



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 7, 2025  
**TO:**                THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF SAVANNAH  
**FROM:**            METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION  
**SUBJECT:**        Special Use Request

**PETITION REFERENCED:**

**Petitioner:** Ryan Williamson, Agent for Strangebird Savannah LLC

**Property Owner:** Martin Smith for Savannah College of Art and Design

**Address:** 1220 Barnard Street

**Alderman District:** 2 - Detric Leggett

**County Commission District:** 2 - Malinda Scott Hodge

**Property Identification Number:** 20044 35006

**Petition File Number:** 24-006412-ZA

**MPC ACTION:**

The Planning Commission recommends **approval** of the request to add sale of distilled spirits to the Special Use Permit with the following condition:

1. The Special Use Permit shall be nontransferable.

**MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

MPC Staff recommends **approval** of the request to add sale of distilled spirits to the Special Use Permit with the following condition:

1. The Special Use Permit shall be nontransferable.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** 9

Traci Amick  
Laureen Boles  
Travis Coles  
Karen Jarrett - Chairwoman  
Jay Melder  
Amanda Wilson  
Stephen Plunk  
Coren Ross  
Dwayne Stephens

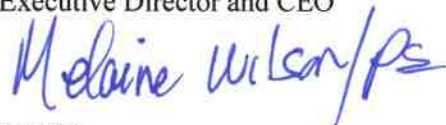
**PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:** Approve Staff Recommendation.  
(8-1)

<b>APPROVAL Votes: 8</b>	<b>DENIAL Votes: 1</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>Recused</b>	<b>Online</b>
Amick Boles Coles Melder Wilson Plunk Ross Stephens	Jarrett	Ervin Kaigler Notrica Welch Woiwode			



Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Wilson  
Executive Director and CEO



MW/sh

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

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**Council Report**

**To:** City Council

**From:** Planning Commission

**Date:** January 7, 2025

**Subject:** Special Use Request

**Petitioner:** Ryan Williamson, Agent for Strangebird Savannah LLC

**Property Owner:** Martin Smith for Savannah College of Art and Design

**Address:** 1220 Barnard Street

**Alderman:** District 2 – Alderman Detric Leggett

**County Commission:** District 2 – Commissioner Malinda Scott Hodge

**Property Identification Number:** 20044 35006

**Petition File No.:** 24-006412-ZA

**REQUEST:** The Petitioner requests approval of a Special Use pursuant to Section 3.10 of the Savannah Zoning Ordinance to establish accessory sales of distilled spirits within a restaurant. The Petitioner received approval for accessory sales of beer and wine with limiting conditions from MPC on [July 25, 2023](#), and City Council on [August 24, 2023](#).

The Special Use process includes review by the Planning Commission and Savannah City Council. Should the use be approved by City Council, approval to sell distilled spirits will be added to the existing ABC license(s).

**BACKGROUND:** 1220 Barnard Street is a non-contributing structure in the National Register Victorian District and the local Victorian Historic District. It is located within a mixed-use residential and commercial area, surrounded by houses and the SCAD Eckburg Hall for Fashion & Accessory Design at the intersection of Barnard and Henry Streets.

A COA was approved on June 26, 2023, for two new single non-illuminated signs to be installed into the existing pylon sign at the Streamliner Diner.

The streamliner was used as a diner known as Sandfly Barbecue but has since changed ownership. The Savannah College of Art & Design has renovated the interior and changed

the signage to reflect their new restaurant name “Strangebird.”

The subject parcel is rectangular in shape consisting of .29 acres or 12,632 square feet, in lot area and contains approximately 105-feet of frontage along Barnard Street, approximately 120-feet along both West Duffy Street and West Henry Street. The property abuts residential housing.

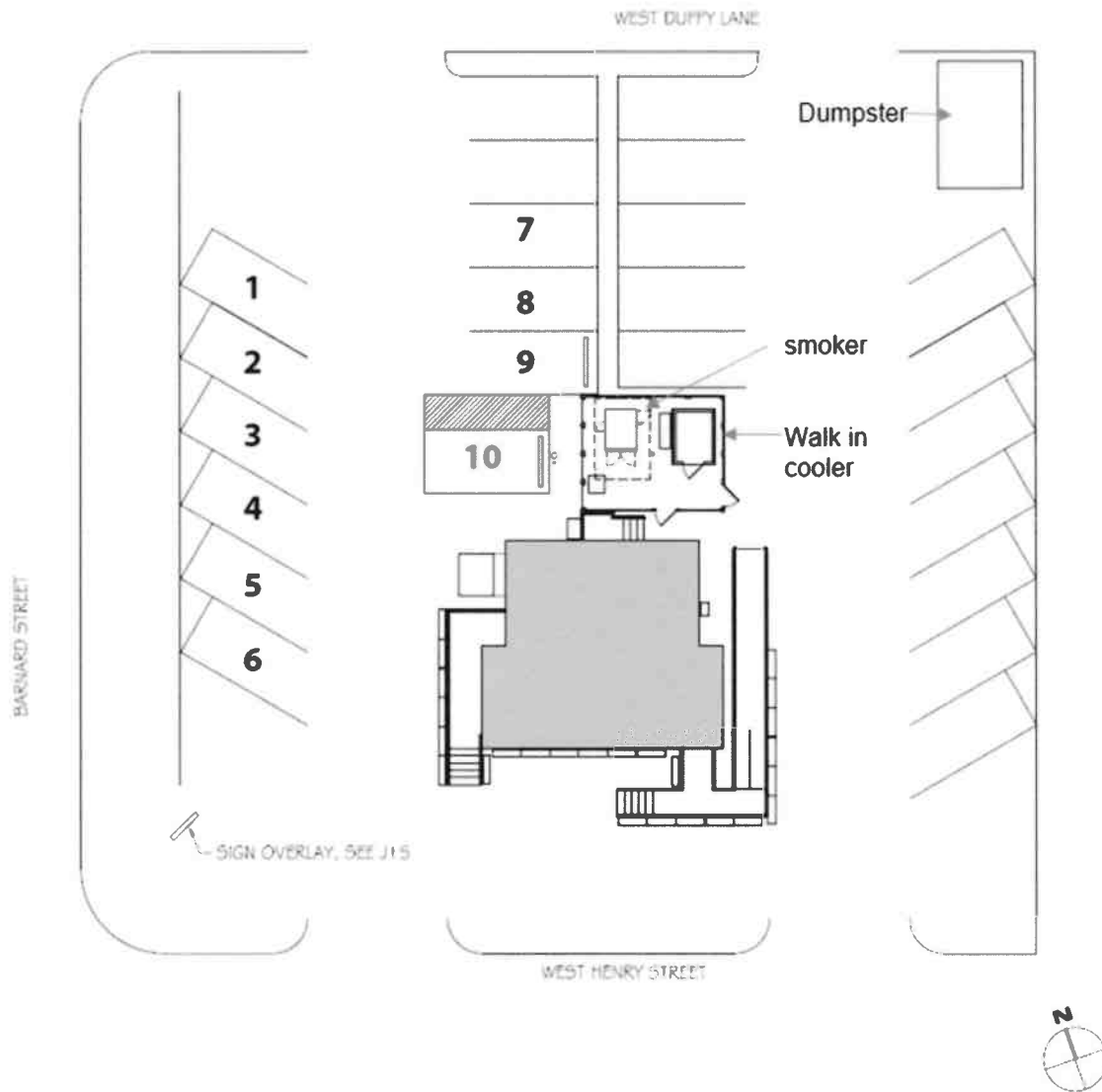
The property is zoned TC-1 (Traditional Commercial-1). Since the initial hearing, the Petitioner has established a small Mexican fusion restaurant within the streamliner serving tacos, burritos, and other Mexican-inspired dishes along with accessory beer and wine sales. The Petitioner is requesting to augment the original Special Use approval to allow accessory sales of distilled spirits as well.

1. **Public Notice:** Mailed notice of the Planning Commission meeting was sent to all property owners within 300-feet of the subject property, signs were posted on site and required newspaper advertisements were run. The notice included instructions on how to access the meeting over the internet.

2. **Existing Development Pattern:**

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

Location	Land Use	Existing Zoning
North	Residential Housing	TN-1
South	Savannah College of Art & Design	TC-1 & TN-1
East	Residential Housing	TN-1
West	Retail & Residential Housing	TC-1 & TN-1



*1220 Barnard Street – Site Plan*

**3. General Provisions 3.10.2:**

The General Provisions for Special Uses identify the purpose of the process and are as follows:

- Special uses within each zoning district are uses that would not be appropriate generally or without restriction but which, if controlled as to number, area, location, or relation to other uses may be appropriate in a particular zoning district.

- A special use permit shall be required for all special uses (identified with an “S” designation) as set forth in the permitted use table in [Sec. 5.4, Principal Use Table](#) or as part of a use condition in [Article 8.0, Use Standards](#).
- Specific use standards may be applicable to the approved special use.
- Any use or activity on the property not specifically permitted by [Article 5.0, Base Zoning Districts](#), or the special use permit as modified, shall be deemed unlawful and subject to [Article 12.0](#).

4. **Review Criteria for Special Use Permits Section 3.10.8:**

When reviewing a special use permit request, the review authority shall consider the following criteria:

- a) Whether the Special Use is consistent with the intent, goals, strategies, policies, guiding principles and programs of the Comprehensive Plan and other adopted plans;

**Staff Comment:** The Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designates the subject property as *Traditional Commercial*. The Traditional Commercial classification allows 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 among collectors and arterials. Characteristics include walkability, limited or on-street parking, and multi-tenant retail. The proposed restaurant with accessory alcohol sales is compatible with the parcel’s future land use designation.

- b) Whether specific use standards for the special use, if any, as provided in Article 8.0, Use Standards, can be achieved;

**Staff Comment:** The specific standards for this special use have been met.

- c) Whether the special use is detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, welfare, function, and appearance of the adjacent uses or general vicinity by reason of any one or more of the following: the number, area, location, height, orientation, intensity (such as traffic, noise, odor, hours of operation), or relation to the neighborhood or other adjacent uses.

**Staff Comment:** The Petitioner is an established restaurant with previous approval for on-site consumption of beer and wine. The present request

would add approval to sell distilled spirits under the current licensee.

The city regulates operational hours for businesses selling alcohol from 7:00 a.m. until 3:00 a.m.

The Petitioner originally proposed and operates as follows:

- Monday through Sunday – 11:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m.
- The property is leased for ten (10) off-street parking spaces with more parking available on site if needed.
- The restaurant operates two shifts with 4 to 6 employees per shift in the building at one time.
- There is an enclosed area to the rear of the property where the dumpster is placed.

- d) Whether the subject property is adequate in shape and size to accommodate the Special Use;

**Staff Comment:** The structure has sufficient interior square footage to accommodate a restaurant with accessory alcohol sales use. The interior space is approximately 950 square feet. The Petitioner provides thirty-three (33) indoor seats. The property has at least ten (10) off-street parking spaces dedicated in their lease. However, per [Sec. 9.3.7.d](#), no off-street parking is required.

- e) Whether adequate public facilities are available to serve the proposed use, including, but not limited to water; sanitary sewer; stormwater drainage facilities; public safety and emergency facilities; roadway capacity; vehicular ingress and egress; or, that the applicant will provide adequately for such services and for placement in an appropriate location.

**Staff Comment:** Adequate public facilities are available to support the proposed use.

- f) Whether the special use will result in the destruction, loss, or damage of any feature determined by the review authority to be of natural, cultural, scenic, or historic importance.

**Staff Comment:** There will be no loss, destruction, or damage to any item of historic significance.

**POLICY ANALYSIS:**

The special use provisions of the Savannah Zoning Ordinance are designed to allow the reviewing authorities to consider the establishment of uses in zoning districts, where the use may be appropriate but should not be allowed by right. The review criteria outlined in Section 3.10.8 are the standards for considering a special use. In review of the standards, the subject property and proposed use meet the requirements.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Approve the Petitioner's request as presented or with conditions.
2. Deny the Petitioner's request.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Planning Commission recommends approval of the request to add sale of distilled spirits to the Special Use Permit with the following condition:

1. The Special Use Permit shall be nontransferable.