



METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

"Planning the Future - Respecting the Past"

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: August 15, 2023
TO: THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF SAVANNAH
FROM: METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
SUBJECT: MPC RECOMMENDATION

PETITION REFERNCED:

Petitioner: Patrick Shay, GMSHAY Architects
Owner: Live Oak Living, LLC
Aldermanic District: 5 - Alderman Dr. Estella Shabazz
County Commission District: 5 - Commissioner Tanya Milton
Neighborhood/Subdivision: Feiler Park, Hussars Terrace, Dittmerville
Current Zoning District: RTF (Residential Two-Family)
Future Land Use (FLU) Category: Residential-Suburban Single Family
File No. 23-003919-ZA
Location: 20 W 60th Street
PINs: 20093 27003
Acreage: 0.18 acres

MPC ACTION:

Approval of the request to amend the Future Land Use Map to reflect Traditional Commercial use.

MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approval of the request to amend the Future Land Use Map to reflect Traditional Commercial use.

MEMBERS PRESENT: 10 + Chairman

Dwayne Stephens -Chairman
Laureen Boles
Karen Jarrett
Wayne Noha
Jeff Notrica
Michael Kaigler
Elizabeth Epstein
Shedrick Coleman
Travis Coles
Jay Melder
Traci Amick

PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE: Approval staff recommendation (11-0)

APPROVAL Votes: 11	DENIAL Votes: 0	ABSENT
Stephens Coles Boles Noha Kaigler Epstein Melder Notrica Jarrett Amick Coleman		Ervin Woiwode Welch



Respectfully submitted,



Melanie Wilson
Executive Director

MW/sh

Enclosure

cc: Mark Massey, Clerk of Council
Lester B. Johnson, Assistant City Attorney
Jennifer Herman, Assistant City Attorney
Bridget Lidy, Panning, Urban & Design



CHATHAM COUNTY-SAVANNAH
METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
"Planning the Future, Respecting the Past"

STAFF REPORT

To: The Planning Commission

From: Edward Morrow, Principal Planner, Development Services

Date: August 3, 2023

Subject: Comprehensive Plan – Future Land Use Map Amendment

Owner: Live Oak Living, LLC

Agent: Patrick Shay, GMSHAY Architects

Address: 20 West 60th Street, Savannah, GA

PIN: 20093 27003

Site Area: 0.18ac

Alderman District: 5 – Alderman Dr. Estella Shabazz

Chatham County Commission District: 5 – Commissioner Tanya Milton

File Number: 23-003919-ZA-FLUM

Request

The Petitioner requests amendment of the Future Land Use Map for the property at 20 W 60th Street from a designation of Residential Suburban Single Family to Traditional Commercial. The amendment is requested in association with a proposal to develop the subject parcel and several adjoining as a multi-family housing development with ground floor retail use along Bull Street.

Current Character Area

The subject parcel is currently designated Residential Suburban Single Family. This character area is identified for single-family detached residential dwellings at a density not to exceed five (5) gross dwelling units per acre. This category includes non-residential uses that are compatible with the residential character and scale of the neighborhood.

Proposed Character Area

The Traditional Commercial character area is envisioned as suitable for business areas in close proximity to Downtown Savannah or in outlying historically settled areas. This category includes commercial uses that should be compatible with the character and scale of adjacent neighborhoods, most often found along collectors and arterials. Characteristics include walkability, limited or on-street parking, and multi-tenant retail.

Analysis

NewZO requires a Future Land Use designation of Traditional Commercial for property to be rezoned to either of the Traditional-Commercial zoning districts. For this reason, the requested designation is the minimum required for the proposed rezoning and development. The requested FLUM designation and zoning district are also likely the best option for the proposed development as a large proportion of the parcels to be developed are already similarly situated.

The subject parcels are likely designated Suburban Single Family due to the long-standing predominate single-family pattern of residential development that is common to this area. Ardmore/Gould Estates, Abercorn Heights, Sylvan Terrace and other established in-town neighborhoods often display parcel and dwelling configurations that are very patterned and consistent. Upon close inspection, however, the subject block and those immediately adjacent within Feiler Park demonstrate a higher degree of irregularity in parcel size and shape, and contain a greater variety of structure types – single-family detached, single-family attached, multi-family of varying sizes, and non-residential uses.



The current zoning district permits development of one and two-family homes by right, but the future land use map presently suggests future densification of this area is not desired or anticipated, as the FLUM designation calls for a zoning district that only permits single-family detached homes. FLUM designation is sometimes at odds with established development patterns where there is a decided effort to redirect undesirable development or reshape a given area over time. This is likely in error in the present case, though, as densification of areas in close proximity of in-town jobs, services, and retail uses is a goal well-founded in sound planning principles and clearly established in Chatham County Savannah's Plan 2040. Reconsideration of this area more broadly for a FLUM designation of *Traditional Neighborhood* would be appropriate. The Traditional Neighborhood Character Area would permit the full range of housing types (single-family detached up to multi-family), giving developers the opportunity to develop housing solutions that are contextually sensitive to the surrounding stable housing types and uniquely suited to each available parcel.

NewZO does not offer specific criteria, however, the following may provide guidance for evaluation of the merits of the present FLUM amendment request.

(1) The relationship of the proposed amendment to the existing and future land uses depicted in the Future Land Use Map

- The proposed amendment represents the extension of a FLUM designation that is already present on an adjoining parcel to the east. The adjoining parcel has frontage on Bull Street, which is classified as a minor arterial, making it ideal for neighborhood-scale commercial uses with upper-story residential development. The present request is made in association with a proposed development that would bring these parcels into common use. The subject parcel specifically is proposed to contain a portion of a multi-family residential building and off-street parking for residents.

(2) The relationship of the proposed amendment to any applicable goals, objectives, policies, criteria, and standards adopted in the Comprehensive Plan.

The following goals and strategies of Plan 2040 are relevant to the present request:

- Land Use:
 - Goal 1: Establish growth policies for the city of Savannah that seek to guide development and redevelopment in a responsible manner, encouraging compact development, walkable neighborhoods, increased connectivity, and open space preservation.
 - Goal 4: Continue to create innovative ways to connect people with places.
 - L4.2: Pursue opportunities for creative placemaking, including the use of vacant storefronts for temporary installations.
- Housing:
 - Goal 3: Increase affordable housing stock.
 - H3.3: Adopt policies and ordinances to allow for a wider variety of housing types to be built in existing neighborhoods.



GM SHAY
architecture + urban design

Proposed publicly accessible courtyard to serve Bull Street retail uses

(3) Other professional Planning principles, standards, information and more detailed plans and studies considered relevant.

- The Housing Savannah Action Plan (HSAP), adopted in 2021, identified regulatory barriers as one challenge that stood in the way of affordable housing provision, and Action Item 5A.4 highlights the significance of zoning and associated land use tools for their role in supporting a ‘Housing Friendly’ development environment. While this action item is aimed at needed changes to our regulatory scheme, its intent remains relevant here. In this instance, the MPC has the opportunity to use its authority and an existing policy tool to extend the ability of a developer to increase the local housing supply in a thoughtful and responsible manner. The present request would increase density, enable creation of a mixture of housing unit sizes, and enable the creation of mixed-use structures - all of these identified as beneficial in addressing the City’s housing affordability challenges by the HSAP.
- The 2023-2027 Housing and Community Development Plan (HCD) identified *blight reduction* and *neighborhood beautification* among its top 5 community needs for Savannah’s neighborhoods. It also established a 5-year objective of improving, developing, and/or retaining 500 dwellings for low-moderate income renters including those experiencing homelessness.

(4) Written comments, evidence, and testimony of the public.

- MPC Staff has not received and is not aware of any public comment regarding the proposed future land use amendment or associated proposed development.

MPC Staff Recommendation

MPC Staff recommends **approval** of the requested Future Land Use Map Amendment.

***Note:** Staff recommendation is based on information submitted during the application submittal and review process, and may change based upon information and data presented during the public hearing.*