



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:**        FLUM Amendment

**PETITION REFERENCED:**

**Petitioner/Agent:** Warner Moore, Agent for WJMoore Properties, LLC

**Address:** 1421 and 1425 West Gwinnett Street

**Alderman District:** 1 - Bernetta B. Lanier

**County Commission District:** 8 - Kenneth A. Adams

**Property Identification Number:** 20050 -16021, -16022

**Petition File Number:** 24-001813-ZA

**MPC ACTION:**

The Planning Commission recommends **approval** of the requested FLUM amendment from 'Residential Single-family' to 'Traditional Commercial' for the parcels at 1421 and 1425 West Gwinnett Streets.

**MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

MPC Staff recommends **approval** of the requested FLUM amendment from 'Residential Single-family' to 'Traditional Commercial' for the parcels at 1421 and 1425 West Gwinnett Streets.

**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.  
(9-0)

<b>APPROVAL Votes: 9</b>	<b>DENIAL Votes:</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>Recused</b>	<b>Online</b>
Amick Boles Coles Jarrett Melder Wilson Plunk Ross Stephens		Ervin Kaigler Notrica Welch Woiwode			



Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Wilson  
Executive Director and CEO

*Melanie Wilson/PS*  
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*

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## Council Report

**To:** City Council  
**From:** Planning Commission  
**Date:** January 7, 2025  
**Subject:** Comprehensive Plan - Future Land Use Map Amendment  
**Applicant/Agent:** Warner Moore, Agent for WJMoore Properties, LLC  
**Address:** 1421 and 1425 West Gwinnett Street  
**PIN's:** 20050 -16021, -16022  
**Site Area:** 0.14 Acres  
**Aldermanic District:** 1 – Alderman Bernetta B. Lanier  
**Chatham County Commission District:** 8 – Commissioner Kenneth A. Adams  
**File Number:** 24-001813-ZA-FLUM

**Request:** The Petitioner requests amendment of the Future Land Use Map from *Residential Single-Family* to *Traditional Commercial* for the subject parcels.

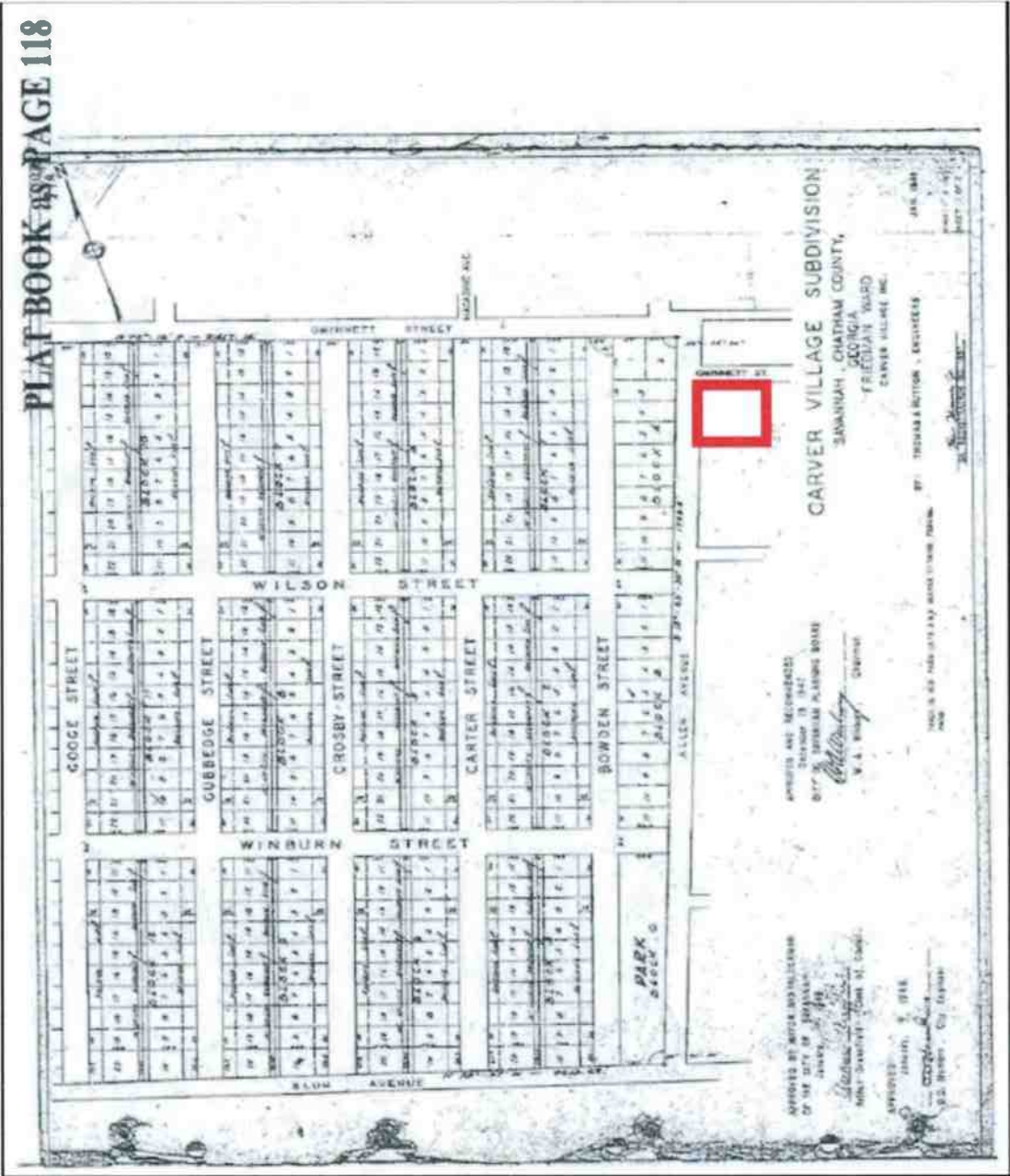
**Background:** The request is made in association with a proposal to convert an existing duplex into a neighborhood-scale multi-tenant commercial structure. The two-story structure currently hosts an over-under duplex. The proposal would effectuate its conversion for nonresidential uses to include: office, personal services, and a potential food-oriented retail establishment on the ground floor. A contractor office would occupy the second floor. The companion rezoning Petition is 24-001759-ZA.

The proposed development lies just north of Interstate 16 in the Carver Heights *National Historic Eligible District*. The site adjoins the Carver Village National Historic Listed District and local [Conservation District](#).

Carver Village was established in 1947 as the '*Carver Village Exclusive Colored Housing Development*' in response to the African American population's acute need for quality housing. The neighborhood represents an example of federally funded housing that was created under the Federal Housing Administration (FHA)'s policies, which often promoted racial segregation in housing developments. Carver Village was designated for African American residents during a

time when FHA policies explicitly enforced segregation by restricting funding for integrated developments and using racially restrictive covenants. This neighborhood is particularly significant as a local historic example of the broad systemic injustice in housing policy witnessed across the United States.

The densely developed and primarily residential district is composed of narrow rectangular lots fronting straight, grid-patterned streets. Housing primarily consists of compact one-story houses constructed of concrete blocks, some with stucco or brick veneer. Carver Village is also significant within the landscape of Savannah's local African American heritage and community development.



Plan 2040 identifies the Carver Heights/Carver Village neighborhood to be car dependent. The neighborhood lacks convenience retail, grocery stores and personal service establishments within



a 15-minute walking distance. Aside from residential uses, the area primarily hosts industrial and institutional uses.



Figure 1: Available community facilities

**Existing zoning:** The existing zoning for the subject parcel is Traditional Residential-2 (TR-2). Residential development in the TR-2 district allows for limited housing types including single-family detached and two-family over/under units. This zoning district does not allow any commercial uses.

Location	Land Use	Existing Zoning
North	Church / Dwellings	TR-2
South	Dwellings	TR-2
East	Dwellings	B-N / TR-2
West	Daycare Center	B-L



Figure 2: Aerial view of the subject property

**Existing FLUM:** The existing FLUM designation for the subject parcel is *'Residential Single-Family.'* These are the areas identified for single-family detached residential dwellings at a density not to exceed eight (8) units per gross acre. This category includes non-residential uses that are compatible with the residential character and scale of the neighborhood. However, the existing FLUM category does not allow the commercial uses proposed by the Petitioner.

**Requested FLUM:** The requested FLUM designation for the subject parcel is *'Traditional Commercial.'* Plan2040 describes these as *'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. The requested FLUM category will allow the applicant to develop the land for the proposed land uses.



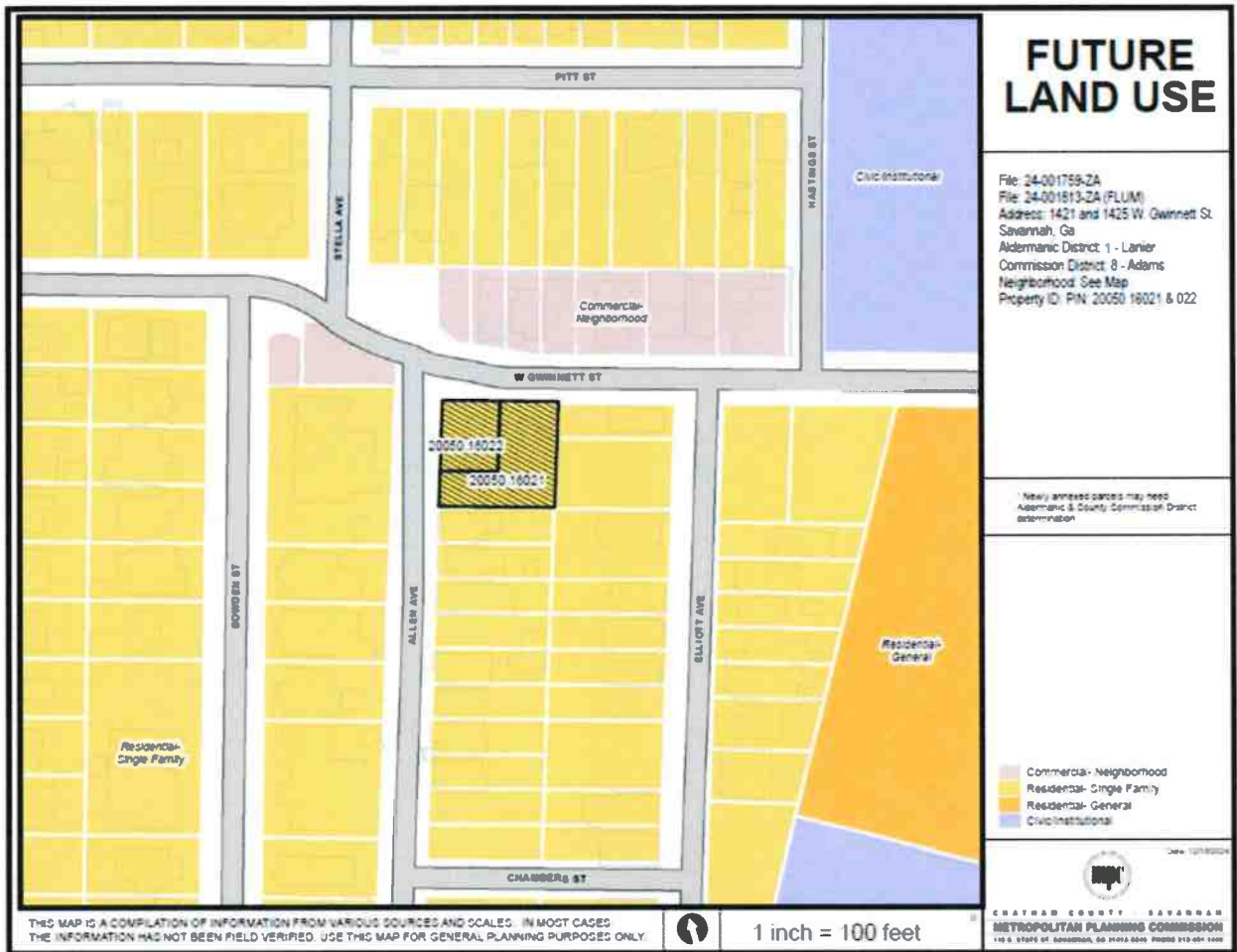


Figure 1: The Future Land Use Map of the subject property.

## Evaluation

Within the City of Savannah, the Zoning Ordinance requires amendments to the zoning map to be consistent with the FLUM. In essence, amendment of the FLUM very technically signals approval of only specifically identified zoning districts.

Given that the Ordinance specifies no particular criteria, consideration of the following points may serve to elucidate whether the proposed amendment meets the intent of existing, published guidance:

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

Savannah-Chatham County's Joint Comprehensive Plan, Plan 2040, identifies the subject parcel and surroundings as 'Urban Transitional' with regard to the anticipated character. Per the Plan, Urban Transitional character areas are those that are sometimes classified as "urban edge" or "urban expansion." This character area includes the Cuyler-Brownville

Historic District, established neighborhoods such as Ardsley Park and Victory Heights, and commercial corridors on Abercorn Street and Victory Drive. Urban Transitional areas are identifiable by more automobile-oriented, suburban style residential areas that still provide access to urban amenities and public transit. Most of these neighborhoods are also pedestrian-oriented with well-used sidewalks, parks, and open spaces. Redevelopment and infill development opportunities are prevalent in this character area, and special attention should be paid to corridors suited for TOD.

**URBAN TRANSITIONAL**

Urban Transitional character areas are those that are sometimes classified as "urban edge" or "urban expansion." This character area includes the Cuyler-Brownville Historic District, established neighborhoods such as Ardsley Park and Victory Heights, and commercial corridors on Abercorn Street and Victory Drive. Urban Transitional areas are identifiable by more automobile-oriented, suburban style residential areas that still provide access to urban amenities and public transit. Most of these neighborhoods are also pedestrian-oriented with well-used sidewalks, parks, and open spaces. Redevelopment and infill development opportunities are prevalent in this character area, and special attention should be paid to corridors suited for TOD.



<b>PRIMARY USES</b>	Attached & detached Residential
<b>SECONDARY USES</b>	Commercial, civic & institutional
<b>DENSITY</b>	Medium-high; 6-20 units per acre
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	Interconnected street grid, multi-modal transportation
<b>ROAD FUNCT. CLASS</b>	Local roads, collector, arterial, expressway
<b>PARKING</b>	On-street, off-street, surface, private driveways
<b>UTILITIES</b>	Supported by existing municipal utilities
<b>OPEN SPACE</b>	Municipal parks, schools, historic Grayson Stadium

Figure 3: Prescribed Urban Transitional Character Area

Areas designated for a future land use of 'Traditional Commercial' are '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.' Staff supports the



FLUM amendment as the parcel is on a major thoroughfare, and in proximity of other parcels already functioning in a principally commercial capacity.

The requested FLUM amendment and uses are consistent with the *Plan 2040* Character Area designation.

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

The requested rezoning supports the following goals established in *Plan 2040*:

Economic Development:

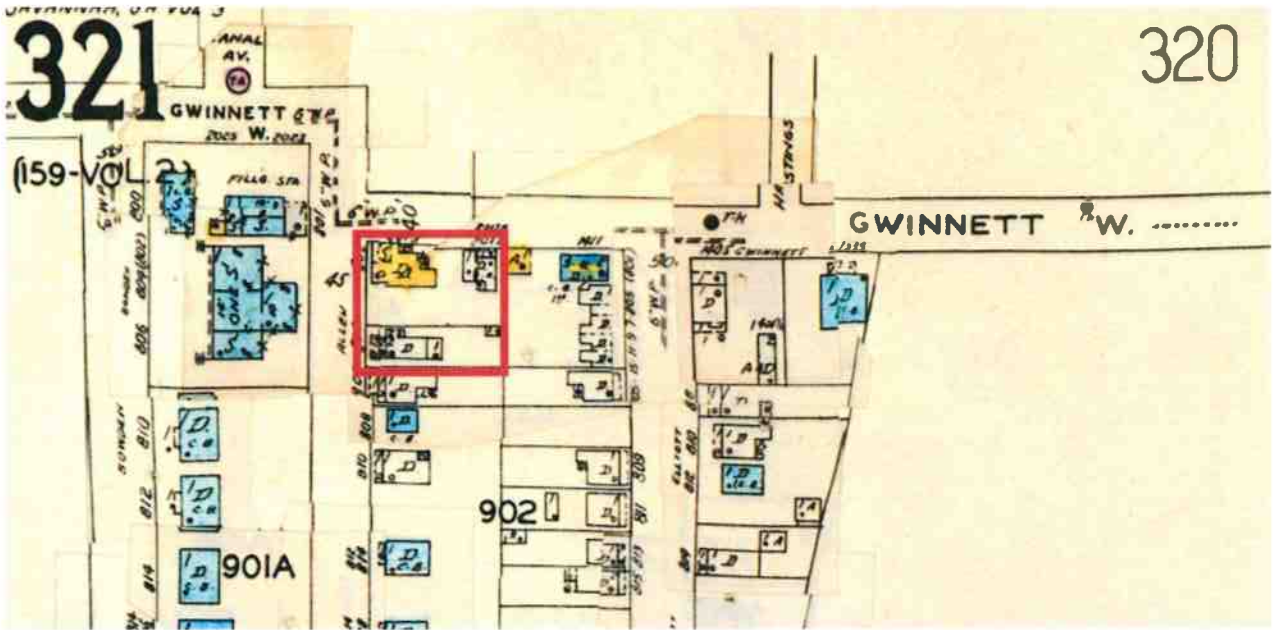
- Goal 2 - Foster a positive environment that provides opportunities for all businesses
- Goal 5 - Become a community with economically vibrant, safe neighborhoods and commercial centers
  - E.2.2. Identify and remove obstacles to existing and proposed businesses in targeted redevelopment areas

Land Use:

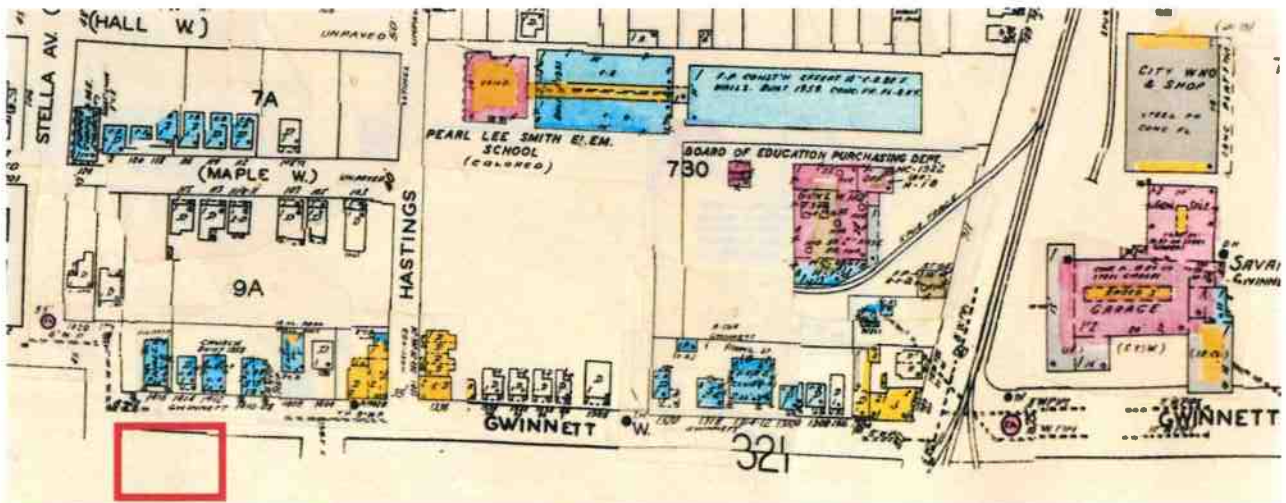
- Goal 1 - Establish growth policies for the City of Savannah that seek to guide development and redevelopment in a responsible manner, encouraging compact development, walkable neighborhoods, increased connectivity, and open space preservation
  - L.1.1. Ensure zoning ordinances provide for pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use development, and a mix of housing types

**3. Other professional planning principles, standards, information and more detailed plans and studies considered relevant.**

While the subject parcels historically contained dwellings, review of the 1955-1966 Sanborn maps indicate a history of mixed uses along the Gwinnett Street corridor. The parcels immediately north and east of the subject parcels contained retail uses, a filling station, a church and fellowship hall. Today, the church and hall remain, and the stores to the east appear to have become a day care center (structure built in 1948 per the tax assessor).



1955-1966 Sanborn Maps: North of West Gwinnett Street



1955-1966 Sanborn Maps: North of West Gwinnett Street adjoining subject parcels

**4. Written comments, evidence, and testimony of the public.**

Per the Petitioner, the proposal was well received at multiple regular meetings of the Carver Village Neighborhood Association. The Neighborhood Association President and several members of the community appeared at the May 21, 2024 MPC meeting (at which the Petition was continued) to convey support for the request to MPC Staff.

**Recommendation**

The Planning Commission recommends approval of the requested FLUM amendment from 'Residential Single-family' to 'Traditional Commercial' for the parcels at 1421 and 1425 West Gwinnett Streets.