



C H A T H A M C O U N T Y - S A V A N N A H

METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

Planning the Future - Respecting the Past

To: The Metropolitan Planning Commission

Through: Melanie Wilson, Executive Director and CEO

From: Subhashi Karunaratne, Planner MPC

Date: June 23, 2026

Subject: Special Use Request

Petitioner: Robert L. McCorkle, III, Agent for Train Track Investments, LLC

Property Owner: Train Track Investments, LLC

Address: 410 East 37th Street

Alderman: District 2 – Alderman Detric Leggett

County Commission: District 2 – Commissioner Larry Rivers

PIN: 20064 33001

Petition File No.: 26-002770-ZA

REQUEST: The Petitioner is requesting approval of a Special Use pursuant to Section 3.10 of the Savannah Zoning Ordinance to allow accessory alcohol sales by the drink in association with a restaurant.

The Special Use process requires review by both the Metropolitan Planning Commission and the Savannah City Council. If approved by City Council, the use will be subject to the permit and enforcement provisions contained in Article 3 of the Savannah Zoning Ordinance.

The property previously received approval of a Special Use Permit to allow accessory beer and wine sales in connection with the restaurant use (23-001765-ZA). The property also received a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) in 2023 for the re-establishment of the historic service station building, which was approved as an extension of the original 2021 COA (21-000661-COA).

The current request seeks approval to allow accessory sales of beer, wine, and liquor in conjunction with the operation of a restaurant. A new Special Use Permit is required because the restaurant is undergoing a change in ownership and operation. The proposed restaurant will transition from a small establishment primarily offering pre-packaged food items to a restaurant with an onsite kitchen, including barbecue smokers used for food preparation and the existing General Store continue its operation under new ownership. Concurrent with this Special Use request, a COA application is currently under review by the Historic Preservation Commission (26-002734-COA).



410 East 37th Street Site Conditions in 2023



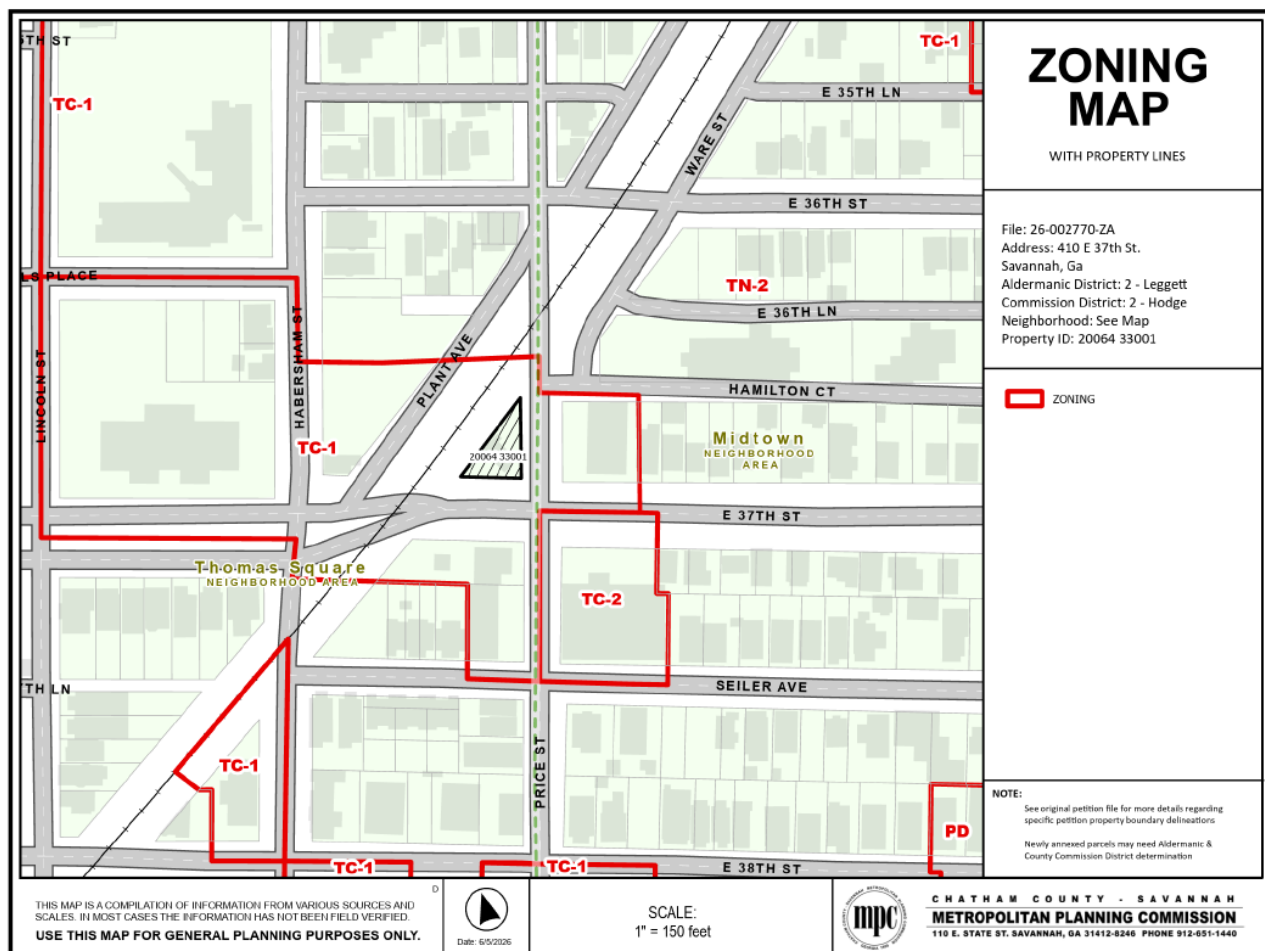
410 East 37th Street - Site Conditions in 2026 (View from E 37th Street)



410 East 37th Street - Site Conditions in 2026 (View from Price Street)

BACKGROUND: The property consist of a historic building which was constructed in 1927 as a Gulf Service Station prototype and is a contributing resource within both the Thomas Square-Streetcar National Register Historic District and the local Streetcar Historic District. Additions to the building were constructed between 1954 and 1973. A Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for rehabilitation of the service station was approved on February 24, 2021, and subsequently received a six-month extension under COA File No. 21-000661-COA.

The subject parcel is triangular in shape, bounded by East 37th Street and Price Street and adjacent to the railroad right-of-way. The site contains approximately 3,485 square feet (0.08 acres), with roughly 76 feet of frontage along East 37th Street, 101 feet along Price Street, and 123 feet adjacent to the railroad right-of-way. The property is zoned TC-1 (Traditional Commercial-1) and is situated within the Thomas Square Neighborhood at the edge of the Midtown Neighborhood.



410 East 37th Street – Zoning Map

Public Notice: Mailed notice of the Planning Commission meeting was sent to all property owners within 300-feet of the subject property, signs were posted on site and required newspaper advertisements were run.

Existing Development Pattern:

The land uses and zoning districts surrounding the subject property include:

Location	Land Use	Existing Zoning
North	Multi-family, single-family and duplex residential uses	TN-2
South	Offices and multi-family uses.	TC-1
East	Commercial and residential housing	TC-1, TN-2
West	Railroad tracks, commercial and apartment building	TC-1

General Provisions 3.10.2:

The General Provisions for Special Uses identify the purpose of the process and are as follows:

- Special uses within each zoning district are uses that would not be appropriate generally or without restriction but which, if controlled as to number, area, location, or relation to other uses may be appropriate in a particular zoning district.
- A special use permit shall be required for all special uses (identified with an “S” designation) as set forth in the permitted use table in Sec. 5.4, Principal Use Table or as part of a use condition in Article 8.0, Use Standards.
- Specific use standards may be applicable to the approved special use.
- Any use or activity on the property not specifically permitted by Article 5.0, Base Zoning Districts, or the special use permit as modified, shall be deemed unlawful and subject to Article 12.0

1. Review Criteria for Special Use Permits Section 3.10.8:

When reviewing a special use permit request, the review authority shall consider the following criteria:

- a) Whether the special use is consistent with the intent, goals, strategies, policies, guiding principles and programs of the Comprehensive Plan and other adopted plans;

Staff Comment: Yes. The proposed restaurant with accessory alcohol sales is consistent with the Traditional Commercial future land use designation and supports the intent of the Comprehensive Plan by providing a neighborhood-serving commercial use compatible with the character and scale of the surrounding area.

However, staff does not support the proposed expansion of accessory alcohol sales to include liquor. The previous approval was limited to beer and wine sales in conjunction with restaurant use. Expanding the permit to include liquor could increase the intensity of the use and create the potential for the establishment to function more as a bar than as a neighborhood-serving restaurant.

- b) Whether specific use standards for the special use, if any, as provided in Article 8.0, Use Standards, can be achieved;

Staff Comment: Yes, provided the Special Use Permit is approved. Section 8.7.24 permits accessory alcohol sales by the drink in conjunction with a restaurant within the TC-1 zoning district only through approval of a Special Use Permit. Therefore, the specific use standards can be met upon approval of the requested Special Use.

- c) Whether the special use is detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, welfare, function, and appearance of the adjacent uses or general vicinity by reason of any one or more of the following: the number, area, location, height, orientation, intensity (such as traffic, noise, odor, hours of operation), or relation to the neighborhood or other adjacent uses.

Staff Comment: The previous restaurant use with accessory beer and wine sales has not been reported to be detrimental to the surrounding neighborhood. However, the current proposal includes an onsite kitchen with two barbecue smokers and expands accessory alcohol sales to include liquor in addition to beer and wine. These changes may result in increased impacts related to odor, noise, and overall intensity of the use.

To minimize potential impacts on adjacent properties and maintain compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood, staff recommends that any approval be subject to the conditions previously approved for the site, including the proposed hours of operation from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and accessory alcohol sales shall be limited to beer and wine only.

- d) Whether the subject property is adequate in shape and size to accommodate the special use;

Staff Comment: At the time this report was prepared, a concept plan for the proposed restaurant use had not been provided. As part of the previous Special Use Permit review, MPC staff determined that the site contained sufficient area to accommodate a restaurant use with accessory alcohol sales. However, the current operator has indicated that the existing 50-seat capacity will not be expanded. While the triangular shape of the parcel presents unique site constraints, the adequacy of the site for an expanded restaurant operation cannot be determined at this time.

Per Sec. 9.3.7.d no minimum parking is required.

- e) Whether adequate public facilities are available to serve the proposed use, including, but not limited to water; sanitary sewer; stormwater drainage facilities; public safety and emergency facilities; roadway capacity; vehicular ingress and egress; or, that the applicant will provide adequately for such services and for placement in an appropriate location.

Staff Comment: Adequate public facilities are available to support the proposed use.

- f) Whether the special use will result in the destruction, loss, or damage of any feature determined by the review authority to be of natural, cultural, scenic, or historic importance.

Staff Comment: At the time this report was prepared, the Historic Preservation Commission had not yet made a determination on the pending Certificate of Appropriateness application (26-002734-COA). Therefore, staff is unable to determine whether the proposed modifications associated with the restaurant use would result in the destruction, loss, or damage of any feature of historic importance.

POLICY ANALYSIS:

Based on the history of the restaurant operating at this location without documented adverse impacts on the surrounding neighborhood, MPC Staff finds the proposed use generally compatible with the area. While the proposed restaurant will include an onsite kitchen and new ownership, staff believe these changes do not warrant a departure from the conditions established under the previous Special Use Permit, provided the operation continues to adhere to the previously approved hours of operation of 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

However, staff does not support the proposed expansion of accessory alcohol sales to include liquor. The previous approval was limited to beer and wine sales in conjunction with restaurant use. Expanding the permit to include liquor could increase the intensity of the use and create the potential for the establishment to function more as a bar than as a neighborhood-serving restaurant.

Additionally, if the seating capacity of the restaurant is increased beyond what is currently proposed, the parking requirements will need to be reevaluated based on the revised occupancy.

The special use provisions of the Savannah Zoning Ordinance are designed to allow the reviewing authorities to consider the establishment of uses in zoning districts, where the use may be appropriate but should not be allowed by right. The review criteria outlined in

Section 3.10.8 are the standards for considering a special use. In review of the standards, the subject property and proposed use meet the requirements.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the petitioner's request as presented or with conditions.
2. Deny the petitioner's request.

RECOMMENDATION:

The restaurant use has operated at this location without documented adverse impacts on the surrounding neighborhood, and staff finds that maintaining the existing limitations on alcohol sales and hours of operation will help ensure continued compatibility with the area. Staff does not support the expansion of alcohol accessory sales including liquor and recommends that alcohol sales remain limited to beer and wine only.

Accordingly, MPC Staff recommends **approval** of the Special Use Permit subject to the following conditions:

1. The Special Use Permit shall be nontransferable.
2. Accessory alcohol sales shall be limited to beer and wine only.
3. Operational hours shall be limited to 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.