



METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

"Planning the Future - Respecting the Past"

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: June 11, 2024
TO: THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF SAVANNAH
FROM: METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
SUBJECT: Zoning Map Amendment

PETITION REFERENCED:

Petitioner: Joshua Yellin

Property Owner: Jeff Notrica

Address: 2180 East Victory Drive

Alderman: District - 3 – Linda Wilder-Bryan

County Commission: District - 3– Bobby Lockett

Property Identification Number: 20081 07003

Petition File No.: 24-002847-ZA

MPC ACTION:

The Planning Commission recommends **approval** of the request to rezone the subject property from RMF-2-20 to OI-E to establish a mini- warehouse storage facility with the condition that the building will be climate controlled and that a repurpose company will be contacted to preserve any historic material.

MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The MPC Staff recommends **approval** of the request to rezone the subject property from RMF-2-20 to OI-E to establish a mini- warehouse storage facility

MEMBERS PRESENT: 11

Dwayne Stephens	Jeff Notrica
Stephen Plunk	Joseph Welch
Travis Coles- Vice Chair	Wayne Noha
Karen Jarrett – Chairwoman	Michael Kaigler
Laureen Boles	Tom Woiwode
Joseph Ervin	

PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE: Approve Staff Recommendation with conditions.
(6-4)

APPROVAL Votes: 6	DENIAL Votes: 4	Abstain	ABSENT
Noha Coles Plunk Welch Kaigler Woiwode	Boles Ervin Jarrett Stephens	Notrica	Amick Ross Melder



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 City Council
From: The Planning Commission

Date: June 11, 2024

Subject: Zoning Map Amendment

Agent: Joshua Yellin

Address: 2180 East Victory Drive

PIN: 20081 07003

Site Area: 1.77 acres

Aldermanic District: 3 – Linda Wilder-Bryan

Chatham County Commission District: 3 – Bobby Lockett

File Number: 24-002847-ZA

Neighborhood/Subdivision: Victory Heights

Current Zoning District: RMF-2-20 (Residential Multi-family – 2 – 20)

Future Land Use (FLU) Category: Residential General*

Request:

The Petitioner seeks to rezone the subject property from a multi-family residential designation (RMF-2-20) permitting up to 20 dwelling units per acre to the *Office and Institutional – Expanded (OI-E)* zoning classification for a proposed mini-warehouse storage development.

Facts and Findings:

Public Notice: As required by the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance, all property owners within 300 feet of the subject property were sent notices of the proposed rezoning. Public notice was also posted on site and published in Savannah Morning News at least 15 days in advance of the public hearing.

Neighborhood meeting: Per the Petitioner’s Agent, the Victory Heights neighborhood association elected not to meet in advance of its next regularly scheduled meeting and opted alternatively to post a notification to its Facebook page alerting community members of the pending MPC petition.

MPC Staff received several phone calls and emails expressing opposition to the proposed mini-warehouse storage use specifically.

Background: The subject property, which is a 1.77 acre parcel on the north side of Victory Drive, is developed with a residential structure constructed in 1938, which is currently uninhabited. The property also contains three accessory buildings which were constructed in the same style as the principal building. The property is adjacent on the west side with the former St. Mary’s Home for Girls, which now operates as the administrative offices for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Savannah. East of the subject property is a multifamily residential development originally built in 1970, which includes 150 dwelling units on 9.35 acres.

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

<u>Direction</u>	<u>Land Use</u>	<u>Zoning Designation</u>
North	Multifamily Residential	RMF-2-20
East	Multifamily Residential	RMF-2-20
South	Victory Drive / Commercial	B*
West	Institutional/Office	OI

**Within Town of Thunderbolt, Georgia jurisdiction*

Zoning History: The subject parcel was previously considered for rezoning from RMF-2-20 to RMF-2-45 in 2022. The request was heard by the MPC at its May 24, 2022 meeting and continued to permit the property owner the opportunity to seek additional access to the site through connection with an adjoining parcel. After this effort was unsuccessful, the request was considered at the July 26, 2022 MPC meeting, where it received a recommendation of **approval** with the condition that a traffic study be completed and presented to City Council. There is no record that the Petition was subsequently scheduled for a City Council hearing.

Existing RMF-2 Zoning District:

- a. **Intent of the RMF-2 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 RMF-2 district permits all standard forms of residential use ranging from detached single-family up to to apartments. The district also permits a number of appropriate nonresidential uses that are desirable and appropriate in close proximity to residential uses. For a full list of permissible uses please refer to [Sec. 5.4. Principal Use Table](#) of the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance.
- c. **Development Standards:** The development standards for the RMF-2 district have been appended to the end of this report.

Proposed O-IE Zoning District:

- a. **Intent of the OI-E District:** The Office and Institutional-Expanded (“OI-E”) district is established to allow office uses as well as limited residential, group living, health care, educational, cultural, lodging and service uses. The OI-E district is intended to serve a transition district between the more intensive Nonresidential districts and less intensive districts.
- b. **Allowed Uses:** For a full list of permissible uses please refer to [Sec. 5.4. Principal Use Table](#) of the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance.
- c. **Development Standards:** The development standards for the OI-E district have been appended to the end of this report.

Impact and Suitability:

1. **Transportation Network and Transit:** Transit is available along East Victory Drive. The nearest stop is immediately west of the subject property.

The only vehicular access to the property is via one existing curb cut. Because this portion of East Victory Drive is divided by a median, only right-in / right-out access is available. This limited access would require those entering the property traveling east to proceed past the site to the next median break, East Victory Drive Crossing, and make a U-Turn. This portion of Victory Drive is a State Highway and, therefore, **any additional access points would require GDOT approval**. Based on conversations with the City of Savannah Traffic Engineering Department staff, additional curb cuts are unlikely based on traffic counts and the proximity to the nearest signalized intersection.

Preliminary 2050 MTP LOS data rates Victory Drive’s level of service within this segment at level ‘D’ where LOS ‘A’ represents the highest rating and ‘F’ the lowest. Level of Service D is characterized by 1) high traffic volumes, 2) reduced speed and freedom to maneuver, 3) frequent stops and starts, and 4) increased potential for traffic delays.

2. **Public Services and Facilities:** The area has access to the City’s public water, sewer, and stormwater systems. Based on the proposed lot coverage, on-site stormwater

management facilities will be required and approved through the specific site development plan process should the requested rezoning be successful.

3. **Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element:** As of the writing of this report, the Chatham County-Savannah Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designates the subject property as 'Residential General,' a designation permissive of relatively higher density residential development (in excess of 10 dwelling units per acre). A request to amend the FLUM was submitted concurrently with the rezoning petition. Per Sec. 5.15.2 of New ZO, the requested OI-E zoning requires a FLUM designation of "Office/Institutional" or "Commercial-Suburban." The Petitioner has requested the *Commercial-Suburban* designation.

Zoning Ordinance Review

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

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 are permitted by the current zoning district.

MPC Comment: The office/light commercial, institutional and group living uses within the requested zoning district are equally as appropriate as the moderate density residential uses permitted in the present zoning district, generally, as the site fronts a higher classification thoroughfare. Variants of both use classifications can already be found in close proximity to the site. Given the current LOS rating of 'D' at this location, however, major traffic generators should be avoided. The Petitioner's proposed use within the requested zoning district is among the lowest traffic generators that would be allowed, likely making it more appropriate under the circumstances.

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

MPC Comment: The proposed use can be expected to support anticipated residential growth in the area. While there are mini-warehouse developments in the area, additional small-unit residential developments in the urban core and periphery are forthcoming that precipitate the need for storage of this nature.

b. Compatibility

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

MPC Comment: Mini-warehouse storage facilities are relatively benign uses. If attractively designed, the proposed structure can be expected to have no adverse impact to adjacent properties.

- 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.

MPC Comment: The office/light commercial, institutional and group living uses within the requested zoning district are desirable and compatible with conforming uses on nearby properties.

- iii. 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: The current LOS rating of 'D' for Victory Drive at this location necessitates that high traffic generating uses be avoided. The Petitioner's proposed use within the requested zoning district is among the lowest traffic generators that would be allowed. Added to this is the proliferation of small-unit residential developments within the City that offer residents little space to store excess or bulky items. These are factors that support approval of the request.

Viewed from an alternative perspective, the site presently has a zoning classification that supports the creation of additional housing units, which are also a pressing regional need. Future residential development on the site is not likely to yield genuinely *affordable* housing, however.

ITE trip generation data for varying multi-family residential types ('LUC' - *land use code*) can be reviewed in the correspondence with Traffic Engineering appended to this report.

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.

MPC Comment: The subject property is within the 'Urban Transitional' area as identified by the [Land Use Element](#) within Plan 2040 (p. 184-185). 'Urban Transitional character areas are those that are sometimes classified as "urban edge" or "urban expansion." This character area includes the Cuyler-Brownville Historic District, established neighborhoods such as Ardsley Park and Victory Heights, and commercial corridors on Abercorn Street and Victory Drive. Urban Transitional areas are identifiable by more automobile-oriented, suburban style residential areas that still provide access to urban amenities and public transit. Most of these neighborhoods are also pedestrian-oriented with well-used sidewalks, parks, and open spaces. Redevelopment and infill development opportunities are prevalent in this character area, and special attention should be paid to corridors suited for TOD.'

The requested FLUM amendment and zoning map amendment are consistent with Plan 2040 for this character area.

d. Reasonable Use

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

MPC Comment: Albeit at a potentially higher level of traffic generated, the subject property does have reasonable use as currently zoned. ITE trip generation data for

varying multi-family residential types ('LUC' - land use code) can be reviewed in the correspondence with Traffic Engineering appended to this report.

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.

MPC Comment: The requested map amendment will have minimal impact on public facilities. Adequate public facilities exist to accommodate the proposed use.

f. Proximity to a Military Base, Installation or Airport

MPC Comment: The subject parcel is not within proximity of an airport or military installation.

Recommendation

Based upon findings and evaluation the Planning Commission recommends **approval** of the request to rezone the subject property from RMF-2-20 to OI-E to establish a mini- warehouse storage facility with the condition that the building will be climate controlled and that a repurpose company will be contacted to preserve any historic material.

Correspondence with COS Traffic Engineering re: ITE Trip Generation Data

Hi Edward,

As often happens with respect to development and land use codes, the answer is that it depends on the variable. For LUC 151 (Mini warehouse), you'll need to know whether the 33,000 sf is of gross floor area or net rentable area or how many units the square footage will contain.

33,000 sf self-storage (LUC 151)

Variable – per 1,000 gross floor area

1.45 trips per 1k = 48

AM Peak = 3

PM Peak = 5

Variable – per 100 units (let's say the average size is 100 sf = 330 units)

17.96 trips per 100 units = 59

AM Peak = 4

PM Peak = 6

Variable – per 100 occupied units (let's say the average size is 100 sf = 330 units)

17.96 trips per 100 units = 63

AM Peak = 4

PM Peak = 5

Variable – per 1,000 sf net rentable area:

1.65 trips per 1k = 54 trips per day

AM Peak = 3

PM Peak = 6

The same goes for apartments, although the ranges are substantially larger. Since there are only 35, I've left out high-rise.

LUC	Description	Avg. Trips/unit	AM Peak	PM Peak	Total
220	Multi-family Low-rise	6.74	34	36	300
221	Multi-family Mid-rise	4.54	4	14	120
223	Affordable housing	4.81	22	25	270
225	Off-campus students Low-rise*	3.57	25	39	579
226	Off-campus students Mid-rise*	2.57	7	22	270

*Off campus student housing assumes that apartments are rented by the bedroom and range from studio to 5-bedroom units. For the sake of consistency, I've used 3 bedrooms per unit (105 total bedrooms) for trip gen.

I hope this is more helpful than confusing! Feel free to call or email with any questions!!

Michele Strickland

Traffic Engineering Manager

City of Savannah

Transportation Services Department

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RMF Development Standards (Current Zoning District)

5.10.5 Development Standards for Permitted Housing Types			
Standards	RMF-1	RMF-2	RMF-3
Site (min)			
Lot area per unit (sq ft) [1][2]			
Single-family detached	6,000	5,000	--
Single-family attached	3,600	3,300	2,400
Two-family	3,600	3,300	2,400
Townhouse/Stacked Townhouse	No min.	No min.	No min.
Three-Four Family/Apartment	--	No min.	No min.
Lot Dimensions [1]			
Lot width per unit (min ft)			
Single-family detached	60	50	--
Single-family attached	36	33	24
Two-family	36	33	24
Townhouse unit width	20	20	20
Lot width (min ft)			
Three-Four Family	--	50	50
Apartment	--	55	55
Building Setbacks [2][3] (min ft)			
Street Access			
Front Yard			
Single-family detached	20	20	--
Single-family attached	20	20	20
Two-family	20	20	20
Townhouse/Stacked Townhouse	20	20	20
Three-Four Family	--	20	20
Apartment	--	25	25
Side (Interior) Yard			
Single-family detached	5	5	--
Single-family attached	5	5	5
Two-family	5	5	5
Townhouse inc. Stacked (end unit)	5	5	5
Three-Four Family	--	7	7
Apartment	--	10	10
Side (street) Yard			
Apartments	--	15	15
All other housing types	10	10	10
Rear Yard			
Single-family detached	20	20	20
All other housing types	25	25	25
From access easement	5	5	5
Lane Access			
Front Yard			
Apartment	--	20	20
All other housing types	15	15	15
Side (Interior) Yard			
Side (street) Yard	5	5	5
From access easement	20	20	20
Rear Yard	5	5	5
Building separation	See Fire Code	See Fire Code	See Fire Code
Building Coverage (max)			
Street Access			
Single-family detached	40%	40%	--
All other housing types	50%	50%	50%
Lane Access			
Single-family detached	40%	45%	--
All other housing types	50%	50%	50%
Height (max ft) [4]			
Accessory Structure Setback	See Sec. 5.7	See Sec. 5.7	See Sec. 5.7
Parking Area Setback (min ft) (Apartments Only)			
From collector and arterial street rights-of-way	--	15	15
From local street rights-of-way	--	10	10
From lane, property line or access easement	--	5	5

(1) If not applicable

OI-E Development Standards (Proposed Zoning District)

5.15.6 Development Standards for Permitted Nonresidential Uses

Nonresidential uses in any OI district shall meet the development standards as set forth below.

5.15.6 Development Standards for Permitted Nonresidential Uses			
Standards	OI-T	OI	OI-E
Lot Dimensions (min)			
Lot area per unit for Upper Story			
Residential use (sq ft)	--	2,170	1,740
Lot area for all other uses	--	--	--
Lot width (ft)	--	--	--
Building (max)			
Building Coverage	50%	80%	80%
Height (ft)	36	40	75 [1]
Ground floor area (sq ft)	3,000	--	--
Building Setback (min ft)			
Front yard	20	15	15
Side (street) yard	15	15	15
Side (interior) yard	5	10	10
Rear yard	20	--	--
Rear Yard (adjacent to street/lane)	20	15	15
From access easement	5	5	5
Building separation	See Fire Code	See Fire Code	See Fire Code
Accessory Structure Setback	See Sec. 8.7	See Sec. 8.7	See Sec. 8.7
Parking Area Setback (min ft)			
From collector or arterial street rights-of-way	15	15	15
From local street rights-of-way	10	10	10
From lane, property line or access easement	5	5	5
<small>[--] = Not permitted or not applicable [1] Buildings proposed within 50 feet of a Residential zoning district shall be subject to the height restrictions established in such Residential zoning district and then may increase in height one (1) foot for every one (1) foot of distance from the Residential zoning district. For example, the portion of the building that is 65 feet from a Residential zoning district with a 36 foot height limit cannot exceed 51 feet in height.</small>			