



**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 REFERENCED:**

**Petitioner:** Andrew Johnson and Richard Rodenberg

**Owner:** Fiddlers Investments, LLC

**Aldermanic District:** 3, Linda Wilder-Byran

**County Commission District:** 3, Bobby Lockett

**Neighborhood/Subdivision:** Avondale

**Current Zoning District:** Residential-Single-family – 6

**Future Land Use (FLU) Category:** Residential-Suburban Single-Family

**File No.** 23-005385-ZA-FLUM

**Location:** 2025 Texas Avenue, Savannah, GA 31404

**PIN:** 20060 20010

**Acreage:** 0.241

**MPC ACTION:**

The Planning Commission recommends **approval** of the requested FLUM amendment to Residential – Single-family.

**MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

MPC Staff recommends **approval** of the requested FLUM amendment to Residential – Single-family.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** 12 + Chairman

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

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

<b>APPROVAL Votes: 11</b>	<b>DENIAL Votes: 0</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
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, Department of Planning and Urban Design



# CHATHAM COUNTY-SAVANNAH METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

*"Planning the Future, Respecting the Past"*

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## STAFF REPORT

**To:** The Savannah City Council

**From:** The Planning Commission

**Date:** November 2, 2023

**Subject:** Comprehensive Plan – Future Land Use Map Amendment

**Owner:** Fiddler Investments, LLC

**Agent:** Andrew Johnson and Richard Rodenberg

**Address:** 2025 Texas Ave, Savannah, GA 31404

**PIN:** 20060 20010

**Site Area:** 0.241 ac

**Alderman District:** 3 – Linda Wilder-Byran

**Chatham County Commission District:** 3 – Bobby Lockett

**File Number:** 23-005385-ZA-FLUM

### Request

The Petitioner requests amendment of the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) for the property at 2025 Texas Avenue from a designation of Residential – Suburban Single-family to Residential – Single-family. The amendment is requested in association with a proposal to rezone and subdivide the property for the purpose of developing a single-family home on the newly created vacant parcel. Per Section 5.7.2 of the Zoning Ordinance, rezoning to RSF-5 requires a FLUM designation of Residential Single-family.

### Current Character Area

The subject parcel is currently 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. This category permits certain non-residential uses that are compatible with the residential character and scale of the neighborhood

on a very limited basis. This designation corresponds with zoning districts: RSF-E, RSF-30, RSF-20, and RSF-10.

### **Proposed Character Area**

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 category includes non-residential uses that are compatible with the residential character and scale of the neighborhood. This designation corresponds with zoning districts: RSF-6, RSF-5, and RSF-4.

### **Analysis**

New ZO requires a Future Land Use designation of Residential – Single-family for property to be rezoned to Residential Single-family – 5 (RSF-5). For this reason, the requested designation is the minimum required for the associated rezoning request and proposed development. The requested FLUM designation is similar to the current designation in that it permits only single-family detached dwellings, albeit at a slightly higher density that is more consistent with in.

Of note with regard to this area is that there is a misalignment between the FLUM designation of the majority of parcels and their current zoning. New ZO requires strict consistency with the Future Land Use Map, and as a guiding policy document, currently suggests the neighborhood is to be developed in a less dense manner with lots 10,000 sf in area or greater. The current zoning pattern largely permits lots with a minimum area of 5,000 – 6,000 sf.

As the region grapples with a housing shortage and searches for strategies to support appropriate, contextually sensitive infill development, consideration should be given to whether an area that is east of the Truman, but still very much ‘in town’ is suitably designated for a suburban development pattern.

The Savannah Housing Action Plan identifies a number of goals and strategies for bridging the gap in housing supply and demand. Action item 5A.1 recommends preparation of a citywide planning document that identifies conditions and opportunities *by neighborhood*. It is Staff's contention that closer evaluation of this and similar neighborhoods for a more flexible and adaptive zoning schemes could yield desirable infill opportunities – either through reduction of the prevailing minimum lot size or through adoption of a more flexible traditional development approach with an eye toward future reuse of interspersed larger parcels. ADU provisions may also be adjusted as a means of accommodating additional units if a principally single-family configuration is genuinely the best fit.



*With single-family home parcels ranging from 35' to 105' in width, and (typically) 100' in depth, the varied parcel fabric of the area offers possibilities for infill development.*

NewZO does not offer specific criteria for evaluation of a FLUM amendment, however, the following may provide guidance for consideration of the merits of the present 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 is a relatively minor adjustment to meet the consistency requirement of the Zoning Ordinance, as both designations support only development of detached single-family homes. The Residential Single-family FLUM designation is more consistent with the current and requested zoning of the parcel than the current designation. Future evaluation of the neighborhood more broadly should be considered to make the zoning and FLUM more consistent.

(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:

- 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.

Though tangential, 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 FLUM amendment and rezoning would address this particular parcel, policy and ordinance amendments should be considered to make the infill development process less onerous. 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.

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

Approval of the present request is consistent with the following action item identified within the Housing Savannah Action Plan:

- 4.3: Increase the capacity and/or number of non-profit, CDC and private developers of new or renovated single-family properties

The Petitioners are small, local investors. Success in their initial project will allow them to continue to pursue additional single-family infill development projects.

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

- MPC Staff has been informed of productive exchanges with neighbors and the District 3 Alderwoman regarding the request. The Petitioner also requested a meeting with the Avalon Neighborhood Association as is required by the Ordinance, but as of the writing of this report, no response was received.

### **MPC Recommendation**

The Planning Commission recommends approval of the requested FLUM amendment to Residential – Single-family.

*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.*