



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

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## METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

*"Planning the Future - Respecting the Past"*

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M E M O R A N D U M

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**DATE:**            **January 25, 2024**

**TO:**                **THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF SAVANNAH**

**FROM:**           **METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION**

**SUBJECT:**        **Special Use Request**

**PETITION REFERENCED:**

**Petitioner:** James Massey  
**Property Owner:** Starland Partners, LLC  
**Address:** 12 West 41<sup>st</sup> Street  
**Alderman:** District - 2 – Detric Legget  
**County Commission:** District - 2– Malinda Scott Hodge  
**Property Identification Number:** 20065 47020  
**Petition File No.:** 23-006445-ZA

**MPC ACTION:**

The Planning Commission recommends **Approval** of the request for a Special Use permit to establish a craft micro distillery.

**MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

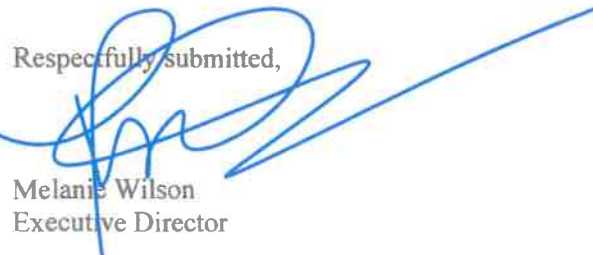
Staff recommends **Approval** of the request for a Special Use permit to establish a craft micro distillery.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** 8

Traci Amick  
Michael Kaigler  
Travis Coles- Vice Chair  
Karen Jarrett - Chairwoman  
Jay Melder  
Joseph Ervin  
Dwayne Stephens  
Tom Woiwode

**PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:** Approve Staff Recommendation.  
(8-0)

<b>APPROVAL</b> Votes: 10	<b>DENIAL</b> Votes: 0	<b>ABSENT</b>
Amick Coles Ervin Jarrett Kaigler Melder Stephens Woiwode		Coleman Noha Notrica Welch Boles Epstein

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 Inspections



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 Mayor and Aldermen, City of Savannah  
**From:** The Planning Commission  
**Date:** January 25, 2024  
**Subject:** Special Use Request (Craft Distillery)  
**Petitioner:** James Massey  
**Property Owner:** Starland Partners, LLC  
**Address:** 12 West 41<sup>st</sup> Street, Savannah, GA 31401  
**Alderman:** District 2 – Alderman Detric Leggett  
**County Commission:** District 2 – Commissioner Malinda Scott Hodge  
**Property Identification Number:** 20065 47020  
**Petition File No.:** 23-006445-ZA

**REQUEST:** The Petitioner requests approval of a Special Use pursuant to Section 3.10 of the Savannah Zoning Ordinance to establish a craft distillery use within an existing microbrewery and restaurant in the TC-1 zoning district. The Special Use process includes review by the Planning Commission and the Savannah City Council. Should the request be approved by the City Council, approval and issuance of other State and local licenses will still be required to establish the use. The scope of the present review includes only those criteria established by the Zoning Ordinance regarding appropriateness of the use at the requested location.



**BACKGROUND:** The subject property consists of three units within a two-story

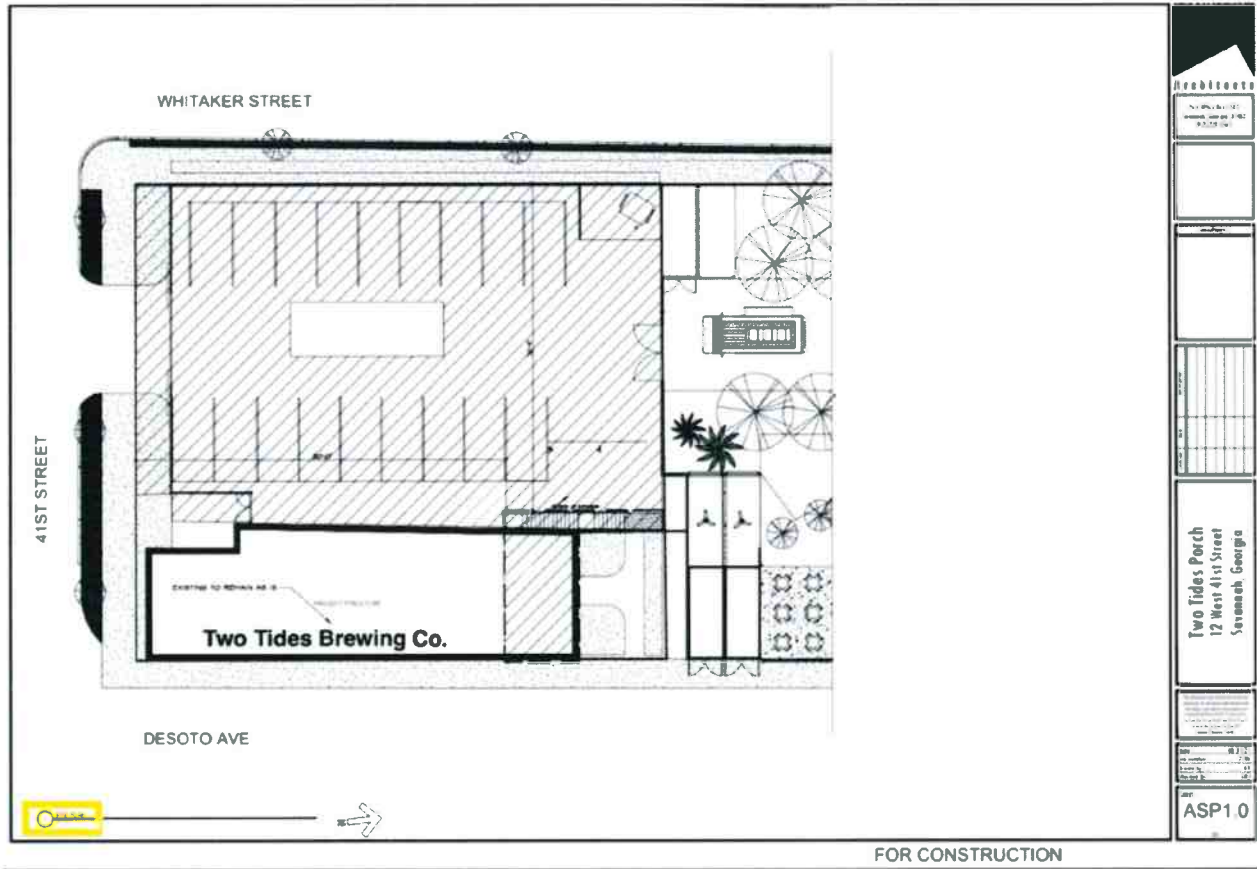
commercial condominium with a 2,687 square foot footprint located at 12 West 41st Street. The structure is part of the “Starland District” commercial complex, which is zoned TC-1 (Traditional Commercial-1) and located within the Streetcar Local Historic District. A Special Use Permit was issued by the City of Savannah Zoning Board of Appeals in 2017 to establish a microbrewery at this location (Case No. 17-003114-ZBA).

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.

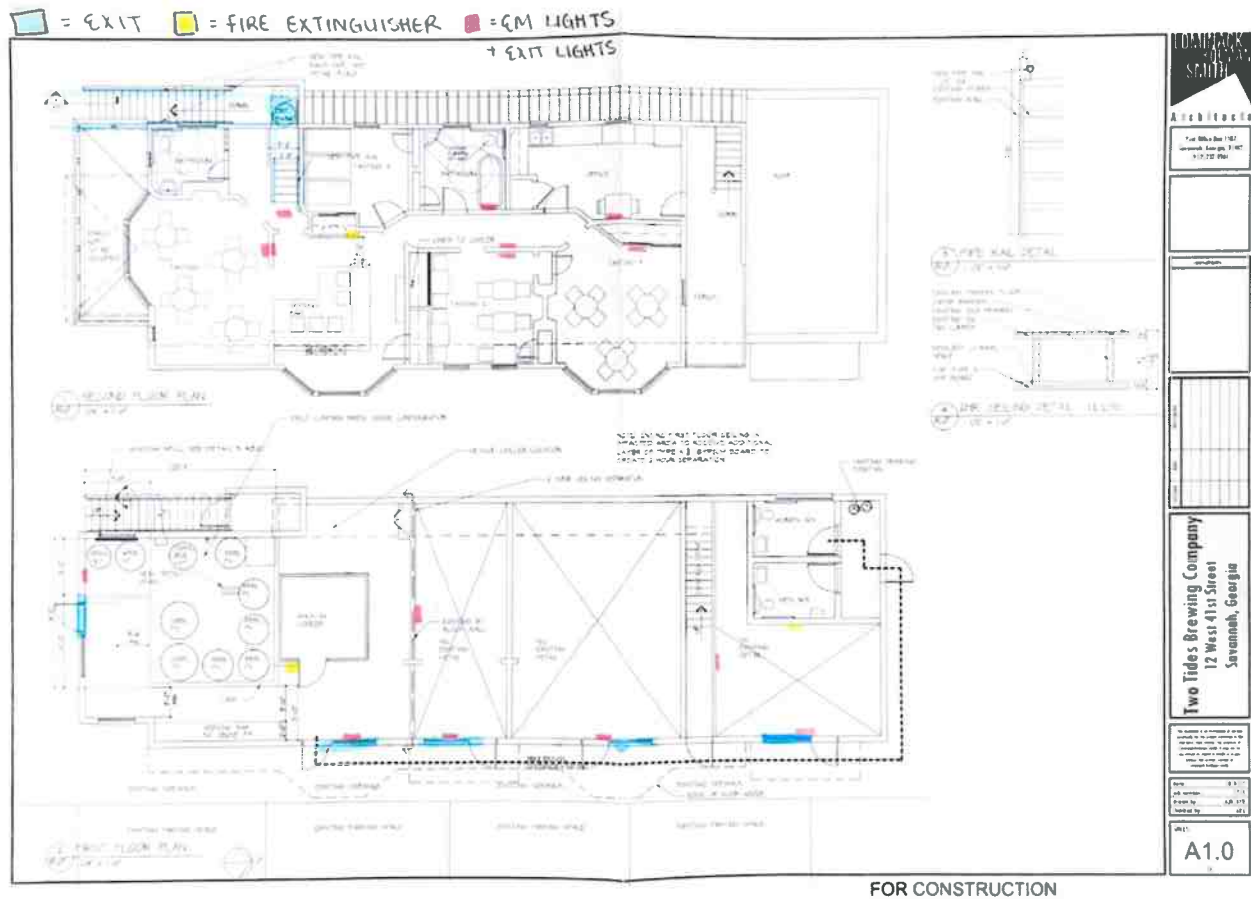
2. **Existing Development Pattern:**

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

<b>Location</b>	<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Existing Zoning</b>
<b>North</b>	Starland Yard/Food Truck Court	TC-1
<b>South</b>	Residence/Retail Shop	TN-2
<b>East</b>	Mixed Use/Residential Building with Ground floor Commercial	TC-1
<b>West</b>	Starland Yard Seating Area / Word of Faith Christian Family Center	TN-2



*Two Tides Brewery within Starland Development*



*Two Tides Brewery - Existing Floor Plan*

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) **Staff Comment:** 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 Commercial*. The 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 among collectors and arterials. Characteristics include walkability, limited or on-street parking, and multi-tenant retail. The proposed microdistillery addition to the existing microbrewery and restaurant use is consistent with the parcel's future land use designation, 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 8.0, Use Standards, can be achieved;

**Staff Comment:** There are no particular standards associated with the microdistillery use in the TC-1 district beyond the requirement that a Special Use Permit be obtained.

- 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:** The Petitioner currently operates as a restaurant and microbrewery, a use which was approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals

on June 22, 2017. Additions nor improvements exterior to the building are anticipated in association with the request. Interior improvements must be made in accordance with local building codes and all other regulations surrounding the operation of a microdistillery. Alteration of the general terms of operation for the microbrewery Special Use have not been requested.

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

**Staff Comment:** The parcel is conforming within the TC-1 zoning district and is presently developed. The proposed use will occur within a portion of an existing building. No new development is proposed in association with the request.

- 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 is developed for commercial purposes and the requested use is not substantially dissimilar to those in the immediate vicinity. Neither is it likely to have a negative impact on adjacent properties.



**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Approve the petitioner's request as presented or with conditions.
2. Deny the petitioner's request.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Planning Commission recommends approval of the requested Special Use to establish a craft microdistillery.