



METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

"Planning the Future - Respecting the Past"

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: May 21, 2024
TO: THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF SAVANNAH
FROM: METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
SUBJECT: Special Use Permit

PETITION REFERENCED:

Petitioner: Robert L. McCorkle, III

Property Owner: Ramsey Khalidi, LLC

Address: 100 West Lathrop Avenue

Alderman: District - 1 – Bernetta B. Lanier

County Commission: District - 8– Kenneth A. Adams

Property Identification Number: 20025 12001 and 20025 12002

Petition File No.: 24-002463-ZA

MPC ACTION:

The Planning Commission recommends **approval** of the requested Special Uses with the following conditions: 1) the Special Use Permit shall be nontransferable; 2) A Specific Site Plan be subsequently approved showing conformance with all applicable ordinances and City Department Reviews and Approvals; 3) Any future material change to the site plan be further reviewed and approved by the MPC. MPC may refer to City Council if change is deemed as substantial.

MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The MPC Staff recommends **approval** of the requested Special Uses with the following conditions: 1) the Special Use Permit shall be nontransferable; 2) A Specific Site Plan be subsequently approved showing conformance with all applicable ordinances and City Department Reviews and Approvals; 3) Any future material change to the site plan be further reviewed and approved by the MPC. MPC may refer to City Council if change is deemed as substantial.

MEMBERS PRESENT: 11

Traci Amick
Stephen Plunk
Travis Coles- Vice Chair
Karen Jarrett – Chairwoman
Laureen Boles
Coren Ross
Joseph Ervin
Jeff Notrica
Joseph Welch - Online
Jay Melder
Michael Kaigler

PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE: Approve Staff Recommendation with conditions.
(10-1)

APPROVAL Votes: 10	DENIAL Votes: 1	ABSENT
Amick Coles Melder Notrica Plunk Welch Ross Ervin Jarrett Kaigler	Boles	Woiwode Stephens Noha



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, Planning and Urban Design



C H A T H A M C O U N T Y - S A V A N N A H
METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

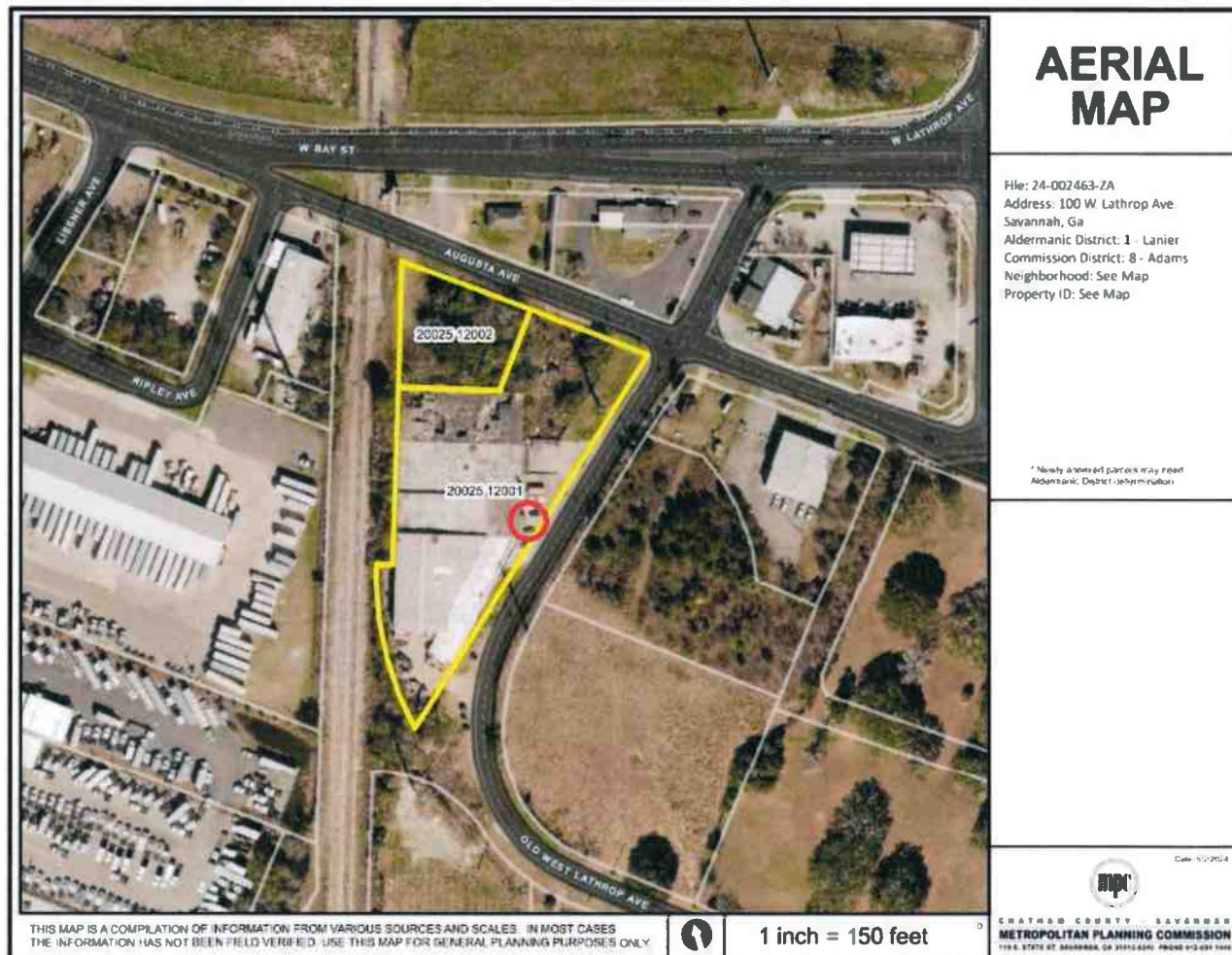
Planning the Future - Respecting the Past

To: The Metropolitan Planning Commission
Date: May 21, 2024
Subject: Special Use Request
Petitioner: Robert McCorckle, III
Property Owner: Ramsey Khalidi, LLC
Address: 100 West Lathrop Avenue
Alderman: District 1 – Alderman Bernetta B. Lanier
County Commission: District 8 – Commissioner Kenneth A. Adams
Property Identification Number: 20025 12001 and 20025 12002
Petition File No.: 24-002463-ZA

REQUEST: The Petitioner requests approval of a Special Use Permit pursuant to Section 3.10 of the Savannah Zoning Ordinance to establish an *'indoor amusement'*. The proposed *'amusement'* will establish a year-round haunted house attraction based on the history and legends of the Savannah area. This Special Use permit will create a new special use in an I-L (Light Industrial) district pursuant to the newly created special use in Sec. 5.4 Principal Use Table with use-specific standards in Article 8, Section 8.5, Commercial Use Standards for Limited and Special Uses.

Front Entrance W. Lathrop Avenue





100 West Old Lathrop Avenue (Entrance on W. Lathrop Avenue)

BACKGROUND: The property located at 100 W. Lathrop Avenue is situated at the southwest corner of the intersection of Augusta Avenue and 'Old' West Lathrop Avenue. The parcels in question consist of approximately 2.36-acres of developed industrial warehouse use, constructed between 1955 and 1963 per the Chatham County Assessor website. Plans submitted for the proposed use include utilizing 8,327.7-sqft for the main attraction/'Spook Corridor' and 12,857.4-sqft for storage and operations (201.3-sqft Control Room; 402.8-sqft Restrooms). Parking calculations for the proposed use require 47 dedicated off-street parking stalls which have been depicted on the submitted plans.

(Attached Exhibit 1 – Site Plans)

The Petitioner intends the established operation to run on a managed schedule to account for maximum facility occupancy as well as parking which will minimize chance of

overcrowding for the proposed Indoor Amusement Use.

Per the Zoning Ordinance, an Indoor Amusement is defined as “An establishment that Includes pool halls, bowling lanes, game arcades, escape rooms, haunted houses, skating rinks and similar uses. This term does not include adult entertainment.”

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 via the internet.

2. **Existing Development Pattern:**

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

Location	Land Use	Existing Zoning
North	Package Liquor Store / Union Hall	B-C
South	Vacant / Unused	I-L
East	Savannah Fire Station 4	B-C
West	Fabrication Shop / Truck Storage	I-L

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 remaining *Light Industrial* surrounded by Community Business and Traditional Commercial. A significant condition of the special use is that the property use classification transient and upon cessation revert back to the original zoning district. The future 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 along collectors and arterials. Characteristics include walkability, limited or on-street parking, and multi-tenant retail. The proposed Indoor Amusement use would be compatible with adjacent parcel's future land use designations, current zoning, and the general pattern of development in the area.

- b) Whether specific use standards for the special use, if any, as provided in Article 8.4.52, Use Standards, can be achieved;

Staff Comment: The recent approval of a text amendment by the City Council on April 25, 2024, establishing the Special Use category for Indoor Amusement in a Light Industrial zoning district provides the following;

Sec. 8.4.52 Indoor amusement

In the I-L zoning district, the following shall apply:

- a. All activities shall be conducted indoors.
 - b. A conceptual site plan shall be submitted and approved with the petition including the following:
 - i. Existing zoning of all parcels within 100 feet of the property line.
 - ii. Land uses and structures within 100 feet of the property.
 - iii. Rights of way and points of ingress/egress to the property.
 - iv. Footprints of existing and proposed buildings/structures to be used in association with the request.
 - v. Location of any proposed screening, fences, or walls to be constructed in association with the proposed use.
 - vi. Location and counts of all proposed parking.
 - c. Where variances to development standards of Article 9 are required, a site plan meeting the requirements of a General Development Plan as provided in Sec. 3.8.4.a. shall be submitted and approved concurrently through a Special Use Permit.
- 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: Staff does not believe that the approval of a Special Use permit for this use will be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, welfare, function or appearance of adjacent uses or general vicinity by orientation, intensity (such as traffic, noise, odor, hours of operation), or relation to the neighborhood or other adjacent uses once all requirements of a Specific Site Development Plan have been met and approved.

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

Staff Comment: The subject parcels are developed and oriented in such a

manner to likely facilitate the successful and efficient use of the property for the proposed special 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 within the existing structure.

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 is currently developed for warehouse purposes and the requested use is such that the ability to make efficient use of large empty indoor areas for the proposed use makes the property highly suited to this purpose. 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 requested Special Uses with the following conditions:

1. The Special Use Permit shall be nontransferable.
2. A Specific Site Plan be subsequently approved showing conformance with all applicable ordinances and City Department Reviews and Approvals.
3. Any future material change to the site plan be further reviewed and approved by the MPC. MPC may refer to City Council if change is deemed as substantial.