



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Rob Hernandez, City Manager

**FROM:** Bridget Lidy, Director of Planning and Urban Design

**DATE:** January 15, 2019

**SUBJECT:** Additional Information Concerning Proposed Zoning Amendment

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During the January 3, 2019, City Council Meeting, the Mayor and Aldermen approved a two-week continuance on a requested amendment to the zoning ordinance to allow certain Savannah Historic District exceptions outside of the Historic District (Petitioner: Harold Yellin for Standard Southeast LLC).

The request concerns 601 East Liberty Street, the former Catholic Diocese building, which abuts but is located just outside the Historic District. The proposed zoning amendment would extend existing density, minimum lot area per dwelling unit, and parking exemptions currently permitted in the Savannah Historic District to the subject property. Council directed the City Manager to explore whether a design review process would be appropriate and feasible for the property under this new zoning designation.

MPC and City staff met with attorney Harold Yellin and representatives from Standard Southeast LLC, Downtown Neighborhood Association and Historic Savannah Foundation and developed the following design review process for City Council consideration:

- Similar to the design review processes for the Mid-City and Victorian districts, a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) will be required. The petitioner will be required to submit the COA application to the Preservation Officer.
- Once the application has been submitted, the petitioner will convene a public meeting allowing the community to learn more about the project and provide input in to the design.
- Once the public outreach meeting has been held and the Preservation Officer completed a review, a public hearing will be held where MPC considers the design of the project for the issuance of a COA.

The following design criteria will be used when the Preservation Officer and MPC review the project:

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- Visual Compatibility, Design and Preservation standards will be used as outlined in Sec. 8-3030 Historic District Ordinance;
  - The property may be up to five stories above grade as measured from East Broad Street and East Liberty Street;
  - No bonus story will be permitted;
  - 601 East Liberty Street will be considered a contributing structure; and
  - MPC may waive design standards by up to 20% during the COA review process when the Commission determines that such waiver is visually compatible with historic context.