



March 29, 2018 City Council Regular Meeting

CITY GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF CITY COUNCIL SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

PRESENT: Mayor Eddie W. DeLoach, Presiding

Aldermen Carol Bell, Julian Miller, Brian Foster, Bill Durrence, Van Johnson, II, Tony Thomas, John Hall, and Estella E. Shabazz

Rob Hernandez, City Manager

Marty Johnston, Chief Operating Officer

Brooks Stillwell, City Attorney

Assistant City Attorney William Shearouse

The regular meeting of Council was held this date at 2:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison followed by the Invocation by Mayor Pro-Tem Carol Bell.

Upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded by Alderman Miller, unanimous approval was given for the Mayor to sign an affidavit and resolution on Litigation, Personnel and Real Estate for an Executive Session held today where no votes were taken.

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF SAVANNAH AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN AFFIDAVIT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah as follows:

At the meeting held on the 9th day of April, 2018 the Council entered into a closed session for the purpose of discussing Litigation. At the close of the discussions upon this subject, the Council reentered into open session and herewith takes the following action in open session:

1. The actions of Council and the discussions of the same regarding the matter set forth for the closed session purposes are hereby ratified;
2. Each member of this body does hereby confirms that to the best of his or her knowledge, the subject matter of the closed session was devoted to matters within the specific relevant exception(s) as set forth above;
3. The presiding officer is hereby authorized and directed to execute an affidavit, with full support of the Council in order to comply with O.C.G.A. §50-14-4(b); 17
4. The affidavit shall be included and filed with the official minutes of the meeting and shall be in a form as required by the statute.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED: APRIL 9, 2018 upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded by Alderman Shabazz, and unanimously carried.

Upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded by Alderman Shabazz, and unanimously carried the agenda was amended to add item 34 for the purpose of Litigation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- [1. Motion to Approve the Summary/Final Minutes for the City Council Work Session and City Manager's Briefing of March 15, 2018
03.15.18 WS minutes.pdf](#)

Approved upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded by Alderman Shabazz, and unanimously carried.

[2. Motion to Approve the Summary/Final Minutes for the City Council Meeting of March 15, 2018](#)

[03.15.18 Minutes.pdf](#)

Approved upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded by Alderman Shabazz, and unanimously carried.

ZONING HEARING

[3. Motion to Rezone 0, 1210, and 1212 Wheaton Street from I-L/R-M-25 to R-M-40 \(Petitioner: Robert L. McCorkle, III for Live Oak Landing LLP\)](#)

[Draft Ordinance 18-000497-ZA.pdf](#)

[Planning Commission Recommendation 18-000497-ZA.pdf](#)

Thomas Trawick, Metropolitan Planning Commission: Yes sir, thank you Mayor and members of Council. My name is Thomas Trawick I'll be filling in for Marcus Lotson today. The petition before you today represents 0, 1210 and 1212 Wheaton Street, the petitioners Robert McCorkle acting as agent for Live Oak Landing. They wish to rezone 6.7 acres located north of Wheaton Street located between Live Oak and Cedar streets and they wish to rezone from the R-M-25, which is multi-family residential and I-L which is light industrial to an R-M-40 to allow greater density for multi-family uses on that site. The intent is to develop or allow the development of a 154 unit apartment complex that will be age restricted and affordable. Currently Wheaton Street has several parcels located along that corridor that are zoned I-L or the light industrial which allows for intensive uses that are not typically desirable next to established residential neighborhoods or existing civic uses such as the school located north of the site. For example, though I-L zoning district allows for certain uses such as storage light industrial, light industries such as bottling and laundry plants. It allows also heavy commercial uses such as nightclubs and package stores. The R-M district which the petitioner is proposing to establish on the site allows for mostly residential as well as some personal care uses which are more consistent to the existing businesses in the area, the civic uses and established residential neighborhoods. If approved the R-M zoning district would remove less desirable uses along the Wheaton Street corridor than was currently permitted with the I-L zoning. The Planning Commission recommends approval of the requested rezoning for the three parcels located at 0, 1210 and 1212 Wheaton Street to the R-M-40 zoning classification.

Mayor DeLoach asked for any comments and Alderman Hall asked Robert McCorkle, of McCorkle and Johnson law firm, to come forward to explain the changes in the zoning districts.

Robert McCorkle: My name is Robert McCorkle from the law firm McCorkle and Johnson representing the petitioner who is the current owner of these properties. Currently, there are three different parcels of land that have a total of two different zoning districts. The front portion a certain distance back along Wheaton Street is zoned light industrial and the back portion of the property is zoned multi-family with a 25 unit per net acre designation. And so what we're asking to do is we're down zoning the front-side which will get rid of, as staff said, will get rid of a lot of bad uses that will occur next to a school that shouldn't be there and making the front also multi-family. We're not adding any uses to the site. The only thing that's changing is we're asking for a per net acre density change from 25 to 40 and that's going to allow us to have about 10 more units on the site. But the site, most of the site as it currently sits was already zoned for the use and where it is down zoning to front so that we can have this multi-family district. I know you had raised an issue about the school board. The school board received notice from staff at the time of our MPC, did not make any comments, but if you have a concern about that continues and you would like us to directly engage them and reach out to them specifically prior to making a decision, and that's something that we can do if that's what you need us to do to. So, let me let them go to them and have a conversation with them about what to do.

Alderman Hall: I would not be one to hold your project up. So, would you sit down with them and have a conversation with them about what your intended uses are and what could be there, but what you're not going to have there. I would appreciate that and we could move this forward.

Robert McCorkle: Sure, I'll be happy to sit down with them and discuss with them directly what we're doing and why we're doing it that way.

Alderman Miller: Mr. City Attorney do we need a motion to delay this.

City Attorney Stillwell: No. If you just make a motion to continue the hearing for two weeks it would be appropriate.

Alderman Hall: And approve everything then?

City Attorney Stillwell: If you're going to not take final action on it, you should continue the hearing for two weeks.

Mayor DeLoach: I think he's going to take final action on it.

Alderman Hall: I do want to take.

City Attorney Stillwell: What is it you want to do exactly?

Alderman Hall: Let's go ahead move forward with it.

City Attorney Stillwell: Well then the appropriate thing would be, to go ahead and approve it and if there is a concern you can bring it up on first reading.

Alderman Hall: Motion to approve it.

Alderman Johnson: Mr. Mayor because this is a public hearing there might be individuals here in the audience assembled and might want to comment.

Mayor DeLoach asked for any other comments, no persons came forward.

Hearing closed upon motion of Alderman Hall, seconded by Alderman Miller, and unanimously carried.

Approved upon motion of Alderman Thomas, seconded by Alderman Johnson, and unanimously carried.

[4. Motion to Amend the Zoning Ordinance Regarding the Conservation Overlay Districts \(Petitioner: Ardsley Park-Chatham Crescent-Ardmore Neighborhood Association\)](#)

[Planning Commission Recommendation 17-007079-ZA Article Q Text.pdf](#)

[Draft Ordinance 17-007079-ZA Article Q Text.pdf](#)

Alderman Miller: Mr. Mayor, item number four is a petition by the Ardsley-Chatham Crescent-Ardmore Neighborhood Association proposing a text amendment to amend the zoning ordinance to create an overlay district for the area within the neighborhood association's boundaries to include Ardsley Park, Chatham Crescent, and Ardmore. The intention is to require that proposed demolitions of historic buildings, only historic buildings, within the area be reviewed by the Metropolitan Planning Commission prior to the issuance of a building permit. I think Ms. Harris is here to speak on this.

Ellen Harris, Metropolitan Planning Commission: Yes, Mr. Mayor, members of Council, thank you. I think Alderman Miller summed up the purpose of the proposed text amendment. This is related to the map amendment, which is also a separate item on your agenda. But they are interrelated. This is a neighborhood sponsored petition and the Metropolitan Planning Commission recommends approval.

Alderman Thomas: Ms. Harris, can you give us a definition of what a historic building in Ardsley Park is.

Ellen Harris: Yes sir, so the Ardsley Park-Chatham Crescent neighborhood was designated, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985. And with that designation came with a map that defined which buildings were consider contributing and which buildings were not considered contributing. In order to be contributing you have to, a building has to have been constructed within the period of significance and for Ardsley part that's about 1900 to about 1930 and it also has to have integrity. So, a building that has been altered to such a degree that it's no longer recognizable would not, would no longer qualify.

Alderman Thomas: So, anything in the 1900 to 1930, would be considered the base that they would go off of.

Ellen Harris: Assuming it still has integrity, yes sir.

Alderman Thomas: If somebody built a shed in their yard in 1945, they're not going to have to go through these hoops and everything to take it down.

Ellen Harris: No sir, they would not.

Hearing closed upon motion of Alderman Miller, seconded by Alderman Thomas, and unanimously carried.

Alderman Thomas: Question for Alderman Miller. You've been involved in these conversations and you feel very confident that everyone's been reached in this?

Alderman Miller: I do and everyone in the neighborhood has been contacted by the MPC and in most cases by the neighborhood association. It's been on the web sites. We've been speaking about it for quite some time. I received no objections to it.

Approved upon motion of Alderman Miller, seconded by Alderman Thomas, and unanimously carried.

[5. Motion to Amend the Zoning Map Regarding the Conservation Overlay Districts \(Petitioner: The Planning Commission\)](#)

[Planning Commission Recommendation 18-000225-ZA Map.pdf](#)

[Draft Ordinance 18-000225-ZA - Map.pdf](#)

Alderman Thomas: Can you define for the public what a conservation overlay district is?

Ellen Harris: Yes sir. So the first item on your agenda is a text amendment that creates the conservation district. And what that does is within that, within the defined area all proposed demolitions of historic buildings would require MPC approval before a building permit could be issued.

Alderman Thomas: Can you give us the parameters, I thought we were going to have it on the screen here.

Ellen Harris: Yes sir, that is the proposed parameters include Ardsley Park, Chatham Crescent, and Ardmore. They get, they matched the neighborhood association boundaries and go from approximately Victory Drive down to 55th Lane and from Bull Street over to Waters Avenue.

Hearing closed upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded by Alderman Miller, and unanimously carried.

Approved upon motion of Alderman Miller, seconded by Alderman Foster, and unanimously carried.

[6. Motion to Amend the Zoning Ordinance Regarding the Victorian District Historic Buildings Map \(Petitioner: MPC\)](#)

[Planning Commission Recommendation 18-000419-ZA.pdf](#)

[Draft Ordinance 18-000419-ZA.pdf](#)

Ellen Harris: The proposed text amendment adds fifty nine buildings that were built between 1870 and 1923 to the contributing buildings map that was left off when the map was last updated in 1981. Metropolitan Planning Commission recommends the approval.

Alderman Thomas: Let me ask a question of Ms. Harris. Why would buildings be left off originally, were they in dilapidated shape?

Ellen Harris: It could have been that, it was more likely because these are predominantly lane cottages and lane dwellings, the focus back in the 80s was more on the main house and those lane dwellings were just not seen as important. But we've kind of changed our thinking on that, now they are just as important as the main structures.

Alderman Shabazz: Just curious did you state that this, just backing up not for a second, that number five, that conservation overlay districts, you said that this is the first time this has been on our agenda?

Alderman Miller: That item, this is the first time.

Alderman Shabazz: Okay, and the other question is, my district is right next door to the fourth. Would this, was this part of the City annexed into the City to fall under such a district overlay?

Ellen Harris: Not to my knowledge. I'm not aware of any annexation related to this at all.

Hearing closed upon motion of Alderman Durrence, seconded by Alderman Miller, and unanimously carried.

Approved upon motion of Alderman Durrence, seconded by Alderman Miller, and unanimously carried.

[7. Zoning Hearing to Amend the Zoning Ordinance Regarding the TC-2 Zoning District and the MLK/Montgomery URA \(Petitioner: Harold and Josh Yellin for River East Management, LLC\)](#)

[Planning Commission Recommendation 18-000495-ZA \(2\).pdf](#)

[MLK-Montgomery-Corridor-Urban-Redevelopment-Plan.pdf](#)

Thomas Trawick: Thank you Mr. Mayor, members of Council. This next petition it's related to the next two items on your agenda. They include, one is a text amendment to the TC-2 zoning district and the other is for rezoning of property located 407 and 409 West 31st Street, 1501 and 1503 Montgomery Street, and 410 and 412 West 32nd Street. The applicant is Harold Yellin acting as agent for River East Management. On this site there is approximately six parcels, are located between MLK and Montgomery and north of West 32nd Street and south of West 31st. The site is currently split zone between two different commercial districts one of which is a B-C or commercial business or community business, excuse me, zoning district. The other is B-G which is general business. These two districts are usually identified as more intensive commercial zoning districts in the zoning ordinance. The site is located within the MLK and Montgomery Street corridor urban redevelopment area. It is a state identified redevelopment area or enterprise zone which allows for certain incentives for development in the area including property tax exemption over a number of years. Currently the TC-2 districts in the urban redevelopment area do not have a density requirement, only the only requirement for the dwelling units have to be 300 square feet per unit. This is one of the reasons why the petitioner wishes to rezone to this TC-2 district. The petitioner also wishes to construct a multi-family building on the site. It would be approximately about 140 dwelling units in that development. They wish to amend, or to do so, they wish to amend the TC-2 to district in order to do two things: eliminate the ground floor area requirement of 10,000 square feet as well as eliminate the 10 foot rear yard setback requirements. Originally, the petitioner did request for a height text amendment, however that has been withdrawn, so you're only looking at the rear yard setback as well as the ground for area requirements. This would only apply to TC-2 districts one located in the urban redevelopment area. There's not that many in the urban redevelopment area currently. And it would not apply to TC-2 districts that are located in the Mid-city district. However that's not to say that a property located in the urban redevelopment area could rezone their property to a TC-2 apply these more flexible standards in the future. So the Planning Commission recommends approval of the rezoning to the TC-2 zoning district. I believe they feel that it would by rezoning to the TC-2 it would have to adhere to the Mid-city design and development standards and the Planning Commission recommends denial of the requested text amendment.

Virginia Mobley: Good afternoon. First of all let me state I support the MPC's decision that they made and I ask you to support them. But I have one question. You're being asked to alter a redevelopment plan that is not a City ordinance. You as a governing body, and I realize that you were, most of you were not here in 2002, never voted nor developed a redevelopment plan for this corridor. You approved a map but nothing with it. How can you rezone an area that is non-existent under a nonexistent plan?

Alderman Johnson: I think her question, Mr. Mayor, I think that her question warrants an answer, I guess I mean, obviously as the elected body we do that but I guess I'll ask the City Manager. I think it's a good question.

City Manager Hernandez: It is a good question. I'm not sure I have an answer for members of Council right now. I was under the impression that previous City Councils had in fact adopted a plan which is why we adopt, we attached to the agenda item. But if in fact Council did not take a vote, so then there is no guiding document that area. And so any decision that you make either today or in the future, absent a plan will be essentially taken on a case by case basis rather within the context of an overall redevelopment plan.

Mayor DeLoach: Okay, so we can take a case by case basis until you get back to us with a clear plan.

City Manager Hernandez: Well if you're asking for staff to develop a new plan that is something that we can't undertake right now. It is probably something that we'll have to build into our work plan for next year. But you're looking at probably realistically 2020, 2021 before we bring a finished product or draft document back to you, unless it's just an update of the existing of the document that was put together by, it looks like the SDRA was the agency that took the lead on behalf of the City. I'm trying to get the actual date on this document.

Alderman Johnson: I would say essentially there is no source document, a guiding document.

City Manager Hernandez: According to this document, as adopted by the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah on December 12th, 2002.

Alderman Thomas: I remember it. Yeah, I remember this.

City Manager Hernandez: Well I'm hearing from staff that it was in fact approved.

Mayor DeLoach: It was approved in 2002, Ms. Mobley.

Virginia Mobley: No sir, you approved the map, you did not approve or vote on a document that supported the map.

Alderman Johnson: I'd like to get that verified.

City Manager Hernandez: We will verify. We'll have the Clerk's Office bring up the minutes. But I am told by staff that the Council did adopt the plan.

Alderman Thomas: I believe, I believe how this went down, I was here, and I think we were in, at that time we used to meet over here, before we had a conference room over there. And that's where it was presented. Were you here Bridget? I thought you were here and I know you were. And it was presented to the Mayor and Aldermen during a work study, a work program as what it was. That was then under Mayor Floyd Adams, though and then I believe it was placed, you can look somewhere for that, but I think it was adopted on that meeting.

Mayor DeLoach: What can we do? Let's talk about, let's do it this way. Can we just do this one individually and then find out the rest of the information, yes or no, and then come back and either amend what we've done or whatever we need to do to, make sure this moves, you know, that we move on this?

City Attorney Stillwell: Yes, you can do that. As the City Manager said earlier, if you can you, you can amend the text or you can amend the map based on what has been proposed and come before you today.

Mayor DeLoach: And we just clarify that at the next meeting, so that everybody understands, the next meeting.

Alderman Miller: It strikes me, that if we don't, if we didn't have an approved document then since this is an amendment, and this becomes the document.

City Attorney Stillwell: If you adopt a text amendment and then adopt a map amendment today then that will become the governing document for this for this particular piece of property as City Manager said.

Alderman Miller: Mr. Thomas I have to go on record saying I'm astounded you can remember a meeting in 2002 including where you met, who was talking.

Alderman Durrence: Mr. Mayor, I thought what we're doing here whether there is an overarching document or plan an overlay for a district like this. Mr. City Attorney please correct me if I'm wrong. But any approach to rezoning a particular current zoning is going to be handled on a case by case basis anyway. Regardless of what might exist in an overlay.

City Attorney Stillwell: If you do, if you adopt a new zoning for this property today then that will be the governing document, regardless of what was there before if you adopt a new zoning that would become the governing zoning. Now if you don't do anything today for whatever reason and then I guess we would have to go back and see exactly what it is, I'm not exactly sure what Ms. Mobley is saying or how that would impact anything, but you do something different today, it will become the governing document as to this district.

Alderman Durrence: But I guess that's kind of my point. Whatever document may or may not have been approved, voted on and adopted in the past it.

City Attorney Stillwell: It becomes mute if you do something new today.

Alderman Durrence: Whatever that was whether it happened or not we would have the ability to do that today.

Alderman Shabazz: Mayor for my clarification can Ms. Mobley repeat what she said earlier, so I can keep up with what's going on here.

Virginia Mobley: I said I go along with the MPCs decision on this matter. I do support it. But my question is this is being referred to as the MLK-Montgomery Urban Renewal Area in a publication by the SDRA the 10th, October the 12th, 2000 and to a letter along with a map asking for the development of the urban renewal plan for this corridor was presented to Council. The Council voted only on the map because there was no plan in existence. No directive from this Council came to the bodies of this government to develop a plan nor was it voted on.

Alderman Miller: OK but the City Clerk says that's not true.

City Attorney Stillwell: Well I think I can get it based on what she says. It would not really matter whether it's called part of this renewal plan or not. The description in the ordinance that you would adopt if you adopt a text in a zoning change will govern the boundaries of the area included in it. And. I don't really think that's material to what you're discussing today.

Mayor DeLoach: All right so let's get back to it then. Thank you Mr. Thomas.

Virginia Mobley: I just want to say, all of the departments of the City that would handle redevelopment plans, I personally went multiple times and have looked for a copy of the adopted plan and there is none.

Mayor DeLoach: OK. Thank you. All right. Number here.

City Manager Hernandez: Mr. Mayor, for the record if I can just clarify please a copy of the plan is available on our website. Under this particular agenda item if Ms. Mobley needs to get a copy on there then it's on there. And again the City Clerk confirms in the official record in the minutes that the City Council back then adopted the plan.

Alderman Thomas: I just want to go further. We actually started revitalization efforts on the M. L. King corridor with this plan. This is where the sidewalk start going in and the break was a million improvements and we actually did debate back then was over the north and south and then we started on the south end down where it intersects with Victory Drive and started work and back up and pretty much private developers were starting on the north end and working their way down.

Alderman Foster: Mr. Mayor, I just add to that, so he was there at that time to back up what Tom said. At that time shifted over to MLK from Broughton, and the reason I'm bringing that up because we're going to drop the Broughton border today because we did switch and focus SDRA on MLK. It created that urban corridor under the Mayor Adams at that time. And it moved offices up and started the redevelopment of MLK. That's true.

Mayor DeLoach: All right. So I'm still looking for motion and a second.

Harold Yellin: Mr. Mayor, could I, can we please address the petition? We do need to clarify a few points. If you can tell me how you're going to vote first then maybe I don't need to speak with you. But I do need to just lay some groundwork please for the record. Harold Yellin for the petitioner, River East Management. Dick Finland is behind me to answer any questions. Ms. Mobley is right and she's wrong. This is the 73 page plan that was approved in 2002. It was approved but it is a plan. It is not a district. It is not an ordinance. It is not a text. It's not Mid-city it's not Victorian. It's a plan, but the plan was approved, all 73 pages and I got this from the City. This is their copy that says on the front adopted by the Mayor and Aldermen, December the 12th, 2002. In a nutshell, we are trying to rezone six properties to the TC-2 and the text amendment and hope you don't mind I'm going address 7 and 8 together. The text Amendment only applies to properties between MLK and Montgomery Street. Any TC-2 anywhere else it doesn't apply to. We're trying to address this corridor which has been neglected for a very long period of time. As Mr. Trawick said, we originally did ask for three items. We have abandoned height. The only thing we're asking you adopt in the text amendment is allow us to have more than 10,000 square feet of floor area. And that's really consistent with what's happening today with people putting properties together and to eliminate a 10 foot rear yard setback which candidly I don't even know why it's there because I don't know what the 10 feet is, for a car certainly couldn't fit on the ten feet. So we're asking for those two things to be eliminated. The bottom line and I've given you five exhibits but only one of them is really important. This urban redevelopment area was approved in 2002. In 2005, City Council created Mid-city district. So if you flip all the way to the back to exhibit 5, I'm just going to skip over 1, 2, 3 and 4. Exhibit 5 the Victorian neighborhood has their own district in their own ordinance. Mid-city has their own district and their own ordinance. Cuyler-Brownville has their own district and ordinance and even today y'all created the Ardsley Park overlay. Guess who doesn't have anything, Montgomery-MLK corridor. For 16 years there's been a plan and there has been no ordinance of any kind to follow. So the one area that did not receive a district or a land use designation is the urban redevelopment area that y'all approved in 2002. So we are 16 years late being here. We submit to all members of Council that we want to incentivize multi-family in this area because it's a key to development in this corridor. Sometimes we're urgent with MPC. Why don't you just wait for a plan to come and once we adopt the plan you'll come back and follow that plan. I think folks are a little bit out of patience right now. If we wait for a plan, wait for a policy maybe it will happen today, tomorrow or it may be another 16 years. But we're here today to present a plan and it's, it's our policy. We want to create a multi-family residential area in the Montgomery-MLK corridor. It will apply to all properties only in this corridor and to ensure the orderly development, we are making ourselves part of the Mid-city review process. Right now this property is all zoned BCBG which is car lots, it's service areas, adult entertainment. We're trying to change all that and that's the petition before you today. So we ask for seven and eight, items seven and eight. That one you agreed to accept our proposal for text amendment. Let's eliminate those two items of setback and that lot coverage and then we ask that we be rezoned to that text amendment. And with that we'll be happy to answer any questions y'all may have. Thank you Mayor, thank you Alderman.

Alderman Shabazz: Mr. Mayor, on your packet, Attorney Yellin, under section number four, why did you include this section here in your packet?

Harold Yellin: Item number four was to show y'all that there was only put the front page. I didn't put all 73 pages. It was to show you all that a plan was approved in 2002. But since that plan's been approved nothing else has happened. This may be the most neglected area in the City of Savannah. Everywhere around this corridor you've got a district, you've got guidelines, you have an ordinance. This area is just BCBG free for all and multi-family development is not permitted in the BC unless you're in the historic district. So the very, very things that we need for the corridor to bring commerce, to bring retail, to bring restaurants, to bring some night life, to bring this area back aren't even permitted. So the very things that were asked for. I'm glad you asked the question if I can only find my one page. There was language on page 29 of that land plan that said BC and BG districts allow uses that appeared to be incompatible with the character of the study area. This is in 2002. These uses include warehousing, building contractor yards, drive-in restaurants, manufactured homes, automobile repair shops, adult entertainment. These are inconsistent with the visions and goals for this neighborhood. So, it would be nice if we already had a district but we have people right now ready to commit resources to this neighborhood and that's all we're trying to do is to say there's a plan. Let's see if we can make the plan happen.

Alderman Shabazz: Can you give me the southernmost boundary at the bottom of this page?

Harold Yellin: I'm going to try. OK. I'm going to show you the map, page 28 shows it and it's just I believe it is 52nd but I can't be sure.

Alderman Shabazz: Well I'm glad that we're talking about this. The City Manager was not here at that time nor was I here. Mr. City Manager, I would love to know, we need to get together in a very, very near future to talk about this right here because this is part of my district that's in this Montgomery corridor and MLK. So we just need to bring it up from the dust and shake it off and keep moving.

Mayor DeLoach: Okay, anybody else will speak on number seven here. Okay how about number eight. Anybody want to speak with number eight. Okay here. Let's take the zoning hearing. Number seven motion. Hold on. Yes we'll handle them separately and tell me what number seven is.

Harold Yellin: Seven is to amend the text to not require these two items involving setback and lot size. We're asking that that be approved as presented by the MPC. I know the City Manager actually voted in favor of our petition but the vote was against.

Mayor DeLoach: Okay but, okay, my deal is if we approve, if we do, if we do not approve what you're asking for and approve number 8, you can still go forward with your construction site. It just won't be able to transfer this to other areas or other locations. Is that right?

Harold Yellin: But number seven would meet, would either need to be approved per staff or per petition.

Alderman Thomas: I think what he's asking Harold, is on Item 7 text amendment, is it just this site?

Harold Yellin: I'm sorry, yes sir it is. It is absolutely applicable only to this corridor.

Mayor DeLoach: See that's my point, not corridor, this site only, what you're doing right now.

Harold Yellin: Yes sir, because we're the only ones. Yes.

Alderman Johnson: But the map was denied.

Harold Yellin: No the map was approved. It's the text that was denied. So we're asking for the text to allow for multi-family development and that there not be a requirement with respect to setbacks of ten feet on the rear yard and they would not be a 10,000 maximum lot size. That's the petition. That is number seven which was denied by the MPC. But yet they approved our rezoning to the TC-2. We are asking City Council to approve the text amendment not as approved by MPC but as submitted by petitioner that will allow for the multifamily.

Alderman Johnson: Is it site specific?

Alderman Thomas: What is the language we need in order for it to be this site?

City Attorney Stillwell: MPC is the language that was presented by the petitioners site specific?

Thomas Trawick: Not to my understanding. The TC-2 district, there is a section just north of the site that was rezoned to TC-2.

Mayor DeLoach: It is located in the urban redevelopment corridor so you could go from here to there and do this again without having to go before us, as far as changes in zoning is that right?

Harold Yellin: But you'd have to rezone to a TC-2, because right now in this area we've talked about there are no TC-2s and if you're willing to rezone to TC-2, your saying, I now have to abide by review standards. I have to actually go before, so anybody that would like to have the advantages that we're asking for, you have to be willing to leave the BC and the BG which are intensive commercial and abide by Mid-city and actually go through a review process in front of the site administrator of the City of Savannah. So we're making it tough. Not everybody will rezone. We're prepared to rezone to the TC under these conditions.

Mayor DeLoach: And I'm going back, and I'm going to ask somebody from this side is this site specific or not. If it's not site specific, if it is not, as far as I'm concerned it is denied.

City Attorney Stillwell: Let me get clarity from the petitioner. Harold, Mr. Trawick, if I understood him right, said there is another TC-2 in this corridor. Is that right?

Harold Yellin: That's the one that City Council approved in January of 2018.

City Attorney Stillwell: So could you instruct me to, when we are drafting the ordinance for the next meeting assuming you pass whatever you agreed to today. You can instruct me to add language to the ordinance to make it site specific, so only this petitioner's site. So we would draft it that way. If that's not already in there.

Alderman Durrence: Brooks, if we don't do that, then anywhere in this corridor that is TC-2 these conditions would apply?

City Attorney Stillwell: That's correct. That's correct. So we can fix that. If that's what Council wishes us to do, so to answer the Mayor's question.

Harold Yellin: Right, Mr. Durrence, to your point there are no other TC-2 sites other than what you just passed.

Alderman Durrence: My point is if at some point if we don't make it site specific, if someone else asked for TC-2 in the future it would come under those conditions, assuming it's in this corridor.

Harold Yellin: But this is, this is a very important point. When we created the TC-2 in January MPC staff wanted to encourage people to apply to the TC-2. Now there seems to be a little bit of a fear of the TC-2 and I'm not sure why. Back in January we talked about whether we were going to leave that southwest corner, or make it TC-2. And after a whole bunch of wrangling and several meetings it was decided by everybody that it was to everyone's advantage to create the TC-2 because of the review process. So it's only them and it's only us. And if you want people to put multi-family on this corridor, you want people to rezone to TC-2.

City Attorney Stillwell: You could do that if you wish to do that. The issue would be if some, if someone else wants to come in and asked to change from BC to TC-2 to assume all the responsibilities that go with that they would have to ask Council to again amend the text to add that area but you could do that if that's what you wish to do.

Alderman Durrence: If we make this site specific?

City Attorney Stillwell: Yes.

Harold Yellin: If I could add one last thing. And you also have to come before Mayor and Council to rezone the TC-2, anybody else that wants to be TC-2, can't just become TC-2. They go to MPC and they come back before you and you have the right to say yes or no.

City Attorney Stillwell: Would it be a problem for your client for this project, if we make it site specific.

Harold Yellin: With the right language, yes sir, I think we can probably work it out between now and the next meeting.

Alderman Foster: Mr. Yellin, can you just clarify. I think we're talking about this tiny square right here. The only thing causing the issue, because this is all TC-2, 90 percent of the projects are TC-2. If I read this right, can you hold that up and tell me.

Harold Yellin: That's the property that's before you right now, and the property that's directly across the street is the property that y'all rezoned TC-2 in January.

Alderman Foster: We're talking about this box here. It's a very small piece of property. Yeah, so you're verifying it.

Harold Yellin: It's very small but you got to jumpstart this corridor in some fashion.

Mayor DeLoach: Understand you want to jump start the corridor, but you jump started in the corridor with exceptions to the TC-2 because you want to change the TC-2 to a get rid of the 10 foot set back on the back side or get a ten and changes that's not what you did in January and that's not what this is if we change that we are changing the TC to outline that we did back in January that that's what we're doing right now. We've fixed, we're changing what we agreed to earlier so that he can build to lot line is what's going on. So that is the issue. And right now I say we'll do a site specific can build this structure and get this started in that area but I'm not willing to make the full length of this. The same pattern that he's going to build. We might decide we want it and sit back later. I don't know. I couldn't tell you. But that is what you're saying right now. You're saying that you're going to change the TC-2 that we have right now to another type TC-2.

Alderman Thomas: I mean what we're really doing is spot zoning. And I think that's what we're doing. You know, we can say we're doing, jump start the corridor or whatever. But I think what we have to weigh is that in the best interest of the City and the corridor. So I think that's a question that this Council is asking. So now are we willing to agree to a spot zoning.

Mayor DeLoach: I would be willing to do the spot zoning on this.

City Attorney Stillwell: Honestly I don't really think you can characterize spot zoning it, but that's an argument.

Alderman Thomas: Well it's a good argument that lawyers can have. But I'll tell you this I'm not against, I'm not against this project but at the same time we can't give a blanket text amendment. That would allow the entire corridor to be manipulated or changed like this without, without it coming back up to us.

Alderman Johnson: And the character of the surrounding neighborhoods.

City Attorney Stillwell: I think actually, as Mr. Yellin pointed out, any TC-2 rezoning has to come to the Council anyway. So, it's probably, just means that the next person who asks for that can come up and ask for the same text amendment. But that's okay, you can consider it on a case by case basis.

Alderman Thomas: As it was just pointed out there is one just north of this site. And once these guys get what they're going to do going, I'm sure that everyone else, that one or two, whatever, say hey maybe that's something we can do as well. We just really need to put out what we're really looking at doing here.

Alderman Shabazz: I need to remind us what Attorney Yellin said with reference to this corridor, to add MLK to the conversation, that back in 2002, that the Council at that time looked at this, that they approved a map or a plan, but since that time it's been sitting, collecting dust on somebody's shelf. So, it's very, very important, and I agree with what the Mayor is saying, and we don't need to do things just for the case and point for one section if we're trying to, with my bringing this up now, with the City Manager on board, we're going to start looking at this thing a little deeper. And since I've been up here it's been almost like a sin for spot zoning. But it's being done, case after case. I don't want to disagree with whatever is going on here, but I knew I saw it and this is it. So, we're going to be working to bring this dilapidate marginalized section of our City that's been that way ever since I've been around back to life and I'm glad we're talking about this. So we getting ready to do some new things. I don't know what to do with this right here.

Mayor DeLoach: Give me a motion and we'll go forward.

Alderman Miller: I have a question, as I understand it if we did change this warning the things you were talking about doing is no longer restricting to a building to less than 10,000 square feet. Am I right?

Harold Yellin: That's correct. That's correct.

Alderman Miller: Ten foot setback on the back of the property.

Harold Yellin: That would also be eliminated.

Alderman Miller: Why do we need those two things?

Harold Yellin: Well that was my point. Because if this area had its own ordinance I probably wouldn't be here. But this area hasn't had an ordinance since forever. Everybody else does. Victorian does. Mid-city does. Cuyler-Brownville does. Ardsley now has an overlay. This one doesn't have anything and if you're going to ask people to come in and put in multi-family residential you have to say okay what makes sense and I'll be honest, I'd love for City Council to adopt an ordinance for this corridor, but I betch you that's going to take about six months, nine months, a year. And we've got people lined up like the one in January and the one now, people ready and willing to invest in this area. I don't see this a spot zoning any more than the one that you approved in January being spot zoning. What you guys are looking to do is to say bring it on to the corridor.

Alderman Miller: Second question is, where the City Attorney asked you if this was site specific, would that be problematic. You said. Why would it be problematic? You have intentions on expanding?

Harold Yellin: Our site plan specific has a unique definition to me that might not be the same definition that you all have.

City Attorney Stillwell: I think what the Mayor meant, which we can work out in the next two weeks was that the 10 foot set back line and the 10,000 square foot, would only apply to this particular property subject to this zoning unless something else happens. And if that's the case I don't think that affects your client's situation. We can come up with that. I do think that his point is well taken that somebody else will be up with the same request and we'll be doing this all over. But that will be it for another day as the Mayor points out and then you can consider whether you want to do it for that one.

City Manager Hernandez: Mr. Mayor if I can I just want to point out that the plan does caution us and in recommending that for setbacks and for maximum area coverage that there would be consistency throughout the corridor. So I'm just throwing that out for you since we are referring back to the 2002 plan. They

you know, they argue against you know overly restrictive setbacks and building coverage areas but then they also argue against being overly generous as well. For the sake of consistency throughout the area. Okay.

Mayor DeLoach: You can bring me the same thing back next week and say less than two weeks from now and say we need to approve this and I'll look at it and I'll vote on that then. But right now I'm voting on this specific thing and that's only as far as I'm going on it. I'm sorry. I just want to make sure that there's no boogers in the woods or something you know.

Alderman Durrence: Mr. Mayor, I'm just curious, how would you define the rear?

Harold Yellin: That's a great question because if the property is in a u shape around a rectangular lot I'm not sure I have any idea based on what street you orient to which one is the rear yard which is one of the reasons why I don't know why there is even a rear yard in the first place.

City Attorney Stillwell: But does that cause a problem for this particular developer on this particular project?

Harold Yellin: I suppose at some point. We spend the money for the architectural plans and we get much further down the road. We have to look and see do we have to move our building around.

City Attorney Stillwell: But aren't we exempting this property from the 10 foot setback line?

Harold Yellin: If we are, that's fine.

Alderman Durrence: That's what he suggested that there wouldn't be a setback line.

Harold Yellin: I agree, but I think Mr. Durrence's question was which, which direction is the rear.

Alderman Durrence: We're talking about Montgomery, MLK, 31st and 32nd. None of those are a lane. Two of those are arterial.

City Attorney Stillwell: We're exempting this from that.

Alderman Durrence: We talking about them and I was just mostly curious, how do you define the rear?

Harold Yellin: The answer is I have no idea.

Mayor DeLoach: Okay let's draw to a close here. Come on. What are the rules, anybody else will say something concerning this?

Alderman Durrence: Let me let me make sure I'm clear where we're going with this, because if, if we're going to vote on this now and vote on it to be a site specific thing and you would bring back the right language for that in two weeks. That's what, so you're willing to vote?

Mayor DeLoach: To do MPC's that means we deny the first and we accept the second.

Hearing closed upon motion of Alderman Johnson, seconded by Alderman Miller, and unanimously carried.

Approved petitioner's request with condition City Attorney include language in ordinance that makes amendment site specific. Approved upon motion of Alderman Durrence, seconded by Alderman Foster, and unanimously carried.

[8. Motion to Rezone 407, 409 West 31st Street; 1501, 1503 Montgomery Street; and 410, 412 W 32nd Street from B-G/B-C to TC-2 \(Petitioner: Harold and Josh Yellin for River East Management, LLC\)](#)

[Planning Commission Recommendation 18-000496-ZA.pdf](#)

[Draft Ordinance 18-000496-ZA.pdf](#)

Hearing closed upon motion of Alderman Johnson, seconded by Alderman Miller, and unanimously carried.

Approved upon motion of Alderman Johnson, seconded by Alderman Durrence, and unanimously carried.

[9. Motion to Amend the Zoning Ordinance Regarding the CIV Zoning District \(Petitioner: Robert L. McCorkle, III for Forum Development, LLC\) Alternative to the Proposed TC-3 Zoning District](#)

[Planning Commission Recommendation 18-000592-ZA.pdf](#)

[Draft Ordinance 18-000592-ZA 20180302.pdf](#)

Thomas Trawick: Members of Council, this next petition is represented by Robert McCorkle acting as an agent for Forum Development. In this case it would be a text amendment to the CIV which is civic or institutional zoning in the Mid-city zoning district. This is not a rezoning request, that has since been withdrawn. The site consists of five parcels located at 2201 Bull Street, 2115 Bull Street, and 19 West 38th Street. The parcels are located between Whitaker Street to the west, Bull Street to the east, 37th to the north, and 39th Street to the south. It is currently split zone between three different zoning districts within the Mid-city district. Three parcels on the northernmost part of the site are currently City owned and are proposed to become a 54 apartment complex with associated parking that is located within a TC-1 zoning district. The parcel to the south consists of one parcel, is located within the existing CIV zoning district. It consists of a former church property with classrooms and is proposed to become a mixed use office and retail space from former classrooms, as well as an event space for the church. Last there is one parcel to the west, behind the church property across De Soto, which would become a 160 space parking garage that is located within a TN-2 to Mid-city zoning district. CIV zoning district and Mid-city is intended to provide for civic and institutional district uses which serve a large area or produce intensive activities not within other districts. For example it allows for schools as well as other religious institutions that typically require a larger building footprint. They also include more intensive uses, there's more programming on those sites as well. The amendments which we will go over in a minute would strictly apply to the CIV of a property when there is an existing contributing structure or historic structure which was formerly identified as a school or religious building as well as these text amendments would apply to adjacent properties. In this case, the former Epworth Methodist Church is a contributing or historic structure and the adjacent properties to the north and to the west could apply for the proposed text amendment so to effect the five parcels identified even though the adjacent properties one to the north includes a TC-1 district and the one to the west includes a TN district. They could apply the more flexible standards that are proposed in this CIV text amendment since they were adjacent to the identified contributing building. The proposed amendments to the CIV district include the following, they wish to increase the maximum height from three stories or 45 feet to five stories or 58 feet. They wish to remove the maximum building coverage requirement. They wish to remove the side and rear yard setback requirements. They wish to allow the multi-family use as well as the event venue use to be permitted and the CIV Mid-city zoning district, and they also wish to remove the wrapping requirement for parking structures. In Mid-city you're required to wrap the ground floor with non-residential or residential uses to kind of make it not look so much like a parking structure. The proposed text amendments would limit the flexible standards to the site in question at the moment and not to all CIV districts in the Mid-city area. The petitioner's intent for these changes other than allowing for the proposed developments to move forward is to allow flexibility for a large school or religious buildings identified as contributing to be able to be reused. The Planning Commission recommended approval for the petitioner's proposed text amendment to the CIV or civic institutional Mid-city zoning district.

Mayor DeLoach: I've got a question for you. You read they do not have to wrap or they are asking not to have to wrap the parking deck in retail. What have they decided to do with that, so that people know what they have decided to do? What have they decided, are you privy to that?

Thomas Trawick: I'm not privy to that information.

City Manager Hernandez: If I can, Mr. Mayor, when the item, when it was presented to the MPC that petitioner stated that they would be wrapping or cladding the parking structure.

Mayor DeLoach: That's what I understand. That's the reason I'm trying to get a clarification because they did agree to wrap it, just was not in retail, isn't it. I'd call them shadowbox design stuff.

Alderman Miller: We have the representative here. You can ask him that question.

Robert McCorkle: Good afternoon, Robert McCorkle again from McCorkle and Johnson representing the petition. To that specific question, before my presentation, the word use is the important part. We still intend to wrap the parking deck. This is actually a diagram that shows our conception of what the parking deck will look like. You will tell it does not look like a parking deck. The reason is, the sentence is that we're removing says that you have to wrap it with the uses, like active retail, active residences. We are leaving in the language in the ordinance. It says when the parking structure is visible from the street there shall be no exterior evidence to indicate that the structure is used for parking except for entrances so the physical wrapping of the building, it will absolutely be wrapped, and what we're proposing is jewel box retail windows around the bottom that will be art display. So it will appear, and address from the street as a retail building.

Alderman Shabazz: What street is that? What's the red brick?

Robert McCorkle: This is 38th. 38th headed towards Bull that way.

Mayor DeLoach: Okay can we go ahead. Anything you want to add. Okay you want to go ahead Robert.

Robert McCorkle: Yes sir, thank you. I'm excited to be here today. This is an exciting project, it's a little outside the norm of what y'all usually hear up here and outside of the norm of what I'm usually up here presenting. My client, the Foram Group which is led by Travis Stringer and Loretta Cochran, many of you who you know, is trying to develop a creative product, is really unlike anything that currently exists in the Mid-city district or that exists frankly in the city of Savannah. Their vision is a live, work, play area that allows for multiple uses all in the same site to allow someone to live, to work, to attend events, to go to restaurants, all in one location, in an innovative manner that evokes the sense of the Starland community that they're in. MPC staff noted during our process with MPC and at the hearing that this was really the first request ever in the Mid-city district for a more intensive, larger scale, mixed use commercial project. Staff also acknowledged the current ordinance doesn't really have standards for this and that's why we're here today. This is the first project of its kind in any way in Mid-city since 2005 when the ordinance was adopted and staff confirmed that there aren't really, the ordinance doesn't really provide for this type of project and so what we've come up with to address, it is a site specific text amendment. A lot of times we say that were text amendment and you, y'all spoke about the last hearing. It causes a concern that it's going to change other districts in the entire ordinance. That's not what this does. We'll get to the specific language but it is tied by pin number, to our specific five parcels and does not affect a single other piece of property in the Mid-city. I'm going to talk to you a little bit about the project and then talk about the process we've been through to get here. First let me show you the project. If you turn to exhibit one, that you've got, there's also a picture of it up here. Let me orient you a little. This is Bull Street that runs along the bottom. This is De Soto Street behind that, and Whitaker Street behind that. This here is the old Epworth Church which is still standing and the office buildings and classrooms that are still connected to the Epworth Church right here. This is currently an empty parking lot. This is the police site, the police lot that is currently owned by the City of Savannah. And this is the empty parking lot that backs up onto Whitaker that currently serves the church. The total site is about one and a quarter acres and it takes up about two city blocks. My client has already purchased the church property. So, all this here is purchased. They've invested up to today, about three and a half million dollars of cash into this project and acquiring that site in soft cost to get us here today and are very much committed to the project. This piece of it, as you know is the City property. We are under contract currently and in the middle of our due diligence period to acquire that property from the City. The contract for the City was approved by this Council for us and the RFP process and I'm sure you all are familiar with it went through for this project. There were many applicants for the project, people looking to do things. The City and City Manager's office, Council looked at the projects that were applied for and took a holistic approach to it, which I think you may have read in the paper and probably recall from when it was going through of what would be an economic driver for the community, what would create jobs, what would raise the tax revenue, what would boost further development and expansion of good uses that are community-based in the Starland district, and the City chose our project at the time that we went through the RFP process. We were showing pictures that are not exactly like this, but they were incredibly similar to this. We have never at the time we were asking, we were planning on doing 65 feet and something a little bit larger than what we are actually asking, so we have downsized it since then, but this is essentially the same project that we applied for in the RFP process that went through with the City. Like I said it's a live, work, play facility, and I want to talk about the uses a little bit. If you'll flip to exhibit two you will see a diagram that shows kind of the uses on all the different floors. The first thing I will talk about is the event venue. The church itself, which is a contributing structure and there is a picture of it I believe on page three of your handout. It is a contributing structure. It will not be changed on the exterior of the building, we are absolutely saving it. There's been a lot of talk about 900 people in there. If you've ever set foot in that church or you headed over to SDRAs meetings that have been over there in the last couple of weeks, you'll know that that's not realistic. The reality is it's going to be an event venue hosting multiple types of events that could be luncheons, it could be meetings like the SDRAs who's already been using it, it could be concerts, but you know those are going to range between 50 people and say 500 people in realistic terms. The 900 number came about by a square footage calculation, but was not intended to be the attendance and it's not intended to have big concerts there every night. That's just not the way the world works, there's going to be like I said luncheons and all kinds of things to serve the community. Believe it or not there is not currently an event venue use in the Mid-city, doesn't exist, any existing ordinance, I don't understand why it doesn't exist, but it doesn't. So one of the things that's happening today is we're asking to add that. This site will fill a void for a need for venues of that size. They can host Ted X events, music festival, Geekend, things that our client has already in touch with all these organizations about. The other really exciting thing about the project is flex office space. It is going to have 65 co-working office spaces similar to We Works or Industrious office spaces, if you're familiar. These spaces are absolutely crucial to keeping young entrepreneurs, SCAD graduates, people like that in the city with jobs. Because people don't want class A, people in that field don't necessarily want class A office space. And so this office space has common area usage and it's much, much cheaper than going and getting class A office space, so it is going to be a great contributor to the city. There are 90 residential apartments, those apartments are a mix of studio, one bedroom and two bedroom apartments. There are 10 artist's studio spaces. They call it artist alley. If you look here this is the alley between the buildings, and it also shows up on the other pictures we've already looked at here. It runs between here, and this is not going to be one solid building. It will remain open so that you can walk through it, with artist galleries. There will be 13,000 square feet of retail with two restaurant spaces and a semi-automated parking structure. That's going to go on the Whitaker lot back here. This is a really another really exciting project that is involved here. The city currently doesn't have semi-automated parking structures. City Lift is the name of the company that produces these, you can Google them, watch the videos, we've watched them with some of y'all already. But they exist in 13 countries already. These things have been in place in Asia and in Europe and in other places in the United States for the last 25 years. They've installed 30,000 systems similar to this worldwide, 30,000 systems. It reduces the height of our building, it reduces the size of our building and allows us to provide more parking spaces. And most importantly it reduces the per parking space cost for that parking deck by about 20,000 dollars per space, which is an incredible number. We expect it to be successful. It is successful all over the world. It could be a game changer for parking in this city. It can park seven cars at one time. It delivers your car to you in a distance and timeframe between 18 and 35 seconds. It operates at a decibel level of about 45 decibels. You can watch all the videos and listen to it online. It's less than a commercial air conditioner. It is a really, really great technology that will allow us to provide about 150 parking spaces in garage parking spaces on our site. Rooftop park is the last to talk about, my client and in other projects they have done are very serious about contributing public space and having public space on their projects. On the parking garage, you might notice if you look at this picture, there are people standing up there and some trees, and the reason for that is because my client likes to call it an elevated square. But we're going to have about 7,600 square feet of community park open to the public on top of the parking garage. We were going to have it in a different location and we were originally going to have residential on the site but we heard from the neighborhood they were concerned about having a tall building back here and staff very much wanted the height moved to Bull Street and not back here which is the only part really adjacent to residences. And so what we did is we moved the residential up to the City lot and then, made the parking garage the parking garage. The parking garage currently planned is about 32 feet tall which is about 13 feet less than we're allowed to build. So because of the type of parking structure we're doing, in the type of automated parking we're doing, we're able to have only a 32 foot tall building back there and still have you know 100 and something spaces in it. If you look at Exhibit 3, that's a picture of the existing church and building as it sits today. The church is 52 feet 11 inches. You may hear somebody say it's not. But we have professional architects that

have measured it. We also had the original plans and the blueprints from the construction of the building and it is 53 feet tall at its peak. It and the building next to it were built to zero lot line including the office building across the back of the property. Both these buildings will remain. What we're proposing to do on the site, as a project as a whole, is something that is consistent with those buildings. We are asking for these text amendment site specific variances in order to allow us to build structures that have the same setbacks and are similar in nature to these buildings that exist on the site. The changes that we're making, as you're going to see, the first if you'll look at exhibit 4, which is this picture up here, are the top. This is a view from Bull Street looking towards the south. This is the existing office building right here which is three floors. So what we're proposing to do is add a floor to the top of that office building. You can see that it steps back at the top so it is not fronting or viewing as a four story building or adding a story up on that building. We're going to add in the empty parking lot, what is a five story residential and retail mixed use building. It is 58 feet tall at its tallest point which is the height that we're asking for on the site. But it's not going to project as a five story building. If you notice in the drawing it is probably easier to see on your picture than it is on this, but you'll see right here, the corner of the property, south corner, as you're coming down Bull, is actually going to front as a three story building and then it will step back, and have another floor, and then it will step back further and have a fifth floor. The main part of the building is four stories, retail on the bottom and residential above, and then again will step back onto the fifth floor. So if you're standing on the street, you're likely to not see the top stories when you're actually in front of the building or the same side of the street, and from across the building it'll be set back. On these five foot setbacks are important because it's not just a monolithic building. The buildings that are being proposed are not straight sheet, 58 foot tall buildings. They're just not. Our client is very dedicated and our architect is very dedicated to building these buildings in such a way that they do not just appear as 58 foot straight walls down the street. And so we are going to offset. We are going to make the corner shorter. We're going to do all these things so that it is not present as one big five story building. The other building if you'll turn to exhibit 5, is here. This is the building that we intend to construct on the City lot. You can see again, on the north corner of the building is three stories. It will front as three stories on the north corner. It steps back and you'll have a fourth floor and there is a fifth floor that you can barely see that is further set back. It's important to note that those step backs go all the way around the building. It's not just stepping back from Bull. It steps back from the sides, it steps back from the back everywhere around it, it is not just a solid five story building. The two stories in the middle, you'll also notice it's actually only going to be two stories, here in the middle, in the front. It makes it consistent with the courtyard that will remain on the office building, a consistent appearance. It also allows room for the trees in the middle to grow over that space. And then step back farther away, but again that front is a two and three story building. The automated parking structure which we talked about a little bit for your first question. It is again originally designed to be residential on the site and when we moved it. So, now we're going to have this building. It will look like this. It will be wrapped in jewel box artist displays. It will appear as a retail store if you're walking down with our displays for local artists. It will not appear like a parking garage. We will meet the requirements of the ordinance that say it cannot appear like a parking garage, and it's 32 feet tall. In addition to that it will have a public park on the top. As I mentioned before those, that parking structure and the one that's going to be attached to the City building on the back of this building will provide about 150 off-street parking spaces. In addition to the 150 off street parking spaces we have, we have 31 on street parking spaces. I think it's important to note, because I know there's concerns about parking, that that is 35 more spaces than we're required to have under the existing ordinance. We are not asking for a parking variance. You will not see in the text amendment that's in front of you today that we're asking for a parking variance, because we're not asking for one. We are more than exceeding the existing Mid-city parking requirements. Little bit about process. I know you think it's important. This has been a long process. We originally met with MPC staff in June of 2017. My client has had tens, dozens of meetings with the neighborhood. They presented formally to the neighborhood association in November, showed pictures of everything we were doing, talked to them about what we were doing. We've met with the board of the neighborhood association on multiple occasions. We went to a meeting called by the people that are against our project and stood up and took questions until they were out of questions to answer, anything that anybody had. Not only do we attend these meetings but we then followed back up. We changed our project. We lowered it by seven feet. We moved a building to a different site. We added artist studios. We changed the layouts, we did all of these things in response. We moved the park over to this building so that will be lowered to the ground because people didn't want to have to walk through a commercial building to get to the public park. So, we put it on top of the parking deck which everybody was more comfortable with, because it was a public access kind of thing that would be easy to get to. We made all of those changes. My client sent letters out to the neighborhood explaining the changes as they were happening of what we were doing. All of these things were part of public input. My client has been a model for what, and I think the neighborhood association will confirm, he has been a model of the way development, in a way I know Bill Durrence has asked us in the past to do development, where we involve and engage the neighborhood association from the very beginning. We've also engaged the City Attorney and City Manager from the beginning of this process. They participated in our MPC meetings, they participated in figuring out how this was going to work in helping us to draft the ordinance. We originally applied for a new zoning district. We got pushback from the neighborhood. They were concerned that if we created a TC3 zone that lots of other developers would come and try to put TC3 all over the neighborhood. And so with MPC staff's help we went back and tried to do a text amendment requested by MPC that would allow the project, but would not require us to rezone because we're not here to rezone today. If you'll flip quickly to the last tab, it actually has the text amendment in it. I think it's important. One thing that Thomas did not mention, I think it's important that you look at the intent statement at the top of the paragraph there. Not only is this text amendment limited to our specific pin numbers, but the intent statement was requested by staff specifically so that it would not create other people coming in asking for the same thing. And I want you to look at what it says. It says it is the reason that the City is doing this is to reuse, for the reuse and encouraging reuse of parcels that have contributing buildings already on them, not only contributing buildings but contributing buildings that were originally designed for religious and education related uses. In those situations because it's so costly and so difficult to redevelop sites that have large churches, large educational buildings on them, there are times when good projects come up that it's appropriate to change the standards for those projects. And then it says to the extent to which flexibility may be allowed it must be considered on individual parcel basis. That's true anyway as the City Attorney mentioned earlier, but it's specifically in the ordinance that this has to be taken on a per parcel basis and that's important to us. We never, we never wanted to change Mid-city, we weren't trying to amend the whole ordinance. We weren't trying to create a new zone. We were just trying to figure out a way to have a site specific project. I'm happy to answer any questions.

Mayor DeLoach called for questions.

Alderman Thomas: We've got a lot of citizens that want to talk, but I do have a question on the event facility. The occupancy is 900 people at that location and you've made an issue of saying we're not going to have 900, and I think earlier you said that it would be somewhere, the most activities would be 50 to a couple

of hundred people maybe in that facility. But there's no guarantees that there won't be 900. So, would, is there any mechanism, and perhaps this is for you, and something to negotiate somewhere in the middle on a different occupancy for that event facility other than 900?

Robert McCorkle: I think that the 900 number comes from a mechanical calculation based on square footage of the total building. Again, if you have ever set foot in it there's no way you can have 900 people in there. I think maximum capacity is probably, the maximum capacity standing up is more realistically 600, is what we're talking about.

Alderman Thomas: Okay, well let's say, let's be honest, let's talk, let's say you have a facility or you have an event there with 600 people, and let's just say that people come two to a car, that's 300 cars. Where are they going to park in an event like that?

Robert McCorkle: So for parking, we one have been working with the City and with traffic to encourage extending all of the public access available, mobility, transit, everything to the site to make sure there's public access. When concerts happen, as you know, a lot of people walk in this neighborhood, a lot of people take Uber now. I would guess that there's not a single event facility in the city of Savannah that parks itself. I don't think that such a thing exists. I know when I go to concerts or things at the Lucas or at the Morris Center or wherever else it is, they don't. The Morris Center doesn't park itself, these other places don't park themselves, Civic Center certainly doesn't park itself. So, I think that the requirements of the ordinance, as they exist, we are meeting. We are meeting the requirements and are not asking for a variance. We expect people to come by public transit. We expect people to walk. We expect people to park on the street and will take Uber. But we're comfortable with the fact that people will be able to still come and enjoy the event facility at that level of capacity.

Alderman Foster: When was that ordinance written?

Robert McCorkle: When was the ordinance written for Mid-city? 2005 was when it was adopted.

Alderman Foster: Okay and it had the same parking requirement in 2005 that was already in place before the change?

Robert McCorkle: It did and I can tell you that it has not changed and it has not changed to my knowledge. The parking requirement is and this applies to all non-residential uses. It doesn't, the Mid-city ordinance doesn't distinguish between an antique store and a restaurant. So if you have a restaurant, which obviously requires way more parking than an antique store, the parking requirements are identical. It's the way that Mid-city was set up with intent. If you have a part, a non-residential structure over 2,500 square feet, you're required to have a minimum of one space per thousand square feet and maximum, maximum of one space for 500 square feet, is the current existing requirement.

Alderman Thomas: But your, Mr. McCorkle, your garage will handle how many people?

Robert McCorkle: We will have about a 150 garage parking spaces and the one behind that facility has about 112 spaces.

Alderman Thomas: So, most of those spaces would be allocated to residents that would be living in these apartments, correct?

Robert McCorkle: Not most, but many yes. For that parking garage, yes.

Alderman Thomas: The only concern that I have is the parking. I mean I think it's a wonderful looking project. I like the set-backs on the floors and everything. I like how you're using the church. Doing something different there. But I think the parking is still an issue. I guess I need to go back to the original question, would you consider a lower occupancy on that event space.

Robert McCorkle: I have to talk to the City Manager and staff one question about that. I'm not sure if it's possible to, is it possible to even limit a specific occupancy? I know again in other event facilities before, I know there's just general square footage calculation. Was even possible to set an occupancy through the zoning?

City Manager Hernandez: I don't know about through zoning but certainly through the Fire Marshal's office that is something we look at.

Robert McCorkle: Sure and we're happy to have that conversation and engage the Fire Marshal. We have both site plan review and design review through Ellen that all has to be done before we get this thing down the road.

Alderman Thomas: Well I would suggest, and she said, six hundred is what you believe it is. You know instead of a setting it at 900 set it at six hundred. I mean that gives you what you're asking for.

Alderman Johnson: But I'm not sure that it can be handled through the fire code.

Robert McCorkle: I don't think it can be handled through the zoning.

City Attorney Stillwell: You ask us to look into that. I don't think you can do that as part of the zoning deal but I think that is probably a way to do that through some kind of a contract or an agreement with the Fire Marshal or something. But if you'll ask the City Manager and I to look into that we'll do that.

Robert McCorkle: And we will have more parking spaces than the church currently has, which is the same square footage that it is going to be.

Alderman Thomas: This is a city that allows people to double parking in its churches. We're not going to allow that with a private facility.

Alderman Hall: It is not going to be a church, right? I don't believe you could put 600 people in there on Easter Sunday.

Robert McCorkle: It's going to be the same building. We're not expanding it any and it's not going to be any different than it always has been. It's been there a long time.

Alderman Foster: Is now the appropriate time to ask a question about the developer? One of the questions that I had that I was unable to get answered and by the way I spent a lot of time trying to learn about this project. I'm familiar with the neighborhood going back to the 80s. So, I rode around again to see what's been redeveloped and some of the houses that have been moved into and there's a lot of good things happening in the neighborhood. And this is an exciting area. This is probably the most dramatic thing that we could ever do that side of the historic district. It will set precedent in my mind for the future development of the city. Yet we don't have a master plan or city plan that says this is what we want to do. And so that's the first thing that bothers me. Next thing that bothers me is we've got a developer who's talking about doing a 40 million dollar development project in a small residential commercial neighborhood that people moved into to renovate the Victorian homes and a lot of small businesses. I made a lot of small business loans, Elizabeth's on 37th and Lester's Florist next door to the bank, that I had to put a Plexi-glass up on because it was robbed too many times. So, I'm very familiar with that neighborhood. And when I saw that somebody was going to put this kind of development in the first thing I want to know is okay, how many of these have they done, and how successful have they been. I know when I was referred to the website, and I see a tall skyscraper in Miami has nothing to do with this, and I see a building in Gainesville, Florida that looks like a Holiday Inn apartment complex with a pool, and I didn't see anything else. So, my question is how many residential commercial neighborhoods, multi-use projects in a historic district of this size have they done?

Robert McCorkle: Travis do you want to come up and address this question? Let me, let me respond real quick to that. So, I think part of the concern that always comes up when you have a developer doing something like that is are they capable of doing something like this. You look at something of this scale and you say well can they do this. I think the building in Miami, I do want to mention it is a 40 story building that's on phase one of three phases of a project that's already being constructed. It was a 300 million dollar project that they constructed and still own on that site in Florida. The apartment building that looks like a Holiday Inn is a 340 unit apartment complex that was a 67 million dollar project that they still own and operate. The principal CEO of this company and the company itself owns thousands of acres of property that is currently under development in Pooler and being sold in Pooler. They are local. They are here. They live here, they have a long history of being, doing construction and doing projects around this area and particularly in the state of Florida. Ms. Cochran herself is on the board of SEDA. She also sits on the board of the World Trade Conference or the World Trade Center. So these are, these are sophisticated individuals that have done sophisticated projects with real dollar amounts that are much, much, much larger than what we're talking about doing. Travis if you want to, the mix you know the big building in Miami for example is a mixed use project. I mean there's multiple uses in that project. But do you want to add anything to that?

Travis Stringer: My name is Travis Stringer, president of Foram Group. You heard everything about us and my grandmother. To your point, there was a 340 unit apartment complex, unfortunate it had to be called the Holiday Inn type of project.

Alderman Foster: That was just what hit me when I looked at the property, I apologize, I didn't mean it was a Holiday Inn. It was surrounding a pool in the picture.

Travis Stringer: That was a redevelopment of a number of multi-family buildings at the time that we were managing as part of a 10 acre track. The building in downtown Miami, that's just the first phase of three phases, actually the ultimate project which you know based on where real estate market is right now in Miami and what we're looking to do on that site it's going to end up being about 5 million square feet of development. We worked with the City of Miami for multiple years, the same way we've gone through this process where we assembled multiple pieces of property acreage in downtown that made up this entire site. We worked with the City putting an overlay on this piece of property making it site specific. We deeded back almost an acre of property in perpetuity that can never be built on as a public space right on the front of Brickell Avenue. Before doing both of those redevelopment projects we managed about roughly 10 office buildings that had retail components to them as well in Miami, Boca, Fort Lauderdale, Jacksonville, all up and down you know Florida. A lot of our commercial real estate investment and development was in Florida. We did for about over 20 years. We've invested a lot of money in the southeast Georgia area and large acres of timber operations. We invested in a major investment that was part of Savannah, just outside of Savannah, would have been the four quadrant at 16 and 95. We were a part of putting together the planning and the zoning for the mega site that was sold where Mitsubishi is now. We've done a lot of work with the City of Pooler from a master planning and PED perspective. We're down to a couple of thousand acres left in that area and we're currently developing that with

different multi-family developers. Right now we actually have plans looking at developing multi-family projects out there. I would say we're at 40 years now, this year actually, for our business. I am the third generation. Our core is investing in, developing, and managing properties for families, as well as ourselves. And we are owners in a lot of those projects that I just mentioned.

Alderman Foster: So let me just say, Mr. Mayor, just one second. I have a lot of respect for your family and your company. I'm not questioning that at all. I think I like a lot of things about this development. And so I'm not questioning your commitment or your ability to do it. My big question is this is different, this is not Miami, this is Savannah, a small historic neighborhood that goes way back. I go back over 30 years with relationships in the neighborhood and myself and I'm not that old yet. But I think it's such a major change for this city. I mean to me, I've dealt with a lot of developers, I've never seen one come in and want to change an entire city like this. I mean this is a 140 some thousand population city with a small historic district, this is a huge development. I'm trying to get it in my head. How could you get 40 million dollars to invest in something like this and make it successful in a small neighborhood in Savannah and that's what I'm having a hard time gripping with.

Travis Stringer: Well from a use standpoint, I think all of the uses we've definitely have built with and the office component of it is something that we took two floors out of that building down there to do. Now I understand this is a different market, Savannah's different than Miami. Miami in the 80s when we first went there was very much like how Savannah is today. And so we were very familiar with a much smaller town. People see it now as skyscrapers and big investment, hundreds of millions of dollars, billions of dollars and when we, the life that we work through, that it wasn't that way. You know we've been in Savannah for 20 years, very familiar with a lot of the developments and investment that's going on. Right now, I would say our project, of some of the major projects in Savannah, is probably the smallest one on a, from a standpoint of having so many uses and being so influential. I mean you have the River Street project that's about five times the size of our project from an investment standpoint and a capital standpoint, as well as even overall size. You got Savannah River Landing that's 50 acres that's being planned. You know that's about ten times the size of what our project is on an investment level and in a time horizon. You have a project that was just sold, Mariner Grove Apartments. There is a lot of funding and investment that is coming into Savannah right now. We have a lot of really expensive hotel projects that are going in. Savannah is a small town but it has been very much recognized as an opportunity and a place of growth. A place of change, a place that people want to be a part of, people, a place that people want to come to and join the residents who are already here. So I would say our project is going to be, and you know in our opinion I think a lot of the neighborhoods very influential very impactful change. It has a lot of components that you know has been put in there from neighborhood conversations. I think that we tried to do the best that we could, understanding the dynamics that we were working with. Having meetings immediately from the very beginning, before this project was even put together with the residents to understand how we could do the project the way that we're proposing it, but be able to have the residents in that neighborhood for the most part buy into it and for everyone in Savannah outside of this neighborhood because if you see the Vault it's a very successful restaurant. They have people coming from all over town to go. I mean just about every business person every day at noon, I mean it is at that restaurant eating out. And you know and there's plans to develop some of those other parking lots in the neighborhood. I mean the question to, I want to address some points that Tony Thomas brought up with parking. There are a number of bare street parking lots right now that are used for parking. We've already been in discussions with them to be able to lease those parking spaces out for certain types of events so that we can allocate more parking in that neighborhood for if an event gets to 500 or 600 people. In our parking structure alone there will be parking spaces allocated to the offices that will be structured the same way as parking complexes are downtown 8 to 5 during the day for the people in offices and after that all those parking spaces transition over to the event venue, and they will be used for that. I guess going back your question, I feel like we have put a lot of effort to really make sure that the way we did this and the process we went through would allow us to successfully do, implement something like this in a smaller town that affects more people, more dramatically, more directly than if you went and did this in the center of downtown Miami when you got 100 story buildings. No I appreciate the question.

Alderman Foster: I appreciate it.

Alderman Thomas: The reality is that those bare lots that are over there now, once you do this they're not going to be bare lots anymore and they're going to have parking needs as well. So, I'm just concerned where we're headed because see I remember this quarter when SCAD came in and took Richard Arnold and all of a sudden it had an influx of students that were coming and going all day and then residents were getting blocked, and it was becoming really an issue and we had to get involved at that point. And really look, so I mean I don't want to move the problem, but at the same time I want to see how we can solve the problem because you know it's not just your development, this is a great development and I mean and I'm very appreciative that your family wants to make an investment like this in this community, but at the same time we don't want to ruin it either. And we have to be focused on those bare lots are going to change because of what you're doing here. So let's put that on the table and be fair.

Mayor DeLoach called for public comment.

Julia Sullivan: Thank you Mayor DeLoach and members of Council. My name is Julia Sullivan. I'm with the law firm of Stone and Sullivan and I'm here on behalf of a number of neighbors who are concerned about the scale, scope, density, and other issues that are presented by this project. As the lawyer I'm going to actually speak to some elements of the zoning proposed text amendment itself and leave those other issues to the neighbors who are more acutely impacted by this project. The concerns that I have relative to the text amendment are that it brings uncertainty and ambiguity to our zoning ordinance. Mr. Yellin was up here on the prior matters talking about how the discussion of his project might be different if there was an element in the zoning ordinance that dealt with his parcel. That there was a district, if there were these elements in our zoning ordinance that he could then look to perhaps get a variance from as needed and that that was part of what would, could, should compel this Council to find in favor of his project and his request. Here we have a zoning ordinance. Here we have a historic neighborhood. It has a historic designation from the National Park Service, just like downtown. Okay, and we're meant to have those protections. And yet, and yet we have a developer coming in and asking to change that ordinance even though it already exists. So I ask you at what point does it make sense that we even have a zoning ordinance to begin with if we can keep coming in and making these changes on an ad hoc basis. The concerns I have with the ordinance language

is that it hasn't really been drafted with the current ordinance in mind. It uses terminology that doesn't exist anywhere else in the ordinance so therefore there's terminology that we don't have a definition for. What does that mean? That means people like me get to come up and try to convince you that our definition is the definition of what was intended today if you decide to adopt the text amendment. It also means that we have the inclusion of specific parcels that are not tied to this particular developer. Once the changes that they're requesting are put in place. Anybody who owns these parcels can then develop the property to this end, these pictures are beautiful. They're very pretty, but we're not here for a site plan review. We're not here for design review. We're here to determine whether or not we're going to make an irreparable change to the language in our zoning ordinance. And that's why we have to look at that more carefully. Now one of the things that's interesting to me in terms of that language is that it talks about including parcels but it certainly doesn't talk about excluding what happens to those parcels once they are included in the ordinance. What do I mean by that? What I mean is that once that is attached the standards are attached to these parcels it stays that way. It doesn't matter whether or not the parcels were ultimately spun off and sold to other developers who don't have the same concerns for our larger community in mind. And so the ordinance is actually not, it's not fully vetted in terms of what it really means for our neighbor, for this particular neighborhood. It also really raises concerns to my mind, and perhaps other legal minds would differ on this, of spot zoning. Because now we are carving out a particular piece of property, a particular use, a particular land owner, without keeping in mind a comprehensive plan for the neighborhood. We have a plan. There was a plan adopted. There is an ordinance that was generated by that plan. We have a historic designation for this neighborhood. And so those are all the things that we need to be keeping in mind when we decide if we're going to actually go down this road. Thank you.

Clinton Edminster: Morning y'all. My name is Clinton Edminster the proud neighborhood association president for the Thomas Square Neighborhood Association. We've developed a statement, I'd like to read it to you. Following further input from our neighbors, the board of the Thomas Square Neighborhood Association would like to express its qualified support for the zoning entitlements that the Foram Group is seeking for their project The Starland Village. Still there exists concerns some of which you definitely will hear today for in our community about the scale, the noise, parking, congestion, and preservation of the tree canopy. Addressing these concerns must be a top priority from you and from the Foram Group as the city moves forward with this project. We support that this project is being accommodated within zoning that already exists within Mid-city. We find that the proposed changes to the CIV to be an elegant development tool as more civic buildings transition in the future. These changes would allow for redevelopment on very select future projects in a narrow range of uses and only when they include the renovation or reuse of an existing civic structure. Additionally, we would like to acknowledge the Foram Group's efforts to reach out to all segments of our neighborhood and hear their concerns. Regardless of today's outcome they have set a precedent that we will be expecting from all future developers in our area. Their efforts should not go unnoticed. With the previously mentioned concerns adequately addressed, we know that our neighborhood will be able to support this development as it moves forward. Thank you for your consideration.

Alderman Bell: How many people are in your neighborhood association?

Clinton Edminster: Right now we've got about 90 people in our neighborhood association. We recently sent out a survey to those folks. We got a little bit more that were not necessarily in our neighborhood association, but are in our neighborhood. From those discoveries, from that we found that there is a slight majority who is in favor of this project.

Alderman Foster: Can you repeat one segment again, because I'm not sure I heard which is, what is precisely you are supporting.

Clinton Edminster: We are supporting the zoning entitlements the Foram Group is seeking.

Alderman Foster: The changes?

Clinton Edminster: Yes.

Alderman Foster: All the changes?

Clinton Edminster: All changes.

Virginia Mobley: Good afternoon again. Before I get started I just want to make one quick clarification. Mr. McCorkle alluded that everyone in the neighborhood had been contacted. Of a survey of 20 homeowner property owners in my area, within a block and a half of this property, only one had received their letter and I received it, I'm the one, through an email sent by the neighborhood association. So there are a lot of people out there, out of seventeen-hundred households that have not heard about this project. Thomas Square Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan 1995, National Register of Historic Places 1997, the City of Savannah Local Historic District 1997, the Thomas Square Streetcar Historic District Land Use and Zoning Study 2003, Mid-city Thomas Square's zoning changes 2005, done by the residents, approved by your local government, by our local government, excuse me. Now being encouraged by developers and their attorney for the vision of the dollar, to throw all that aside because how you vote will open the entire neighborhood to change. Today you will vote on the value of our history. One of the things that this plan has in common is the uniqueness of the neighborhood. The mix of home owner occupancy and small businesses, this body that represents us has destroyed it for the landmark district and driving out the residents of the Victorian district. Now you want to do the same to Thomas Square, one of this city's three local historic districts Thomas Square has a history that goes back to Oglethorpe's farm lots. But as noted in the National Register of Historic Places, Thomas Square is unique for its community plan, noting that the original neighborhood was planned as the new suburbia to provide residents with daily services that gave opportunities for growth to a varied spectrum of economic levels. Listing on the historical Register of Historic Places was given to Thomas Square Streetcar District because of the following; architect; architecture; commerce; ethnic heritage-African American; landscape architecture;

community planning and development. There are 1,110 contributing structures in the neighborhood. One hundred and seventy nine have been dropped as non-contributing structures because they have undergone extensive alterations by causing that have lost their integrity. I would like to skip to the last paragraph, it will take about 30 seconds. In talking with the City of Milledgeville just up the road, another town with a college in the middle of the local business and residential districts, Georgia College has spread out as SCAD has. What has happened there is a residential area has changed from home owner occupancy to rental units attracting students at the loss equal to two thirds of the housing stock. With the commercial area that has been redeveloped for students now struggles for the four months of the year when the school is out. These businesses are losing a third of their yearly income. It has no diversity. It is a single based economic situation. What you're leading our neighborhood to, is the same direction. If you think student base can support our city you will quickly learn the lessons of other cities right here in Georgia. We have over 140 small businesses in Thomas Square serving full time residents. Without our historic district designation, our residents and local businesses are the city's lifeblood. This project pushes us into a single based economic that will destroy the fiber of our historic use.

Frank Early: Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I appreciate the comments regarding how big and different this project is and I appreciate the comments regarding the uniqueness of our neighborhood. I would like to point out another unique. I'm sorry. My name's Frank Early, I am a resident here. I lived here 6 years. I'm on the corner of 39th and Whitaker. If I look out my front porch to the left I'll be looking at the Lift system. I'm right there in the neighborhood. We are unique because we are the mouth of the evacuation route. The 37th street connector to I-16. A couple of meetings back at the firehouse some folks from the Foram Group, at least one person turned to the group and said help us get the City to switch Whitaker to one lane so we can have parking on one lane of the street. This has been repeated by other folks. And in fact in the paper there was a conversation, more comments, and just because people are talking doesn't mean it's going to be done about going one lane on Drayton and Whitaker. I attended the charrette on I think it was Saturday in the church and the very property that we're talking about here and a consultant who was hired by the City was pitching the idea of putting a bike lane on 37th and removing two lanes of traffic. I am concerned that there will be some traffic flow issues that are not even covered by those two things. If we are cutting down access to our evacuation route, if we're making that things difficult, if any kind of lane changes are built into these plans, regarding that evacuation route, that makes me very concerned. I have concerns regarding public safety that I have stated in a letter to all of you. I did appear before the MPC. I know that folks are saying that all of the questions have been addressed, but I would invite you to look at what I said to the MPC and see if anyone responded to it. I would encourage you to say no if it's going to have the kind of impact I'm afraid it might have on public safety.

Raine Blunk: Thank you. My name is Raine Blunk. I rent two properties one of which is on the edge of the Starland District or the Thomas Square neighborhood and one that is within it on the west side. I would first like to bring up the fact that in the short history or in the most recent history the Starland neighborhood has been one of small business for local artists and families. The proposed development and zoning severely impacts that community negatively. It repackages and homogenizes years of a distinct Savannah culture built by locals. Live, work, play, it is unlike any project in Savannah yet it is almost, it almost perfectly mirrors existing developments in heavily gentrified cities like Miami where Foram group has most recently developed. Offsetting corners and adjusting building height might alter the building face but it does not change the exclusive culture and overall homogenized aesthetic and narrative that this project is trying to bring to our neighborhood. This project does not have good low income options. It does not have good multi-family options and its price point far surpasses one that would meet the needs of our community. It seeks to develop a large venue the scale of which far surpasses the needs and interests of the mid-town area. Even considering changes made by developers in response to public input in a public meeting, Travis explicitly stated to a person that the issue of developments like Foram group pricing out people in the neighborhood was not the fault of developments like Foram group, it was the fault of people in the neighborhood and existing developments themselves. Moving forward with this project as it stands sets a precedent for outside developers to homogenize our neighborhood and price out residents and business owners. There are other upcoming projects like Item 7 and 8. The length of this process as was mentioned earlier, since June of 2017, does not compare in any way to the years and years of history that have been cultivated without the help of developing groups like Foram. The beautiful thing about Savannah is that we have time to save our city from becoming what so many cities in the US have already become and falling victim to moving forward with this project would change that forever. I highly encourage you to vote no on the existing zoning because this is dramatically important to the history of our city as a specific, unique, beautiful place that is unlike any place on the East Coast and in the US.

Curtis Bellenot: Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen of the City Council. My name is Curtis Bellenot. I am a local business owner in the Starland area, a property real estate redeveloper similar to what Foram Group does, but on a lot smaller scale. I do want to say, I will not repeat the things on parking. You know, I do want to say though that Thomas Square neighborhood was originally a streetcar neighborhood. We don't have street cars anymore, so people use cars on the street to park. The digital survey that was passed around by the neighborhood council, once again 90 people on that council out of 1,500 homes, so less than 10 percent. The same thing is the president that is also getting money from SEDA, who Foram Group gives money to. I understand that the City of Savannah has some budget issues and we're kind of broke, even though we've had an amazing year at the port and an amazing year for tourism. I don't think that selling out to big developers are going to be the best way to solve that issue. That being said for 40 million dollars, it's a big check. The City property was originally, the RFP was given to the owners of the Vault across the street, and then a more holistic approach was taken for the new one, and I think we can all agree that that's a 12 million dollar tax revenue over the next 20 years. It's a big check. I want to say that that is not the best way to do things. We have a lot of opportunities to make a lot of money. Let's keep the cool parts about Savannah cool. We do have another few pitfalls. Travis, he did take me to breakfast, which I thank you very much for. And he talked to me about how difficult it was to get funding for this project. The way we work space in the event space are not traditional ways to make money on big developments. So his capital was put in jeopardy because he did not have long term residences, long term business leases, to make sure that these are long term triple net leases to fund the project. So the project managers could get a return on their money. That leads me to believe that this may not actually happen. This is also, I thank you very much Mr. Brian Foster, this is the first project that they've done of this size. All right. And I do want to say that you know Travis had a lot of nice things about we did this and we did that, we did this, Travis is the same age as me, 28 years old. So, in that business, the skyscraper was in Miami, he was getting out of college.

Mayor DeLoach: Hey we don't need it. We don't need to talk about other folks in here. If you got something wrong with the project say something wrong with the project, but don't talk about any individual in this room. Thank you.

Alderman Hall: What business does he operate in that area?

Curtis Bellenot: My company is Bellenot Homes, LLC. I buy homes, flip them, and then I also have rental properties in that area.

Alderman Hall: How many parcels do you own?

Curtis Bellenot: In the Starland area? Four sir.

Alderman Johnson: Mr. City Manager, is the City of Savannah broke?

City Manager Hernandez: To address the alderman's point, the City of Savannah is not broke.

Alderman Johnson: I mean I just, I just I just feel the need that you don't want people put out things that are incorrect, particularly over the public airways we have to immediately make sure that we get the debunk out where it is. Sir you are absolutely incorrect.

City Manager Hernandez: And just for the record the speaker made that comment at the MPC and I addressed that particular comment at that time as well.

Alderman Johnson: Well, we need to make it here as well.

City Attorney Stillwell: If I can add to that, we have a [inaudible] bond rating and we have had a balanced budget for many, many years, as far back as I can remember, at least the last 50 years. We have a very strong financial record.

Esther Murphy: My name is Esther Murphy. Okay, number one they're trying to, they're not just trying to change our neighborhood. They're making it into a business area like downtown too. They have no regard. The children are not considered, residents are not considered. And if they tear this piece, who says not let them push other people out, take their buildings so that they can make other things in. And three, we already have a parking issue now, that's going to be worse when they do this. There is no place, they are really, that little teeny spaces not big enough for 100 and some parking places. And they thinking of skyscrapers. Our neighborhood is not built for heavy traffic or skyscrapers. We just don't have the space for that. And this is all I wanted to say.

Jonathan Morgan: Hello council. My name is Jonathan Morgan. I actually live, well my house is right here on 38th and Whitaker, facing right where the parking garage, right here. Where all the three dimensional people will be staring at my property. Thing I'm concerned about is it, we do have a live, work, play neighborhood as it already is. This is a, this is a beautiful design. And you know this could be a lot better than a lot of other things that we've run into. But we're also, you know I've got a house from 1890. I've got single pane windows and I'm going to be sitting in there hearing noise 3:00, 4:00 o'clock in the morning. I mean how long is this going to go to with you know what the concert hall right there, are people coming out automatic parking garage. It is a total change of things. We also have people you know, as all of us know, people fly down Whitaker Street right there, and we're talking about the entrance being on Whitaker Street. That would be nice to slow down some of the traffic there but there's a lot of things that concern me about that. Typically just the noise of it. It does change the residential neighborhood, changes the neighborhood quite a bit. It is something. I mean it could be a lot worse things here but we need to you know, we need to make sure that neighborhood keeps its structure of what it is and who we've been. We organically grew to be this great community. And I think a lot of us feel that other parts of downtown have kind of forced us into this neighborhood because so much large development has come in. So thank you so much. That's my concern.

Heather Gordon: I'll be brief. I'm Heather Gordon. I'm with the Savannah Tree Foundation. The Savannah Tree Foundation would support the Starland Village development if development and construction plans are modified to both protect the existing tree canopy and plant new trees in improved environments. Realistically, with the current plans there are 6 to 7 of the City's mature canopy trees are likely to be damaged during construction past the point of having long-term health. We would like to see an assessment of the trees on this property to evaluate their health and their viability from the City. With building modifications, there may be an opportunity to save some of these mature trees. Among our recommendations, one specific modification Savannah Tree Foundation encourages would be a setback from building on the lot line. In our discussions with Forum Group they have been open to modifying their project to better protect the tree canopy and the critical root zones. With those changes, Savannah Tree Foundation will support this development project.

Heather Gordon: There was some questions for my contact information and I will provide that. Absolutely.

Alderman Foster: I was over Friday with the City Manager and senior staff at the church and we were trying to look and measure from the ground looking at those trees, which is what makes that neighborhood so wonderful. How old are those trees, those big oaks?

Heather Gordon: I don't have the specific facts but I believe that they were planted around 1900 to 1920.

Alderman Foster: And the way we were trying to measure, and one of the staff members said going from three stories to five stories would put the building probably a full story maybe 10 plus feet above the top of those trees. I mean, did you all do that?

Heather Gordon: So I'm not an arborist. I do want to go on record for that. I represent the nonprofit, but from that perspective the trees have probably done the growing they're going to do. We won't be getting a lot more height off of them, but I believe where they are now and again we haven't done specific measurements, you would still lose a significant amount of canopy with where the buildings are currently designed.

Alderman Foster: Well it was clear that those limbs would at least on two maybe three trees are going to have to be cut, because they stick so far out and so I don't know what the impact is to large oak trees like that but I know when they get limited places for their roots to go because of street sidewalks and they get disturbed you cut half the tree out. What you're saying is they're probably going to die.

Heather Gordon: The concern we have is that if a tree is under stress, which the construction process especially if you're pruning it drastically or affecting the root zone that stress may not affect the tree today but within the next five to 10 years we might have to pull that tree out.

Alderman Foster: Thank you.

Alderman Hall: You did say that tree is at its height now, that it's not going to grow anymore?

Heather Gordon: I would certainly want to defer to an arborist, but I believe that they are, they are mature trees at this point it.

Alderman Hall: But properly pruned tree...

Heather Gordon: That's why we'd like to have an assessment done by the City to evaluate what the health of those are. If the health suggests that the trees don't have more than 10 years left to live. You know that's a factor we want to consider. But if those trees have 20 to 30 years we should do what we can to preserve them.

Alderman Johnson: But these trees are I think estimate I remember about the early 1900s, so well over 100 years old. So the fact that they are damaged or die within a couple of years is still a major loss.

Heather Gordon: The stress can be very hard on them, yes.

Alderman Miller: That said, we have to looking at these trees. We have sidewalks all the way up to the trunks. We have bricks all the way up to the trunks. We have streets come up over the roots. Is there anything in this construction will do to damage those trees or not already been done.

Heather Gordon: Yes it could be. If you prune too much alone just losing too much of its canopy can be extra stressful for a tree. The parking of heavy construction equipment on top of the root system will add to the compaction that's there and damage the roots. So there is the risk that you could have additional problems for them. Not, the trees were certainly happier when they were planted on dirt roads before. And that's part of the conversation we've had with the Forum Group. Let's also be talking about projects that could be implemented now to help create healthy tree canopy down the road. There may be some opportunities in their design that they can help us compensate for some of that in the future.

Alderman Durrence: [question directed to Robert McCorkle] In light of the information about the trees and I know that there's a lot of concern about that, I have my own concerns. But what we're being specifically asked to address today is text amendment to allow this building to be built. If we did not do that. And if someone just came in there with the TC-2 zoning that that lot has right now and built a building within the restrictions of that zoning code. What would be the impact on the trees?

Robert McCorkle: To clarify its TC-1. On the block that the church is located it is required by existing ordinance that the setback to be consistent with the existing contributing building on a structure which is zero lot line. So in the parking lot over here you can currently build a 45 foot tall building at zero lot line on the front of that which is going to have the same effect on trees that our building will have on trees or any construction has on trees. On the City lot its zoned TC-1 and it has a maximum five feet street set back and it will similar answer if you build a three story building. I mean you can see, if you build a three story building or you can build a 45 foot tall building on the site now in the same generally the same place we're asking for it unless it becomes a City park the trees are going to be an issue. My client has, is completely committed to saving the trees. We have met with the Savannah Tree Foundation multiple times. We have already engaged the arborist that they recommended to us to use to do the study that they're asking be done. It's already been engaged and is going to take place. That study is going to determine the health of the trees as they currently exist. How many years they have left. How much pruning can be done without hurting them. We will then use that study and if we have to adjust our project through the site planning process and that's what we'll do. But we, we really, really want to

keep these trees and have no intention of doing anything to harm it and our zoning or does text amendment we're asking today, which I think is what you're getting at, isn't going to make a bit of difference about whether or not the trees get saved.

Steve Arove: Steve Arove. I originally did a CAD drawing I presented at the MPC meeting on the overhead projector but I converted this to a handmade drawing. It's pretty crude actually but it's a quarter inch to the foot scale. And I've checked the measurements twice with 100 foot tape and the elevations I did with this thing called a laser inclinometer mounted on a tripod that can measure the incline and then calculates the sign of the hypotenuse is what it does to get the elevation. But mainly what I was trying to do here was try to show the scope of the proposed project in relationship to the existing structures. The height of the church, the Epworth Church, see there is and I calculated at 51 feet 3 inches not off by a huge amount, they say 53 feet, and the area in red of course is the proposed development and I don't show any of the setbacks because that's not what you're voting on, you're voting on fifty-eight foot height.

Mayor DeLoach: No, it makes a big difference. A set back on a building and when you set back, you set back each time, it does make a huge difference on the look of a building.

Steve Arove: As for the look of the building I certainly agree with that. I absolutely agree with you but I don't believe the text amendment has any wording in it that says that they're going to be, have to give a certain setbacks. I think it just says that they're be allowed to build 58 feet high and to the property line. I also checked the measurements with SAGIS and found out they're pretty close to agreement. For example SAGIS says that the property line from the church [inaudible] on the other side of 38th is 40 feet and when I measured the width of 38th Street I got like almost exactly 30 feet from inside of curb to inside of curb. So that means that the property lines are five foot past the inside of the curb. So that's what that's showing here is 145 feet of frontage next to the two Victorians on near 37th Street.

Alderman Shabazz: Grab your mic for me and come in front of your work so you can orient me and the public. Okay, so starting on this end, tell me what is here and move all the way down so that we can understand what you have here.

Steve Arove: Okay, this is a structure that's existing on the corner of 39th and Bull. I think it's currently occupied by an architectural firm. It is probably Victorian era structure because of the low hipped roof but it's been kind of reclad at some point in time maybe the 50s or 60s. The next is a 100 foot lot of frontage along Bull Street that the developer would like to build on. I think it's mainly the office, the flex office space, and that shows 58 feet height, which converts to like 14 ½ inches on the quarter inch scale. The next is the classroom/office space that was added onto the Epworth Church and the developer from what I understand wants to build to 54 feet, in other words add a fourth floor to the current three story structure. Then of course there's the Epworth Church, here shows 38th Street, with the 30 foot width, this shows the five foot setback from 38th Street and the hundred and forty five foot long proposed structure with again a 58 foot height fronting on Bull Street between 37th and 38th. Then there are two Victorian houses. This one stands on the corner of 37th and Bull, and this was the next one going south. I believe they are both being used as office space rather than residential space.

Alderman Shabazz: Alright, thank you so much.

Alderman Hall: On your drawings you didn't show the setbacks?

Steve Arove: No. One thing I didn't have, I didn't have renditions for what this is going to look like. And the second thing was, well I mean if it's in the text amendment that's fine, but I don't think it's in there and they can step back in.

Alderman Johnson: Sir, is this really a fair representation in that it's not street, a street level view is it?

Steve Arove: This is a scale elevation.

Alderman Johnson: I mean this picture right here the one that Mr. McCorkle presented that you see from the street you see everything in relation to everything else you see windows here, even in this form it's kind of misleading. You wouldn't see that from a street level view?

Alderman Shabazz: Is that a front view?

Steve Arove: It is a front view from an elevation along Bull Street. It is scaled down a quarter inch to one foot scale, it's a common architectural scale. I'm just showing massing.

Joe Volpe: My name is Joe Volpe and I live on the corner of 38th and Whitaker across from where this parking garage would be built. I'm also a young artist and young professional who works in the area. I live, work, and play already there just fine. I have two concerns, one concern is on traffic jams involved with this robotic parking garage. A 35 second wait time is a long time at 5 o'clock. My second concern is these structures. They are targeting my demographic. This feels disingenuous to me and I feel a little hurt. The local culture in that area and it's one of the reasons I moved there and choose to live there. So thank you.

Robert McCorkle: It's difficult for developers to get people that are for projects to come here and sit here today and do that. I've got copies of all the letters and emails that were sent to y'all including from Ellie Tran who owns the Vault across the street supporting our project who is subject to the RFP. Her letter was published in the paper today. We also put out a poll to people and got 99 signatures supporting the project in addition to that. And so quickly in its response to a couple of things. This is not spot zoning, that's a reworking of the what spot zoning means. We're not rezoning the property, we are leaving the property zoned exactly as it is, which is consistent with the zoning districts that exist around it now. The letters that we sent out, we sent out through the neighborhood association. The neighborhood association itself delivered it to the individual residents. We, when I say that we spoke to everyone who wanted to speak to us, we fielded every call, fielded every letter. We got up at the meeting where we were being opposed and fielded questions from everybody that was there. We specifically drafted this text amendment, staff specifically helped us draft this text amendment so that we did not affect other properties, so that we did not change the Mid-city District and completely change everything that's happening around it. I'm not up here today telling you that this is appropriate on every site in the Mid-city. It's not. We suggesting that it's appropriate in the Bull Street corridor. Look at pages 7 and 8 on the pages I handed you and you can see the trees going down the street in the view of these buildings you can't even see the top of the church on the top of the buildings as they currently set. And so I think that diagram one thing it's true. People don't address buildings and straight blocks like that. I think the pictures that we've provided, they're professionally done, are much more representative of what is going to look like. One thing is important, is that length of that thing which is about two arm lengths of mine. I'm 6 foot 4, I think he said it was about 12 feet tall. That's the variance that we're asking for, that piece of paper right there. We can build 45 feet now. We are asking for is 58 so that that piece of white paper was 12 feet and we're asking for 13 feet. I don't think it's such a dramatic change that we are somehow going to affect the lifestyle or the total atmosphere of Starland and through this project and through this amendment. As you heard we have the support of the neighborhood association, that was hard earned support. Believe me we have the support the neighborhood association, we have the support the City Manager as I understand it. He voted for it at the MPC. We have the support of the Metropolitan Planning Commission who voted 9 to 2 with the same commentary and the same objections from individual citizens to recommend approval to y'all from the Metropolitan Planning Commission. I would ask you all to support all of those recommendations that support this change and not to not to turn away a good project, a good project that is trying to add community things. We need height because we want to have a public park, and flex office space, and artist studios. These are things that are built for Starland and for our community around us. We don't have to do them. We want to do them and we would ask that you not pass on a good project because of fear of some other unrelated project that's going to take place somewhere else in the future.

Hearing closed upon motion of Alderman Johnson, seconded by Alderman Durrence, and unanimously carried.

Alderman Johnson: I think this is a wonderful project. It's a cool project. I think it definitely represents coolness at his best. But in my mind it's also a fundamental mismatch. It's classic in my mind gentrification. This is a neighborhood, a neighborhood and a corridor in transition, it has been transition for quite some time and still trying to find its way. You have new businesses, new people who've relocated there, but you have people who have been there for years. You have smaller businesses, community, neighborhood businesses that had been there for years and have found their footing. These types of projects will most definitely make those types of things go away. You know we're here not talking necessarily about site plans or design, but we are talking about issues of traffic and issues of density that have not necessarily been addressed and once it's done, it's done. And so for this corridor which is already bustling and a lot of movement and a lot of people and a lot of cars. And now and you now you ingest more into this equation I think spells very badly for this neighborhood, this neighborhood in transition, this neighborhood still trying to find its way. So I'll just leave it there.

Alderman Durrence: Alderman Foster remembers this neighborhood from the 90s and Alderman Thomas remembered it from the 80s. I remember it from the 50s and 60s. And Travis made the comment that Savannah is not a big city and certainly relative to Miami or Atlanta it is not. But it is also not the village I grew up in. And we have to acknowledge that things are changing here. In fact things have been changing here from the beginning. And they are going to continue to change. Maybe it hasn't found its way yet. Maybe this is the way. The thing that we have to anticipate what's coming next. Not what has done our past. We want to preserve that as much as we can where it's useful to the community. But we have to be looking to what happens after all of us old people are gone. What's going to happen with the younger generation of people coming here and what they're looking for. When we talk about some of the issues that are problematic here, many of those things are issues that are going to be changing relatively soon in the future, parking issues and parking demands are just one of those things. We are in a constant state of flux. That's not going to change. If Foram walked away from this project tomorrow and sold the property they own and did not close on the property they're looking to buy, somebody else will. That church is going to wind up being an event space. Somebody is going to be doing something there. Whether this project does it or somebody else does it. Whatever pressures are going to come from that are going to be there anyway. If this project isn't built the way it's projected something else is going to be built there it's going to create the same problem with the trees, it's going to create the same issues that everybody is concerned about now about noise and about parking and trash and all the kinds of things that are essentially the nature of living in an urban center. At one point the Landmark District, if you go back far enough, was nothing more than cottages and that eventually turned into much larger scale homes, scale changes, context changes. At one point the urban core of the city of Savannah was north of Gaston Street. Today that's Victory Drive not Gaston. So, I think this is a good project. I think that the effort that this developer has put into working with the community is an essential part of this project. And I think one of the things that's really important about that to keep in mind is if we don't move forward with this project, one of the lessons and I thank Jason for this comment, one of the lessons that comes out of this to the next developer is that there's not much point in doing the kind of intensive community networking in conversation that they've been trying to do. So this project has my absolute support. Thank you.

Alderman Bell: So, I live in the Victorian District which is just adjacent to this district. So I consider this somewhat of my community. I like the project because it actually is the live, work, play concept which I really have some strong feelings for because I have something that I think is perhaps appropriate for some of the areas in our city and I think this is one. I also recognize that, and I've talked to citizens, recognize that change is going to happen. Change is inevitable. I think it's important. The thing that I admire about this project and these developers I guess most is that you have engaged the residents and the public in this process and it appears to me that it's been a process where there's been give and take and you've listened to the concerns of the residents and the organizations around the neighborhood who have vested interests. And I think that's so important because that's one thing we push for so much on this Council, make sure that a developer

doesn't come into our community and thrust upon us what their ideas of improvements are without engaging the citizens and this seems to be, from what I can see, civic engagement at its best. And then I was happy to hear organizations, other than the residents, come forth and say we've had, the Tree Foundation, we've had discussions with the developers as well and we have gotten their consent or their commitment to work, continue to work with us as this process develops. And I don't know about my colleagues, I don't know how each of them will vote, but I can think of a lot worse things that could happen and if this project isn't passed if we don't pass this one something is going to go there and I just feel like we have an opportunity here to actually have a voice, we the citizens, we the residents have a good opportunity to work with a developer that is willing to listen and work with us. So, on that note it has my support.

Alderman Miller: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. You know I had to talk myself into this project. I did an awful lot of research and talked to an awful lot of people, sat through an awful lot of presentations, and I asked a lot of questions on my own, got a lot of e-mails which I did appreciate. I tried to respond to every single one of them. And I tried to look at everything that was, that was said to me. I don't see this as certainly not the worst that can happen I see this as a very, very good project. We've asked for diversity. We've asked for economic rents. We've asked for density. We've asked for mixed use. Can't even read my writing down here, and sensitivity to the neighborhood and I know some people aren't, don't necessarily agree that we've been sensitive enough. But to me it's amazing how sensitive these developers have been. We've looked at everything and that includes what's there now. We talk about zero lot lines, well we got zero lot lines there now. Now we talk about buildings that were taller than the trees where you could build those there now. We talk about you know parking, well they're adding more parking than what the City required. We talk about the trees and that was my main concern the trees. And I tried asking the Tree Foundation exactly where are we on this thing and I understand you don't really know because we don't know what's going to happen at this point but I'm convinced that these developers are intent on keeping the trees, doing everything we can because they need the trees. It adds to the entire complex and the height of the buildings. First of all the experts tell us that over 30 feet you don't notice them anyway. But then we have these trees there and you got a 55 foot church there, we're talking about only another five feet. And I do think Van you are right when we looked at the drawing, it was not representative of what's going to be there because we have stepped back the things. We've asked other builders to do in other locations that they wouldn't do, this group has done and is willing to do more. That has swayed me over toward support of this project. This is not a neighborhood. These are not houses. This is a business district. Even the houses they are businesses. Now there is one, I think there is one house that actually touches to the project and one across the street from it. Everything else there is a business and it's going to go that way. We have a chance here to shape where this area is going to go. This is the type project if we were going to try to bring one we'd have a hell of a time finding a developer who would come in and do what we're doing here. Now they're trying to do it all at one time so it looks big. But if we started off with individual buildings we probably wouldn't have this much of an objection, but we would have an objection. We talk about the Vault restaurant and how we're so happy with it, with the parking and the restaurant and everything. But I remember when we tried to get the license for the Vault, we also had a group here that complained about how was going to destroy the neighborhood. I think we've got to go forward. So it has my support.

Alderman Foster: Mr. Mayor I represent everybody who lives in this district. I represent everybody in the city. And so I've tried to spend a lot of time understanding this, understanding how it impacts not only this neighborhood but our city as a whole. And I guess one of the, one of the things that, that bothers me more than anything has nothing to do with the developer, has more to do with the lack of leadership in our own governmental community to get things done on a timely basis and to let our citizens know and prospective developers, investors, and property owners to understand if they buy a house behind Starland that somebody is not going to come in and change the whole district and put in a new zone that says we can put a skyscraper in. So we are not being consistent with what we have been saying for 10 years, now it's 11. So give us a NewZo and let's stick to it. Now if I bought, and you're wrong Alderman Miller, there are several houses that will be facing these buildings, I was just over there looking at these Victorian houses that had been renovated, some folks live at them. But these people came in and bought these houses in a neighborhood that wasn't the best neighborhood in the world, but it's now a much better neighborhood partly because they renovated those homes and moved into them. And now they will not be able to see those trees and I don't care if you, if you don't change the zone you can build up but you're not going over the top of those trees. We just looked at them. These folks will not have a parking lot staring at them and the people for blocks around in that neighborhood the Victorian neighborhood and Thomas Square and other areas that flow onto Victory Drive and 37th Street and Whitaker and Barnard. They're the ones that are going to have the impact of all the traffic. We have just battled through several battles and that's why I'm saying I don't see the consistency here. An apartment building that would have gone extra stories between Abercorn and Forsyth. While we didn't have a final vote, the Council basically sent the message that you don't have the votes, and so the developer walked away from it. Well there only one or two houses that could see that, the rest was facing the park. So just a few blocks away we said no you can't build that high, because the zoning doesn't permit it. So now we're going to go a few blocks down Bull Street and we're going say okay you can build one here. I'm not sure I understand the difference. But the mass that is going to go in there on either side of that church is big mass and it's going to forever change that community. We fought the extension of more hotels into our historic homes and neighborhoods downtown. We fought the expansion of vacation rentals downtown. I have neighbors who have moved out. We're not exactly pleased by the fact that we can hardly get out of our carport and get down to the street because were run over by a tourist downtown. And so a lot of folks moved out of downtown and moved up Bull Street and into the Victorian neighborhood and Thomas neighborhood, these are becoming nice residential neighborhoods with commercial services. And now we're going to take the equivalent of a 40 million dollar hotel and plop it right in the middle of it, just a little different name. So I think we're being inconsistent. And I'm very disappointed that we're going to move to this kind of development. I mean if it was up to me I would say let's stop all the new development until the MPC gets the NewZo here and we say this is what Savannah is going to be and that we have a master plan. So if you want to blame anybody blame it on ourselves. Because for the last 11 years we haven't gotten what we said we should have. So I can't support this because I think it's wrong. If I bought a house over there I bought it under the existing zoning. And this is just going to move those folks right on out and we'll just see more development going on there.

Alderman Hall: While I respect everybody's opinion up here and I do, but these issues, zoning issues, are some of the toughest that we deal with. While change is very difficult for some people, Savannah is changing. I don't think for one minute that this new development will put anybody in the Starland District out of business. I think if it would do anything it will bring more business opportunities to the district and the existing businesses will do just fine, because the influx of tourists coming into that area. So, I heard arguments on both sides today and I'm ready to vote and I'm going to support this project. Thank you.

Alderman Shabazz: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I've been tossing with this situation and most times, probably about 95 percent of the time, 96 percent of the time, when issues are not in my district I would go with the alderman's decision, most times. And I came in here ready to do that. But as, during this day, the course of this day, and then most specifically, hearing the voices of the people. This project, this project is an architectural marvel. I am impressed with the architectural idea and vision, from the church, architecturally how you all have this drawn out. I like it. I like the project. I really do. The only thing is, is that we're not talking about putting this in the Fifth District, and it would be such a great place. If this doesn't pass, over on 516 near Chatham Parkway there's a whole lot of land and you won't have to worry about none of these issues, parking or anything, I'm just being an advocate for great, a great project. But where it is now, in here today, I am the voice for the people that stand there and I am your Alderwoman and I'm going to be voting no against this project.

Mayor DeLoach: I think the gentleman that brought this project and his family are a fine group of people who have done well and have brought it back to Savannah and are participating in Savannah in many ways that we don't even know. They're putting in a project that they have talked to any number of people that would take time out to talk to them. Brian the difference in that project that they've got and the one you were talking about over on Forsyth was the fact that the guy would not participate he would not agree to break the, break up the walls. He would not agree to do setbacks. They have gone further than any other person that I know of to give you set backs, to break up the design, to give you different individual buildings that you can look at, and not focus on a full monolith piece of architecture. They've done all that. They've done everything they can to make this thing fit and come in and change a neighborhood. It will change that neighborhood. But I think it will change that neighborhood for the better. I feel like it will be a quality product. It will be material. There will be things happening there that you and I don't even understand at this time from these young kids coming in there and participating in those areas. So I'm excited about the people who are developing this. I'm excited about what they're bringing to the table and it's going to make Savannah a better place as we move forward, so I look forward to voting for this and I'm ready to call for a vote.

Approved upon motion of Alderman Durrence, seconded by Alderman Miller, and carried. A board vote was taken with the following voting in favor: Mayor DeLoach, Aldermen Bell, Miller, Durrence, Thomas and Hall. Aldermen Foster, Johnson and Shabazz voted against.

ORDINANCES - FIRST AND SECOND READING

[10. Motion to Amend Article L of the 2018 Revenue Ordinance to Provide for Discounts to the Fire Services Fee](#)

[Savannah Fire Discount Manual](#)

Alderman Johnson: I'll just say it, I said before, the reality is that the people who most need those discounts cannot get them under the way this is drawn out. We know that the people who are most impoverished, those that are poor and are committed to those living paycheck to paycheck don't necessarily own houses, they rent, and so therefore they are ineligible by definition as this go. I've explained that before, I'm saying it again for the record now. Thank you.

Alderman Foster: But we do have the trust fund for them that they'll be getting information on how to apply for.

Alderman Johnson: For property, for property owners of property, not for tenants. My point is, is that most people can't afford their own homes so how do they get the benefit particularly for investors and property owners who passed those fees on to their tenants. It creates a hardship for them, so I wish there was some way that we could provide some relief for them, which we have not done that so I just want to make sure I put that down in the record.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED: MARCH 29, 2018 upon motion of Alderman Thomas, seconded by Alderman Durrence, and unanimously carried.

ORDINANCES - SECOND READING

[11. Motion to Amend Article U, Section 5a of the 2018 Revenue Ordinance to Provide for Water and Sewer Connection Fees](#)

[2018 Revenue Ordinance Article U Amendment.pdf](#)

ADOPTED AND APPROVED: MARCH 29, 2018 upon motion of Alderman Miller, seconded by Alderman Thomas, and unanimously carried.

RESOLUTIONS

[12. Motion to Adopt Resolution Rescinding the Broughton Street Urban Renewal Plan of 1986, as Amended](#)

[Broughton Street Urban Renewal Resolution.pdf](#)

[1986 Urban Renewal Plan for the Broughton Street Redevelopment Project with Minutes Amendments and Certification.pdf](#)

Alderman Foster: Number 12 is a motion to adopt a resolution rescinding the Broughton Street Urban Renewal Plan of 1986 as amended. I just wanted to mention on this one that this was put in place, actually went into effect back in 1992, with the establishment by the State Legislature. The Savannah Development and Renewal Authority specifically designed for the renovation of Broughton Street. And I just want to say to the public that that's probably the most successful authority that the State Legislature has ever done for the City of Savannah, because from the day we started that in 1992 we successfully took a street that was

once the main street of Savannah for decades which had turned into 70 percent vacancy on the street floor and probably 100 percent vacancy on the second or third floors. There was no such thing as a condo or rental space. So from that moment on through the leadership of SDRA, and my former friend Don Mendonsa who put into place some wonderful things like sprinkler subsidies and storefront subsidies. Many of you probably weren't aware of. But it got Broughton Street kicked off. We did some things like the old Maas Brothers building which had been closed for decades. We got that negotiated and into the hands of SCAD and it became the library and then the theater across the street and the rest is history. This new renewal plan no longer needs to exist because it has been fully renewed basically and there are a few things in there that are a hindrance according to City staff, so we need to just do away with that, and this is to adopt a resolution to rescind that.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED: MARCH 29, 2018 upon motion of Alderman Hall, seconded by Alderman Foster, and unanimously carried.

[13. Motion to Adopt Resolution Requesting the General Services Administration to Respect the Oglethorpe Plan in Selecting a Federal Courthouse Annex Design](#)

[Federal Courthouse Annex Resolution.pdf](#)

[Federal Courthouse Annex Rendering1.jpg](#)

Alderman Durrence: Mr. Mayor, item 13 motion to adopt Resolution requesting the General Services Administration to respect the Oglethorpe Plan in selecting Federal courthouse annex design. The two courthouse annex buildings facing Telfair Square that were built proximately 30 years ago. Most people have felt like were inappropriate for the plan. At the time the design standards that we had in Savannah were not incorporated into the design and those buildings were built. At this point the General Services Administration is preparing to take those down and build something new. The original plans that were introduced continued to be what many people felt like were inappropriate to the community and so a number of people in the community have been working to try to get GSA to respect the Oglethorpe Plan and to do something that's consistent with that. I'd like to particularly recognize some of the folks that have been working very hard on that. Certainly, Scott Barnard, a local architect, has been helping to lead the charge. Belinda Allen and Bob Rosenthal, from the Downtown Neighborhood Association, Daniel Cary and Historic Savannah Foundation, the MPC staff with Ellen Harris, Andre Patterson in the Victoria Neighborhood Association, Beehive Press, Telfair Academy, Gail Steves and friends of Massie School, are just some of the folks that have really put a lot of effort into this. There have been hundreds of people attending meetings and writing letters to GSA about this. Congressman Buddy Carter's office and staff, and Senator Johnny Isakson's staff has been attending these meetings to try to get support from GSA to respect this plan. And I just felt like it was important that the City of Savannah weigh in on that as well. So we have a resolution that we will send to GSA asking that they do that and I look for approval. Thank you.

Alderman Johnson: Mr. Mayor a comment. Commendations and kudos to Alderman Durrence for taking up our charge on this matter. I think it's very important, I think that the manner in which we are moving forward is prudent and strategic, and I thank him for leading in that way.

RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE FEDERAL GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION RESPECT THE OGLETHORPE PLAN AND SAVANNAH'S HISTORY IN SELECTING A FEDERAL COURTHOUSE ANNEX DESIGN ON TELFAIR SQUARE

WHEREAS, the Federal General Services Administration has generously agreed to subject the design of the Federal Courthouse Annex to Savannah's rigorous Landmark Historic District building approval process;

WHEREAS, the Federal plan to demolish its two existing buildings on Telfair Square provides a singular opportunity to design and erect a structure that is much more visually compatible with the neighborhood and the Landmark Historic District; and

WHEREAS, Telfair Square is one of Savannah's four original squares laid out by Gen. Oglethorpe, and remains one of our most important and picturesque squares; and

WHEREAS, President Street is part of the original and increasingly fragile Oglethorpe City plan which Savannah wishes to keep intact in accordance with Department of Interior guidelines for the Landmark Historic District designation; and

WHEREAS, secure annex parking should be reduced to the absolute minimum required and then placed underground to preserve the second trust lot;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Savannah City Council respectfully requests that the General Services Administration continue to work with the appropriate design review elements and the citizenry of Savannah to design and erect a courthouse annex on Telfair Square that is visually compatible with the neighborhood, and of which we can all be proud.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED: MARCH 29, 2018 upon motion of Alderman Durrence, seconded by Alderman Johnson, and unanimously carried.

SAVANNAH AIRPORT COMMISSION ACTION ITEMS

14. Motion to Approve Five-Year Contract for Airport Business and Financial Consulting with DKMG Consulting, LLC and Ricondo & Associates, Inc.

[airport-business-and-financial-consultant \(1\).pdf](#)

Approved upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded Alderman Miller, and unanimously carried per the City Manager's recommendations.

15. Motion to Approve Local Sponsor Share for the Interstate 95 Airways Interchange Improvements Study

[Airport Request I-95 Airways Avenue Transportation Study Revised.pdf](#)

Approved upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded Alderman Miller, and unanimously carried per the City Manager's recommendations.

16. Motion to Renew Annual Maintenance and Service Agreement with Kone, Inc.

[Kone Service Price 2018-2019 3-6-2018.pdf](#)

[2018 Savannah Airport Rate Escalation letter 2-20-2018.pdf](#)

[Kone Amendment #2 3-25-2009.pdf](#)

Approved upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded Alderman Miller, and unanimously carried per the City Manager's recommendations.

17. Motion to Renew Annual Maintenance and Service Agreement with Johnson Controls, Inc.

[2018 Savannah Airport Renewal Letter \(HVAC Only\) 2-20-2018.pdf](#)

[Johnson Controls Amendment #1 fully signed 4-8-2011.pdf](#)

Approved upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded Alderman Miller, and unanimously carried per the City Manager's recommendations.

BIDS AND CONTRACTS

18. Motion to Award Design Services Contract for Highlands Fire Station to Kern & Co., LLC (Event No. 5779)

[Purchasing Summary.pdf](#)

[Highlands Scope.pdf](#)

[Highlands Fire Station Design Funding.pdf](#)

Approved upon motion of Alderman Johnson, second by Alderman Bell, and unanimously carried per the City Manager's recommendation.

19. Motion to Award Design Services Contract for Sanitation Facilities to Cogdell Mendrala (Event No. 5802)

[Purchasing Summary.pdf](#)

[Dean Forest Scope.pdf](#)

[Dean Forest Design Srvcs Funding.pdf](#)

Approved upon motion of Alderman Johnson, seconded by Alderman Shabazz, and unanimously carried per the City Manager's recommendation.

20. Motion to Procure Fire Pumpers from Sutphen Corporation (Event No. 4551)

[Bid Tabulations.pdf](#)

[Fire Pumpers Funding Verification.pdf](#)

[Fire Pumpers Specifications.pdf](#)

[Purchasing Summary.pdf](#)

Approved upon motion of Alderman Miller, seconded by Alderman Bell, and unanimously carried per the City Manager's recommendation.

[21. Motion to Approve Contract Modification No. 1 for Phase 1 of Central Precinct with Johnson-Laux \(Event No. 5688\)](#)

[Central Precinct Modification Funding.pdf](#)

[Purchasing Summary.pdf](#)

Approved upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded by Alderman Thomas, and unanimously carried per the City Manager's recommendation.

[22. Motion to Approve Contract Modification No. 5 for President Street and General McIntosh Improvements with McLendon Enterprises \(Event No. 2379\)](#)

[Purchasing Summary.pdf](#)

[Funding Verification.pdf](#)

Approved upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded by Alderman Thomas, and unanimously carried per the City Manager's recommendation.

[23. Motion to Approve Contract Modification No. 1 for River Street Improvements with McLendon Enterprises \(Event No. 4803\)](#)

[Purchasing Summary.pdf](#)

[Funding Verification.pdf](#)

Approved upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded by Alderman Thomas, and unanimously carried per the City Manager's recommendation.

Alderman Thomas: Mr. Mayor before we move to agreements, on item number 23, I know it was a motion for a contract modification. What type, just what were the improvements there?

City Manager Hernandez: What happened there, as we were doing some waterline improvements, we discovered that there was an existing storm water the line that had collapsed, and so this is to pay the contractor to go in and replace that storm water line.

Alderman Thomas: Okay and that's great. I think we need to have a very serious conversation about aesthetic improvements to River Street and I know that we have some things that are coming, but River Street looks terrible. I mean it, really it's our living room to the world. And I mean if you go down and look at the flower beds along there and look at the sidewalks. I mean it does not look what I think is ideal for our main living room in our community, and I think that we need to take a clear evaluation to see what we can do about that.

Alderman Durrence: Mr. Mayor I'd like to request that the 6th district donate some additional revenues downtown funding.

Alderman Thomas: Well actually we could also fight about how much revenue we do donate to that coming from the southside and south of DeRenne, but I'm just telling you if I knew that I could direct the monies that we do contribute to the general fund I don't think we would have a problem donating some money to Mr. Durrence.

City Manager Hernandez: As we briefed you last year. We are looking at doing the streetscape improvement project for River Street, Bay Street, and Broughton Street. We've been working with a design firm, EDSA, that has looked at all three of those. There are plans in place. My understanding is that some are out for engineering right now. So we do have long term plans to address the aesthetics of all three streets. But if there's something that we can do certainly in the short term to spruce up the landscaping and so forth we'll do that you know within existing resources.

Alderman Thomas: But there you go, just walk right out of here today. You know before you get in your car to go home, and just take a short walk and look at each of the main gardens and on the plaza itself just the first three or four and that'll be enough to tell you we need to come down here and do something about landscape.

City Manager Hernandez: But you also mentioned sidewalks.

Alderman Thomas: There are some sidewalks that are dirty. I mean I applaud the folks at Olympia Cafe that actually get out there and clean their sidewalks. But we have dirty sidewalks that are pure filthy to walk on. And you know some of these things only get clean when it rains.

City Manager Hernandez: Let me just address the sidewalks on River Street and Ms. Johnson can correct me if I'm wrong. My understanding with the sidewalks and River Street that is actually the responsibility of the property owner and it is not, it's not, it's not a typical sidewalk like any other. Like for example on Broughton Street. River Street because of its unique nature the sidewalks actually are the responsibility of the property owner.

Alderman Thomas: Well I don't want to, I definitely don't get, I'd like to get out of lane and other people's districts but I would encourage the district representative, I would be happy to come down and just walk with them and just let's look at this together. I know that's why it's split but I think you know I think this is something that's worthy of us to take a look at, because when you look at the postcard to the world of the city of Savannah, River Street is one of those postcards, and I mean it does not look like that. It's like me and Julian have talked about those azaleas on Victory Drive, you know get it back to looking like it used to look.

[24. Motion to Renew Annual Contract for Savannah Police Department Uniforms with JDX and Smyrna Police Distributors, Inc. \(Event No. 3954\)](#)

[SPD Uniforms Bid Tab.pdf](#)

[SPD Uniforms Purchasing Summary.pdf](#)

[SPD Uniforms Funding Verification.pdf](#)

[SPD Uniform Scope.pdf](#)

Approved upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded by Alderman Thomas, and unanimously carried per the City Manager's recommendation.

[25. Notification of Emergency Procurement of Civic Center Ceiling Restoration from Johnson-Laux \(Event No. 5969\)](#)

[Purchasing Summary.pdf](#)

[Funding Verification.pdf](#)

Approved upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded by Alderman Thomas, and unanimously carried per the City Manager's recommendation.

[26. Motion to Renew an Annual Subscription for EMSI Software with EMSI \(Event No. 5880\)](#)

[Event No. 5880 - Purchasing Summary.pdf](#)

[Developer and Career Coach Software Funding.pdf](#)

Approved upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded by Alderman Thomas, and unanimously carried per the City Manager's recommendation.

AGREEMENTS

[27. Motion to Accept PY2016 Adult Worker Program \(Work Base Learning\) Grant Award in the amount of \\$175,000.00](#)

[WSC Adult Worker Backup.pdf](#)

Alderman Shabazz: Yes, Mr. Mayor, the City of Savannah has received a statement of a grant award for workforce incentives, innovation and opportunities for Delk workers program fund in the amount of 175,000 dollars to be spent on job placement, job training, and support services. I want to just point this out for the public, because things to improve our economic strength and poverty reduction is taking place. These funds have been directed through our City Manager's office. They will be used for the Savannah Fire because still our number one priority on this Council is public safety. Some of these funds will be used for the Savannah fire and rescue department's emergency medical technician programs and also in our community because how the fund can be structured, it can go towards certain businesses and management of certain businesses for training and also bringing employees into their businesses, new employees. And this is what the Byrd Cookie Company is going to be doing, to their expansion of their business with this grant. We are happy that we have received this grant. But I want to ask the City Manager if he could just expound on this grant that we receiving so that our public can be more educated and we can get more people working.

City Manager Hernandez: I'm happy to do that, Alderwoman Shabazz, this grant is will be administered through the WorkSource Coastal agency which is overseen by the City of Savannah on behalf of the ten county region. And these particular dollars just as you mentioned will help to pay for additional training for our public safety personnel in the fire department so that they can be trained and certified as emergency medical technicians. But the second component to this is to provide job training services to a business that we're fortunate to have here in the community that is the Byrd Cookie Company. They were being actively recruited by another state. And then they chose to stay in Savannah and also significantly expand their operation and working with our friends over at SEDA. We put together an incentive package in order for them to stay and to continue to expand and grow. And as part of that, through this grant we will be assisting them

with employment training. Right now they employ 90 full time employees and they are looking at bringing on an additional 50 to 75 employees as a result of the expansion and this grant will help provide the job training services for that expansion.

Approved upon motion of Alderman Shabazz, seconded by Alderman Miller, and unanimously carried per the City Manager's recommendation.

[28. Motion to Approve Water and Sewer Agreement for Single-Family Home on Champion Street](#)

[Eady Residence.pdf](#)

Approved upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded by Alderman Thomas, and unanimously carried per the City Manager's recommendation.

[29. Motion to Approve Water and Sewer Agreement for 412 Williamson Street](#)

[412 Williamson Street.pdf](#)

Approved upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded by Alderman Thomas, and unanimously carried per the City Manager's recommendation.

[30. Motion to Approve First Amendment to the Purchase and Sale Agreement for Riverwalk Extension](#)

[FIRST AMENDMENT TO PURCHASE AND SALE AGREEMENT FOR RIVERWALK AGREEMENT.pdf](#)

[Riverwalk Bulkhead Completion Estimate.pdf](#)

Approved upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded by Alderman Thomas, and unanimously carried per the City Manager's recommendation.

MISCELLANEOUS

[31. Motion to Approve Acquisition of Lot on E. 58th Street in Support of Edgemere/Sackville Park Development](#)

[Map of E. 58th Street.pdf](#)

Alderman Hall: This is a Savannah Shines Initiative and it is paid for by SPLOST. The appraised value of the property was \$27,500 and the property owner and the City agreed to \$30,000.

Approved upon motion of Alderman Hall, seconded by Alderman Shabazz, and unanimously carried.

[32. Motion to Approve a Major Subdivision of Yorktown Place, Lot 3](#)

[Major Subdivision Yorktown Place Lot 3 City Council.pdf](#)

[Supporting documentation Maps Vicinity Maps.pdf](#)

Approved upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded by Alderman Thomas, and unanimously carried.

ADDED AGENDA ITEMS

[33. Settlement of Workers' Compensation Claim](#)

City Attorney Stillwell: Mr. Mayor, this is the settlement of a claim by an employee named Robert Itti. He was a sanitation employee. He sustained injuries to his left shoulder and other body parts in connection with his duties. His claims have been settled for \$28,000, subject to Council approval. We recommend approval.

Approved upon motion of Alderman Johnson, seconded by Alderman Hall, unanimously carried.

34. Stillwell spoke, national opioid litigation

City Attorney Stillwell: Item number 34, Council, is where that sometime back you asked me to investigate the possibility of the City joining the national opioid litigation. There are hundreds of lawsuits pending against the manufacturers and distributors of opioids nationwide. Cities, counties, hospital authorities, states, and so we have investigated the possibility of joining that. We recommend that the City do institute the lawsuit against those companies that are causing or are alleged to be causing the major opioid addiction problems that we do have in the country. We have received presentations from several law firms and groups of national firms that are prosecuting these cases. After reviewing those we recommend that the City enter into a contingent fee contract with local counsel John Suthers. He's partnered with

the national Council of Motley Rice, which is a large firm in South Carolina that was one of the leading plaintiffs firms in the tobacco litigation. The contingent fee would be 25 percent of the recovery received by the City plus whatever the expenses are. That all will be advanced by the plaintiffs' lawyers. The City will not have any exposure until or unless it recovers money in the case. Motley Rice has a very large number of clients in this case. Mr Rice is one of the lead national council in the multi-district litigation to which all this is being assigned in the northern district of Ohio. The clients at this firm is already representing include the states of South Carolina, Alaska, Kentucky, New Hampshire and Montana, cities of Chicago, Albany County, New York, the City of Charleston, West Virginia, Newark, New Jersey, Miami, Florida, and many other cities. So I recommend that we enter into a contingent fee agreement recommendation 25 percent.

Approved upon motion of Alderman Bell, seconded by Alderman Miller, and unanimously carried.

Announcements

Mayor Pro Tem Bell announced that the deadline to apply for the Summer 500 Program is March 31, 2018, and encouraged junior and senior high school students, between the ages of 16 and 18, to apply. Applications for the 8-week, paid internship program are available on the City's website. It was noted that a record number of applicants had already been received. Alderman Shabazz noted that the students do get paid.

Alderman John Hall wished everyone a Happy Easter.

There being no further business, Mayor DeLoach declared this meeting of Council adjourned.

The video recording of the Council meeting can be found by copying and pasting the below link in your url:

<https://savannahgovtv.viebit.com/player.php?hash=gfq1pKbg3Yex>

Luciana M. Spracher, Acting Clerk of Council

