

November 7, 2019 Special City Council Meeting

**SAVANNAH CITY GOVERNMENT  
SUMMARY/FINAL MINUTES  
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING  
November 7, 2019 – 8:30 a.m.**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Eddie W. DeLoach, Presiding  
Alderman Julian Miller, Chairman of Council  
Alderman Brian Foster, Vice-Chairman of Council  
Alderman Van Johnson, II, District 1  
Alderman Bill Durrence, District 2  
Alderdwoman Dr. Estella E. Shabazz, District 5  
Alderman Tony Thomas, District 6

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

City Manager Pat Monahan  
Assistant City Manager Heath Lloyd  
Assistant to the City Manager Bret Bell  
Assistant to the Clerk of Council Brittany Hunsaker

The Special Meeting of the City Council was held at 8:36 a.m. at the Savannah Cultural Arts Center, Studio Theater, located at 201 Montgomery Street.

Date: Nov 07 2019 (8:30 a.m.)

Special Meeting Agenda Items

[1. Canal District Master Plan](#)

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#### Update on the Canal District Master Plan.

Bridget Lidy, Director of Planning and Urban Design, began the meeting by going around the room and having each of the attendees introduce themselves. She then introduced Jeff Williams, Associate Principal, Perkins and Will, to give an update on the Canal District Master Plan.

Mr. Williams began by showing a timeline of the project and what's to come. He explained how the team has been addressing feedback and taking all comments from the community into consideration. He stressed the importance of preserving history by supporting the culture, legacy, and names of current neighborhoods. Mr. Williams addressed issues concerning drainage and the appearance of the streets. He expressed the need for long-term leadership and resources and referred to programs that are already in place but need to be rallied for this district, such as an employment program and homeowners program. He concluded the slide show and opened the floor for questions.

Nick Palumbo, Alderman-Elect District 4, asked about discussing future parking options, and the possibility of self-driving cars and how it would affect the current proposed parking proposals. Mr. Williams stressed the importance of encouraging people to use different means of transportation and stated that parking is a gray area and the district needs a temporary parking plan.

Alderwoman Dr. Shabazz inquired about widening the canal. She emphasized the importance of having an efficient and economical plan in place. She then asked if there is a structure fault due to flooding, what is the volume of water that will be stored above ground, and what is the retention and detention of water. She then credited Alderman Thomas for addressing the issue of getting involved with projects without

any kind of plan in place. Mr. Williams stated there is an engineering team working on these concerns and they hope to have numbers when they come back in December.

Aldерwoman Dr. Shabazz asked where the fill dirt would come from. Linda Wilder-Bryan, Aldерwoman-Elect District 3, asked a question in regard to property taxes. Mr. Williams compared this project to the Mercedes Benz stadium in Atlanta and emphasized the need for leadership to work together. Aldерman Thomas inquired about the similarities of Atlanta projects to this one. Mr. Williams stated that Atlanta is currently working retroactively to fix things but we can prevent them from the beginning.

Bernetta Lanier, Aldерwoman-Elect District 1, emphasized the importance of getting it right, not speed. She then commented on the canal neighborhoods and how they should not be referred to as canal neighborhoods. Mr. Williams stated they still have time to tweak the language.

Aldерwoman Dr. Shabazz inquired about the Corps of Engineers and the flood analysis. She asked Mr. Williams if he sits at the table with the Corps. He stated that he is not personally in the role, but the team is talking about them. Bret Bell stated that the Arena needs its own storm management plan and any new development needs to pass storm management regulations. He stated that they want to develop in an urban way. Heath Lloyd addressed a comment regarding engineering and stated that it comes down to long-term maintenance. Melanie Wilson, Executive Director of MPC, stated that the community wants to make sure the City is held accountable. Dwayne Stephens, Vice Chair of the Savannah Downtown Historic District Board of Review, expressed the importance of transparency in the communities and making sure citizens are well informed. He stressed making sure people are attending meetings and providing documents and not just posting online. Sylvester Gould, Vice President of Consulting Services Logistics, brought up a conversation from the night before in regards to a flexible

plan. He addressed the need to establish long and short term goals and if there will be jobs, etc.

There were no further questions or comments. Jeff Williams concluded the meeting by stating that he will see us again in December. The meeting adjourned at 9:32 a.m.

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

Date Minutes Approved: November 18, 2019

Initials: mm