



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: December 16, 2025
TO: THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF SAVANNAH
FROM: METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
SUBJECT: Special Use Request

PETITION REFERENCED:

Petitioner: EJ McLean with First City Brewing LLC

Agent: Joshua Yellin with HunterMaclean

Address: 1722 Habersham St

Alderman District: 2 – Detric Leggett

County Commission District: 2 – Malinda Scott Hodge

Property Identification Number: 20064 09015

Petition File Number: 25-005686-ZA

MPC ACTION:

The Planning Commission recommends approval of the request for a Special Use Permit to establish a microbrewery with the following condition:

1. The Special Use Permit shall be nontransferable.

MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

MPC Staff recommends approval of the request for a Special Use Permit to establish a microbrewery with the following condition:

1. The Special Use Permit shall be nontransferable.

MEMBERS PRESENT: 11

Traci Amick
Laureen Boles
Travis Coles – Chairman
Karen Jarrett
Michael Kaigler
Jay Melder
Jeff Notrica
Stephen Plunk
Dwayne Stephens
Amanda Wilson
Tom Woiwode – Vice Chair

PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE: Approve Staff Recommendation. (11-0)

APPROVAL Votes: 11	DENIAL Votes:	ABSENT	Abstain	Recused
Amick Boles Coles Jarrett Kaigler Melder Notrica Plunk Stephens Wilson Woiwode		Ervin Ross Welch		



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

“Planning the Future, Respecting the Past”

Council Report

To: City Council
From: Planning Commission
Date: December 16, 2025
Subject: Special Use Permit Request

Property Owner: Midtown Savannah Property Investments LLC
Petitioner: EJ McLean with First City Brewing LLC
Agent: Joshua Yellin with HunterMaclean
Address: 1722 Habersham St
Alderman: District 2 – Alderman Detric Leggett
County Commission: District 2 – Malinda Scott Hodge
Property Identification Number(s): 20064 09015
Zoning District: TC-1 (Traditional Commercial - 1)
Petition File No.: 25-005686-ZA

REQUEST: The Petitioner requests approval of a Special Use Permit pursuant to Section 3.10 of the Savannah Zoning Ordinance to establish a microbrewery use in the TC-1 zoning district. The proposed microbrewery is called First City Brewing and would occupy approximately 1,400 square feet. The containing building is mixed-use in nature with upper-story residential units.

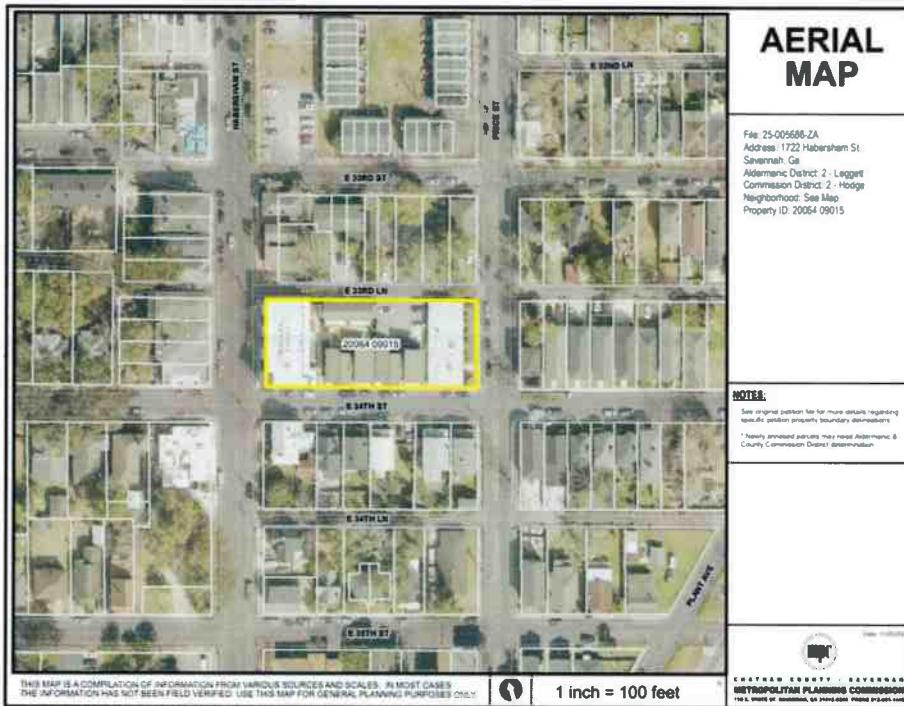
The Special Use process includes review and recommendation by the Planning Commission with final consideration by Savannah City Council.

BACKGROUND:

- i. The subject building is a part of a series of residential buildings with approximately 4,100 square feet with frontage on East 34th Street and Habersham Street.
- ii. The property is within the Thomas Square Neighborhood and Streetcar Local Historic District. No exterior modifications are proposed in association with this request.
- iii. In 2018, a previous Petitioner submitted a request to the Savannah Zoning Board of Appeals for approval to operate a restaurant with alcohol sales at this location, which was subsequently approved ([18-001080-ZBA](#)).
- iv. In May 2025, another previous Petitioner submitted a request to the Planning Commission ([25-001606-ZA](#)) for approval to operate a restaurant

with alcohol sales at this location, which was subsequently approved by City Council in June 2025.

v. The proposed operational hours are 12:00 pm to 10:00 pm Sunday-Thursday and 12:00 pm to 11:00 pm Friday - Saturday.



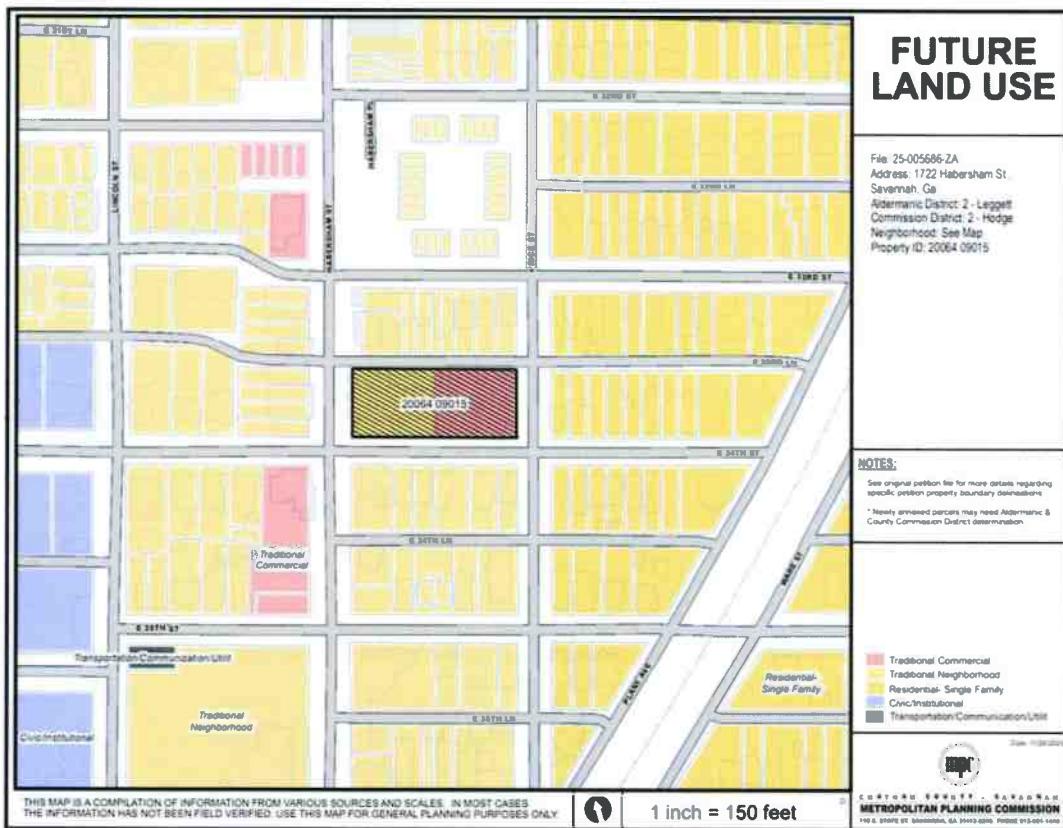
1722 Habersham Street

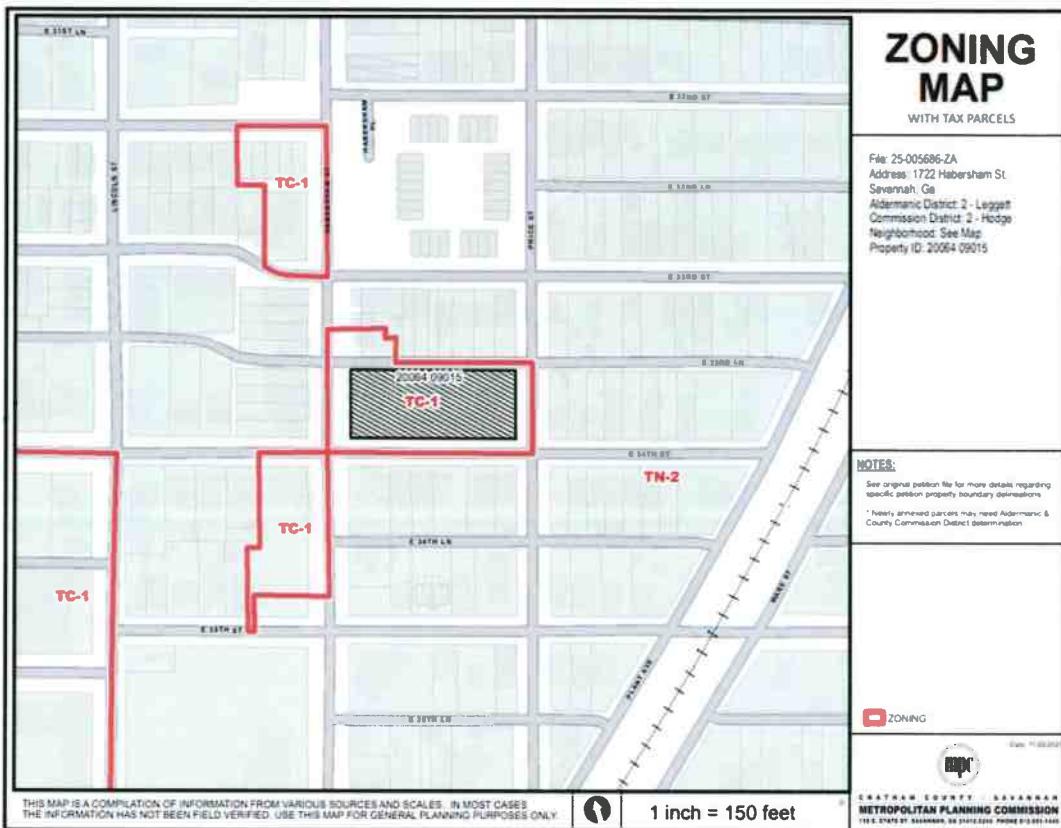
- Public Notice:** Mailed notice of the Planning Commission meeting was sent to all property owners within 300-feet of the subject property, signs were posted on site and required newspaper advertisements were run. The notice included instructions on how to access the meeting via the internet.

- Existing Development Pattern:**

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

Location	Land Use	Existing Zoning
North	Traditional Neighborhood and Traditional Commercial	TN-2 and TC-1
South	Traditional Neighborhood	TN-2
East	Traditional Neighborhood	TN-2
West	Traditional Neighborhood	TN-2





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 Neighborhood. These are residential areas near downtown or in outlying historically settled areas. This category includes nonresidential uses that are compatible with the residential character of neighborhoods.

The property is currently inconsistent because the existing FLUM designation is Traditional Neighborhood, while the zoning designation is Traditional Commercial-1 (TC-1), which is a zoning classification that appears to have been in place prior to the adoption of the current FLUM and NewZO.

Under the Traditional Neighborhood FLUM designation, a microbrewery requires a Special Use Permit, which is the subject of the applicant's current request. Notably, this requirement would remain in effect regardless of changes to the FLUM designation, as the need for a Special Use Permit is tied to the zoning regulations associated with this land use category whether the property is zoned TC-1 or TC-2. Additionally, no external or structural modifications are proposed.

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: Given the site's historic use as a restaurant with prior approval by the ZBA in 2018 for accessory alcohol sales (file [18-001080-ZBA](#)) and a more recent approval from the Planning Commission and City Council in June 2025 ([25-001606-ZA](#)), the requested special use is unlikely to be detrimental public interest, health, safety, welfare, function, and appearance of the adjacent uses or general vicinity.

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

Staff Comment: Currently, the site is fully developed for the intended use.

- 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 site or structure of natural, cultural, scenic or historic importance.

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 evaluating the request against these standards, the subject property and proposed use may be regarded as appropriate. The site has previously been operated for the proposed use and will undergo significant site improvements as part of the re-establishment of the future use. If properly regulated, the proposed use is unlikely to have a negative impact on adjacent properties.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the Petitioner's request as presented or with recommended and/or other conditions.
2. Deny the Petitioner's request.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning Commission recommends approval of the request for a Special Use Permit to establish a microbrewery with the following condition:

1. The Special Use Permit shall be nontransferable.