



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"

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: March 19, 2024

TO: THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF SAVANNAH

FROM: METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

SUBJECT: Special Use Request

PETITION REFERENCED:

Petitioner: Ryan Williamson
Property Owner: Farm-Starland Properties, LLC
Address: 2401 and 2403 Bull Street
Alderman: District - 2 – Detric Legget
County Commission: District - 2– Malinda Scott Hodge
Property Identification Number: 20065 47009
Petition File No.: 24-001093-ZA

MPC ACTION:

The Planning Commission recommends **Approval** of the requested Special Use with the following conditions: The Special Use Permit shall be nontransferable.

MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning Commission recommends **Approval** of the requested Special Use with the following conditions: The Special Use Permit shall be nontransferable.

MEMBERS PRESENT: 11

Traci Amick
Michael Kaigler
Travis Coles- Vice Chair
Karen Jarrett – Chairwoman
Laureen Boles
Wayne Noha
Dwayne Stephens
Tom Woiwode

Jeff Notrica
Jay Melder
Stephen Plunk
Joseph Welch

PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE: Approve Staff Recommendation.
(12-0)

APPROVAL Votes: 12	DENIAL Votes: 0	ABSENT
Amick Boles Coles Noha Kaigler Jarrett Melder Notrica Plunk Stephens Woiwode Welch		Ross 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 Inspections



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METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

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To: The Mayor and Aldermen, City of Savannah

From: The Planning Commission

Date: March 19, 2024

Subject: Special Use Request

Petitioner: Ryan Williamson, Managing Partner of Farm Hospitality Group

Property Owner: Farm-Starland Properties, LLC

Address: 2401 and 2403 Bull Street

Alderman: District 2 – Alderman Detric Leggett

County Commission: District 2 – Commissioner Malinda Scott Hodge

Property Identification Number: 20065 47009

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REQUEST: The Petitioner requests approval of a Special Use pursuant to Section 3.10 of the Savannah Zoning Ordinance to establish a restaurant with accessory alcohol sales in the TC-1 (Traditional Commercial -1) zoning district. The Special Use process includes review by the Planning Commission and the Savannah City Council. Should the request be approved by City Council, approval and issuance of an alcohol license will still be required for the sale of alcoholic beverages. 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 structure at 2401/2403 Bull Street is a contributing building in the Streetcar Local Historic District, constructed originally in 1920 and measuring approximately 2,456 sf in area. It is located within a mixed-use, but increasingly commercial, area at the southwest corner of the intersection of West 40th and Bull Streets.

The subject parcel is covered 100% by the existing historic structure. It consists of 0.0564 acres (2,456 sf) in lot area. The parcel is situated within the Streetcar and Victorian parking reduction area. Nonresidential uses are parking exempt up to 3,000 sf of floor area.

The Petitioner intends to establish a restaurant with accessory alcohol sales as well as a catering service in the existing structure on the parcel. Per the Zoning Ordinance, a restaurant is described as *“An establishment that prepares and serves food and beverages to the public. This use may include table, counter, drive-thru, drive-in, take-away and delivery services either individually or some combination thereof. This term includes ice cream, yogurt, gelato and smoothie shops; bakeries; bagelries; doughnut shops; coffee shops; and, similar establishments.”*

The Ordinance further clarifies: *“Restaurants deriving more than 50% of its annual gross food and beverage sales from the sale of alcoholic beverages shall be considered a bar, tavern, or nightclub, as applicable. This term does not include catering establishments.”*

A catering establishment is defined as: *“An establishment that provides meals and/or beverages for off-site consumption. Does not include any banquet or reception hall associated with such an establishment or any type of restaurant use.”*

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	Retail Package Store	TC-1
South	Mixed-use Commercial/ Residential Building	TC-1
East	Commercial/Retail Uses	TC-1
West	Mixed-use Commercial/ Residential Building Structure	TC-1

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 *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 along collectors and arterials. Characteristics include walkability, limited or on-street parking, and multi-tenant retail. The proposed restaurant use would be compatible 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 specific use standards for grant of the Special Use Permit with which the Petitioner must comply. However, there are separate criteria to obtain and maintain an alcohol license from the City of Savannah.

- 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 indicated that conversations had taken place with the Thomas Square Neighborhood Association President. No comment was received from the Association at the time of writing of this report. No other evidence of community outreach was provided.
- The City regulates operational hours for businesses selling alcohol from 7:00 a.m. until 3:00 a.m. *The Petitioner has requested operating hours of 7:00 am to 10:00 pm 7 days a week.*
- The subject parcel is within the Victorian and Streetcar Parking Reduction Area, and at less than 3,000 square feet has no off-street parking requirement. On-street parking is common in this area, which already hosts several neighborhood-scale drinking and eating establishments which are open relatively late.

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

Staff Comment: The existing contributing historic structure covers 100% of the subject parcel. The proposed use must occur within this structure. Further, as the use will consist of less than 3,000 sf, no off-street parking is required.

- 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 currently developed for commercial purposes and the requested use is not substantially dissimilar to others in the immediate vicinity. 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 Use with following conditions that the Special Use Permit shall be nontransferable.