



METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

"Planning the Future - Respecting the Past"

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: MARCH 1, 2022
TO: THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF SAVANNAH
FROM: METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
SUBJECT: MPC RECOMMENDATION

PETITION REFERENCED:

Petitioner: City of Savannah

Owner: City of Savannah

Aldermanic District: 5, Shabazz

County Commission District: 5, Milton

Neighborhood/Subdivision: Tatemville / Feiler Park

Current Zoning District: C-P (Conservation Park)

Future Land Use (FLU) Category: Parks Recreation

File No. 22-000531-ZA

Location: 4801 Meding Street

PIN: 20108-01001 Acreage: 3.85

MPC ACTION:

Approval with conditions to rezone a 3.85- acre portion of the subject property from C-P to RMF-2-25.

MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approval with conditions to rezone a 3.85- acre portion of the subject property from C-P to RMF-2-25.

MEMBERS PRESENT: 12 + Chairman

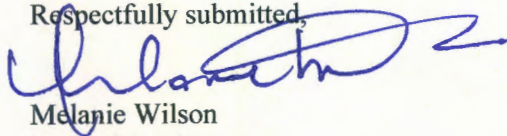
Joseph Welch, Chairman
Lauren Boles
Travis Coles
Shedrick Coleman
Elizabeth Epstein
Joseph Ervin
Karen Jarrett
Jay Melder
Wayne Noha
Jeff Notrica

Dwayne Stephens
Malik Watkins
Tom Woiwode

PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE: Approve Staff Recommendation (13-0)

APPROVAL Votes: 13	DENIAL Votes: 0	ABSENT
Welch Boles Coles Coleman Epstein Ervin Jarrett Melder Noha Notrica Stephens Watkins Woiwode		Smith

Respectfully submitted,



Melanie Wilson
Executive Director

/ca

Enclosure

cc: Mark Massey, Clerk of Council
Lester B. Johnson, Assistant City Attorney
Jennifer Herman, Assistant City Attorney
Bridget Lidy, Department of Inspections





CHATHAM COUNTY-SAVANNAH METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

"Planning the Future, Respecting the Past"

STAFF REPORT

File No. 22-000531-ZA

Location: 4801 Meding Street

PINs 20108-01001

Acreage: 3.85 Acres to be Rezoned

Prepared by Marcus Lotson, Director



Figure 1 Location Map

Petitioner: City of Savannah

Owner: City of Savannah

Aldermanic District: 5, Shabazz

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Neighborhood/Subdivision: Tatemville / Feiler Park

Current Zoning District: C-P (Conservation Park)

Future Land Use (FLU) Category: Parks Recreation

Request

The petitioner is proposing to rezone a 3.85-acre portion of a 66.5-acre tract of land on the west side of Meding Street between W. 62nd and W. 63rd streets. The rezoning request only applies to the 3.85-acre portion. The proposed rezoning would change the zoning of the 3.85-acre portion from C-P (Conservation Park) to RMF-2 (Multifamily Residential). The zoning of the remainder of the parcel would be unchanged.

Background

The subject property was purchased by the City of Savannah in 2016. Prior to the City's ownership, the property was owned by the Savannah Exchange Club who purchased it in 1952 from a private estate. The Exchange Club used the property primarily to host the Coastal Empire Fair as a philanthropic fund raiser for local nonprofits. After the purchase by the City, the Exchange Club leased the property for the next three years but have now permanently relocated the fair.

In June of 2020, the City of Savannah issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the purpose of redeveloping the Fairgrounds property. The intent of the RFP was to receive a plan that would address the strategic priorities of the city.

In December of 2020, MPC Staff completed a Technical Review and Analysis of the RFP's which was provided to then City Manager Michael Brown (*see attached document*). Among the general findings not specific to individual proposers were the following:

IMPLEMENTATION:

- 1) *Community visioning meetings should be held to address any needs and/or services that are not currently being promoted.*
- 2) *Consider how development can merge better with existing neighborhoods.*
- 3) *Preserve the integrity of the existing tax base.*

LAND USE:

- 4) *MPC supports an expansion of the adjoining neighborhood's historic development pattern. MPC also encourages compatible new development within this area. However, we must ensure the preservation of existing greenspace as permanent open space to meet the active and passive recreational needs of residents.*
- 5) *The MPC wishes to ensure that the development is compatible in scale, height, and purpose with a seamless transition from the new development to the surrounding neighborhoods such as Taterville, Feiler Park, and Hussars Terrace/Dittmerville. A well-defined land use and zoning review will ensure that any proposed mixed-use and future housing developments will be successful.*
- 6) *Aspects that should carefully be considered during design should, at a minimum, include:*
 - *street types,*
 - *the public realm,*
 - *building height,*
 - *design and architectural standards,*
 - *parking,*
 - *environmental,*
 - *landscaping,*
 - *public art,*
 - *fiber/high speed internet, and*
 - *signage.*

TRANSPORTATION:

- 7) *The Fairgrounds Property has the potential to create passive open space, parks, and passive trail systems. Ideally, the project should connect with nearby existing and planned bike, bus, and trail networks.*
- 8) *Easy and direct access to multiple modes of transportation within the new development is fundamental to its growth and sustainability. An evaluation of access to existing transit options and overall connectivity should be completed to determine the needed enhancements that will benefit the nearby neighborhoods, larger community, and visitors. Mixed-use areas connected by reliable transit service can lead to large reductions in per capita vehicle miles and hours of travel leading to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and a smaller carbon footprint for the community.*

In October of 2021, City Council authorized the City Manager to execute a contract with P3 Venture Group for the redevelopment of the Fairgrounds. The overall proposal for the

redevelopment includes, but is not exclusive to, residential uses, indoor and outdoor recreational spaces, educational and workspaces associated with the media arts and natural amenities. Specific to the proposed rezoning, only a portion of the residential is being considered with this application.

Public Notice

As required by the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance, all property owners within 300 feet of the subject property were sent notices of the proposed rezoning. Public notice was posted on site. The City of Savannah participated in a meeting on February 24th with neighborhood stakeholders. Although this specific meeting was related to the rezoning request, there have been a series of stakeholder engagement opportunities with the larger neighborhood regarding the fairground’s redevelopment.

Existing Development Pattern

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

<u>Location</u>	<u>Land Use</u>	<u>Designation</u>
North	Single Family Residential	RSF-6
	Multifamily Residential	RMF-2-15
South	Single Family Residential	RSF-6
East	Single Family Residential	RSF-6
West	Single Family Residential	RSF-6
	Conservation	C

The development pattern in the immediate vicinity of the subject property includes primarily single-family residential development, there is also a multifamily residential development, Montgomery Landing, north of the subject property and the Tatemville Community Center south of the subject property.

Impact and Suitability

Public Utilities

The area has access to the City’s public water, sewer, and stormwater systems. Infrastructure improvements, including retention, would have to be provided for a development of the proposed scale. As currently proposed, approximately 1/3 of the overall site, which is currently wooded, would remain undeveloped

Transportation and Transit

Transit is currently available along Montgomery Street, east of the subject property. Public Transportation will be an important aspect of the project at buildout and accommodations on or near the subject site will need to be discussed with public transportation providers. The street network in the vicinity includes Meding Street, a north-south street that links Montgomery Street to Staley Avenue. The only other improved north north-south right-of-way that abuts the subject property is Florance Street on the north side of the property. In terms of access points, West 61st, 62nd and 63rd streets terminate at Meding Street at the entrance to the subject property, it will be

important to align any entrances to the development with these streets to maintain continuity with the existing pattern. Because these intersecting streets were designed for low volume residential use, improvements to physical infrastructure and traffic management, to include pedestrian facilities, will likely be necessary going forward.

Community Development

Specific to the multifamily residential portion of the overall proposal, it will be necessary for future development of the site to be congruous with existing development. MPC has been advised that the residential portion being considered will be senior housing (55+). Senior housing has been identified as a needed housing category in the City of Savannah. Ideally, new senior housing should be integrated into existing neighborhoods and building scale should also be compatible with those neighborhoods. As this is an early phase of a larger project, items such as off-street parking, pedestrian connectivity and amenities should be included with the initial development.

Future Land Use

The Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map designates the subject property as Parks and Recreation, which is dedicated to public open space established for active or passive recreation, leisure, and sports. Ultimately, the subject property is likely to become a part of a Planned Development to accommodate the wider range of uses proposed for the site. Although some of the current site will remain open space, the more appropriate Land Use Designation would be Planned Development which can accommodate a large-scale project with multiple uses developed homogeneously.

Existing Conservation Park (C-P) District

- **Intent of the C-P District:** The Conservation-Park (“C-P”) district is established to preserve and enhance parkland as permanent open space to meet the active and passive recreational needs of residents and to also protect cultural and historic resources. Permitted uses are limited to parks and recreation, cemeteries and other uses that promote open space and preservation of resources.
- **Allowed Uses:** Allowed uses in the C-P district are listed in the attached table.
- **Development Standards:** The development standards are listed in the attached table.

Proposed Residential Multifamily District:

- **Intent of the RMF District:** The Residential Multi-family (“RMF-”) districts are established to allow multi-family development in addition to other types of residential development. The districts (RMF-1, RMF-2, and RMF-3) within the RMF- designation provide for varying development standards and generally the same uses with a few exceptions. The specific density (a whole number) shall be established at the time of rezoning.
- **Allowed Uses:** Allowed uses in the RMF district are listed in the attached table.

- **Development Standards:** The development standards are listed in the attached table. Consistency with development standards is evaluated at the time of development plan submittal.

Additional standards required in the RMF districts:

5.10.10 Additional Requirements Applicable to Residential Multi-family Districts

a. All RMF- Districts

- i. Principal use dwellings shall be a minimum of 450 square feet.
- ii. With the exception of the RMF-1 district where the density does not exceed 10 dwelling units per acre, direct access to a paved roadway classified as a collector roadway or higher shall be provided.
- iii. For each multi-family residential development with at least 25 units, a bus shelter shall be provided on a street adjacent to the development where there are existing or planned bus routes, upon approval of the Chatham Area Transit Authority. This requirement can be waived if a bus stop exists within 600 feet of the main entrance of the multi-family development. Such distance may be increased to one-quarter (0.25) mile where a continuous sidewalk is available from the main entrance to the bus stop.
- iv. A continuous pedestrian circulation system shall be provided throughout the entire development. The system shall link all units to all developed or planned recreational open space, parking, planned or existing bus shelters, and to existing public sidewalks or public rights-of-way that are located adjacent to the development.

Zoning Ordinance Review

The following review criteria for rezoning are prescribed in the Savannah Zoning Ordinance Sec. 3.5.8.

a. Suitability and Community Need

- i. Whether the range of uses permitted by the proposed zoning district is more suitable than the range of uses that is permitted by the current zoning district.

MPC Comment: The existing zoning district is not designed for development. In order for the City of Savannah to achieve the strategic priorities outlined in the RFP, a zoning change will be necessary.

- ii. Whether the zoning proposal is compatible with the present zoning pattern and conforming uses of nearby properties and the character of the surrounding area.

MPC Comment: The proposed zoning would allow senior residential housing inventory to be created, which has been identified as a need in the City of Savannah and is compatible with the surrounding zoning.

b. Compatibility

- i. Whether the zoning proposal will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property.

MPC Comment: The proposed zoning is not likely to adversely affect the use and usability of nearby properties. There is adequate room on site to accommodate the development standards associated with the RMF zoning district. It will be important, however, to accommodate the standards on site and even limit some existing standards further to be more compatible with the established neighborhoods.

- ii. Whether the zoning proposal is compatible with the present zoning pattern and conforming uses of nearby property and the character of the surrounding area.

MPC Comment: Because the site is somewhat a standalone site it can be designed to be compatible with the present zoning pattern. While the surrounding properties are primarily single family residential, the larger redevelopment of the fairgrounds is designed to include single family similar in scale to the existing development pattern.

- iii. Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property which give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the zoning proposal.

MPC Comment: The redevelopment of the fairgrounds is a significant changing condition in the area. The City of Savannah has determined, through both public engagement and the RFP process, that the improvements proposed for the site give supporting grounds for rezoning. The site cannot provide the same benefit to the community under the current zoning.

c. Consistency

Whether the zoning proposal is in conformity with the policy and intent of the Comprehensive Plan and other adopted plans, such as a redevelopment plan or small area plan.

MPC Comment: The current Comprehensive Plan designation conforms with the existing zoning.

d. Reasonable Use

Whether the property to be affected by the zoning proposal has a reasonable use as currently zoned.

MPC Comment: The property does not have reasonable use under the current zoning. The zoning will not allow the property to be developed in a way that can provide maximum benefit to the community.

e. Adequate Public Services

Whether adequate school, public safety and emergency facilities, road, ingress and egress, parks, wastewater treatment, water supply and stormwater drainage facilities are available for the uses and densities that are permitted in the proposed zoning district.

MPC Comment: In conjunction with the overall redevelopment of the fairgrounds, public facilities will need to be identified for upgrade and improvement, as necessary. Due to the increased amount of impervious surface, stormwater retention / detention will be required. Ingress and egress should continue the pattern of streets between Montgomery Street and Meding Street to the greatest extent possible. Unopened rights of way should be evaluated for opening in order to improve vehicular circulation.

Analysis

The overall redevelopment of the fairground property is one of the most significant City driven projects in recent history. The portion of the property identified for rezoning would allow phase one, a multifamily senior living project, to commence in the planning stages. The balance of the property will be required to go through a separate zoning process in the future. The RMF district has standards that are suburban in nature. These include, among others, access to a collector or arterial street, required off street parking at one (1) space per unit, and a maximum height of 50 feet.

The subject property is surrounded by single family neighborhoods, which are developed almost exclusively with one-story structures. Lot sizes are typically 6,000 -7,000 square feet with homes ranging from 1,200 – 1,500 square feet. These factors suggest that there should be some transition between the existing residential and any portion of the subject property that may be incompatible from a development standard standpoint. In the RMF districts, density is established at the time of rezoning. The applicant did not include a specific density. However, in discussion with the applicant about the overall project, a density of 25 units per acre would be consistent with the current conceptual plan, allowing a unit count not to exceed 100 residential dwellings.

Relative to height, although a maximum of 50 feet is permitted by the district, staff recommends there be a step back in height from Meding Street in order to provide a transition from the existing residential. No buildings abutting Melding Street should exceed two stories and no buildings on site should exceed three stories up to 45 feet.

Regarding permitted uses in the RMF-2 zoning district, the **housing types** shown in the chart below are allowed by right. Concept plans shared to-date suggest that some combination of these housing types is likely to be developed within the larger fairground redevelopment.

Housing Type
Single-family detached
Single-family attached
Two-family
Townhouse
Stacked Townhouse
Three-Four Family
Apartment

Regarding permitted uses in the RMF-2 zoning district. The **nonresidential** uses shown in the chart below are allowed by right, or as limited or special uses as identified. In review of the nonresidential uses, there do not appear to be any uses that might negatively impact neighboring properties. However, the Planning Commission can recommend the elimination of any of the uses in the chart in conjunction with a zoning recommendation.

The proposed rezoning of the identified portion of the larger tract of land is being done to accommodate the timeline set forth by the applicant to keep the overall project on schedule. It is likely that a subsequent rezoning of the overall site will occur to allow the full redevelopment of the fairgrounds. However, it is necessary to ensure that any development associated with the current rezoning proposal be compatible with the neighborhood, and consistent with requirements of the ordinance, without depending on future phases of development to meet standards.

RMF-2	√= Permitted Use L= Limited Use S=Special Use
Child caring institution	S
Monastery/convent	√
Agriculture, personal	√
Community Garden	√
Park, general	√
Library/community center	√
Police/fire station or substation	√
Child/adult day care home	L
Child/adult day care center	S
School, public or private (K-12)	L
All places of worship	√
Assisted living facility	√
Personal care home, registered	√
Personal care home, family	√
Personal care home, group	S
Personal care home, congregate	S
Community living arrangement	S
Golf course	√
Retail consumption dealer (on premise consumption of alcohol)	S
Dock, private	√
Dock, Residential Community	√
Marina, Residential	√
Watercraft Launch/Ramp	√
Utilities, major	S
Utilities, minor	√

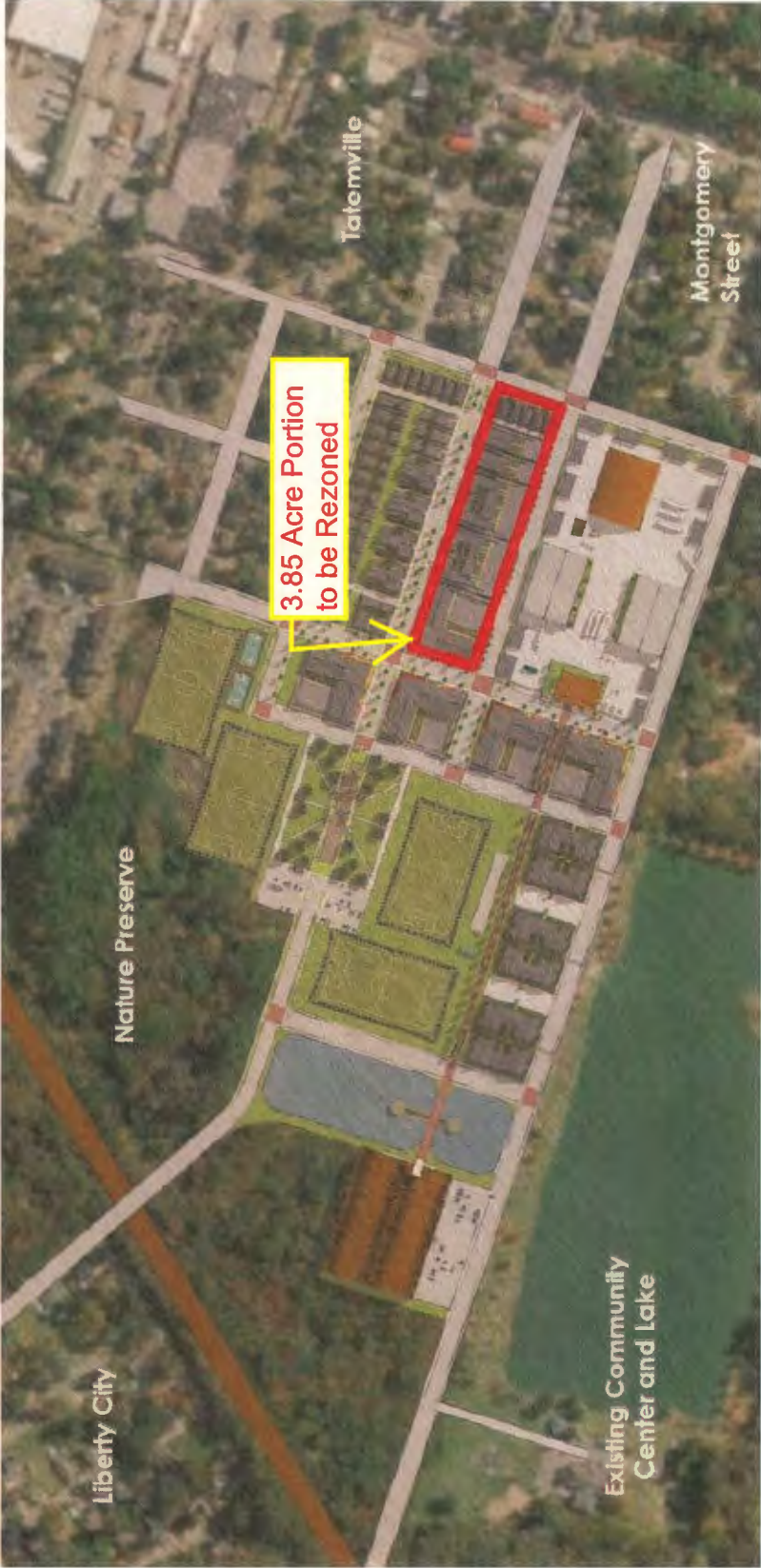
Recommendation

The Planning Commission recommends **approval with conditions** to rezone a 3.85- acre portion of the subject property from C-P to RMF-2-25. Recommended conditions are as follows:

1. The Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map designation be amended from Parks Recreation to Planned Development.
2. The number of residential dwelling units in the RMF zoned property shall not exceed 100.
3. Multifamily residential development on the RMF zoned property be restricted to senior (55+) housing.
4. Required parking for multifamily residential housing in the RMF zoned property be provided off-street.
5. Building height for multifamily residential housing in the RMF zoned property shall not exceed two stories if abutting Meding Street or three stories (up to 45 feet) elsewhere on the RMF zoned property.
6. Surveyed boundaries (metes and bounds) of the portion of the property to be rezoned be established prior to ordinance adoption.
7. Alcohol sales and service shall be prohibited.

Note: Staff's recommendation is based upon information contained in the application and discussions with the Applicant. This recommendation could change based on information gathered during the public hearing.

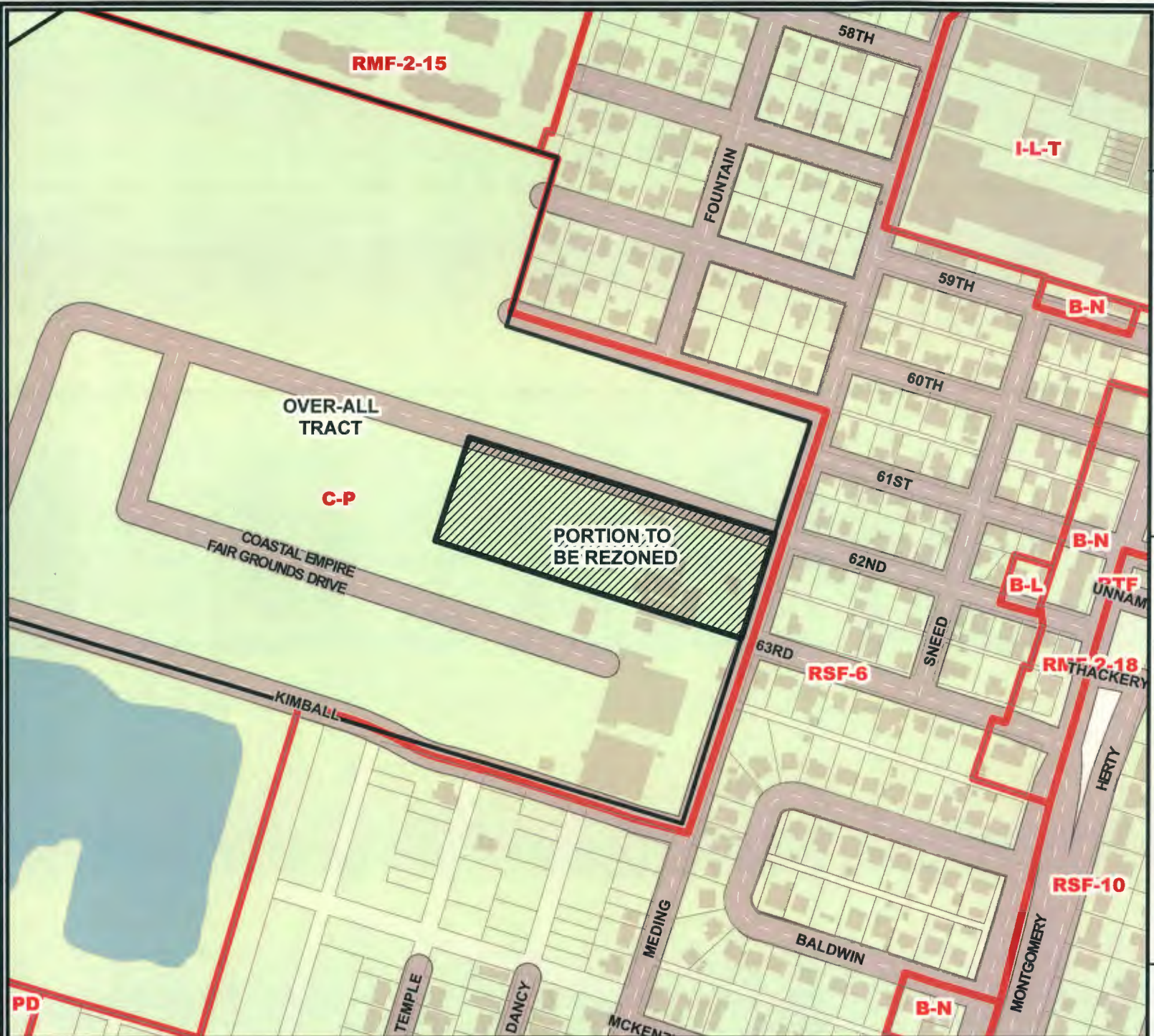
Comparison of Development Standards		
	Existing C-P District	Proposed RMF-2
Standard	C-P	RMF
Minimum Lot Area (Each unit unless otherwise specified)	n/a	n/a
Minimum Lot Width	n/a	n/a
Front Yard Setback	n/a	25 feet
Minimum Side Yard Setback	n/a	10 feet
Minimum Rear Yard Setback	n/a	25 feet
Maximum Height	n/a	50 ft
Maximum Building Coverage	n/a	50 %
Maximum Density	n/a	Up to 40 upa



ZONING MAP

File: 22-000531-ZA
 Address: 4801 Meding St.
 Savannah, Ga
 Aldermanic District: 5 - Shabazz
 Commission District: 5 - Milton
 Neighborhood: See Map
 Property ID: See Map
 (Approximate Representation)

Current Property Zoning
 is Primarily
 C-P
 Proposed Property Zoning:
 RMF-2



ZONING

Date: 2/10/2022



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

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1 inch = 300 feet

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TAX MAP

**Feiler Park/Hussars
Terrace/Dittmerville**
NEIGHBORHOOD AREA

**OVER-ALL
TRACT**

**PORTION TO
BE REZONED**

Tatemville
NEIGHBORHOOD
AREA

File: 22-000531-ZA
Address: 4801 Meding St.
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(Approximate Representation)

Date: 2/10/2022



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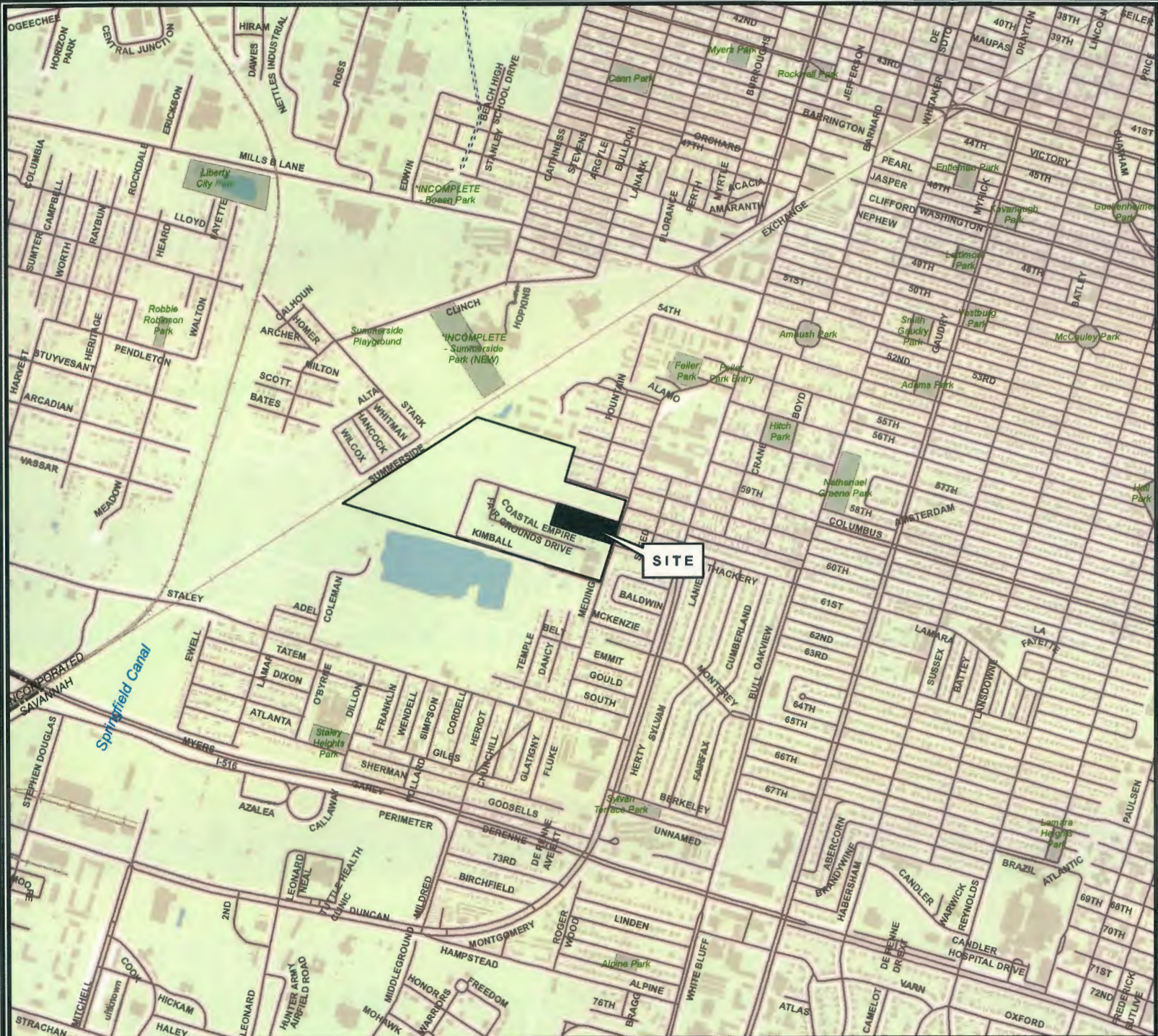
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1 inch = 300 feet

VICINITY MAP

File: 22-000531-ZA
 Address: 4801 Meding St.
 Savannah, Ga
 Aldermanic District: 5 - Shabazz
 Commission District: 5 - Milton
 Neighborhood: See Map
 Property ID: See Map
 (Approximate Representation)



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1 inch = 1,500 feet

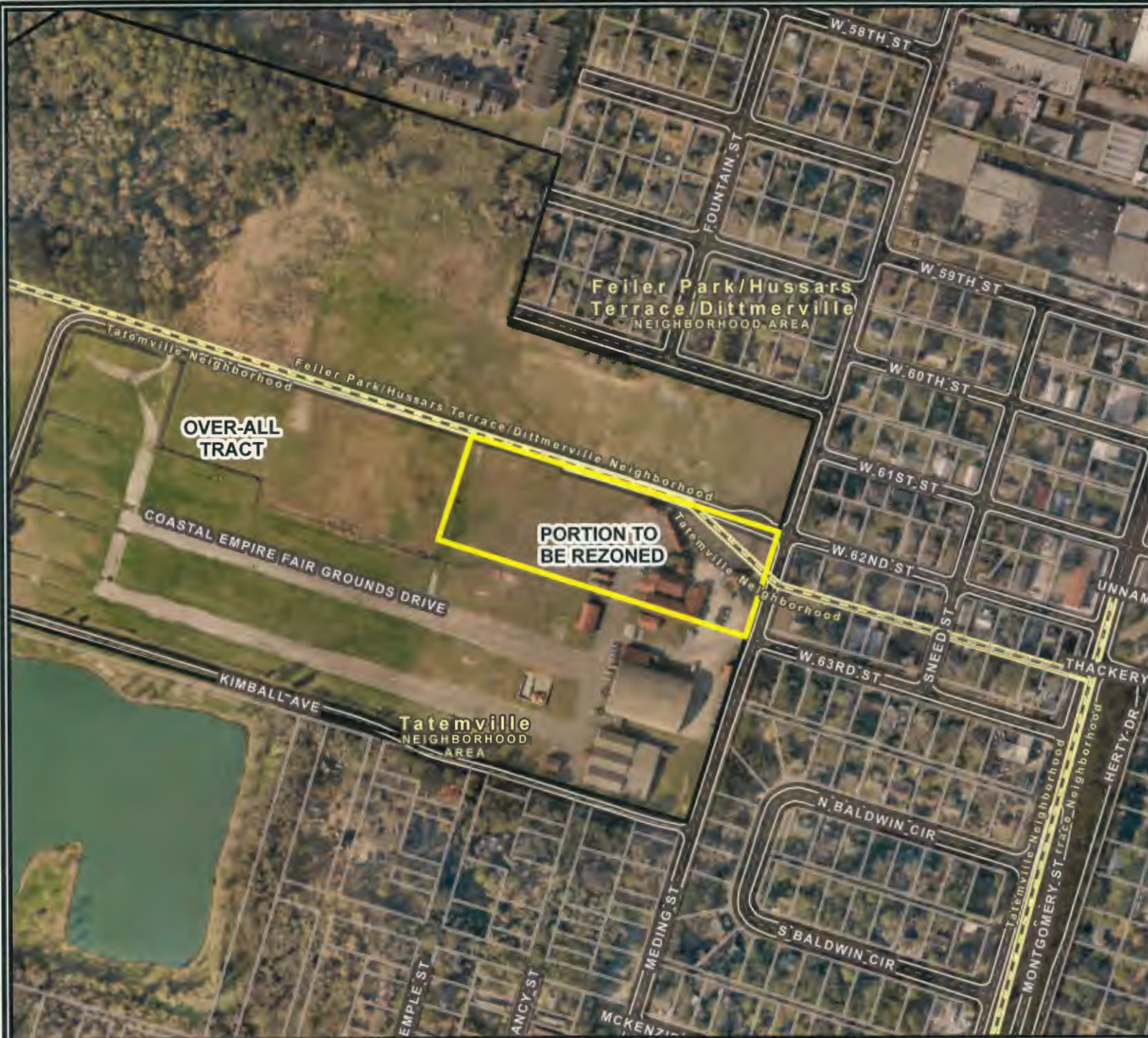
Date: 2/10/2022



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AERIAL MAP

File: 22-000531-ZA
Address: 4801 Meding St.
Savannah, Ga
Aldermanic District: 5 - Shabazz
Commission District: 5 - Milton
Neighborhood: See Map
Property ID: See Map
(Approximate Representation)



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110 E. STATE ST. SAVANNAH, GA 31412-0246 PHONE 912-651-1460

FUTURE LAND USE

File: 22-000531-ZA
 Address: 4801 Meding St.
 Savannah, Ga
 Aldermanic District: 5 - Shabazz
 Commission District: 5 - Milton
 Neighborhood: See Map
 Property ID: See Map
 (Approximate Representation)



- Open Water
- Commercial- Neighborhood
- Commercial- Suburban
- Residential- Suburban Single Family
- Residential- General
- Parks/Recreation

Date: 2/10/2022



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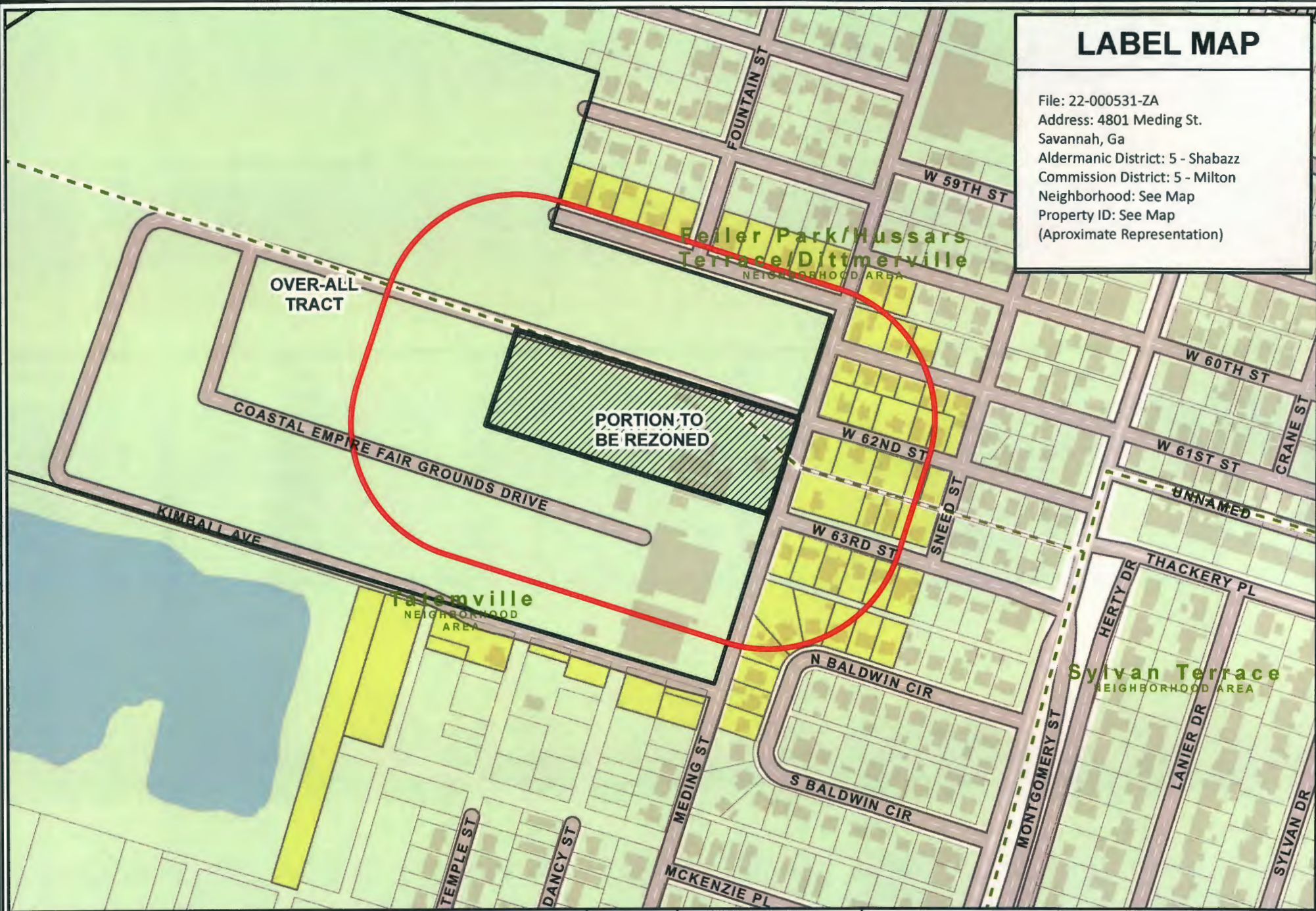
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1 inch = 300 feet

LABEL MAP

File: 22-000531-ZA
Address: 4801 Meding St.
Savannah, Ga
Aldermanic District: 5 - Shabazz
Commission District: 5 - Milton
Neighborhood: See Map
Property ID: See Map
(Approximate Representation)



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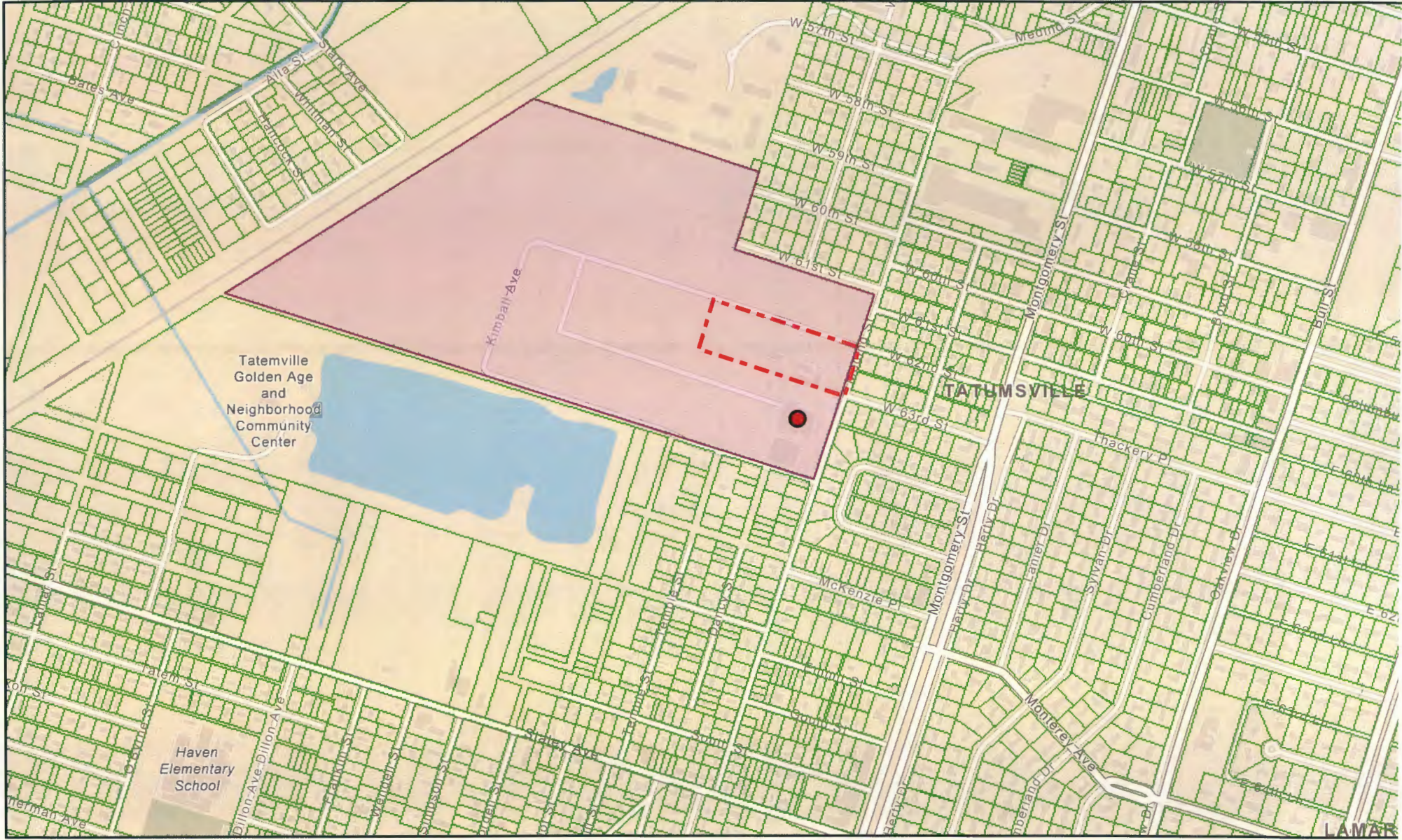
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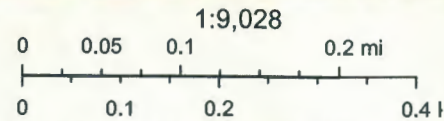
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Property Boundaries (Parcels)



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