

CHATHAM COUNTY-SAVANNAH METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

MPC MINUTES

ARTHUR A. MENDONSA HEARING ROOM
110 EAST STATE STREET

November 15, 2005

1:30 PM.

Members Present: Stephen R. Lufburrow, Chairman
Lee Meyer, Vice Chairman
Robert Ray, Treasurer
Ben Farmer
Melissa Jest
Walker McCumber
Timothy S. Mackey
Lacy A. Manigault
Freddie B. Patrick
Jon N. Todd

Members not Present: Alexander Luten, Secretary
Michael Brown

Staff Present: Thomas L. Thomson, P. E., AICP, Executive Director
Harmit Bedi, AICP, Deputy Executive Director
Charlotte L. Moore, AICP, Director of Development Services
Deborah Rayman-Burke, AICP, Development Services Planner
James Hansen, AICP, Development Services Planner
Marilyn Gignilliat, Executive Assistant
Lynn Manrique, Administrative Assistant

Advisory Staff Present: Robert Sebek, County Zoning Administrator

I. Call to Order and Welcome

Chairman Lufburrow called the meeting to order.

II. Executive Session

Mr. Ray **moved** to recess to Executive Session. Mr. Todd seconded the motion.

MPC Action: The motion to recess to Executive Session carried with none opposed.
Voting: Mr. Lufburrow, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Ray, Mr. Farmer, Ms. Jest, Mr. McCumber, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Manigault, Mr. Patrick and Mr. Todd. Mr. Abolt and Mr. Jones were not in the room when the vote was taken.

Following Executive Session, the Planning Commission reconvened in the Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room to conduct the business on the Final Agenda for the November 15, 2005, Regular Meeting.

Mr. Abolt **moved** that the Commissioners adopt an affidavit to affirm that there was discussion only during the Executive Session and that no votes or inappropriate action was taken. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ray.

MPC Action: The motion carried with none opposed. Voting: Mr. Lufburrow, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Ray, Mr. Abolt, Mr. Farmer, Ms. Jest, Mr. Jones, Mr. McCumber, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Manigault, Mr. Patrick and Mr. Todd.

III. Notices, Proclamations and Acknowledgments

A. Items Requested to be removed from the Final Agenda

1. Master Plan

Wexford
450 Bush Road
PIN 1-1026-01-001
67.2 acres
R-A-CO Zoning District
MPC File No. M-051020-48446-2
Maupin Engineering, Inc., Engineer
Mike Bolen, Agent
Bluewater Properties, Owner
Gary Plumbley, MPC Project Planner

Mr. Manigault **moved** to remove this petition from today's agenda and place it on the December 6, 2005, Regular Meeting agenda. Mr. Todd seconded the motion.

MPC Action: The motion to move the Wexford Master Plan to the December 6, 2005, MPC agenda carried with none opposed. Voting: Mr. Lufburrow, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Ray, Mr. Farmer, Ms. Jest, Mr. Jones, Mr. McCumber, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Manigault, Mr. Patrick and Mr. Todd. Mr. Abolt was not in the room when the vote was taken.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of the November 1, 2005, MPC Meeting Minutes and Briefing Minutes.

Mr. Todd **moved** to approve the November 1, 2005, MPC Meeting Minutes and Briefing Minutes. Mr. Meyer seconded the motion.

MPC Action: The motion to approve the November 1, 2005, MPC Meeting Minutes and Briefing Minutes carried with none opposed. Voting: Mr. Lufburrow, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Ray, Mr. Farmer, Ms. Jest, Mr. Jones, Mr. McCumber, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Manigault, Mr. Patrick and Mr. Todd. Mr. Abolt was not present for the vote.

B. Zoning Petition – Map Amendment

Milo & Milo LLC, Petitioner and Property Owner
Phillip McCorkle, Agent
2905 Bull Street
Jim Hansen, MPC Project Planner
MPC File No. Z-050825-60642-2

Issue: Rezoning of 0.12 acres from a P-R-B-1 (Planned Residential Business) classification to a P-B-N-1 (Planned Neighborhood Business-Limited) classification.

Policy Analysis: The proposed rezoning is consistent with the City's Future Land Use Plan and will establish a zoning district that is compatible with adjacent uses and the surrounding neighborhood.

Staff Recommendation: Approval of the request to rezone the subject property from a P-R-B-1 (Planned Residential Business) classification to a P-B-N-1 (Planned Neighborhood Business Limited) classification.

Speaking about the petition: Philip McCorkle, Agent, said that the petitioner is satisfied with the staff recommendation and has nothing further to add.

Mr. Meyer **moved** to approve the staff recommendation with the condition that the reference to the rezoning for the Mutual Benevolent Society included in the first paragraph of Item 10 of the staff report be deleted. Mr. Todd seconded the motion.

MPC Action: The motion carried with one opposed. Voting in favor: Mr. Lufburrow, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Ray, Mr. Farmer, Ms. Jest, Mr. McCumber, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Manigault, Mr. Patrick and Mr. Todd. Opposed: Mr. Jones. Mr. Abolt was not in the room when the vote was taken.

C. General Development Plan / Group Development Plan

Colonial Terminals Warehouse
916 West Lathrop Avenue
I-L Zoning District
Chad Zittrouer (Kern-Coleman & Company), Agent
Jim Hansen, MPC Project Planner
MPC File No. P-051017-59211-2

Nature of Request: The petitioner is requesting approval of a General Development Plan/Group Development in order to construct a 10,050-square-foot warehouse within an I-L (Light Industrial) zoning district. No variances are requested. Approval by the MPC is required because the proposed structure will be part of a group development.

Staff Recommendation: Approval of the General Development Plan/Group Development Plan with the following conditions: 1) The Traffic Engineer must approve the proposed access, and 2) The Sanitation Department must approve the location of the dumpster.

The Specific Development Plan shall incorporate the General Development Plan conditions of approval and include the following: 1) A Landscape Plan, including a Tree Establishment and Tree Protection Plan. The City Arborist shall review the Landscape Plan. 2) A Water and Sewer Plan. The City Water and Sewer Engineer shall review the Water and Sewer Plan. 3) A Drainage Plan. The City Stormwater Engineer shall review the Drainage Plan. 4) A Lighting Plan. MPC staff shall review the Lighting Plan. The Lighting Plan shall identify the location of all exterior light standards and fixtures. All exterior lights shall utilize fully shielded fixtures to minimize glare on surrounding uses and rights-of-way. "Fully shielded fixtures" shall mean fixtures that incorporate a structural shield to prevent light dispersion above the horizontal plane from the lowest light-emitting point of the fixture. Cut sheets shall be provided. 5) A Signage Plan. MPC staff shall review the Signage Plan.

Speaking about the Petition: Chad Zittrouer, Agent, said that petitioner would revisit the proposed bald cypress buffer in order to ensure an opaque buffer between the property and residential uses.

Mr. McCumber **moved** to approve the staff recommendation conditioned upon the vegetative buffer between the development and residential uses being of a type that will provide long-term heavy screening. Mr. Ray seconded.

MPC Action: The motion to approve the staff recommendation and to require a long-term dense vegetative buffer between this development and residential uses carried with none opposed. Voting in favor: Mr. Lufburrow, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Ray, Mr. Farmer, Ms. Jest, Mr. Jones, Mr. McCumber, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Manigault, Mr. Patrick and Mr. Todd. Mr. Abolt was not present for the vote.

V. Old Business

There was no old business to come before the Metropolitan Planning Commission.

VI. Regular Business

A. Specific Development Plan – Principal Use Sign

Hampton Inn & Suites Hotel
591 Al Henderson Boulevard
PUD-C Zoning District
Kern-Coleman Engineering Company (Terry Coleman), Agent
Anil R. Patel, Owner
Charlotte Moore, MPC Project Planner
MPC File No. P-051109-37029-1
MPC Reference File No. P-031126-33030-1 and M-030416-64539-1

Nature of Request: The petitioner is requesting approval of a freestanding principal use sign for a hotel located on the south side of Al Henderson Boulevard approximately 1,450 feet east of Abercorn Street (Georgia Highway 204) within a PUD-C (Planned Unit Development-Community) zoning district.

Staff Recommendation: **Denial** of the requested freestanding principal use sign as submitted based on the findings. The MPC staff further recommends **approval** of a revised freestanding principal use sign. The revised sign shall be a monument style sign not more than 20 feet in height with a maximum sign area of 60 square feet. The sign may also include a reader board with a maximum area of 32 square feet.

Mr. Todd **moved** to approve construction of a 100-foot-high principal-use sign designed to accommodate collocation of other signs. Signs shall not exceed 286 square feet in size. Mr. Ray seconded the motion.

Speaking about the Petition: Terry Coleman, Agent, explained that Anil Patel is the owner of both the existing Hampton Inn and the proposed Hampton Inn & Suites. When the new inn is built, the building which now houses the Hampton Inn will be used to house a different “brand” hotel and Mr. Patel will continue to own that facility. The existing Hampton Inn sign pole will remain and a sign for the hotel which replaces Hampton Inn on that site will be installed on the existing pole. Petitioner’s intent in coming before the Commission today is to pursue approval of the height and mass of the new Hampton Inn & Suites sign and secure approval to collocate a second sign on the same pole. Petitioner prefers that a decision be rendered on those points today rather than continue the petition to a later date for a decision on height, collocation and mass of both signs.

Anil Patel, owner of the Hampton Inn and other nearby businesses, has been at this location for more than 12 years. Mr. Patel said because of the trees in the area, a sign lower than the requested 125 feet would be invisible. The new Hampton Inn & Suites will be six stories. It is located toward the rear of this commercial area and can barely be seen from the road. He had intended to place the new Hampton Inn & Suites sign on the existing pole, but Hilton Hotel Corporation who owns the Hampton Inns vetoed that plan. Hilton requires that the sign be placed near the hotel entrance to avoid confusion on the part of guests trying to find the Hampton Inn & Suites. A contract is being negotiated with Applebee's to build near the new inn and part of that discussion includes agreement to locate the Applebee's sign on the same pole with the new Hampton Inn & Suites sign.

Charlotte Moore pointed out that there is an error in the Staff Report. The square footage of the proposed sign is actually 368 feet.

After hearing the comments from the petitioner and his agent and further discussion among the Commissioners, Mr. Todd withdrew his motion.

Mr. Meyer **moved** to approve a principal-use sign for the Hampton Inn & Suites of 125 feet in height with a maximum mass of 368 square feet. The sign and pole will be designed to accommodate collocation of a second principal-use sign for Applebee's (or another future establishment that may be developed on the adjacent parcel to the north). Mr. McCumber seconded the motion.

MPC Action: The motion to approve a principal-use sign for the Hampton Inn & Suites of 125 feet in height with a maximum mass of 368 square feet carried with three opposed. The principal-use sign for Applebee's (or another future establishment that may be developed on the adjacent parcel to the north) must be collocated on the approved Hampton Inn & Suites pole and must be reviewed by the Planning Commission for approval of size and design. Voting in favor: Mr. Lufburrow, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Ray, Mr. Farmer, Mr. McCumber, Mr. Patrick and Mr. Todd. Opposed: Ms. Jest, Mr. Jones and Mr. Manigault. Mr. Abolt and Mr. Mackey were not present for the vote.

B. Sign Plan

US Food
1315 Augusta Avenue
R-B-1 Zoning District
Abdullah Riphaya, Agent
Debbie Burke, MPC Project Planner
MPC File No. P-051025-59803-2

Nature of Request: The petitioner is requesting approval of fascia signs painted on three walls of a commercial building at 1315 Augusta Avenue, within an R-B-1 (Residential-Business) zoning district. Section 8-3112(i)(4) of the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance requires that signs painted on buildings be approved by the MPC.

Staff Recommendation: **Denial** of the variance request for an additional 134.5 square feet of supplemental identification signage. **Approval** of the following signage painted on the building subject to the condition that the remaining signs on the building shall be removed within 60 days of MPC approval and prior to the issuance of a sign permit: 1) Principal-use fascia signage on the front of the building for a total of 35 square feet in area. 2) Eight square feet of supplemental identification signage on the front or either side of the building.

Speaking about the petition: Abdullah Riphaya, Owner/Agent, says he has made significant improvements to the building since he took over. The signs are there to advertise what he has in his store.

Pam Oglesby, Vice President of the West Savannah Community Organization, stated that although Mr. Riphaya mentioned the improvements he has made to the building since he opened the store, he owned the building when it was in its worst condition. The signs are unsightly and are nothing more than upscale graffiti. This store is surrounded by a residential area. As for advertising what's inside the store, the average person knows what to find in a convenience store. People come into this neighborhood and do what they want to do, then come to MPC for approval. The signs do not meet the ordinance and need to be removed.

Kenneth Dunham, President of the West Savannah Community Organization, agreed with Ms. Oglesby's comments and concerns. He and his group are working very hard in west Savannah to make that neighborhood one of the best. He asked that MPC uphold the sign ordinance in this area.

Louis Wilson was raised on Richard Street and lives near the store. He likes the signage and said Mr. Riphaya (affectionately known as "Zeke" in the neighborhood) has done a lot of good in this area. The store looks better than it ever has. He believes the petitioner should have the right to advertise what's in his store on his signage. He pointed out that in the MPC conference room there are three big signs that say "Metropolitan Planning Commission." In his opinion, the MPC seal would be enough, but somebody felt the additional signage was appropriate. Likewise, he believes the signage on Mr. Riphaya's store is appropriate.

Mr. Manigault **moved** to approve the staff recommendation. Mr. Ray seconded the motion.

MPC Action: The motion to approve the staff recommendation carried with none opposed. The principal-use fascia signage on the front of the building totaling 35 square feet in area and the eight square feet of supplemental identification signage on the front or either side of the building may remain. All other signage on the building must be removed within 60 days of MPC approval and prior to the issuance of a sign permit. Voting in favor: Mr. Lufburrow, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Ray, Mr. Farmer, Ms. Jest, Mr. Jones, Mr. Manigault, Mr. McCumber, Mr. Patrick and Mr. Todd. Mr. Abolt and Mr. Mackey were not present for the vote.

VII. Other Business

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the November 15, 2005, Regular Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas L. Thomson, P.E., AICP
Executive Director

Note: Minutes not official until signed