



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:** JUNE 8, 2021  
**TO:** THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF SAVANNAH  
**FROM:** METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION  
**SUBJECT:** MPC RECOMMENDATION

**PETITION REFERENCED:**

**Proposed text amendment to the Savannah Zoning Ordinance**

**Re: Amendment to Sections 7.11.14.c (Additional Regulations Applicable to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Montgomery Street)**

**Applicant: Mayor and Aldermen**

**Agent: Bridget Lidy**

**File No. 21-002884-ZA**

**MPC ACTION:**

**Approval** of the request to amend the ordinance as outlined.

**MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

**Approval** of the request to amend the ordinance as outlined.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** 8 + Chairman

Joseph Welch, Chairman  
Laureen Boles  
Elizabeth Epstein  
Karen Jarrett  
Wayne Noha  
Eula Parker  
Lee Smith  
Dwayne Stephens  
Maliak Watkins

**PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:** Approve Staff Recommendation (9-0)

<b>APPROVAL</b> Votes: 9	<b>DENIAL</b> Votes: 0	<b>ABSENT</b>
Welch Boles Epstein Jarrett Noha Parker Smith Stephens Watkins		Brown Coles Ervin Joyner 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





**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:** June 8, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Proposed text amendment to the Savannah Zoning Ordinance

**Re: Amendment to Sections 7.11.14.c (Additional Regulations  
Applicable to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and  
Montgomery Street)**

**Applicant: Mayor and Aldermen**

**Agent: Bridget Lidy**

**File No. 21-002884-ZA**

**Marcus Lotson, MPC Project Planner**

**ISSUE:**

Upon the adoption of the current Savannah Zoning Ordinance, an omission occurred pertaining to density and height in TC-2 (Traditional Commercial-2) zoning district. The omitted language is specific to the Streetcar Historic Overlay District (Section 7.11). The language was included, as it should have been in the Victorian Historic Overlay District (Section 7.9), but inadvertently left out of the Streetcar district.

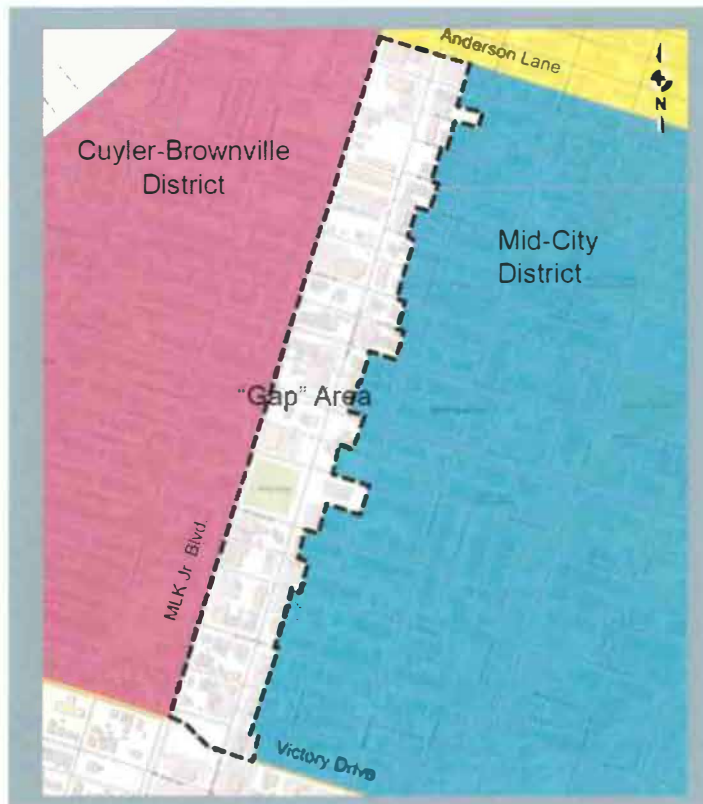
**BACKGROUND:**

Certain properties within the MLK / Montgomery corridor were brought into the Streetcar historic district in 2018. Before 2018, the corridor was in a gap between Streetcar and Cuyler Brownville. Council approved an amendment to bring the gap area into Streetcar district and allow properties in the corridor to have density governed by dwelling unit size and maximum height like downtown. A 450 square foot minimum for a dwelling unit was adopted as well height standards of 4 stories not to exceed 55 feet. This was applied to the TC-2 district in Streetcar and Victorian.

The properties in the corridor which had base zoning districts under the old ordinance like B-G, B-C etc. were rezoned to Streetcar districts like Traditional Neighborhood & Traditional Commercial. These districts also replaced the old districts in Victorian 1-R,

2R, 3R & 1B, 2B & 3B.

When NewZo was adopted, the density and height language got transferred for the Victorian District section but left out for the Streetcar District section. In the current ordinance, the Victorian Section (7.9.14) has this language, Streetcar does not even though it was adopted as such.



**ORDINANCE:**

The language that should have been included in the Streetcar Historic Overlay District for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Montgomery Street portion of the ordinance as highlighted in red and underlined below:

Section 7.11.14 Additional Regulations Applicable to Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Montgomery Street

- c. Additional Regulations Applicable to Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Montgomery Street
  - i. Parking and Access

New curb cuts along Martin Luther King, Jr., Boulevard or Montgomery Street shall be limited to one (1) curb cut per 100 feet of street frontage. Such curb cut shall not exceed 20 feet in width unless otherwise required by the City Manager or his or her designee.

ii. TC-2 Development Standards

For properties zoned TC-2 that are located within the Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard/Montgomery Street Urban Redevelopment Area and that do not contain a contributing structure, the following standards apply:

1. Density. A maximum residential density is not required for multi-family development; however, a minimum floor area requirement of 450 square feet is applicable.
2. Height. The maximum height is four (4) stories or 55 feet maximum up to 150 feet from the right-of-way of Montgomery Street. For a distance greater than 150 feet, the maximum height is the limit specified for the base district.

When an abutting parcel contains an existing residential dwelling, the maximum height shall not be more than one (1) story taller than the residence within 30 feet from the exterior wall of the residence.

**ANALYSIS:**

Staff views the proposed change as a correction of an error that occurred during the transition between ordinances. The amendments were based on multiple discussions held with City Council and the community about the need to include the parcels along the Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Montgomery Street Corridor between Anderson Lane and Victory Drive in the Mid-City District. Now that the map has been amended to close the gap and the new standards are in place, the desired changes are complete with the adoption of the corrected language.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Planning Commission recommends **approval** of the request to amend the ordinance as outlined.

## REVISIONS TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE

During NewZO, a scrivener's error was made when language pertaining the density and height for the TC-2 (Traditional Commercial-2) zoning district was not included in the Streetcar Historic Overlay District (Section 7.11), yet it was included in the Victorian Historic Overlay District (Section 7.9).

Section 5.13.1.b. states that the TC-2 district was established to ensure the vibrancy of historic mixed-use neighborhoods with traditional development patterns characteristic of Savannah during the streetcar and early automobile eras. The district provides for the creation of commercial corridors along higher classifications of streets that traverse historic neighborhoods.

The language that should have been included in the Streetcar Historic Overlay District for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Montgomery Street portion of the ordinance as highlighted in red and underlined below:

### Section 7.11.14 Additional Regulations Applicable to Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Montgomery Street

#### c. Additional Regulations Applicable to Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Montgomery Street

##### i. Parking and Access

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##### ii. TC-2 Development Standards

For properties zoned TC-2 that are located within the Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard/Montgomery Street Urban Redevelopment Area and that do not contain a contributing structure, the following standards apply:

1. Density. A maximum residential density is not required for multi-family development; however, a minimum floor area requirement of 450 square feet is applicable.
2. Height. The maximum height is four (4) stories or 55 feet maximum up to 150 feet from the right-of-way of Montgomery Street. For a distance greater than 150 feet, the maximum height is the limit specified for the base district.

When an abutting parcel contains an existing residential dwelling, the maximum height shall not be more than one (1) story taller than the residence within 30 feet from the exterior wall of the residence.

The TC-2 development standards for density and height were included in the previous ordinance under Article K. Mid-City (Thomas Square), Sec. 8-3216(4)(a) prior to the adoption of the new zoning ordinance as evidenced in this link: <https://online.encodeplus.com/regs/savannah-ga/doclibrary.aspx?id=1fe1ba4f-85e6-4848-8458-3fba638c90e7>

In addition, the same provision on density and height in the TC-2 zoning classification was included as part of a rezoning ordinance that was approved on April 12, 2018 for the property located at 1501 Montgomery Street within the Mid-City District under 8-3216(4)(a):

<http://online.encodeplus.com/regs/savannah-ga/doc-viewer.aspx#secid-5019>

### **Additional Background**

On January 4, 2018, a text amendment was approved to allow certain residential uses by-right and increase residential density specifically for properties within the Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Montgomery Street Urban Redevelopment Area. The action amended both the Victorian PNC District (Sec. 8-3028) and the Mid-City District (Article K) of the previous zoning ordinance.

- Link to City Council Minutes (#12): <http://agenda.savannahga.gov/publishing/january-4-2018-city-council-regular-meeting/minutes.html>

During the same meeting, a zoning hearing was held for two additional items pertaining to the Mid-City District:

- Amend the zoning ordinance regarding the Mid-City Boundaries and Other Sections of Article K; and
- Rezone certain properties to the Mid-City Zoning Districts.

These amendments were based on multiple discussions held with City Council and the community about the need to include the parcels along the Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Montgomery Street Corridor between Anderson Lane and Victory Drive in the Mid-City District. Prior to the approval of these amendments, the parcels were not governed by the development and use standards of the Mid-City District and had no local historic designation as outlined in Article K. MPC staff presented both text and map amendments to bring these parcels into Mid-City District boundaries and assigned them zoning classifications.

- Zoning Hearing links to Council Minutes (#9 and 10): <http://agenda.savannahga.gov/publishing/january-3-2019-city-council-regular-meeting/minutes.html>

On January 17, 2018, City Council approved the text and zoning amendments to include these parcels in the Mid-City District and assign them zoning classifications—thereby establishing a complete historic district.

- 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading link to Council Minutes (items #14 and 36): [https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=http%3a%2f%2fagenda.savannahga.gov%2fpublishing%2fjanuary-17-2019-city-council-regular-meeting%2fminutes.html&c=E,1,FNCBCPesNORqRYm9Xn9YOd8gBiQ6y5xCQoGFCXiS85oiv-STieblJJs8ZFke3y7SXqhWawXW7CgDYghEXd\\_71IfyIsFjivINKAd-RGx&typo=1](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=http%3a%2f%2fagenda.savannahga.gov%2fpublishing%2fjanuary-17-2019-city-council-regular-meeting%2fminutes.html&c=E,1,FNCBCPesNORqRYm9Xn9YOd8gBiQ6y5xCQoGFCXiS85oiv-STieblJJs8ZFke3y7SXqhWawXW7CgDYghEXd_71IfyIsFjivINKAd-RGx&typo=1)

This is a link to the MPC presentation outlining the proposal for the Mid-City District Expansion:

[https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fwww.thempc.org%2feagenda%2fx%2fmpc%2f2018%2fdecember-11-2018-regular-mpc-meeting%2fmid-city-expansion-presentation-11-8-18\\_1.pdf&c=E,1,qkS5grA8wfjVukQ2-](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fwww.thempc.org%2feagenda%2fx%2fmpc%2f2018%2fdecember-11-2018-regular-mpc-meeting%2fmid-city-expansion-presentation-11-8-18_1.pdf&c=E,1,qkS5grA8wfjVukQ2-)

[o3crobMW1cjBptLbfGTvvclDL5vEB4f\\_ZX9bE\\_PoCx3ilbnmeWB0Kb1NdOX93WwrU6hA0mYQnwVRnb09RK-NZFNG4.&typo=1](#)

Based on the inventory of properties within the gap area, 32% will be impacted by this revision:

<b>Zones</b>	<b>Parcel Counts</b>
TC-1	36
TC-1 & TN-2	1
TC-1-S	1
TC-2	44
TC-2-S	1
TN-2	57
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>140</b>