



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

## METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

*"Planning the Future - Respecting the Past"*

M E M O R A N D U M

**DATE:** JANUARY 14, 2020  
**TO:** THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF SAVANNAH  
**FROM:** METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION  
**SUBJECT:** MPC RECOMMENDATION

**PETITION REFERENCED:**

**Map Amendment to the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance**

**Zoning Map Amendment: Historic Carver Village/Flatman Village  
Conservation Overlay District**

**File No. 19-006958-ZA**

**Petitioner: Bridget Lidy for the City of Savannah**

**Leah G. Michalak, Director of Historic Preservation**

**MPC ACTION:**

**Approval** of the Historic Carver  
Village – Flatman Village Overlay  
Conservation District as requested.

**MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

**Approval** of the Historic Carver  
Village – Flatman Village Overlay  
Conservation District as requested.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** 10 + Chairman

Joseph Ervin, Chairman  
Thomas Branch  
Travis Coles  
Ellis Cook  
Karen Jarrett  
Lacy Manigault  
Tanya Milton  
Wayne Noha  
Eula Parker

Linder Suthers  
Joseph Welch

**PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:** Approve Staff Recommendation (11-0)

<b>APPROVAL</b> <b>Votes: 11</b>	<b>DENIAL</b> <b>Votes: 0</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Ervin Branch Cook Coles Jarrett Manigault Milton Noha Parker Suthers Welch		Smith Monohan Woiwode

Respectfully submitted,



Melanie Wilson  
Executive Director

/jh

Enclosure

cc Mark Massey, Clerk of Council  
Lester B. Johnson, Assistant City Attorney  
Jennifer Herman, Assistant City Attorney  
Beth Barnes, Department of Inspections





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## **METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION**

*"Planning the Future - Respecting the Past"*

M E M O R A N D U M

**TO: Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah**

**FROM: Metropolitan Planning Commission**

**DATE: January 14, 2020**

**SUBJECT: Map Amendment to the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance**  
**Zoning Map Amendment: Historic Carver Village/Flatman**  
**Village Conservation Overlay District**  
**File No. 19-006958-ZA**  
**Petitioner: Bridget Lidy for the City of Savannah**  
**Leah G. Michalak, Director of Historic Preservation**

**Issue:**

The City of Savannah, on behalf of the Carver Village Neighborhood Association, has filed a petition to designate the area from the centerline of West Gwinnett Street to the centerline of Allen Avenue to the centerline of Blun Avenue to the centerline of Endly Street as the "Historic Carver Village – Flatman Village Overlay Conservation District."

**Background:**

Carver Village is an established, historic neighborhood with a distinctive social and architectural history. Following the listing of Carver Village on the National Register of Historic Places in January 2019, the City of Savannah and the Carver Village Neighborhood Association now seek to protect the area from unnecessary demolition of historic buildings as well as prohibit lot recombination by establishing the Conservation District. This would require that all demolitions of historic buildings be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission at a public hearing and public notice would be provided; it would also prohibit all lot recombinations.

Established in 1948, Carver Village is a socially and architecturally significant neighborhood. The neighborhood was conceived and planned in 1947 as a "low cost negro housing development." The Carver Village Exclusive Colored Housing Development was the first of its kind, providing low cost loans to African American home buyers and providing City-funded roads, drainage, and water and sewer services. The American Small House design for the buildings in Carver Village was determined by a design competition; Cletus W. Bergen, a prominent Savannah architect, was chosen to design the model house for the development.



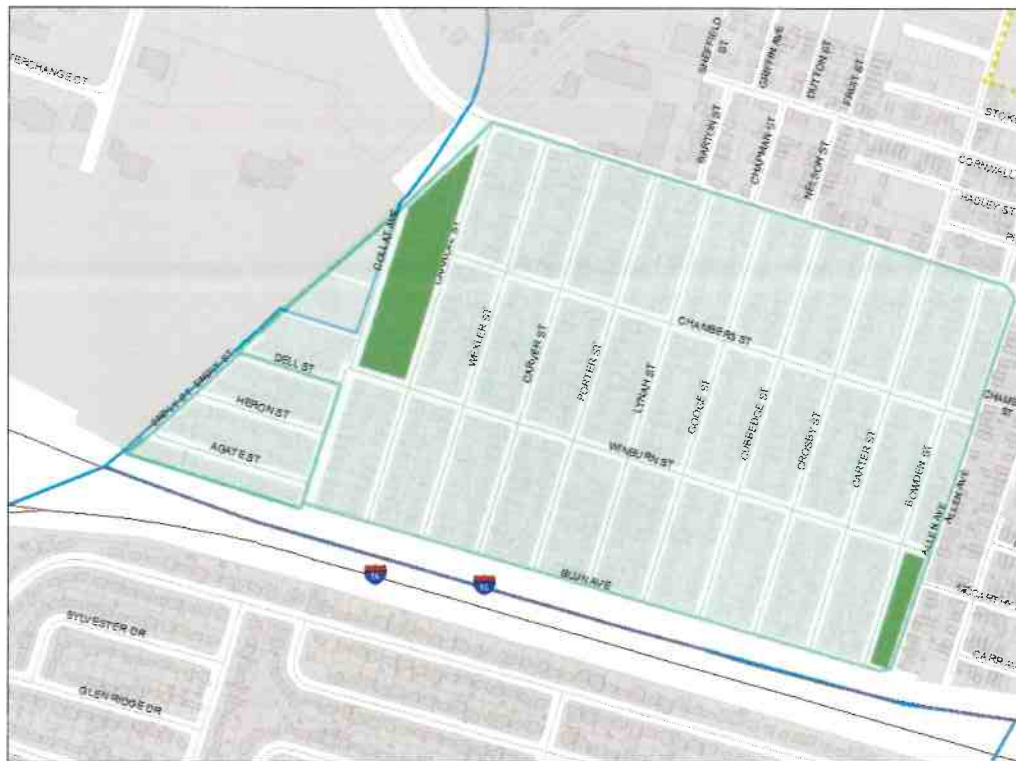
These images are screen shots from a video created about the neighborhood in 1949. The video is available on YouTube; search “carver village 1949.”

**Facts and Findings:**

1. **Public Notice:** All property owners within the district boundaries were sent notices of the proposed overlay on December 16, 2019. As of the writing of this report, staff did not receive any letters or emails from the public. Staff did receive several phone calls asking for clarification regarding the proposal.

In addition, City and MPC staff with the Neighborhood Association President (Rev. Chester Ellis) presented this proposal to the attendees of the December 16, 2019 Carver Village Neighborhood Association Meeting.

2. **Existing Development Pattern:** The area within the Conservation Overlay District is generally characterized as predominantly single family with some neighborhood scale commercial uses. Civic uses include two parks, a community center, and churches.
3. **Overlay Boundaries:** The overlay applies to a defined geographic area delineated in the associated map. The Historic Carver Village – Flatman Village Overlay Conservation District (CD-4) boundaries are from the centerline of West Gwinnett Street to the centerline of Allen Avenue to the centerline of Blun Avenue to the centerline of Endly Street. These boundaries include the Carver Village National Register Historic District as well as the neighborhood to the west known as Flatman Village; Flatman Village was requested to be included by the petitioner.



**Map 1: Historic Carver Village – Flatman Village Overlay Conservation District (CD-4)**

4. **Transportation Network:** West Gwinnett Street is the primary vehicular travel way in the area.
5. **Public Services and Facilities:** The properties identified on the corresponding map are served by the Savannah Police Department, City fire protection and by City water and sewer.
6. **Land Use Element:** The adopted Tri-Centennial Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map will not be amended as a result of the proposed overlay. Both the base zoning districts and existing land use categories will remain unchanged for properties within the overlay.
7. **Zoning:** Although the base zoning district will not be changed for any property in the overlay, the corresponding text amendment, which establishes the overlay, states that in the event of any conflict between the base district and the overlay the more restrictive standards shall apply.

#### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

1. *Will the proposed zoning district permit uses that would create traffic volumes, noise level, odor, airborne particulate matter, visual blight, reduce light or increased density of development that would adversely impact the livability or quality of life in the surrounding neighborhood?*

Yes \_\_\_\_ No X

2. *Will the proposed zoning district permit uses that would adversely impact adjacent and nearby properties by rendering such properties less desirable and therefore less marketable for the type of development permitted under the current zoning?*

Yes \_\_\_\_ No X

3. *Will the proposed zoning district permit uses that would generate a type or mix of vehicular traffic on a street or highway that is incompatible with the type of land use development along such street or highway?*

Yes \_\_\_\_ No X

4. *Will the proposed zoning district permit uses that would generate greater traffic volumes at vehicular access points and cross streets than is generated by uses permitted under the current zoning district to the detriment of maintaining acceptable or current volume capacity (V/C) ratio for the streets that provide vehicular access to the proposed zoning district and adjacent and nearby properties?*

Yes \_\_\_\_ No X

5. *Will the proposed zoning district permit uses or scale of development that would require a greater level of public services such as drainage facilities, utilities, or safety services above that required for uses permitted under the current zoning district such that the provision of these services will create financial burden to the public?*

Yes \_\_\_\_ No X

6. *Will the proposed zoning district permit uses or scale of development that would adversely impact the improvement or development of adjacent and nearby properties in accordance with existing zoning regulations and development controls deemed necessary to maintain the stability and livability of the surrounding neighborhood?*

Yes \_\_\_\_ No X

7. *Will the proposed zoning district permit development that is inconsistent with the comprehensive land use plan?*

Yes \_\_\_\_ No X

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Approve the petitioner's request as presented.
2. Approve an alternative amendment.
3. Deny the petitioner's request.

**POLICY ANALYSIS:**

The Carver Village neighborhood is an established, intact historic neighborhood with a high level of both historical significance and integrity. The proposed Conservation Overlay District will ensure that unnecessary lot recombinations and demolitions are avoided and that a public hearing is provided.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**Approval of the Historic Carver Village – Flatman Village Overlay Conservation District as requested.**