



CHATHAM COUNTY-SAVANNAH
METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
"Planning the Future - Respecting the Past"

STAFF REPORT

File No. 26-004077-ZA
Date: September 15, 2026
Through Melanie Wilson, Executive Director/CEO
To: The Planning Commission
From: Ely Zarka, Senior Planner – Development Services
Subject: GDP with Variances
Applicant/Agent: Zerik Samples, Coastal Empire Habitat for Humanity
Address: 4111 and 4113 Walton St
Parcel ID: 20493 06008, 20593 06012
Site Area: 0.18 acres
Alderman District: 2 – Detric Leggett
Chatham County Commission District: 5 – Tanya Milton

REQUEST

The Petitioner requests a GDP with variance to reduce the required lot area from 5,000 square feet to 4,000 square feet, and to reduce the required lot width from 50 feet to 40 feet.

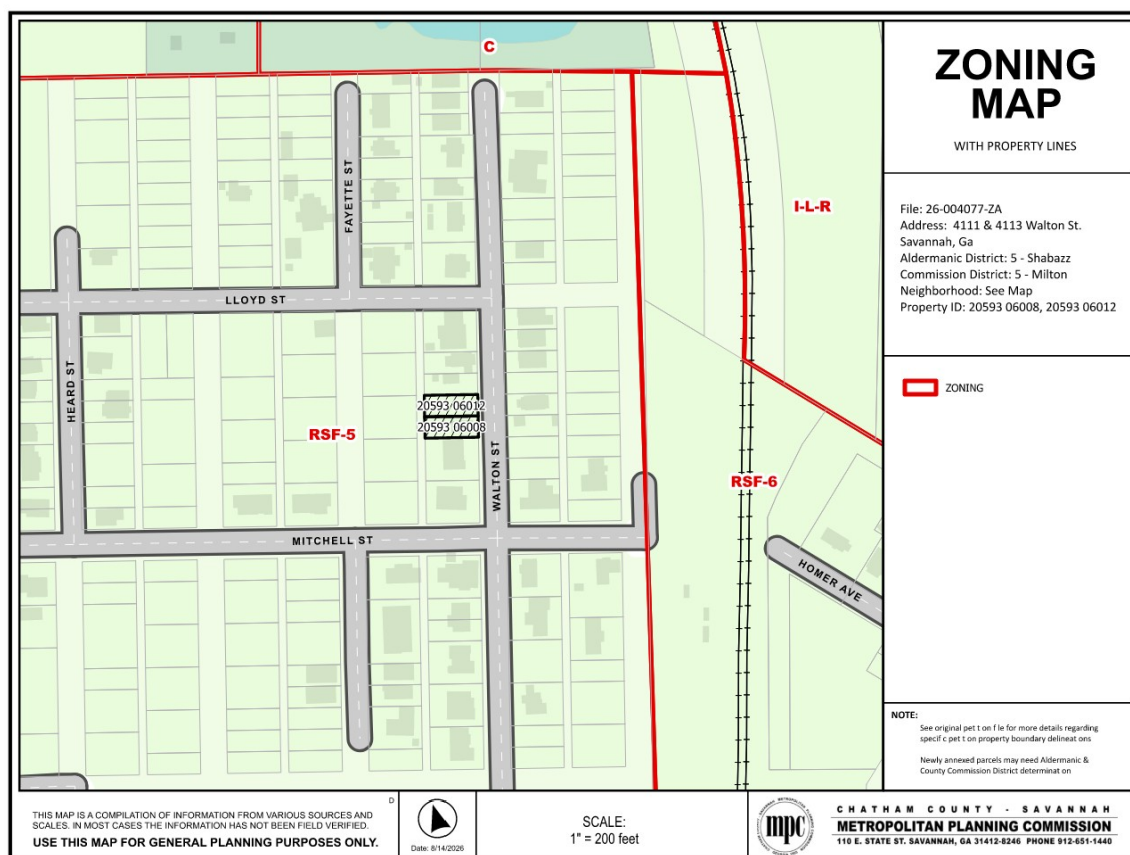
BACKGROUND

The subject parcels are historic, non-conforming lots of record. When multiple, adjacent, non-conforming lots are in common ownership the zoning ordinance requires that these lots be treated as one lot or multiple conforming lots with certain exceptions.

The RSF-5 district has two different lot sizing standards. To qualify for the reduced standard, lots must be access from the lane with the caveat that the reduced standards only apply when the majority of lots within 100 feet are less than 5,000 SF. As the lots are not being accessed from the lane, which is also unopened, and the majority of lots in the vicinity are greater the 5,000 SF and 50's width applies.

The Petitioner is requesting this variance in order to develop on both lots individually in the manner that is typical of their organization. If the variance were to not be granted, then a single residence on a conforming lot would be permitted.

LOCATION	LAND USE	EXISTING ZONING
North	Residential	RSF-5
South	Residential	RSF-5
East	Residential	RSF-5
West	Residential	RSF-5



Current Zoning Map for 4111 and 4113 Walton St

Standards at Issue:

1. 9.3.4 Off-Street Parking Requirements

5.7.5 Development Standards for Permitted Housing Types							
Standards	RSF-E	RSF-30	RSF-20	RSF-10	RSF-6	RSF-5	RSF-4
Lot Dimensions							
Street Access							
Lot area (min sq ft) [1]	43,560	30,000	20,000	10,000	6,000	5,000	4,000
Lot width (min. ft.)	120	100	80	70	60	50	40
Lane Access [2]							
Lot area (min sq ft) [1]	--	--	--	--	6,000	4,000 [3]	3,500
Lot width (min ft)	--	--	--	--	60	40 [3]	35

2. 11.5.3 Development on Non-Conforming Lots

Development on nonconforming lots is subject to the following exceptions and modifications:

a. Adjoining Lots

- i. When two or more adjoining lots with continuous frontage are in one ownership at any time after the adoption of this Ordinance and such lots, individually, are less than 5,000 square feet in area or are less than 50 feet in width, then such group of lots shall be considered as a single lot or several lots of minimum permitted width and area for the district in which located.

Zoning Ordinance Review

The following review criteria for Variances are prescribed in the Savannah Zoning Ordinance Sec. 3.21.10:

a. General Consistency

The variance shall be consistent with the intent of this Ordinance and the Comprehensive Plan and shall not be injurious to the neighborhood or otherwise detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare.

MPC Comment: The requested variance is consistent with the intent of the Zoning Ordinance. The lots are of a similar size to many neighboring properties nearby. The

undeveloped lots to the west trigger the footnote not permitting the reduced lot size standard.

b. Special Conditions

i. Special conditions and/or circumstances exist which are peculiar to the land, [buildings](#) or [structures](#) involved and which are not applicable to other lands, buildings or structures in the same zoning district.

MPC Comment: Any developer of these lots would be held to the same standard if the adjoining lots were in common ownership. This is also a circumstance which occurs in many areas of the city.

ii. The special conditions and/or circumstances do not result from the actions of the applicant.

MPC Comment: By acquiring adjoining non-conforming lots this is result of the Petitioner's action. However these lots are typical for projects by Habitat.

iii. The special conditions and/or circumstances are not purely financial in nature so as to allow the applicant to [use](#) the land, buildings or structures involved more profitably or to save money.

MPC Comment: The request does not appear to be purely financial in nature as this property is being developed by a non-profit to serve as affordable housing.

c. Literal Interpretation

Literal interpretation of the provisions of the regulations would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same zoning district under the terms of the Ordinance and would result in unnecessary and undue hardship on the applicant.

MPC Comment: The literal interpretation of the regulations would not deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same zoning district.

d. Minimum Variance

The variance, if granted, is the minimum variance necessary to make possible the reasonable use of land, buildings, or structures.

MPC Comment: The specific variance request would allow the lots to act in a manner similar to other lots in the neighborhood. The lot size requirement would be allowed by right if all of the lots within 100' were of a similar size.

e. Special Privilege Not Granted

The variance would not confer on the applicant any special privilege that is denied by this Ordinance to other lands, buildings, or structures in the same zoning district.

MPC Comment: The variance grants privilege in so much as it allows the lots to be developed individually.

MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION

MPC Staff recommends **APPROVAL** of the request to reduce the minimum required lot area from 5,000 square feet to 4,000 square feet, and to reduce the minimum required lot width from 50 feet to 40 feet.