



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 18, 2022

TO: THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF SAVANNAH

FROM: METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

SUBJECT: MPC RECOMMENDATION

PETITION REFERENCED:

Text Amendment to the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance
Re: Amendment to Section 7.11, Streetcar District
Contributing Resources Map
Applicant: Staff initiated
Leah G. Michalak, Director of Historic Preservation
MPC File No: 21-005613-ZA

MPC ACTION:

Approval to amend the Streetcar District Contributing Buildings Map to include nine (9) buildings constructed prior to 1937 and not previously listed as contributing and to expand the district boundary with an effective date of March 1, 2022.

MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approval to amend the Streetcar District Contributing Buildings Map to include nine (9) buildings constructed prior to 1937 and not previously listed as contributing and to expand the district boundary with an effective date of March 1, 2022.

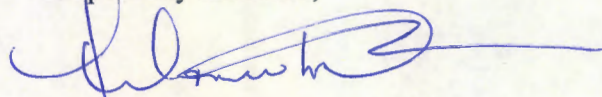
MEMBERS PRESENT: 10 + Chairman

Joseph Welch, Chairman Jay Melder
Laureen Boles Joseph Ervin
Elizabeth Epstein
Karen Jarrett
Wayne Noha
Travis Coles
Jeff Notrica
Tom Woiwode
Malik Watkins

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

APPROVAL Votes: 9	DENIAL Votes: 0	ABSENT
Welch Boles Coles Epstein Ervin Jarrett Melder Noha Notrica Woiwode Watkins		Smith Stephens

Respectfully submitted,



Melanie Wilson
Executive Director

/sh

Enclosure

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

**METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION***"Planning the Future - Respecting the Past"*

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: The Mayor and Aldermen, City of Savannah

FROM: The Planning Commission

DATE: January 18, 2022

SUBJECT: Text Amendment to the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance
Re: Amendment to Section 7.11, Streetcar District
Contributing Resources Map
Applicant: Staff initiated

Leah G. Michalak, Director of Historic Preservation

MPC FILE NO: 21-005613-ZA

Report Status: Council Report

ISSUE:

A petition to expand the Streetcar Historic District boundary and to amend the Contributing Resources Map to include nine (9) buildings of historic and architectural significance that were built in the Streetcar District prior to 1935 and not previously listed as "contributing/historic." The district's Period of Significance is 1799-1935. The boundary expansion includes two small areas south of West Victory Drive on either side of the SCAD One West Victory complex; the area consists of four (4) parcels and two (2) buildings.

BACKGROUND:

The Streetcar Local Historic District (formerly named Mid-City) was created in 2005 as part of the Zoning Ordinance for the City of Savannah. The purpose of the district is to promote sensitive rehabilitation of existing historic buildings and ensure the visual compatibility of new construction within the area.

Within the Streetcar Historic District, all buildings are classified as either contributing (historic) or non-contributing (non-historic) on the Streetcar Contributing Resources Map. The map was adopted in 2005 by City Council and, with the exception of 315 West 38th Street, the status of resources has not been updated since that time; the map itself was transferred to ArcGIS in 2016.

The impetus for the Contributing Resources Map update is that there have been three (3) district boundary expansions since 2018 yet the Contributing Resources Map has not been updated and the three (3) expansion areas were never surveyed. These expansions included: a 2018 West Side Expansion [18-005534-ZA], a 2018 Victory Village Expansion [18-005583-ZA], and a 2019 NewZO East Side Expansion.

The impetus for the boundary expansion is to regularize the awkward historic district boundary at the southern end of the historic district and to protect the significant historic building at 2805 Bull Street.

Taking no action leaves these nine (9) buildings unprotected. The state enabling legislation provides for the preservation and protection of historic buildings, structures, appurtenances, and places that are of basic and vital importance for the development and maintenance of Savannah's tourism industry, its culture, and for the protection of property values because of their association with history, and their unique architectural details. An on-going update of the Streetcar District Contributing Resources Map and periodic evaluation of the district's boundaries is vital to this mandate.

Staff was not contacted by any of the nine (9) property owners after sending mailed notice letters.

FINDINGS:

1. Currently, all buildings within the local design review area for the Streetcar Historic District are reviewed for any exterior changes visible from a public right-of-way. However, only those buildings that are listed as contributing on the Contributing Resources Map require Historic Preservation Commission Review for demolition.
2. All buildings listed as non-contributing on the Historic Buildings Map that fit within the current Period of Significance (1867-1937) were analyzed by the MPC Historic Preservation Department following the survey of the expansion areas. Staff used criteria based on the "National Register Criteria for Evaluation" as follows:
 - a. Is the building associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of history?
 - b. Is the building associated with the lives of persons significant in the past?
 - c. Does the building embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction?
 - d. Does the building possess integrity of location?
 - e. Does the building possess integrity of design and materials?
 - f. Does the building possess integrity of setting?Staff also consulted the following documents: the 1987 Historic District Information Form and the 1997 National Register of Historic Places Registration Form and Map.
3. Three (3) buildings proposed to be added are commercial, three (3) are two-family residential, one (1) is single-family residential, and two (2) are accessory dwelling units.
4. All buildings proposed to be added fall within the current Period of Significance. Buildings proposed to be added which are within the National Register District boundary were likely overlooked when the National Register map was originally created. Staff located several attempts to survey this area within the MPC's records; however, the project (for reasons unknown) was never completed.

POLICY ANALYSIS:

1. Taking no action leaves these nine (9) buildings unprotected especially with regard to demolition. This neighborhood contains valuable affordable housing opportunities that, if demolished, would be difficult to replicate. The buildings have smaller footprints on larger

parcels with existing infrastructure that is expensive to build with new construction development.

2. The state enabling legislation provides for the preservation and protection of historic buildings, structures, appurtenances, and places that are of basic and vital importance for the development and maintenance of Savannah's tourism industry, its culture, and for the protection of property values because of their association with history, and their unique architectural details. An on-going update of the Streetcar District Contributing Resources Map and periodic evaluation of the district's boundaries is vital to this mandate.

Creating a plan for on-going review, evaluation, and protection of these historic resources is consistent with the policy of protecting the City's historic buildings.

ALTERNATIVES:

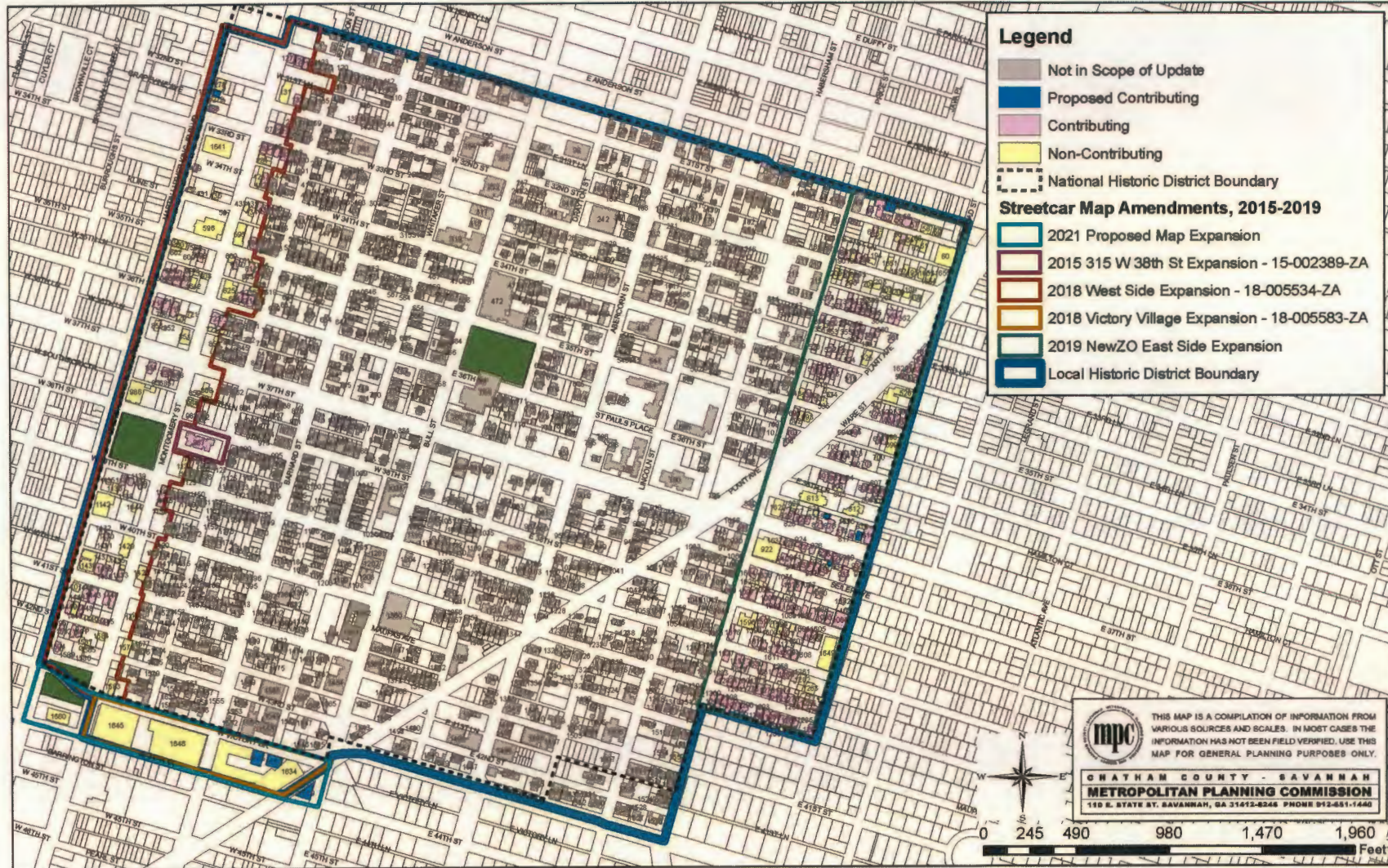
1. Recommend approval of the request to amend the Zoning Ordinance as proposed.
2. Recommend an alternate amendment.
3. Recommend denial of the request.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning Commission recommends approval of the amendment to the Streetcar District Contributing Buildings Map to include nine (9) buildings constructed prior to 1937 and not previously listed as contributing and to expand the district boundary with an effective date of March 1, 2022.

STREETCAR HISTORIC DISTRICT Proposed Update to the Contributing Resources Map

Draft Date: January 18, 2022




Legend

- Not in Scope of Update
- Proposed Contributing
- Contributing
- Non-Contributing
- National Historic District Boundary

Streetcar Map Amendments, 2015-2019

- 2021 Proposed Map Expansion
- 2015 315 W 38th St Expansion - 15-002389-ZA
- 2018 West Side Expansion - 18-005534-ZA
- 2018 Victory Village Expansion - 18-005583-ZA
- 2019 NewZO East Side Expansion
- Local Historic District Boundary


 THIS MAP IS A COMPILATION OF INFORMATION FROM VARIOUS SOURCES AND SCALES. IN MOST CASES THE INFORMATION HAS NOT BEEN FIELD VERIFIED. USE THIS MAP FOR GENERAL PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY.

CHATHAM COUNTY - SAVANNAH
METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
 150 E. STATE ST. SAVANNAH, GA 31412-8246 PHONE 912-651-1440

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