



# Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission

Minutes  
January 6, 2026 at 1:30pm  
112 East State Street, Arthur Mendonsa Hearing Room

## January 6, 2026, MPC Meeting

Members Present: Tom Woiwode - In person  
Michael Kaigler - In person  
Karen Jarrett - In person  
Dwayne Stephens - In person  
Laureen Boles - In person  
Jay Melder - In person  
Stephen Plunk - In person  
Amanda Wilson- In person

Members Absent Coren Ross  
Jeff Notrica  
Traci Amick  
Joseph Welch  
Joseph Ervin  
Travis Coles

Staff Present: Melanie Wilson, Executive Director/CEO  
Edward Morrow, Director of Development Services/Current Planning  
Subhashi Karunaratne, Planner, Development Services  
Sally Helm, Administrative Assistant II, Development Services/Current Planning  
Hind Patel, IT Support  
Roger Beall, IT Support

### 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. Special Use | 2505 Abercorn St, 104,112,114,116 E. 41st St. | establish a hotel in a TC-1 zoning district | 25-005343-ZA](#)

#### Motion

Item removed from the final agenda.

#### Vote Results ( Approved )

Motion: Stephen Plunk

Second: Dwayne Stephens

Joseph Ervin	- Not Present
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Not Present
Joseph Welch	- Not Present
Coren Ross	- Not Present
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Dwayne Stephens	- Aye
Jeff Notrica	- Not Present
Laureen Boles	- Aye
Stephen Plunk	- Aye
Jay Melder	- Aye
Michael Kaigler	- Aye
Traci Amick	- Not Present
Amanda Wilson	- Aye

[2. Major Subdivision | Goldwire, Ft. Argyle Rd GA S.R. 204 | SUBD-0925-000580](#)

**Motion**

Item removed from the final agenda.

**Vote Results ( Approved )**

Motion: Stephen Plunk

Second: Dwayne Stephens

Joseph Ervin	- Not Present
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Not Present
Joseph Welch	- Not Present
Coren Ross	- Not Present
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Dwayne Stephens	- Aye
Jeff Notrica	- Not Present
Laureen Boles	- Aye
Stephen Plunk	- Aye
Jay Melder	- Aye
Michael Kaigler	- Aye
Traci Amick	- Not Present
Amanda Wilson	- 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 Items Requested to be Withdrawn**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

### [3. Approval of the November 18, 2025, Meeting Minutes.](#)

#### **Motion**

Approval of the November 18, 2025 meeting minutes.

#### **Vote Results ( Approved )**

Motion: Stephen Plunk

Second: Laureen Boles

Joseph Ervin	- Not Present
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Not Present
Joseph Welch	- Not Present
Coren Ross	- Not Present
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Dwayne Stephens	- Aye
Jeff Notrica	- Not Present
Laureen Boles	- Aye
Stephen Plunk	- Aye
Jay Melder	- Aye
Michael Kaigler	- Aye
Traci Amick	- Not Present
Amanda Wilson	- Aye

### [4. Major Subdivision | Paulsen St, 802 E. 37th St | 25-005263-SUBP](#)

#### **Motion**

Approval of the proposed major subdivision to create 7 single family home lots and waiver of additional ROW dedications subject to the following conditions:

1. Show the signatures of a Georgia Registered Land Surveyor and the owner of the property on the final plat.
2. Approval of the Chatham County Health Department and the City review departments, including the City Engineer.

#### **Vote Results ( Approved )**

Motion: Stephen Plunk

Second: Laureen Boles

Joseph Ervin	- Not Present
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Not Present

Joseph Welch	- Not Present
Coren Ross	- Not Present
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Dwayne Stephens	- Aye
Jeff Notrica	- Not Present
Laureen Boles	- Aye
Stephen Plunk	- Aye
Jay Melder	- Aye
Michael Kaigler	- Aye
Traci Amick	- Not Present
Amanda Wilson	- Aye

## VIII. Old Business

## IX. Regular Business

### [5. TEXT Amendment | Ogeechee Rd | Savannah Powder Magazine | Sec. 7.7 Historic Property Overlay District | 25-005000-ZA](#)

**Ms. Subhashi Karunaratne, Planner for Development Services**, presented the Staff report.

**Ms. Karunaratne** stated the City proposes zoning text amendments to add clarifying standards to Article 7, Section 7.7, Historic Property Overlay District, establishing a formal framework for local historic property designation. The proposal would also designate 4241 Ogeechee Road, known as the Savannah Powder Magazine, as the first Historic Property Overlay, to be identified as H-P-O-1. A corresponding zoning map amendment is requested concurrently. The Historic Preservation Commission has reviewed and approved the designation in accordance with the requirements of Section 3.17 – Local Historic Property Designation at its meeting on November 19, 2025. The Savannah Powder Magazine was constructed in 1898 as a municipally owned facility for the safe storage of dynamite and other explosive materials. Located on Ogeechee Road outside the city limits at the time, the site was intentionally chosen for its isolation to protect public safety. The Powder Magazine served as the City of Savannah’s only non-military facility of its kind and operated continuously until its closure in 1971. In recent decades, the City has taken steps to preserve the structure, including commissioning a restoration plan and securing grant funding. In February 2025, the building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its association with Savannah’s growth and its innovative design for explosive storage.

Architecturally, the Savannah Powder Magazine is a one-story Gothic Revival brick structure with a distinctive T-shaped plan and an octagonal primary chamber. It features original masonry detailing and specialized safety elements such as thick brick walls, iron vents, asphalt-coated interior surfaces, and vented light boxes designed to reduce explosion risk. The building retains a high level of historic integrity in location, design, materials, and workmanship, remaining largely unaltered despite the loss of its roof and some features. Set on approximately fifteen acres, the structure continues to convey its historic function and remains under City ownership. Sec 7.7 of Article 7 - Overlay Districts currently establishes the intent to permit zoning overlay districts for the preservation of properties identified as possessing historical significance, but it contains no associated standards. The proposed text amendment extends and clarifies this provision, adding: the relationship of the Overlay to base zoning districts, applicability, means of resource classification, clarification of COA requirements, design, and maintenance requirements. A 2020 City study, Savannah Surplus Property Land Use Preference Survey Report, recommended retaining the property in public ownership and using it for a combination of passive recreation, civic purposes, and potential housing.

The proposed text and map amendments support *Savannah GPS Goal 2*, Invest in Equitable Community Development and Resiliency, by identifying and protecting significant local historic and cultural resources outside the Downtown *National Historic Landmark District*. The text amendment would establish site-specific design standards through the Historic Property Overlay district, providing

critical protections for the Savannah Powder Magazine and similar properties of historical significance, ensuring that any proposed work is reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission for consistency with adopted standards. Concurrently, the map amendment would designate the property as H-P-O-1, enabling formal preservation review and oversight. The proposed amendments are further supported by findings from the 2020 Savannah Surplus Property Land Use Preference Survey Report, which identified the Powder Magazine as a site suitable for continued City ownership with a mix of passive recreation and civic uses. Establishing local historic designation ensures long-term stewardship of one of the few known surviving municipal powder magazines in Georgia while aligning with broader City planning and preservation goals.

MPC Staff recommends approval of the request to amend Article 7, Section 7.7, Historic Property Overlay District, to establish a formal framework for local historic property designations *and* to designate 4241 Ogeechee Road known as the Savannah Powder Magazine, as H-P-O-1.

**Ms. Jarrett, Board Member**, asked about other historic properties in the city that are not being maintained. She asked if this Text Amendment would help those as well.

**Ms. Jessica Baldwin, Preservation Officer for the City of Savannah**, said this text amendment only applies to this individual property but that this would open the door for other property owners to do the same.

**Mr. Woiwode, Board Member**, asked if this extends the current overlay to this parcel or creates an individual overlay.

**Mr. Baldwin** said this is a new overlay. This has been in the Ordinance since NewZO it has not been utilized. This property being Historic and being owned by the City of Savannah, we saw this as an opportunity to recognize this parcel individually. The opportunity for the overlay will hopefully help other property owners to see and understand how the individual landmarks outside of the Historic District that are currently established.

**Mr. Dwayne Stephens, Board Member**, asked if this is only applicable for City owned properties.

**Ms. Baldwin** said no, this is open to all. This hopefully will set an example and open other areas of the community to look into their properties.

## NO PUBLIC COMMENT

### Motion

Approval of the request to amend Article 7, Section 7.7, Historic Property Overlay District, to establish a formal framework for local historic property designations and to designate 4241 Ogeechee Road (PIN 20836 02002), known as the Savannah Powder Magazine, as an H-P-O-1 property.

### Vote Results ( Approved )

Motion: Karen Jarrett

Second: Jay Melder

Joseph Ervin	- Not Present
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Not Present
Joseph Welch	- Not Present
Coren Ross	- Not Present
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Dwayne Stephens	- Aye
Jeff Notrica	- Not Present

Laureen Boles	- Aye
Stephen Plunk	- Aye
Jay Melder	- Aye
Michael Kaigler	- Aye
Traci Amick	- Not Present
Amanda Wilson	- Aye

[6. MAP Amendment | 4241 Ogeechee Rd | Savannah Powder Magazine | designate Local Historic Property Overlay H-P-O-1 | 25-005001-ZA](#)

This item was presented with the TEXT Amendment. Please see minutes from the Text Amendment petition.

**Motion**

Approval of the request to amend the Official Zoning Map by applying the Historic Property Overlay standards of Section 7.7 to the subject property at 4241 Ogeechee Road, designating it as H-P-O-1. This recommendation is based on the finding that the Local Historic Property Designation Criteria are met, specifically criterion 3.17.4.a.i, as the property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local history in politics and government.

**Vote Results ( Approved )**

Motion: Jay Melder

Second: Dwayne Stephens

Joseph Ervin	- Not Present
Tom Woiwode	- Aye
Travis Coles	- Not Present
Joseph Welch	- Not Present
Coren Ross	- Not Present
Karen Jarrett	- Aye
Dwayne Stephens	- Aye
Jeff Notrica	- Not Present
Laureen Boles	- Aye
Stephen Plunk	- Aye
Jay Melder	- Aye
Michael Kaigler	- Aye
Traci Amick	- Not Present
Amanda Wilson	- Aye

**X. Presentations**

**XI. Approved Staff Reviews**

**XII. Other Business**

**XIII. Executive Session**

**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.***