



METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

"Planning the Future - Respecting the Past"

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: November 7, 2023
TO: THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF SAVANNAH
FROM: METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
SUBJECT: MPC RECOMMENDATION

PETITION REFERNCED:

Petitioner: Andrew Johnson and Richard Rodenberg
Owner: Fiddler Investments, LLC
Aldermanic District: 3 - Alderman Linda Wilder Bryan
County Commission District: 3 - Commissioner Bobby Lockett
Neighborhood/Subdivision: Avondale
Current Zoning District: RSF-6 (Residential Single-Family - 6)
Future Land Use (FLU) Category: Residential-Suburban Single Family
File No. 23-005383-ZA
Location: 2025 Texas Ave, Savannah, GA 31404
PINs: 20060 20010
Acreage: 0.241 acres

MPC ACTION:

Approval of the request to rezone to Residential Single-family 5 (RSF-5) from Residential Single-family 6 (RSF-6).

MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approval of the request to rezone to Residential Single-family 5 (RSF-5) from Residential Single-family 6 (RSF-6).

MEMBERS PRESENT: 12 + Chairwoman

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

PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE: Approval staff recommendation (13-0)

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

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, Planning of Urban & Design



CHATHAM COUNTY-SAVANNAH METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

"Planning the Future, Respecting the Past"

STAFF REPORT

To: The Savannah City Council

From: The Planning Commission

Date: November 7, 2023

Subject: Zoning Map Amendment

Owner: Fiddler Investments, LLC

Petitioner(s): Andrew Johnson and Richard Rodenberg

Address: 2025 Texas Ave, GA 31404

PIN: 20060 20010

Site Area: 0.241 ac

Alderman District: 3 – Linda Wilder-Bryan

Chatham County Commission District: 3 – Bobby Lockett

File Number: 23-005383-ZA

Request

The Petitioner seeks to rezone the property at 2025 Texas Avenue for the purpose of subdivision and single-family home development. As currently zoned, having an area of 10,500 sf, the subject parcel is deficient 1,500 sf in area for further subdivision. The requested RSF-5 district would permit subdivision of the lot into two lots having a minimum of 50' of frontage and minimum area of 5,000 sf.

Facts and Findings

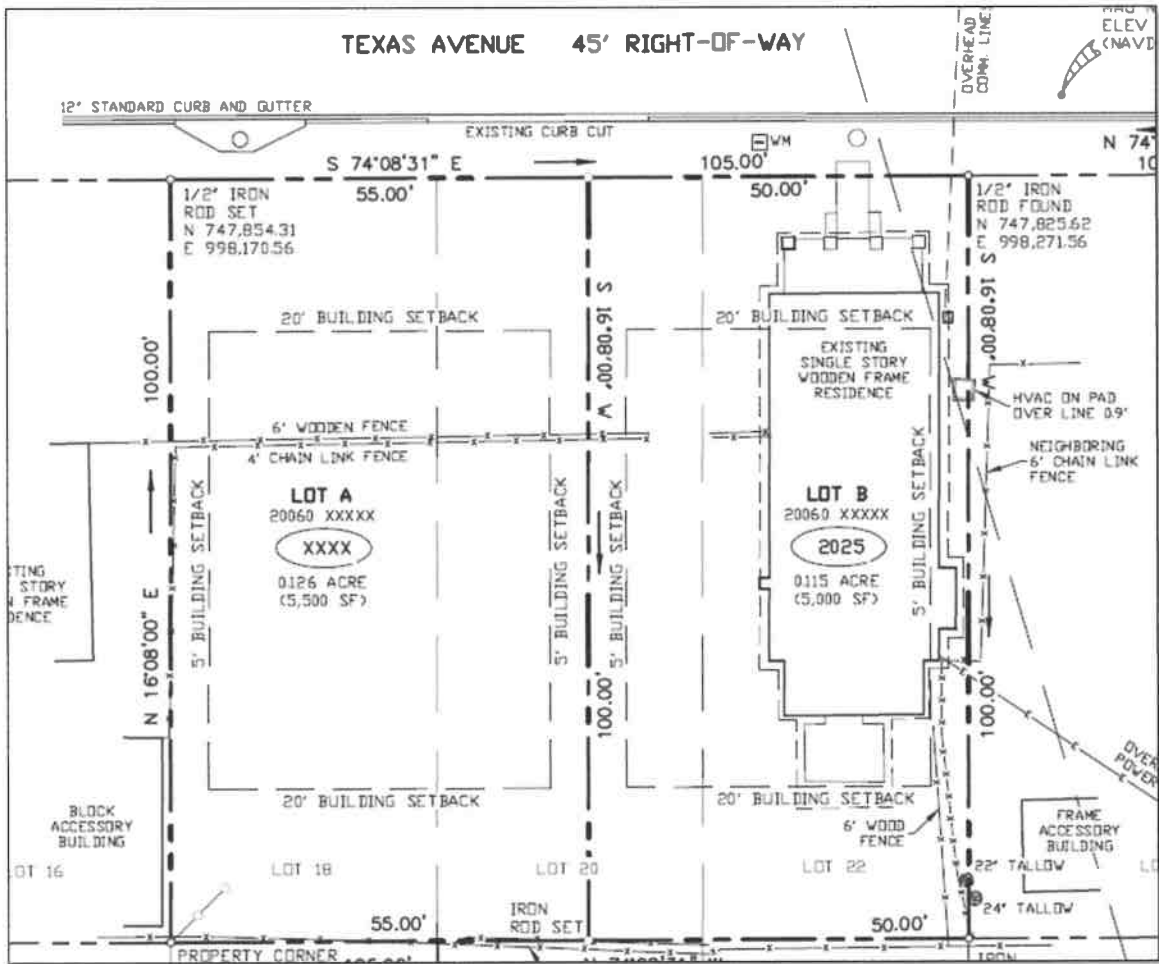
Site

The subject parcel consists of 0.241 acres (10,500 sf) and contains a one story single-family home originally built in 1939. The dwelling is listed by the Board of Assessors as having 1,135 sf of heated floor area and is legal non-conforming with regard to front and side setbacks.

Existing Zoning and Development Pattern

The subject parcel is currently zoned RSF-6, which requires lots with a minimum frontage of 60' and area of 6,000 sf. There is wide variety, however, in parcel dimensions. It is evident that the area was historically platted with lots having frontage of 35'. The majority of lots in the area now reflect having been combined with one additional lot to produce parcels that are 70' wide by 100' in depth. Others reflect a 3-lot combination to produce 105' in width x 100' in depth. Still, others are 35 to 55' in width.

Location	Land Use	Existing Zoning
North	Single-family Dwellings	RSF-6
South	Single-family Dwelling and Church	RSF-6
East	Single-family Dwelling	RSF-6
West	Single-family Dwelling	RSF-6



Proposed RSF-5 subdivision of 2025 Texas Avenue



Proposed RSF-5 subdivision of 2025 Texas Avenue

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 at least 15 but not more than 45 days prior to the meeting. The mailed notice included instructions on how to access the public meeting via the internet.

Neighborhood Meetings

The Petitioner shared a communication in which a meeting was requested with the neighborhood association at the time of application. However, it was later reported that no response was received. The Petitioners also report that positive conversations were held with adjoining neighbors and a tour of the property was provided to the District 3 Alderwoman. MPC Staff received two letters of support for the petition.

Impact and Suitability

Public Services and Facilities

The existing and proposed homes would be served by City water, sewer and stormwater systems. Any needed improvements will be identified and addressed during the plan review and building permitting process.

Transportation and Transit

The subject property has frontage on Texas Avenue. Approval of Savannah Traffic Engineering will be required for creation of a new curb cut. One off-street parking space is required per dwelling.

CAT bus stops are accessible to the west along Pennsylvania Avenue approximately 600 feet away. Sidewalks are provided along Pennsylvania Ave

Comprehensive Land Use Plan Element

The rezoning request was filed concurrently with a request to amend the Future Land Use Map. At the time of the request, the subject parcel was designated Residential – Suburban Single-family. This character area is identified by the Comprehensive Plan for single-family detached residential dwellings at a density not to exceed five (5) gross dwelling units per acre. The Residential Single-family character area is envisioned as suitable for single-family detached residential dwellings at a density not to exceed eight (8) units per gross acre. This designation corresponds with zoning districts: RSF-6, RSF-5, and RSF-4. The requested FLUM designation is more consistent with the current zoning and development pattern in the area

Existing Zoning District

- Intent of the RSF Zoning District: The RSF- districts are established to preserve and create areas of single-family detached development. The five districts (RSF-30, RSF-20, RSF-10, RSF-6, RSF-5, and RSF-4) within the RSF- designation provide for varying development standards but generally permit the same uses. A limited number of nonresidential uses are allowed that are compatible with single-family residential uses.
- Allowed Uses: The uses allowed in the **RSF-6** zoning district appear in the attached chart.
- Development Standards: The development standards of the **RSF-6** zoning district appear in the attached chart.

Proposed Zoning District

- Intent of the RSF Zoning District: The RSF- districts are established to preserve and create areas of single-family detached development. The five districts (RSF-30, RSF-20, RSF-10, RSF-6, RSF-5, and RSF-4) within the RSF- designation provide for varying development standards but generally permit the same uses. A limited number of nonresidential uses are allowed that are compatible with single-family residential uses.
- Allowed Uses: The uses allowed in the **RSF-5** zoning district appear in the attached chart.
- Development Standards: The development standards of the **RSF-5** zoning district appear in the attached chart.

Zoning Ordinance Review

The following review criteria for rezoning are prescribed in the Savannah Zoning Ordinance Sec. 3.5.8

Suitability and Community Need

- Whether the range of uses permitted by the proposed zoning district is more suitable than the range of uses that are permitted by the current zoning district.

MPC Comment: *The uses permitted in each zoning district are identical, the principal difference between the two districts being that the RSF-5 district permits creation of lots having 50' of frontage and a minimum lot area of 5,000 sf, where the current district requires a minimum of 60' of frontage and minimum area of 6,000 sf. The subject parcel, at an area of 10,500 sf, cannot be further subdivided unless the new lot is permitted to be less than 6,000 sf.*

- Whether the proposed zoning district addresses a specific need in the county or city.

MPC Comment: *The proposed rezoning addresses the need for additional housing units within the City through creation of an appropriate infill development opportunity.*

- Whether the zoning proposal will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property.

MPC Comment: *The proposed development is unlikely to have any negative impact on the surrounding neighborhood.*

- Whether the zoning proposal is compatible with the present zoning pattern and conforming uses of nearby property and the character of the surrounding area.

MPC Comment: *The proposed 5,500 sf lot to be created and developed is not inconsistent with the development pattern in the area, as there are existing lots with 50' or frontage and less nearby.*

- Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property which give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the zoning proposal.

MPC Comment: *There are no existing or changing conditions regarding the subject property itself. The compelling condition is the need for additional housing units within the City and region. Subdivision of the parcel would permit the land to be used more optimally.*

Consistency

- Whether the zoning proposal is in conformity with the policy and intent of the Comprehensive Plan and other adopted plans, such as a redevelopment plan or small area plan.

MPC Comment: The following goal and strategy of Plan 2040 are relevant to the present request:

Housing – Goal 3:

- Strategy H.3.3

- Adopt policies and ordinances to allow for a wider variety of housing types to be built in existing neighborhoods.

Reasonable Use

- Whether the property to be affected by the zoning proposal has a reasonable use as currently zoned.

MPC Comment: *The subject parcel does have reasonable use as a single-family home. Additionally, an ADU could be developed on the property to create a second dwelling unit, though an ADU cannot be subdivided and sold.*

Adequate Public Services

- Whether adequate school, public safety and emergency facilities, road, ingress and egress, parks, wastewater treatment, water supply and stormwater drainage facilities are available for the uses and densities that are permitted in the proposed zoning district.

MPC Comment: *Adequate City services are available for the proposed development. Additionally, any needed improvements will be identified and addressed during the plan review and building permitting processes.*

Proximity to a Military Base, Installation or Airport

MPC Comment: *The subject parcel is not within an installation AICUZ or APZ, nor is it in proximity of an airport.*

Policy Analysis

The present request accentuates the fact that a zoning scheme broadly adopted and not developed with the unique contours of a neighborhood in mind can create unnecessary and artificial barriers to what would otherwise be appropriate infill development opportunities. There is a great deal of variation in both the parcel fabric and housing types found in many of the City's older, established neighborhoods. Where some have flexible zoning frameworks like the Traditional Neighborhood districts, others appear to have had a more conventional fixed single-family framework imposed upon them. While approval of the proposed rezoning would address this particular parcel, policy and ordinance amendments should be considered to make the infill development process less onerous within identified neighborhoods where it is appropriate. Additionally, neighborhood plans and corresponding contextual development standards should be created. This will allow the residents most directly impacted to both envision and shape the future growth of their neighborhoods.



An illustration of the proposed single-family home

Recommendation

The Planning Commission recommends **approval** of the request to rezone to Residential Single-family 5 (RSF-5).