

THOMERSON JONES & EDWARDS P.C.

March 11, 2024

Ed Morrow
Director of Current Planning/Development Services
Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission
110 East State Street
Savannah, GA 31401

Re: March 19, 2024 Hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA

Dear Mr. Morrow:

Please be advised that my firm represents two clients in the above matter: Congregation Mickve Israel and the Trustees of the Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery.

The proposed text amendments address several parcels, including those owned by my clients, as well as parcels adjacent to the ones they own. Thus, in the upcoming hearing on March 19, 2024 at the Planning Commission, my clients are parties in interest and also aggrieved parties under Georgia law. Their status differs from that of general members of the public, who are typically only allotted two-to-three minutes to speak.

Therefore, in the upcoming hearing, we request that we be allowed to present our views for the equal amount of time as is allowed to the applicant's side, as represented by counsels for the seller and the developers.

Please respond to our request at your earliest convenience.

Respectfully,

Andrew Berrien Jones

Andrew Berrien Jones, Esq.

GEORGIA, CHATHAM COUNTY

I certify that the foregoing is a true and exact copy of the original which appears on record in this office.

In witness whereof, I have this day 2nd of February, 2024 affixed the city seal and my signature

Mark Massey
Mark Massey, Clerk of Council, City of Savannah

Total Number of Pages: 3

AN ORDINANCE
To Be Entitled

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND DIVISION II, PART 8, PLANNING AND REGULATION OF DEVELOPEMNT, CHAPTER 2. SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS, ARTICLE G – DESIGN STANDARDS, AND CHAPTER 3. ZONING, ARTICLE 3.0 - APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCEDURES AND ARTCILE 7.0 – OVERLAY DISTRICTS; TO REPEAL ALL OTHER ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HEREWITH AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah, Georgia, in regular meeting of Council assembled and pursuant to lawful authority thereof:

SECTION 1: That Division II, Part 8, Planning and Regulation of Development, Chapter 2. Subdivision Regulations, Article G – Design Standards, and Chapter 3. Zoning, Articles 3.0 – Application and Review Procedures and Article 7.0 – Overlay Districts of the Code of the City of Savannah, Georgia hereinafter be referenced as “Code”, be amended to read as follows:

*Note: Text and/or figures to be enacted shown in red and underlined.
Text and/or figures to be stricken shown in strikethrough.*

Article G – Design Standards.

Sec. 8-2030. - Preservation of noteworthy features.

In all subdivisions, to the maximum degree reasonably practicable, as determined by the MPC, efforts shall be made to preserve historic sites, scenic points and views, large trees and other desirable natural growths, watercourses and other water areas, and other features worthy of preservation, either as portions of public sites and open spaces, or in such other form as to provide amenity to the neighborhood.

Large trees or other desirable natural growths located in public or private street rights-of-way or public or private easements shall not be removed unless such removal is necessary for the installation of utilities or drainage structures or for other purposes in the public interest.

The subdivision or recombination of property within the Savannah Downtown Historic Overlay District shall require a Certificate of Appropriateness as provided in Sec. 3.19 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Article 3.0 – Application and Review Procedures

3.19.2 Applicability

- a. This Section shall apply only to the Savannah Downtown Historic Overlay District, as established in Sec. 7.8.
- b. Unless exempted by this Section, a Certificate of Appropriateness shall be required for the following activities:
 - i. New construction;

- ii. A material change to the exterior appearance of any building or structure, including any alteration or addition;
- iii. A material change to any contributing resource which may have an adverse impact on its structural or historic integrity;
- iv. A material change to, or new construction of walls, fences, or paving;
- v. Demolition of any building or structure;
- vi. Relocation of any building or structure into, within, or out of the Savannah Downtown Historic District;
- vii. Erection, placement, or alteration of any illuminated sign, any sign painted directly on a building, or of any sign that exceeds three (3) square feet in size;
- viii. Erection, placement, or alteration of any awning; ~~and~~
- ix. A change of exterior color; and
- x. Subdivision or recombination of parcel lot or tract.

Article 7.0 – Overlay Districts

7.8.7 Criteria for a Certificate of Appropriateness

The Historic Board of Review or the Planning Director shall review and take final action on a proposed Certificate of Appropriateness by applying the applicable standards and criteria below. Depending on the specific nature of the proposed material change, one or more of the standards and criteria may apply. The application for a Certificate of Appropriateness will indicate which standards and criteria apply based on the work proposed.

- a. Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation (Sec. 7.8.8)
- b. Visual Compatibility Criteria (Sec. 7.8.9);
- c. Savannah Downtown Historic District Design Standards (Sec. 7.8.10);
- d. Relocation Standards (Sec. 3.19.9);
- e. Demolition Standards (Sec. 3.19.9); ~~and~~
- f. Sign Standards (Sec. 9.9); and
- g. Subdivision and Recombination Standards (7.8.12).

7.18.12 Subdivision and Recombination Standards Signs

- a. The subdivision or recombination of lots shall be consistent with the prevailing historic context and lot patterns within the visually related context, including, but not limited to, lot size, lot shape, and lot configurations.
- b. Contributing resources on the same parcel shall not be subdivided or recombined unless the proposed results in the same parcel configuration that existed when one of the contributing resources was constructed.

7.8.13 Signs

Signage within the Savannah Downtown Historic District shall comply with Sec. 9.9, Signs. Special sign districts have been established for Factors Walk, Broughton Street and City Market Character Areas (Sec. 9.9.17).

7.8.13 7.8.14 Maintenance of Contributing Resources

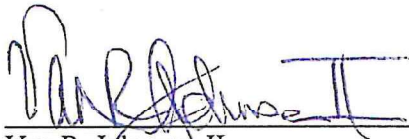
Resources shall be maintained in accordance with any property maintenance ordinances, nuisance abatement ordinances, this Ordinance (including Sec. 3.20, Proactive Preservation), and all other applicable ordinances and policies.

SECTION 2: That the requirements of Section 3.2 of the Zoning Ordinance effective the 1st of September 2019, and the law in such cases made and provided has been satisfied. An opportunity for a public hearing was afforded anyone having an interest or property right which may have been affected by this zoning amendment, said notice being published in the Savannah Morning News, on the 20th of November 2023, a copy of said notice being attached hereto and made a part hereof.

SECTION 3: All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.


EFFECTIVE DATE: This ordinance shall be effective as of the date hereof.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED: 19th day of December 2023.



Van R. Johnson, II
Mayor

ATTEST:



Mark Massey
Clerk of Council



LOCALiQ

The Augusta Chronicle
Athens Banner-Herald
Savannah Morning News

PO Box 631697 Cincinnati, OH 45263-1697

PROOF OF PUBLICATION

City Of Savannah Accounts
ATTN: BIANCA BISSETTE
City Of Savannah Accounts
Po Box 1027

Savannah GA 31402-1027

STATE OF GEORGIA, COUNTY OF CHATHAM

The Savannah Morning News, a daily newspaper published and of general circulation in Chatham County; and personal knowledge of the facts herein state and that the notice hereto annexed was Published in said newspapers in the issues dated or by publication on the newspaper's website, if authorized, on:

11/20/2023

and that the fees charged are legal.
Sworn to and subscribed before on 11/20/2023

Keegan Moran

Legal Clerk

Muhun

Notary, State of WI, County of Brown

8.25.26

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MARIAH VERHAGEN
Notary Public
State of Wisconsin

***PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given that The Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah, Georgia, in regular meeting of Council, will convene a public/zoning hearing regarding text amendments to the Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Map (rezoning or zoning), and Future Land Use Map or Special Use Permits of property described below on Thursday, December 7, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, 2 East Bay St, second floor of City Hall, Savannah, GA.

First Petition of Bridget Lidy on behalf of Mayor and Aldermen for the City of Savannah for Historic Savannah Foundation (owner) to change the Future Land Use Map category of the 0.11-acre property located at 505 West 36th Street (20066 48011) from Traditional Neighborhood to Traditional Commercial. File No. 23-005400-ZA.

Second Petition of Bridget Lidy on behalf of Mayor and Aldermen for the City of Savannah for Historic Savannah Foundation (owner) to change the zoning for the 0.11-acre property located at 505 West 36th Street (20066 48011) from Traditional Residential-1 (TR-1) to Traditional Commercial-1 (TC-1). File No. 23-005399-ZA.

First Petition of Fiddler Investments, LLC on behalf of Andrew Johnson and Richard Rodenberg to change the Future Land Use Map category of for the 0.241-acre property located at 2025 Texas Avenue (20060 20010) from Residential-Suburban Single-family to Residential-Single family. File No. 23-005305-ZA.

Second Petition of Fiddler Investments, LLC on behalf of Andrew Johnson and Richard Rodenberg to rezone the 0.241-acre property located at 2025 Texas Avenue (20060 20010) from Residential Single Family-6 (RSF-6) to Residential Single Family-5 (RSF-5). File No. 23-005303-ZA.

Petition of Bridget Lidy on behalf of Mayor and Aldermen for the City of Savannah to amend Article G Design Standards of the Subdivision Regulations and Article 3.0 Application and Review Procedures and Article 7.0 Overlay Districts of the Zoning Ordinance to require a Certificate of Appropriateness for subdivisions within the Savannah Downtown Historic Overlay District.

Public Comment Allowed: Anyone whose interest of property rights may be affected by the proposed changes may appear at that time, may be heard, and may submit evidence, including written comments.

Waiving Confirmation: The petitioner may withdraw or request a continuation of the petition after this notice has been mailed. It is suggested that you confirm whether the petition will be on the agenda before departing for the scheduled City Council meeting. The scheduled meeting date and time are provided in the first paragraph of this notice.

If You Cannot Attend the City Council Meeting: Anyone who cannot attend the meeting and whose interest of property rights may be affected by the proposed changes may submit evidence including written comments to planning@savannahga.gov or by calling 912-651-3108. Please reference the file number located on this notice. Written comments become public record and are shared with the Mayor and Aldermen prior to the Council meeting.

Materials Available for Public Information: Information about these items and related materials may be reviewed on the City's website at <http://www.savannahga.gov/civicplus.com/257/Agendas-Minutes> prior to the meeting. If you have any questions, please contact 912-525-3097 or planning@savannahga.gov.

11/20/2023

CODE OF ORDINANCES SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

DIVISION II

PART 8- PLANNING AND REGULATION OF DEVELOPMENT^[1]

GEORGIA, CHATHAM COUNTY

I certify that the foregoing is a true and exact copy of the original which appears on record in this office.

In witness whereof, I have this day 13th of March, 2024 affixed the city seal and my signature.


Mark Massey, Clerk of Council, City of Savannah

Total Number of Pages: 4

CHAPTER 3. - ZONING (EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2019)

ARTICLE 3.0 APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

3.7 Zoning Text Amendment

3.7.1 Applicability

The provisions of this Section shall apply to all amendments to the text of this Ordinance.

3.7.2 Initiation of Text Amendment

An application for a text amendment may be initiated by any of the following:

- a. The Mayor and Aldermen;
- b. The Planning Commission;
- c. The Planning Director;
- d. City Manager or his or her designee;
- e. Any person owning property within Savannah or agent for such person.

3.7.3 Application Procedures

- a. Prior to the submittal of an application for a text amendment, the applicant shall participate in a pre-application conference with the Planning Director.
- b. Applications shall include the following information:
 - i. Section of code to amend;
 - ii. New text to be added, and if applicable, the existing text to be deleted; and
 - iii. Reasons for the text amendment.
- c. Applications shall be signed and shall state the name and address of the applicant that is located in the city of Savannah. A text amendment would not apply to a specific property and thus ownership of specific property is not applicable.

Text Amendment Procedure



3.7.4 Required Public Notice

Published notice shall be required before the first public hearing on any proposed text amendment in accordance with the procedures in Sec. 3.2, Public Notice.

3.7.5 Review by the Planning Commission

a. Consideration by Planning Commission

All text amendment applications shall be considered by the Planning Commission at a public hearing, prior to a public hearing by the Mayor and Aldermen.

b. Planning Commission Recommendation

After consideration of the review criteria in Sec. 3.7.7, the Planning Commission shall provide a recommendation which shall indicate that the text amendment should be:

- i. Approved as submitted by the applicant;
- ii. Approved as recommended by the Planning Director;
- iii. Approved with modifications;
- iv. Continue to the next meeting or a date certain; or
- v. Denied.

3.7.6 Action by the Mayor and Aldermen

Within seven (7) days of the recommendation of the review authority, the Planning Director shall forward the recommendation to the Mayor and Aldermen for final action.

a. Public Hearing

The Mayor and Aldermen shall hold a minimum of one (1) public hearing to consider the proposed text amendment after receiving a recommendation from the responsible review authority. Within seven (7) days of receiving the recommendation, the Mayor and Aldermen shall notify the applicant of the scheduled date for the public hearing. Notwithstanding any other provision in this ordinance to the contrary, any text amendment initiated by the Mayor and Aldermen shall not be submitted to or considered by the Planning Commission unless specifically requested by the Mayor and Aldermen.

b. Action by the Mayor and Aldermen

After consideration of the review standards set forth in Sec. 3.7.7, the Mayor and Aldermen shall:

- i. Approve and adopt the proposed text amendment as submitted by the applicant;
- ii. Approve and adopt the proposed text amendment as recommended by the applicable review authority;
- iii. Approve and adopt the proposed text amendment with modifications;
- iv. Continue to the next meeting or to a date certain;
- iv. Return the proposed text amendment to the review authority for further study and recommendation; or
- v. Deny the proposed text amendment.

3.7.7 Review Criteria for Text Amendment Applications

When reviewing an application for a text amendment, all of the criteria listed below shall be considered.

a. Consistency

The extent to which the proposed text amendment is consistent with the remainder of the Zoning Ordinance, including any purpose and intent statements.

b. New or Changing Circumstances

The extent to which the proposed text amendment represents a new idea not considered in the existing Zoning Ordinance, or represents a revision necessitated by changing circumstances over time.

c. Error or Inappropriate Standard

Whether or not the proposed text amendment corrects an error in the Zoning Ordinance, or otherwise improves upon existing requirements or standards.

d. Compliance with Higher Law

Whether or not the proposed text amendment revises the Zoning Ordinance to comply with state or federal statutes.

3.7.8. Limitations on Zoning Text Amendment Applications

If the Mayor and Aldermen deny an application for a zoning text amendment, the applicant shall not resubmit a zoning text amendment application for the same zoning text amendment for a period of 12 months from the date of the written decision by the Mayor and Aldermen.

(Ord. of 10-10-2019(37), § 1)

Effective on: 10/10/2019



**THE
LAMAR
INSTITUTE, INC.**

thelamarinstitute.org

June 9, 2024

Mayor Van Johnson and Others
P.O. Box 1027
Savannah, Georgia 31402

RE: LAMAR Institute's review and comments on a May 2024 GPR survey by GPRS at Cohen Street, Savannah

Mr. Mayor and Others To Whom It May Concern:

This letter contains a negative review and comments regarding a May 2024 Ground Penetrating Radar survey project performed by GPRS for HOS Hospitality at its proposed Hotel development site located at 601 Cohen Street, Savannah, Georgia 31401, as reported by Stubbs (2024). Stubbs (2024:1) concluded, "Based on the GPR scan data taken in both low frequency and high frequency modes, there were no indications of any unmarked graves within the designated scan area."

The GPRS report by Stubbs is sadly lacking and I consider it to be unacceptable as a formal GPR survey report investigating the potential for unmarked human burials within the Cohen Street property, or anywhere in Georgia. The only actual radar data presented in Stubb's report are two tiny GPR Radargram screenshots, which are black and white side views of individual GPR transects collected somewhere on the property. Both of these radargrams extend only a distance of 50 feet in length. Both are completely "floating in space" with no geographic reference as to their locations on the ground. The report includes no plan maps of GPR information, which is a crucial component for any modern GPR cemetery survey.

ASTM International (2024:1-19) provides recognized standards for GPR subsurface investigations. These standards include a list of key items that should be included within a formal report. Stubbs' GPRS report is deficient on several critically important items in this list, particularly:

- 7.2.5. Field approach used along with a description of the equipment and the data acquisition and display parameters, such as date of acquisition, gains, filters, antenna frequency, and geometry.
- 7.2.6. Location of radar transects on a site map, directions of antenna motion along transects, and orientation of antenna polarizations.
- 7.2.10. What software program(s) and steps for processing and interpretation were used.



THE LAMAR INSTITUTE, INC.

thelamarinstitute.org

As the GPR Specialist with the LAMAR Institute, I have conducted dozens of GPR surveys on historic cemeteries in the world, mostly in the southeastern United States. Several of these GPR studies have been in the Savannah area, including surveys at Bonaventure, Colonial, and Laurel Grove North, all owned and managed by the City of Savannah. Elsewhere in Chatham County, I completed GPR survey at the Gould-Bethel Cemetery in the Little Neck community; the Richmond Missionary Baptist Church cemetery in Port Wentworth, and at an unidentified cemetery on the Boyd property in the Monteith community. Numerous unmarked probable graves were located by our surveys at each of these cemeteries. These reports are fully described in archaeological reports that are available free to the public at the Reports section of the LAMAR Institute's website (<https://thelamarinstitute.org>). I also authored a 2013 analytical summary of GPR surveys of historic cemeteries in Georgia's coastal plain, which is contained in an edited peer-reviewed volume of *Early Georgia*, which is the journal of the Society for Georgia Archaeology (Elliott 2013).

More specifically, in 2007 I conducted GPR survey of several large tracts along Cohen Street in Savannah, including the area located between the two Sheftall cemeteries (Elliott and Elliott 2009). A substantial portion of the 2007 survey overlaps with the area examined by Stubbs for GPRS. Our search target in 2007 was features and cultural deposits associated with the October 9, 1779 battle of Savannah, but I did observe (and briefly mentioned in the report) locating possible graves immediately outside of the Levi Sheftall cemetery enclosure. The Levi Sheftall cemetery is located on the opposite side of Cohen Street from the proposed development tract. Our 2007 survey coverage did not include the area within the chain link fence, immediately north of the Mordecai Sheftall cemetery enclosure.

I hope that the Savannah City Council will consider my words as they entertain the development request at 601 Cohen Street by the HOS Hospitality. I strongly suggest that a more thorough and well documented GPR survey examine this area for its full subsurface potential. This area was hallowed ground for numerous Haitian troops who fought as allies with the American and French forces against the British in 1779, and more recently (circa 1840s) it may have served as an expansion area for burial of Jewish citizens of Savannah. I have not physically examined the MikVeh Israel's archives, but I have been told by Savannah attorney Andrew Berrien Jones that these records mention proposed expansion of the cemetery beyond the circa 1840s boundary of the Mordecai Cemetery.



THE LAMAR INSTITUTE, INC.

thelamarinstitute.org

My experience with GPR surveys of early cemeteries in the South tells me that human burials are frequently interred outside of formal cemetery boundaries (areas marked by fences, walls, or stone enclosures). Since I was unable to access the area immediately adjacent to the Mordecai Sheftall cemetery in our 2007 survey, I cannot say with authority whether or not human graves are located there. I can say, however, that I am not firmly convinced by the meager survey findings reported by Stubbs (2024) that additional graves are not present in that portion of the proposed development property.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Daniel T. Elliott
President and GPR Specialist,
The LAMAR Institute, Inc.

References Cited

ASTM International 2024 *Standard Guide for Using the Surface Ground Penetrating Radar Method for Subsurface Investigation*, ASTM Designation: D6432-19:1-19.

ASTM International, West Conshohocken, Pennsylvania.

Elliott, Daniel T. 2013 GPR Survey of Cemeteries of Georgia's Coastal Plain. *Early Georgia* 41(2):1-40.

Elliott, Rita F., and Daniel T. Elliott 2009 Savannah Under Fire, 1779: Identifying Savannah's Revolutionary War Battlefield. *LAMAR Institute Publication Series, Report Number 173*. The LAMAR Institute, Savannah, Georgia.

Stubbs, Daniel 2024 Summary of Unmarked Graves Scan. Report submitted to HOS Hospitality, Savannah, Georgia. GPRS, Savannah, Georgia.

From: [Bruce Cohen](#)
To: [Edward Morrow](#)
Subject: Opposition to the proposed development project on Cohen St
Date: Wednesday, March 13, 2024 9:49:34 PM

Dear Mr. Morrow:

We are writing today to vigorously oppose the proposed development project on Cohen Street scheduled for consideration at the upcoming Savannah's Metropolitan Planning Commission meeting. We moved to Savannah permanently last year attracted by its diversity and commitment to community. We were actively involved in the Susie King Taylor Center for Jubilee effort to name Taylor Square. We are extremely proud of our city's thoughtful process to honor its heritage. The planning and consideration of Savannah's government showed its true obligation to its residents. Indeed, the city archivist documented the fact that under Taylor and Whitefield Squares, the remains of enslaved persons and strangers made those places sacred ground. Similarly, the cemeteries on Cohen St are sacred ground for the Jewish community. Five months after Oglethorpe founded Savannah, a boatload of Jews fleeing persecution arrived on these shores. They were welcomed and integrated into the colony and thrived in their new home. Indeed, this was the largest single migration of Jews to America in the colonial period. We ask that the City honors this sacred ground by creating a process like it did for the renaming of Taylor Square to assess how to commemorate this heritage. Pausing to consider how best to do this is far more important than moving forward so quickly to build another hotel. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bruce Cohen and Karen Bluestone
222 E Waldburg St, Savannah GA



OLD JEWISH BURIAL GROUND

Established by Mordecai Sheftall on August 2, 1773 from lands granted him in 1762, by King George III as a parcel of land that shall be, and forever remain, to and for the use and purpose of a Place of Burial for all persons whatever professing the Jewish Religion.

During the ill fated attempt of the French forces under Admiral Charles Henri, Comte d'Estaing, and the American forces under General Benjamin Lincoln, to recapture Savannah from the British, General Lincoln's Orders of the Day of October 8, 1779 stated that "The second place of rallying, or the first if the redoubt should not be carried, will be at the Jew's burying ground, where the reserve will be placed."

According to the account of Captain Antoine-Francoise Terance O'Connor, a military engineer serving with the French forces, on October 9, 1779, shortly after 4:00 A.M. "The reserve corps, commanded by M. le Vicomte de Noailles, advanced as far as an old Jewish cemetery, and we placed on its right and a little to the rear the four 4-pounders."

5
PH



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
LEVI SHEFFALL
DECEASED FEBRUARY 18 1872
DEPARTED THIS WORLD
MAY 15 1872
AGED 34 YEARS

COITZ OH
1872





From: [LeeAnn KOLE](#)
To: [Edward Morrow](#)
Subject: February 27, 2024 hearing 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-Za
Date: Friday, February 23, 2024 8:09:10 AM

Mr. Morrow,
I hereby oppose the text amendments for the above referenced matter.

Sincerely,
LeeAnn Kole

From: [Gary M Radke](#)
To: [Edward Morrow](#)
Subject: February 27, 2024 hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA.
Date: Friday, February 23, 2024 3:11:41 PM

I oppose the text amendments for the above referenced matters that are completely incompatible with the historic context of the two Sheftall cemeteries and Revolutionary War battles.

Gary Radke

From: [Kelly Holmes](#)
To: [Edward Morrow](#)
Subject: February 27, 2024 Hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559
Date: Thursday, February 22, 2024 8:41:57 PM

Dear Mr. Morrow,

I am writing to oppose the text amendments for the above referenced matters regarding the Mordecai Sheftall Cemetary.

Thank you for all you and the MPC do to preserve and honor Savannah's unique and precious history.

Sincerely,

Kelly

Kelly Holmes
Columbia Ward Co-Captain
Oglethorpe/Anson Interim Captain
617.642.1850

From: [Jessica Leigh Lebos](#)
To: [Edward Morrow](#)
Subject: February 27, 2024 hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA
Date: Friday, February 23, 2024 7:38:44 AM

I - and my entire family! - hereby oppose the requested amendments to these matters. No hotel destroying Savannah Jewish history!!

Cheers ~ JLL

Jessica Leigh Lebos
www.SavannahSideways.com

From: [Kerry Rosen](#)
To: [Edward Morrow](#)
Subject: February 27, 2024 hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA
Date: Friday, February 23, 2024 8:12:34 AM

Mr. Morrow,

The value of the two historical Jewish cemeteries to Savannah is significant. I hereby ask for your support on the above matters and not allow the construction of a 5 story hotel between the cemeteries!

Respectfully,
Kerry Rosen

From: [TSJWLC Atkinson](#)
To: [Edward Morrow](#)
Subject: February 27, 2024 hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA.
Date: Friday, February 23, 2024 12:23:19 AM

Mr Morrow,

I hereby oppose the text amendments for the above-referenced matter.

I find it quite frankly appalling that anyone would consider proposing, let alone requesting amendments, to be allowed to act in complete disregard for our America and her history.

This is a 1773 structure, still standing from the time of our forefathers. You can physically touch history through this structure, envision the fighting that took place right where you stand that led us to become a free and independent nation! These stone walls were decreed by King George III to "be and forever remain, to and for the use and purpose of a Burial ground...". Who dares to risk defying the order of the King?:)

Modern building practices to erect hotels anywhere near such historical markers certainly threatens destruction of these very significant structures. Once gone, there's no getting it back.

Has everyone been to see the cemeteries and adjacent land before making up their minds? Maybe each will be in awe of all that went before them, and choose to help protect and not destroy history.

Sincerely,

Susan Atkinson

From: [Bailey Davidson](#)
To: [Edward Morrow](#)
Subject: February 27, 2024 hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA
Date: Friday, February 23, 2024 6:46:21 AM

Hello Ed,

I'm sorry I will not be able to attend the meeting next Tuesday, but I hereby oppose the text amendments for the above referenced matters.

I cannot believe this is even a discussion.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Bailey Davidson

Bailey Davidson Photography, LLC
346 Lincoln Street | Savannah, GA 31401
912.713.0589 | thebaileydavidson@gmail.com
baileydavidson.com

From: [Edward Morrow](#)
To: [Sally Helm](#)
Subject: FW: Feb 27 2024 Hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559
Date: Friday, February 23, 2024 10:52:27 AM

Please add to both Cohen St agenda items.

From: Brian Goldman <briangoldman2018@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 23, 2024 9:57 AM
To: Edward Morrow <morrowe@thempc.org>
Subject: Feb 27 2024 Hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559

Dear Mr. Morrow,

I am writing to oppose the text amendments for the above referenced matters regarding the Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery. The Cemetery is an important piece of Savannah's history and especially to the Jewish individuals that reside here.

Thank you for all you and the MPC do to preserve and honor Savannah's extraordinary history.

Sincerely,

Brian Goldman
(304 E. President Street - Savannah, GA - 31401)

From: [Edward Morrow](#)
To: [Sally Helm](#)
Subject: Fw: February 27, 2024 hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA
Date: Monday, February 26, 2024 9:51:45 AM

Please add to opposition.

From: Anna Habersham Wright <factorswalk@earthlink.net>
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2024 9:44 AM
To: Edward Morrow <morrowe@thempc.org>
Cc: Andrew Jones <andrewjonesnyc@aol.com>; John Sheftall <JSheftall@hallboothsmith.com>
Subject: February 27, 2024 hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA

Dear Mr. Morrow,

Please include my objection to the above application to amend the Hotel Development Overlay District "to permit the construction of a hotel immediately adjacent to Savannah Station."

It violates all the Text Amendment Review Criteria:

A. Compatibility:

This site is immediately adjacent to the K-8 Esther F. Garrison School for the Arts and its playgrounds.

This site is immediately adjacent to residential buildings

Most importantly, this site sits squarely between two 18th century Jewish cemeteries the walls of which served as defenses for the Haitian reinforcements during the Siege of Savannah and a rallying point for the Whig forces, including the desperately wounded, when they failed to capture the British redoubt. It is a priceless archaeological site, and of enormous historical significance to Americans as a whole and specifically to the Black and Jewish communities of Savannah.

B. New or Changing Circumstances:

These in fact argue against the proposed development.

The application acknowledges the fact that the historic downtown of Savannah has been overrun by new hotels leading to the great distress of the residents.

Rather than moving a hotel "away from downtown residences" this proposal puts it directly between an apartment block and an elementary school.

What it does not mention is that hotel overbuilding has also greatly degraded the quality of visitors' experience of Savannah. This proposal would not only be detrimental to its residential neighbors, but destroy an invaluable potential addition to the visitor experience. It is the last remaining piece of landscape that looks as it did during the great Siege of Savannah, an ambience that would be completely destroyed by this proposal.

C. Error or Inappropriate Standard:

The application uses the same argument as B above by assuming the existing standard ignores an inevitable endless explosion of hotels either directly in or strangling the circumference of the National Historic Landmark District. One might note that this hotel explosion is tied to a fluctuating economy and the uncertainties of the Hutchinson Island Trade Center expansion (an infinitely more appropriate location for these hotels).

In fact the existing standard is totally correct and defends this residential and historic neighborhood against this blight.

The MPC should also consider this proposal in the context of the city's application for the extension of the National Historic Landmark District and its emphasis on a diverse history. How can the city even consider this proposal at the expense of such a valuable historical asset? The proposals in place to remove the civic center and reinstate the Oglethorpe Plan together with the removal of the I-16 flyover will allow the fascinating diverse historical sites

on the West Side of Savannah, including Yamacraw and the Sheftall cemeteries, to once more be united with the existing tourist dense area to the east and dramatically enhance the visitor experience.

Sincerely yours,
Anna Habersham Wright
126 West Taylor Street, Savannah GA

From: [Edward Morrow](#)
To: [Sally Helm](#)
Subject: Fw: February 27, 2024 hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA
Date: Monday, February 26, 2024 10:18:05 AM

From: katie Glusica <katieglusica@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 25, 2024 12:54 PM
To: Edward Morrow <morrowe@thempc.org>
Subject: February 27, 2024 hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA

Hi Mr. Morrow,

I live downtown and I am writing to oppose the zoning ordinance text amendments 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA to be discussed at the February 27, 2024 hearing. Please no more hotels for at least 5 years. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Katie Glusica

www.katieglusica.com

From: [Edward Morrow](#)
To: [Sally Helm](#)
Subject: FW: February 27, 2024 hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA.
Date: Friday, February 23, 2024 10:52:05 AM

Please add to both Cohen St agenda items.

From: kad-in-sav@comcast.net <kad-in-sav@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, February 23, 2024 10:06 AM
To: Edward Morrow <morrowe@thempc.org>
Subject: February 27, 2024 hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA.

Good Morning,

This is to inform you that we strongly oppose the text amendments for the above referenced matters.

Thank you.

Katherine A Durso and David C Riemen
536 E Gaston Street
Savannah

From: [Edward Morrow](#)
To: [Sally Helm](#)
Subject: Fw: February 27, 2024 hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA.
Date: Monday, February 26, 2024 10:17:58 AM

From: Tom Kohler <tkbiggerwe@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 25, 2024 11:12 PM
To: Edward Morrow <morrowe@thempc.org>
Subject: February 27, 2024 hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA.

Mr. Morrow - As a life long Savannahian, and a member of Congregation Mickve Israel I implore you to **deny** the proposed text amendments that would allow 5 story development next to the historic Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery cemetery. Savannah is FIRST AND FORMOST a historic city, and that is a fact. The tourism advocacy community like to call it the 'the hostess city' and that is a marketing fantasy. Let's do the right thing, the conservative thing here, and preserve the integrity of this historic and for many people sacred space.

You may reach me at **912-308-6936** if you would like. Thank you for your time.
Tom Kohler.

From: [Edward Morrow](#)
To: [Sally Helm](#)
Subject: FW: February 27, 2024 hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA
Date: Friday, February 23, 2024 10:53:21 AM

Please add to both Cohen St agenda items.

From: Joan Levy <joansonjones@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, February 23, 2024 9:21 AM
To: Edward Morrow <morrowe@thempc.org>
Cc: BH Levy <bhlevy2@gmail.com>
Subject: February 27, 2024 hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA

I hereby oppose the text amendments for the above referenced matters. It matters a great deal to me that my ancestor, Mordecai Sheftall's historic cemetery may be endangered due to probable jack-hammering and ensuing tremors causing damage to this hallowed site. It is the only original structure remaining to memorialize the Battle of Savannah, the bloodiest battle of the American Revolution!

Sincerely,
Joan Levy

From: [Edward Morrow](#)
To: [Sally Helm](#)
Subject: Fw: MPC Hearing on Feb. 27, 2024 RE:r 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA.
Date: Monday, February 26, 2024 2:26:24 PM

From: Susan Prutzman <susanprutzman@me.com>
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2024 1:37 PM
To: Edward Morrow <morrowe@thempc.org>
Cc: Andrew Berrien Jones <andrewjonesnyc@aol.com>
Subject: MPC Hearing on Feb. 27, 2024 RE:r 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA.

Dear Mr. Morrow,

Please stand in protection of a significant part of Savannah's early history by denying the developer in the above referenced application of the tax amendment to the Zoning Ordinance.

I strongly oppose this developer's application to build yet another hotel in an already overbuilt industry. Please deny the requested tax amendment that will potentially be detrimental to a rare historic land mark. We owe it to our City's history as well to Savannah's earliest Jewish citizens to honor and protect their final resting place in the Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery.

Respectfully,
Susan Currie Prutzman
Landmark District resident

From: [Edward Morrow](#)
To: [Sally Helm](#)
Subject: Fw: Preservation Alert: 18th Century Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery Under Threat
Date: Monday, February 26, 2024 10:18:15 AM

From: Caroline Powell <carocay12@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 25, 2024 8:54 AM
To: Edward Morrow <morrowe@thempc.org>
Subject: Fwd: Preservation Alert: 18th Century Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery Under Threat

Re:hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA

I hereby oppose the text amendments for the above referenced matters. Approval of this amendment to the zoning ordinance will seriously damage and diminish a significant piece of our city's and nation's history . Caroline Cay Powell

Caroline Cay Powell
409 Tattnell Street
Savannah Ga 31401
904 463-1898 cell
carocay12@gmail.com

From: [Edward Morrow](#)
To: [Sally Helm](#)
Subject: Fw: Proposed Zoning Ordinance change/Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery
Date: Monday, February 26, 2024 2:26:38 PM

From: John Page <captainjohngreen@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2024 1:40 PM
To: Edward Morrow <morrowe@thempc.org>
Subject: Proposed Zoning Ordinance change/Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery

I hereby OPPOSE the text amendments to the above referenced matter.

This cemetery is very historic....I mean, the highest ranking Jewish officer in the American Revolution?!? Come on....please do not intrude on this site any more than it is already!!!

John Page

From: [Edward Morrow](#)
To: [Sally Helm](#)
Subject: Fw: Zoning Ordinance/Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery
Date: Monday, February 26, 2024 2:26:45 PM

From: John Page <captainjohngreen@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2024 1:42 PM
To: Edward Morrow <morrowe@thempc.org>
Subject: Zoning Ordinance/Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery

I hereby OPPOSE the above referenced matter.

Margaret Mullin

Edward Morrow

From: gary@degobah.com
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2024 9:54 AM
To: Edward Morrow
Subject: February 27, 2024 hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA

Good Morning Ed,

I hereby oppose the text amendments for the above-referenced matters.

Gary Beebe | 805.272.5018

From: [Pressly](#)
To: [Edward Morrow](#)
Subject: Hearing, February 27, 2024
Date: Thursday, February 22, 2024 8:28:19 PM

February 27, 2024 hearing for 24-0005458-ZA and 24-000559-ZA

Paul and I oppose the text amendments for the above referenced matter.

Paul and Jane Pressly
227 East 45th Street
Savannah, Ga. 31405

From: [Elyse Hohnerlein](#)
To: [Edward Morrow](#)
Subject: In Opposition - Historic Jewish cemeteries may be threatened by 5-story hotel development proposal
Date: Wednesday, March 13, 2024 5:44:06 PM

Dear Mr. Morrow,

I am writing today to oppose the proposed development project of a hotel, number 12 on the agenda at the upcoming Savannah's Metropolitan Planning Committee Meeting. This topic is asking to make amendments to Savannah's zoning ordinance to permit construction of a 5-story hotel on a parcel adjacent to the Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery on Cohen Street. Two separate historic Jewish cemeteries may be threatened by this proposal. At this time the developers have not shown adequate plans or allowed sufficient review to preserve these historic cemeteries, nor to preserve the history of this important Revolutionary War site. We respectfully request that the zoning changes proposed are denied in full until a more thorough review and discussion can take place amongst all of the interested and invested parties.

History of the Proposed Development Site

The hotel would be situated immediately adjacent to the northernmost wall of the Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery and would lie within a few feet of Mordecai Sheftall's grave site. Mordecai Sheftall was the highest ranking Jew who served in the Continental Forces during the Revolutionary War; he held the title of Commissary General of Issues for South Carolina and Georgia. His wife Frances Hart Sheftall and son Sheftall Sheftall are buried next to Mordecai. Both Mordecai and his son Sheftall, then age 16, were captured by British forces during the Battle of Savannah and were held as POW's for 2 years in a British prison on Antigua. The proposed hotel site lies directly across Cohen Street from the Levi Sheftall Cemetery, which was established by Levi Sheftall (Mordecai's half brother) in 1765. There are believed to be approximately 84 Jews buried at this site. Levi served as the first Parnas (President) of Congregation Mickve Israel, which now holds title to his cemetery. These two cemeteries are among the oldest Jewish cemeteries and holy sites in the South and indeed, in all of America. They are both situated on what was the battlefield where American, British, Haitian, and French forces fought the Battle of Savannah, one of the bloodiest battles during the Revolutionary War. One of the French military maps refers to the Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery as the Jews' burying site. Both cemeteries frequently attract historians, both professional and amateur, as well as tourists.

Elyse Hohnerlein
1704 Hale St
Savannah, GA, 31404

From: [WL Sheftall](#)
To: [Edward Morrow](#)
Subject: March 19, 2024 hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA
Date: Thursday, March 14, 2024 10:11:13 PM

Dear Mr. Morrow:

I wish to register my strong opposition to the text amendments for the above referenced matters.

Ancestors of mine rest in two Jewish burial grounds that would be physically overshadowed and commercially degraded by 5-story hotel encroachment - should these text amendments be approved by the MPC.

In historic Savannah of all places, the sacred environs of our revolutionary ancestors' graves should be accorded dignified respect.

Colonel Mordecai Sheftall, chairman of Savannah's "Parochial Committee" and later Continental officer and British POW ship-bound for two years, was my great uncle five generations back. He advanced considerable sums as commissary-general to the troops of Georgia and to the Continental troops.

The grave of my uncle Mordecai is in the Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery.

Mordecai's brother Levi, a "Parochial Committee Man" who enforced the First Continental Congress's boycott of British Goods by preventing ships from unloading, was my grandfather five generations back.

The grave of my grandfather Levi lies in the cemetery he set aside in 1765 upon the death of his father Benjamin. This walled burying ground is immediately to the other side of the proposed 5-story hotel.

The graves of Georgia's Jewish Patriots - within the Battle of Savannah's historic landscape - should be treasured similarly to other Georgia Patriots who rest in Colonial Cemetery. It is the sacred spaces of patriot graves that give authenticity to Historic Savannah.

Sincerely,

William L. Sheftall, Jr. (III)
2858 South Pinetree Boulevard
Thomasville, Georgia 31792

serving currently as

President
Society of the Cincinnati in the State of Georgia
230 Barnard Street
Savannah, Georgia 31401

From: [BH Levy Jr](#)
To: [Edward Morrow](#)
Subject: MPC File No.: 24-000558-ZA-TEXT & 24-000559-ZA-TEXT
Date: Sunday, March 10, 2024 4:32:38 PM

TO: MPC Commissioners c/o Mr. Edward Morrow

For the reasons below, I oppose the two applications pending before the Metropolitan Planning Commission requesting text amendments to Savannah's zoning ordinance (hereinafter "ZO") to permit construction of a 5-story hotel on a parcel adjacent to the Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery on Cohen Street in Savannah's Downtown Historic District. Under Savannah's ZO, neither a hotel nor a 5-story building is presently allowed on Cohen Street.

>

> The applications threaten two separate historic Jewish cemeteries. The proposed hotel would be situated immediately adjacent to the northernmost wall of the Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery and would lie within a few feet of Mordecai Sheftall's grave site. Mordecai Sheftall was the highest ranking Jew who served in the Continental Forces during the Revolutionary War; he held the title of Commissary General of Issues for South Carolina and Georgia a rank equivalent to colonel. His wife Frances Hart Sheftall and their son Sheftall Sheftall are buried next to Mordecai. Both Mordecai and his son Sheftall, then age 16, were captured by British forces during the Battle of Savannah and were held as POW's for 2 years in a British prison on Antigua.

>

> Mordecai Sheftall established his cemetery in 1773 by a trust indenture naming as trustees Jews in Savannah, Charleston, Philadelphia, New York and London. Other prominent Savannah Jews are buried in this cemetery, including some of the original Jewish settlers who arrived in Savannah in 1733. Mordecai's Cemetery Trust continues to this day. I currently serve as one of its several co-trustees.

>

> The proposed hotel site lies directly across Cohen Street from the Levi Sheftall Cemetery, which was established by Levi Sheftall (Mordecai's half brother) in 1765. There are believed to be approximately 84 Jews buried at this site. Levi served as the first Parnas (President) of Savannah's Congregation Mickve Israel, which now holds title to his cemetery.

>

> These two cemeteries are among the oldest Jewish cemeteries and holy sites in America. They are both situated on what was the battlefield where American, British, Haitian, and French forces fought the Battle of Savannah, one of the bloodiest battles during the Revolutionary War. One of the French military maps refers to the Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery as the Jews' burying site. Both cemeteries frequently attract historians, both professional and amateur, as well as tourists.

>

> Among the reasons that both applications related to the proposed hotel development should be denied are:

>

> 1. Pile driving for concrete piers to support a 5-story building is likely to seriously damage the fragile masonry wall, now 200+years old, that encloses the Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery and which lies on the cemetery's property line.

>

> 2. Use of the developer's property as a hotel, with its restaurant and bar, would be incompatible with an immediately adjacent historic cemetery and a cemetery directly across the street, especially when (a) both cemeteries occupy unique places in the rich Jewish history of the American South and (b) both cemeteries constitute holy Jewish sites.

>

> 3. A 5-story building immediately adjacent to the cemetery wall would complicate access to maintain the cemetery's exterior wall and would eliminate visitors' ability to view that portion of the cemetery wall.

4. The ZO requires burial plots to be a minimum of 100 feet from a residential use. A hotel constitutes a residential use.

>

> It was for reasons such as the foregoing that use of the developer's property in question for a hotel or to construct a 5-story building was forbidden when Savannah's current zoning ordinance and hotel overlay were crafted. The

proposed use does not justify text amendments to the ZO and hotel overlay, and both applications should be denied.

>

> With my sincere appreciation for your interest in and your efforts to protect these sites that are so important to the history of Savannah, to Georgia, and indeed to the United States.

>

> Cordially yours,

>

> B.H. Levy, Jr.

> bhlevy2@gmail.com

From: [William/Deborah Goldberg](#)
To: [Edward Morrow](#)
Cc: [Bob @ Congregation Mickve Israel](#)
Subject: Preservation of the Sheftall Cemetary Sites in Savannah Ga.
Date: Wednesday, March 13, 2024 5:22:21 PM

Dear Mr. Morrow:

I am writing today to oppose the proposed development project on the agenda at the upcoming Savannah's Metropolitan Planning requesting text amendments to Savannah's zoning ordinance to permit construction of a 5-story hotel on a parcel adjacent to the Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery on Cohen Street.

Two separate historic Jewish cemeteries may be threatened by this proposal. The proposed hotel would be situated immediately adjacent to the northernmost wall of the Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery and would lie within a few feet of Mordecai Sheftall's grave site. Mordecai Sheftall was the highest ranking Jew who served in the Continental Forces during the Revolutionary War; he held the title of Commissary General of Issues for South Carolina and Georgia. His wife Frances Hart Sheftall and son Sheftall Sheftall are buried next to Mordecai. Both Mordecai and his son Sheftall, then age 16, were captured by British forces during the Battle of Savannah and were held as POW's for 2 years in a British prison on Antigua.

The proposed hotel site lies directly across Cohen Street from the Levi Sheftall Cemetery, which was established by Levi Sheftall (Mordecai's half brother) in 1765. There are believed to be approximately 84 Jews buried at this site. Levi served as the first Parnas (President) of Congregation Mickve Israel, which now holds title to his cemetery.

These two cemeteries are among the oldest Jewish cemeteries and holy sites in the South and indeed, in all of America. They are both situated on what was the battlefield where American, British, Haitian, and French forces fought the Battle of Savannah, one of the bloodiest battles during the Revolutionary War. One of the French military maps refers to the Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery as the Jews' burying site. Both cemeteries frequently attract historians, both professional and amateur, as well as tourists.

At this time the developers have not shown adequate plans or allowed sufficient review to preserve these historic cemeteries, nor to preserve the history of this important Revolutionary War site. As a direct descendant of the Sheftall family and a lifelong resident of Savannah Georgia, I respectfully request that the zoning changes proposed be denied in full or a decision be postponed until a more thorough review and discussion can take place amongst all of the interested and invested parties.

Sincerely,

William Goldberg

12 Melinda Circle

Savannah, Georgia 31406



**THE
LAMAR
INSTITUTE, INC.**

thelamarinstitute.org

April 13, 2024

Mayor Van Johnson, Savannah City Council, and Savannah City Manager,

The LAMAR Institute has conducted extensive research and archaeological investigation of the area around the Levi Sheftall and Mordecai Sheftall cemeteries, Revolutionary War areas of Savannah, and Savannah as a whole. We speak from this skilled vantage point.

Collectively, the area in and around these cemeteries is significant on an International, National, and Local level because:

- It is one of the only above-ground, visible remains of Savannah's role in the American Revolution.
- It played a critical part in defending American and French forces retreating from the 1779 Savannah battle.
- It represents the importance of black Haitian forces stationed there and who exchanged fire with the British and Loyalist troops to protect retreating Patriot forces on October 9, 1779.
- It is a tangible remain of the mid-18th century, colonial, and post-colonial presence of the Jewish community in Savannah.
- Tourists visiting this open area and the cemeteries can still imagine how Haitian allied forces fortified this spot as French and Americans retreated towards it.
- The sub-surface archaeological component of this area contains unique and non-renewable artifacts and information critical to telling the rest of the story of the American Revolution not told by archival sources.
- These archaeological components also have the power to tell the stories of the African-American community here in the late 19th century.
- The archaeological components here can also provide unique information about Savannah's late 19th-century industrial history.
- Construction in and around this area will permanently destroy these archaeological components.
- Such construction will also destroy the view-shed, eliminating the ability and desire of tourists and residents to imagine Savannah's important history here.
- Previous construction of Garrison Elementary, the Savannah Depot, and the Frogtown Lofts has already destroyed a large portion of the archaeological record and view-shed.

The LAMAR Institute strongly recommends that no construction occur in this area and encourages the City of Savannah purchase the area to preserve this important piece of history in perpetuity for current and future generations before it is destroyed forever.

Sincerely,

Dan Elliott

Daniel T. Elliott, President



SOUTHERN JEWISH *Historical Society*

Executive Committee
Southern Jewish Historical Society
PO Box 71601
Marietta, GA 30007-1601

March 18, 2024

Commissioners of the Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission
110 East State Street
Savannah, GA 31401

Re: MPC File No.: 24-000558-ZA-TEXT & 24-000559-ZA-TEXT

Dear MPC Commissioners:

The Southern Jewish Historical Society (SJHS) has as its mission to preserve Jewish history within the American South and to make that history available for future generations. The executive committee of the SJHS board has become aware of the proposal to construct a five-story hotel on a parcel of land that is situated adjacent to the Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery and across Cohen Street from the Levi Sheftall Cemetery, both of which are of unique value in preserving Jewish history in the American South.

The proposed five-story hotel would lie a short distance from Mordecai Sheftall's grave site. Mordecai Sheftall was born in Savannah in 1735 and was the highest ranking Jew who served in the Continental forces during the Revolutionary War. He held the title of Commissary General of Issues for Georgia and South Carolina—a rank equivalent to Colonel. His wife Frances Hart Sheftall and their son Sheftall are buried next to Mordecai. Both Mordecai and his son Sheftall, then age 16, were captured by British forces during the Battle of Savannah and were held as POW's for two years in a British prison on Antigua.

Mordecai Sheftall established his cemetery in 1773 by a trust indenture naming as trustees residents of Savannah, Charleston, Philadelphia, New York and London. Other prominent Savannahians are buried in this cemetery, including some of the original Jewish settlers who arrived in Savannah in July 1733, only five months after General Oglethorpe established the Colony of Georgia. Mordecai's cemetery is surrounded by a fragile masonry wall that lies on the property line of the cemetery and is now more than 200 years old.

The proposed hotel would also sit directly across Cohen Street from the Levi Sheftall Cemetery, which Levi Sheftall (Mordecai's half-brother) established in 1765. Approximately 84 of the original Jewish settlers and their families are believed to be buried at this site. Levi Sheftall served as the first President of Congregation Mickve Israel, which now owns this cemetery.

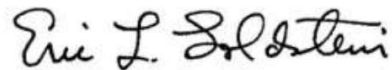
These two cemeteries are among the oldest Jewish cemeteries in the United States, and they frequently attract historians, genealogists, and tourists.

As the executive leadership of the Southern Jewish Historical Society, we affirm the historical significance of these sites. We know that the Trustees of the Mordecai Sheftall Trust and Mickve Israel have communicated their concerns about the potential risks to the graves and the cemetery walls. While it is beyond our expertise to assess the likelihood of damage to these structures, it is in keeping with the mission of the SJHS for us to ask that any proposed development (a) poses no significant risk to historical gravesites and (b) does not restrict public access to the cemeteries or interfere with necessary maintenance.

Sincerely yours,



Josh Parshall
President
Southern Jewish Historical Society



Eric L. Goldstein
Vice President
Southern Jewish Historical Society



Jay Silverberg
Immediate Past President
Southern Jewish Historical Society

Significance of The Battle of Savannah (1779)

Emily Beck, Director of Interpretation

Aaron Bradford, Resource Education Specialist, American Revolution
Coastal Heritage Society

Possibly the single bloodiest hour of the American Revolution, the battle at Savannah on the morning of October 9, 1779, saw roughly 1,000 allied French and American casualties on the field in about 45 minutes. Allied commander Charles Hector, Comte d'Estaing, was forced to call for retreat. In the weeks prior to the assault, allied forces struggled unsuccessfully to carry out what would turn out to be a useless bombardment against British fortifications surrounding Savannah, managing to kill about 40 women and children in the city but reportedly not injuring even a single British soldier. On several levels - relationally, tactically, and strategically, allied action at Savannah proved a crushing failure in the moment, but vital tactical lessons learned at Savannah would inform the Allied success at Yorktown just two years later, almost to the day. The October 9th battle would also turn out to be among the most ethnically and racially diverse battles of the war, illustrating the international and multi-ethnic nature of the American Revolution as a whole.

Although Savannah's 1779 bombardment failed, better-placed munitions and allied coordination successfully damaged British fortifications during the Siege of Yorktown in 1781. Significantly improved at Yorktown were communication and coordination among allied forces, with the French Navy successfully defeating and trapping the Royal Navy, who were unable to slip past French ships as they had done at Savannah. The October 9th assault at Savannah began much later than planned and continued haphazardly, with some contingents missing the battle entirely. At Yorktown, allied forces used an almost identical tactic of double attack as they had planned at Savannah. However, this time, they attacked on time and under cover of darkness, adding the element of surprise so sorely missing at Savannah. At the British surrender at Yorktown, General Benjamin Lincoln, who had commanded American forces at Savannah, accepted the sword of British General Cornwallis.

Among many notable participants at Savannah were the Chasseurs Volontaires de Saint Domingue, a unit of about 500 free men of color from what is now the island nation of Haiti, believed to be the largest contingent of soldiers of African descent to fight in the American Revolution. About 250 enslaved men of African descent also served at Savannah with the British during the Siege. Cherokee and Creek forces allied with the British manned what is now Hutchinson Island during the battle. Mortally wounded in this battle was the Polish cavalry mastermind, Casimir Pulaski, who, up to that point, had done much to shape the mounted forces of the Continental Army.

Soldiers from at least seven modern European nations were present at the battle.

A documented rallying point for allied forces in the fall of 1779 was a Jewish cemetery created in the early 1770s, which today contains the grave of Mordecai Sheftall,

Commissary General of Issues for South Carolina and Georgia and the highest-ranking Jewish officer in the Continental Army.

Savannah's American Revolution story is largely one of defeat, but an understanding of defeat at Savannah creates an enriched, expanded, and inclusive story of the American Revolution, American victory, and of America itself.

From: [Edward Morrow](#)
To: [Laura McMillan](#)
Cc: [Sally Helm](#)
Subject: Re: February 27, 2024 hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-AA
Date: Monday, March 11, 2024 6:45:53 AM

Thank you.

Received.

From: Laura McMillan <la.mcmillan@comcast.net>
Sent: Sunday, March 10, 2024 5:37:46 PM
To: Edward Morrow <morrowe@thempc.org>
Subject: February 27, 2024 hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-AA

Sent from my iPhone

Dear MPC,

I hereby oppose the text amendments for the above-referenced matters.

Laura McMillan

February 27, 2024 hearing for 24-000558-ZA and 24-000559-ZA

Dawn S <dawnrstahl@gmail.com>

Tue 3/26/2024 9:34 AM

To:Edward Morrow <morrowe@thempc.org>

I hereby opposes the text amendments for the above referenced matters.

The brakes need to be put on these developers that are threatening the historic relics of Savannah!

Thank you.

Dawn Stahl

Concerned Savannahian

From: [Edward Morrow](#)
To: [Yael elfassy](#)
Cc: [Sally Helm](#)
Subject: Re: Proposed hotel by Garrison school
Date: Monday, June 10, 2024 7:05:34 PM

Thank you.

We will add your comment to the record.

Best,
Edward

From: Yael elfassy <yelpasso@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 10, 2024 6:57:59 PM
To: Edward Morrow <morrowe@thempc.org>
Subject: Proposed hotel by Garrison school

Good evening,

I would like to write today and address the proposed hotel to be built by Garrison School for the arts and Savannah Station.

In general I do not know why a hotel would even want to be in the area - sandwiched between a SCAD apartment and k-8 school.

I worry for the safety of the students with so many visitors in and out of the area, car traffic impacting school drop off and pick up. Also - I worry that the hotel would have daily complaints with the noise from the school during recess.

There are MANY other places for hotels - please consider not having the hotel by my children's school.

Yael Elfassy

From: [Edward Morrow](#)
To: [Tara Kelsey](#)
Cc: [Sally Helm](#)
Subject: Re: Tuesday, June 11 Hearing
Date: Monday, June 10, 2024 6:22:57 PM

Ms. Kelsey:

We will add your comment to the record.

Best,
Edward

From: Tara Kelsey <tarakelsey@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 10, 2024 6:16:12 PM
To: Edward Morrow <morrowe@thempc.org>
Subject: Tuesday, June 11 Hearing

Mr. Morrow,

I hope it is not too late to add my opposition to the text amendments related to the proposed hotel development on Cohen Street. As a parent of a Garrison student and a supporter of historic preservation in our community, I sincerely hope the committee will deny the petitioner's requests.

I appreciate and agree with my fellow Savannahians who have written to you mentioning the need to preserve the history of the adjacent cemetery and its surrounding site, especially as an important part of the story of the Siege of Savannah. I think one aspect under mentioned is that if the wall surrounding the Mordecai Sheftall Cemetery incurs any damage, construction or damage to the wall could cause potential damage to the burials themselves. No amount of money can fix a disturbed or damaged gravesite.

As a parent of the neighboring school, we try in earnest to be good neighbors to the residents at the Blake and those attending Savannah Station. The school makes us regularly aware of our responsibility especially as it concerns Cohen Street congestion at dismissal..However, I can't image the further imposition and safety risk that would be caused by construction and, later, visitors at the hotel not only to the shared use of Cohen Street, but also to the playground nearest to Savannah Station that is in regular use by the school.

I thank you, the board, and the staff at the MPC.

Best,
Tara Kelsey
Savannah resident