowledge, no one reached out to me or our client.

Ms. Jarrett asked who is going to maintain the road? The access at Derenne, has anyone looked at how much traffic that will affect in that intersection and the school there?

Mr. McCorkle said we will have an agreement; we haven't reached that agreement yet because we haven't gotten to a closing yet. The road is handled by the city. We will have an agreement with Memorial about the maintenance of the road. It will be the responsibility of us, and Memorial I would assume. We do not have a traffic study. The school entrance is further down. I do not anticipate it will cause a traffic issue for the school. Based on the level of service on Derenne, I do not believe the addition of a single apartment would affect negatively, the service on Derenne.

Ms. Jarrett asked, do you anticipate looking for a variance or do you anticipate working within that 50ft constraint?

Mr. McCorkle said I do not know whether or not we would need a variance or not. It will depend on, once we get further in the process, how many units we can get on this site. A big portion of this site is economic viability. We will have to have enough units to make it worth the squeeze. I cannot answer that affirmatively.

Ms. Myra Harrison, member of the public, said I have lived on 60th street for 30yrs. There was a sign around the corner from Cathy, who cried her eyes out, who has lived in that neighborhood most of her life. The sign read, 62nd street, it never read 1800 63rd street. Also, the person who supposedly owns the property at the end, he keeps talking about the Reuben road by Derenne, they are starting behind my house, behind 60th street, they have been there continuously, they have brought people to break City Ordinance about noise on the weekend. They have chopped down and cleared trees that are viable. There have been several wild animals that have come to my property since the clearing. They intend to build, both buildings, one and two and to go as high up as they want to. He wants to build an apartment complex that has residents who can afford to live back there. Those pictures shown mean nothing. Look at the area, I have been there, he says Reuben is the only access to where they want to go, no, the road coming from Skidaway which goes straight along parallel to their said property. You will have immense traffic all the way around. They are preparing the property behind me for them to buy also. Whenever you add to try to build something up, that water is going to go somewhere. This is already a flood zone. I have

watched them, I have listened to them, I have called code compliance on them, everything. The third party involved asked me if I wanted to sell my home. I'm sure he didn't have another home for me to live in. Before you consider this vote, consider the elderly people in the neighborhood who never had to worry about anything. Just because something has never been done, doesn't mean it should be done. This should not be done for several reasons.

Ms. Victoria Blakemore, member of the public, said I live directly across the street from this property. I live at 1802 East 62nd street. I don't really know how to follow the last speech that was done. I think it was perfect in explaining what all of the neighbors are thinking. The big questions for me are the wildlife across the street. We bought this house because we fell in love with the open space. We see deer, fox, bald eagles, and turtles on a daily basis here. It is what makes this property so special. Where are they going to go? They don't have another place to go, even if you keep some of the wetlands, they are not going to just go live over there, they are going die. The drainage is a huge issue. 62nd street on our end towards Coasta Rica is a river every time it rains. All of the water goes straight into that open space. Right now, it is doing a good job of keeping our houses from flooding but if it gets filled in, that will not be the case. There was no environmental impact report done that I saw. I would like to see that done before the property is rezoned, if it is rezoned. I never received a letter, I did get a phone call from the attorney, but never got a letter in the mail and neither did two of the neighbors next to us.

Ms. Jarrett asked, have you been contacted to set up a public meeting? Would you be willing to work with the developer to set up a meeting?

Ms. Harrison said, for me to say I would be willing to set up a public meeting would lend credence to his effort and take credence from mine. The meeting would be of no use, of no cause.

Ms. Jarrett asked, are you aware of a petition that the neighborhood may have circulated regarding the property?

Ms. Harrison said, I made the petition.

Ms. Jarrett asked, did you present the petition to the MPC? Has Mr. Lotson seen your petition?

Ms. Harrison said I did send it to an email address to the MPC. It is signed by far more than 5 residents, between 50-100 people have signed it.

Mr. McCorkle said the comments regarding the client being a bad actor and code compliance being called on us. I do not believe that is our project. The only reason I am aware of the discussion of it is because I had a conversation with Bridgett about it last week. We came to the conclusion on the call that it is not on our property. My client is not clearing property out there or doing anything as of right now. I was asked this question by Bridgett because some neighbors had raised the issue about somebody doing some work on an adjacent property. I don't know exactly where it is located. It is not our project. All of the comments about code compliance and the fact that we have already begun what we are doing, or about our clients being a bad actor, I do not believe any of that is accurate. It is on a different piece of property. Not the property we are here about today. Noone from our project has asked anyone to sell their home. Noone is trying to displace anyone from their home or be asked to acquire a larger tract of property so we can expand the development into the neighborhood in order to force elderly or anyone else out. It sounds like someone else may have something going on behind us but that doesn't have anything to do with what we are doing. As far as cutting trees down, the impact here is about 3 out of 21 acres. 18 acres of trees will remain in place. The forest and wetland buffers that exist to the north, east, and south of us will remain in place. It is certainly possible that when we have to clear the 3 acres that we are going to develop, there will be some wildlife displacement as there is with anytime a piece of property is developed or any trees are cleared. That is a temporary issue. We are not clear cutting the site. I don't think there needs to be much concern about the rest of the site being cleared, it is in fact in the wetlands. There is no intention to go into the wetlands and clear trees. I am happy to meet with Ms. Harrison. I did speak with Ms. Blakemore, I called Mr. Lannon and had multiple conversations. I had given him dates to meet in person, no one responded to a meeting request. I am happy to meet with anyone who wants to meet and discuss the project.

Mr. Melder said the comments from the neighbors are insightful. My original concern stands. This is a large piece of property in the middle of our city. It intersects two of our largest corridors and has been

undevelopable because of site challenges with single-family housing. To foreclose on the idea that this property could ever be developed in a viable way, concerns me. I also think from a matter of zoning, we don't need to be fearful of multifamily housing, especially this Board doesn't need to be fearful of multifamily housing because we need that inventory in our stock. Not only in the City of Savannah but regionally. I want to state my concern with staff recommendation and my concern with foreclosing this property ever being viable for residential development which is in line with the FLUM. At what point are we going to open the door for some type of developer to come back with a viable plan. This isn't a Site Plan. This isn't an Architectural rendering, it is simply the question of whether we believe multi family could be appropriate on this site. That is where my concern is with the recommendation to deny.

Ms. Jarrett said my concern is the fact that we seem to have not gotten a good idea of what the residents are thinking. To me those are the primary concerns. That has always been my primary concern when looking at projects is what is good for the neighborhood.

Mr. Coles said I would add that our charge as a Board is not to make developments viable for people who are looking to purchase land that is not appropriate for a broader zoning. There is a reason why this is zoned the way it is now and the way that it fits into this neighborhood is appropriate for the current zoning, not for a multifamily. All the project site restrictions aside, and the amount of money that would have to be spent to develop it, sometimes land just should not be developed. I am not saying that it can't be developed. Our charge is to determine whether or not, rezoning this property is appropriate for the area. From what you have heard from a couple of residents, including myself, the answer is no. I can tell you there are far more residents that have been following this who are not able to be here today. One of them owns five properties in that area. He is in Atlanta right now. The other is a widower who lives across the street from me and has fought this every time it has come up. Multifamily is not appropriate for this area. I agree, the letters that are sent out from the MPC are not designed for laymen. People do not understand what they mean when they get them. For people to fully understand what kind of impacts this could have, people should know this could include a 6-story building. They do not know that it is not what the letter says. If they knew that, I could tell you everyone in that neighborhood would be here right now.

Motion

Continue item in order to get feedback from the neighborhood about the petitioner's proposal and staff to work with the developer and the neighborhood to help set up a meeting then relay that feedback to the Board at the February 7th Regular Planning Commission meeting.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Karen Jarrett

Second: Travis Coles

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

Michael Kaigler

- Aye

X. Presentations

XI. Other Business

XII. Executive Session

11. Executive Session

Mr. Wayne Noha motioned to move into Executive Session to discuss litigation; seconded by **Mr. Travis Coles**.

Mr. Travis Coles motioned to return from Executive Session; seconded by **Ms. Karen Jarrett**. Motion passed with non-opposed.

Mr. Dwayne Stephens, Chairman, said there were no votes taken in the Executive Session. The matters discussed during the Executive Session were personnel matters and pending litigation. We would like to take action on the items discussed in the Executive Session. The action being, vote to pay the retainer for our legal counsel for our pending litigation.

Mr. Travis Coles made motion to pay the retainer for the pending litigation. Mr. Tom Woiwode seconded the motion. The motion carried with non-opposed.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

XIII. Adjournment

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.