



**METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION**

*"Planning the Future - Respecting the Past"*

M E M O R A N D U M

**DATE:** June 9, 2020  
**TO:** THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF SAVANNAH  
**FROM:** METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION  
**SUBJECT:** MPC RECOMMENDATION

**PETITION REFERENCED:**

**DPJ Residential, Petitioner**  
**Attorney Harold B. Yellin, Agent**  
**1147 East President**  
**PIN: 20013 01001**  
**Acreage: 8.90**  
**Aldermanic District: 2 (Leggett)**  
**County Commission District: 2 (Holmes)**  
**File No. 20-002276-ZA**

**MPC ACTION:**

**Approval** of the petitioner's request to rezone the subject site from the existing B-C (Community Business) zoning classification to an RMF-2-35 (Multifamily Residential – 35 units per acre) zoning classification based on the findings identified in the staff report.

**MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

**Approval** of the petitioner's request to rezone the subject site from the existing B-C (Community Business) zoning classification to an RMF-2-35 (Multifamily Residential – 35 units per acre) zoning classification based on the findings identified in the staff report.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** 8 + Chairman

Joseph Ervin, Chairman  
Travis Coles  
Karen Jarrett  
Tanya Milton  
Wayne Noha  
Eula Parker  
Lee Smith

Linder Suthers  
Joseph Welch

**PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:** Approve Staff Recommendation (9-0)

| <b>APPROVAL</b><br>Votes: 9  | <b>DENIAL</b><br>Votes: 0 | <b>ABSENT</b>                                     |
|--|---------------------------|---|
| Ervin<br>Coles<br>Jarrett<br>Milton<br>Noha<br>Parker<br>Smith<br>Suthers<br>Welch |                           | Branch<br>Cook<br>Manigault<br>Monahan<br>Woiwode |

Respectfully submitted,



Melodie Wilson  
Executive Director

/jh

Enclosure

cc Mark Massey, Clerk of Council  
Lester B. Johnson, Assistant City Attorney  
Jennifer Herman, Assistant City Attorney  
Beth Barnes, Department of Inspections





**TO: The Mayor and Aldermen, City of Savannah**

**FROM: The Planning Commission**

**DATE: June 9, 2020**

**SUBJECT: DPJ Residential, Petitioner  
Attorney Harold B. Yellin, Agent  
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**Marcus Lotson, MPC Project Planner**

**ISSUE:** A request to rezone approximately 9 acres from a B-C (Community Business) zoning classification to an RMF-2-35 (Multifamily Residential – 35 units per acre) zoning classification.

**BACKGROUND:** The subject site is located south of President Street and east of the Wessels - Hitch Housing Authority residential development. It is west of the Bilbo Canal and has frontage on the unopened city right-of-way designated “Normandy Street.”

The petitioner is proposing to remediate the site, removing all debris and potentially contaminated soil, and to re-fill the site preparatory to development. The proposed rezoning has been submitted to accommodate multifamily residential development.

In 2017, the property was rezoned from the Light Industrial classification to the current Community Business classification (**file no.17-001310-ZA**). That rezoning was adopted by the Mayor and Aldermen pursuant to a proposed hotel development of approximately 600 rooms across 5 hotel buildings.

The subject property is designated “Downtown Expansion” on the future land use map of the Tricentennial Comprehensive Plan. This designation is consistent with the proposed zoning, as dense residential development is recommended to exist within the Downtown Expansion areas.

**FACTS AND FINDINGS:**

1. **Public Notice:** As required by the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance, notice of the proposed zoning map amendment was mailed to all property owners located within 300 feet of the petitioned site. Also, signs were posted near the subject site adjacent to President

Street and Normandy Street. In addition, the applicant held a public meeting on June 4<sup>th</sup>. As of the writing of this report, staff has not received any comments. If comments are received prior to the June 9<sup>th</sup> MPC meeting, they will be presented at the pre-meeting.

2. **Existing Development Pattern:**

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

| <u>Location</u> | <u>Land Use</u>     | <u>Designation</u> |
|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| North           | Vacant              | I-L                |
| South           | Vacant              | I-L-T              |
| East            | Vacant              | C                  |
| West            | Communication Tower | I-L                |

3. **Existing B-C (Community Business) Zoning District:**

- a. **Intent of the B-C District:** The B-C district is established to accommodate a range of nonresidential uses that serve a community-wide market area and upper story residences. Uses in this district are intended to be located primarily on collector or arterial streets.
- b. **Allowed Uses:** The uses permitted in the B-C district are attached to the agenda item.
- c. **Development Standards:** The development standards for the B-C district are identified in Table 1

4. **Proposed RMF (Multifamily Residential) Zoning District:**

- a. **Intent of the I-L District:** The Residential Multi-family (“RMF-”) districts are established to allow multi-family development in addition to other types of residential development. The districts (RMF-1, RMF-2 and RMF-3) within the RMF-designation provide for varying development standards and generally the same uses with a few exceptions. The specific density (a whole number) shall be established at the time of rezoning. Such density shall be represented as a numeric suffix after the zoning district (e.g. RMF-3-14). With the exception of RMF-1, the RMF- districts are intended to be placed on higher classifications of streets and in close proximity to mass transit corridors, retail services and employment opportunities. The RMF-3 district is intended to be used primarily for institutional residential uses. A limited number of nonresidential uses are allowed that are harmonious with multi-family residential areas.
- b. **Allowed Uses:** The list of permitted uses for the RMF district appear in the use table included in the staff report.

- c. **Development Standards:** The development standards are identified in Table 1.
5. **Transportation Network:** The subject site has frontage on an unopened right-of-way (Normandy Street) and an access easement along the Bilbo Canal to President Street. Transportation improvements will be determined at the discretion of the City of Savannah Traffic Engineering Department during the site development phase.
6. **Public Services and Facilities:** The property is served by the Savannah Police Department, City fire protection and by City water and sewer services.
7. **Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element:** The Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designates the subject property as Downtown Expansion. The proposed RMF zoning district is compatible with the Downtown Expansion land use designation.

**ADDITIONAL REVIEW CRITERIA:**

***a. Suitability and Community Need***

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

**Staff Comment:** The list of uses permitted within the proposed multifamily zoning district is suitable and can serve a community need in terms of housing.

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

**Staff Comment:** The availability of multifamily housing is a need in the city.

***b. Compatibility***

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

**Staff Comment:** It is unlikely that the uses permitted in the proposed zoning district would adversely impact the nearby uses located within the area.

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

**Staff Comment:** The proposed RMF district is intended in part to allow multifamily residential uses. Some of these uses are presently not allowed in the existing B-C zoning district.

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

**Staff Comment:** The area around the subject property is transitioning from industrial uses and vacant land to mixed use residential. The proposed zoning is compatible with that pattern.

**c. 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.*

**Staff Comment:** The proposed zoning for the subject property is consistent with the Future Land Use Map.

**d. Reasonable Use**

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

**Staff Comment:** The existing zoning of the subject property does provide “reasonable use”. However, the proposed zoning is more in line with the development pattern currently being seen in the vicinity.

**e. 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.*

**Staff Comment:** Relative to services, the uses permitted in the proposed RMF district could be accommodated.

**f. Proximity to a Military Base, Installation or Airport**

*In accordance with the O.C.G.A. §36-66-6, when a rezoning is proposed for property located within 3,000 feet of a military base, installation or airport, or within the 3,000-foot Clear Zone and Accident Prevention Zones I and II as prescribed in the definition of an Air Installation Compatible Use Zone that is affiliated with such base.*

The subject site is not located within 3,000 feet of a military base or within the other listed zones.

**POLICY ANALYSIS:**

The subject site is located within an area where mixed use residential development is currently being developed. The uses permitted within the requested zoning district would not adversely impact the existing properties within the general area. In addition, the opportunity to have the site remediated from an environmental standpoint is an important community benefit.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Recommend approval of the petitioner's request.
2. Recommend denial of the petitioner's request.
3. Recommend approval of an alternative zoning classification.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Planning Commission recommends **Approval** of the petitioner's request to rezone the subject site from the existing B-C (Community Business) zoning classification to an RMF-2-35 (Multifamily Residential – 35 units per acre) zoning classification based on the findings identified in the staff report.

| <b>Table 1: Comparison of Development Standards for the Existing B-C and Proposed I-L Zoning Districts</b> |  |                          |
|--|--|--------------------------|
|  | <b>Existing District</b>   | <b>Proposed District</b> |
|  | <b>B-C District</b>  | <b>RMF-2 District</b>    |
| <b>Minimum Lot Area (each unit unless otherwise specified)</b>   | Residential: Upper Story - 1,850 sf per unit<br>Non-residential: n/a | n/a                      |
| <b>Minimum Lot Width</b>   | n/a  | n/a                      |
| <b>Front Yard Setback</b>  | n/a  | n/a                      |
| <b>Minimum Side Yard Setback</b>   | 15 ft adjacent to street<br>Interior: n/a                            | n/a                      |
| <b>Minimum Rear Yard Setback</b>   | n/a  | 25 ft                    |
| <b>Maximum Height</b>  | 75 ft  | 50 ft                    |
| <b>Maximum Building Coverage</b>   | n/a  | 50 %                     |
| <b>Maximum Density</b>   | n/a  | n/a                      |



| <b>B-C – List of Uses</b>                                      |
|--|
| Upper story residential  |
| Child caring institution                                       |
| Single room occupancy  |
| Agriculture, personal  |
| Community Garden   |
| Park, general  |
| Library/community center                                       |
| Museum   |
| Post office  |
| Police/fire station or substation                              |
| Emergency Medical Services (EMS) substation/ Ambulance Service |
| Shelter, emergency   |
| Shelter, transitional  |
| Soup kitchen   |
| Child/adult day care center                                    |
| Child/adult care center, 24 hours                              |
| College, university, seminary                                  |
| Educational building used by a college, university or seminary |
| School, public or private (K-12)                               |
| School, trade, vocational or business                          |
| All places of worship  |
| Private club/Lodge   |
| Correctional transition facility                               |
| Hospice  |
| Hospital   |
| Intermediate care facility                                     |
| Nursing home   |
| Assisted living facility                                       |
| Personal care home, registered                                 |
| Personal care home, family                                     |
| Substance recovery facility                                    |
| Office, general  |
| Call center  |
| Day labor employment center                                    |
| Office, medical  |
| Office, utility/contractor                                     |
| Studio/multimedia production facility                          |
| Arena; convention center                                       |
| Indoor amusement   |
| Indoor firearm range   |
| Indoor sports facility   |
| Indoor archery range/paintball facility                        |

|  |
|--|
| Teen Club  |
| Theater/cinema/  |
| Drive-in theater   |
| Golf course  |
| Outdoor amusement  |
| Stadium or outdoor arena; Amphitheater; Outdoor sports facility or complex |
| Retail, general  |
| Art/photo studio; gallery  |
| Consumer Fireworks Retail Sales Facility                                   |
| Convenience store  |
| Fuel/gas station   |
| Flea market; Farmer's market; Open air market                              |
| Food-oriented retail   |
| Garden center  |
| Manufactured/modular home sales  |
| Outdoor sales  |
| Pawnshop   |
| Pharmacy   |
| Truck Stop   |
| Warehouse or Office Showroom / Flex Space                                  |
| Services, general  |
| Animal services, indoor  |
| Animal services, outdoor   |
| Bank   |
| Body art services  |
| Business support services  |
| Catering establishment   |
| Check Cashing; Title Pawn;   |
| Crematorium  |
| Funeral home: mortuary (not including crematorium)                         |
| Hall, banquet or reception   |
| Event Venue  |
| Instructional studio or classroom  |
| Laundromat;  |
| Dry Cleaner/Laundry, Neighborhood  |
| Personal service shop  |
| Psychic; palmist; medium; fortune teller                                   |
| Repair-oriented services   |
| Self-service storage facility  |
| Tour company terminal  |
| Distillery, craft,   |
| Bar; tavern  |
| Nightclub  |

|   |
|---|
| Restaurant  |
| Food Truck Park   |
| Retail consumption dealer (on premise consumption of alcohol) |
| Ancillary retail dealer (off-premise consumption of alcohol)  |
| Package store (not including wine specialty shops)            |
| Wine Specialty Shop (not including package stores)            |
| Winery; Meadery; Cidery                                       |
| Brewery, Micro  |
| Bed and Breakfast Homestay                                    |
| Inn   |
| Hotel/motel, 16-74 rooms                                      |
| Hotel/motel, 75 or more rooms                                 |
| Short-term vacation rental                                    |
| Heavy equipment/Heavy vehicle sales, rentals and leasing      |
| Vehicle sales, rentals and leasing                            |
| Moped/motor scooter sales, rentals and leasing                |
| Vehicle Service, Heavy equipment/Heavy vehicle                |
| Vehicle service, minor  |
| Vehicle service, major  |
| Vehicle wash, full or self-service                            |
| Watercraft sales, repair and service                          |
| Artisan/Craft   |
| Parking facility  |
| Passenger terminal  |
| Transportation dispatch and storage                           |
| Broadcast transmission tower                                  |
| Utilities, major  |
| Utilities, minor  |

**RMF – List of Uses**

single-family detached  
Single-family attached  
Two-family  
Three-family / Four-family  
Townhouse  
Stacked townhouse  
Apartment  
Cluster Development  
Child caring institution  
**Monastery/convent**  
Agriculture, personal  
Community Garden  
Park, general  
Library/community center  
Police/fire station or substation  
Child/adult day care home  
Child/adult day care center  
School, public or private (K-12)  
All places of worship  
Assisted living facility  
Personal care home, registered  
Personal care home, family  
Personal care home, group  
Personal care home, congregate  
Community living arrangement  
Golf course  
Retail consumption dealer (on premise consumption of alcohol)  
Dock, private  
Dock, Residential Community