

PLANNING APPROVAL STAFF REPORT**Date: March 3, 2016****NAME**

St. Francis-Joachim, LLC

LOCATION251 St. Francis Street and 15 North Joachim
(Southwest corner of St Francis Street and North Joachim Street)**CITY COUNCIL
DISTRICT**

District 2

PRESENT ZONING

T-5.1, Mixed Use – Medium Intensity Sub-district

AREA OF PROPERTY

0.8 ± Acres

CONTEMPLATED USE

Planning Approval to allow a venue 100+ occupancy load in the Downtown Development District.

**TIME SCHEDULE
FOR DEVELOPMENT**

Immediate

**ENGINEERING
COMMENTS**

No comments.

**TRAFFIC ENGINEERING
COMMENTS**

No comments.

**URBAN FORESTRY
COMMENTS**

Property to be developed in compliance with state and local laws that pertain to tree preservation and protection on both city and private properties (State Act 61-929 and City Code Chapters 57 and 64).

**FIRE DEPARTMENT
COMMENTS**

All projects within the City Limits of Mobile shall comply with the requirements of the City of Mobile Fire Code Ordinance. (2012 International Fire Code) Projects outside the City Limits of Mobile, yet within the Planning Commission Jurisdiction fall under the State or County Fire Code. (2012 IFC)

REMARKS

The applicant is requesting Planning Approval to allow a venue 100+ occupancy load in the Downtown Development District. Planning Approval is required for entertainment venues with an occupancy load of more than 100 people in T-5.1 Sub-districts.

The review required for Planning Approval examines the applicant's location and site plan by the Planning Commission as being appropriate with regard to transportation and access, water supply, waste disposal, fire and police protection, and other public facilities; as not causing undue traffic congestion or creating a traffic hazard; and as being in harmony with the orderly and appropriate development of the district in which the use is located. Such uses are also subject to any conditions and limitations imposed by the Planning Commission.

It is very important to note that the Planning Approval review is specific to the request submitted; therefore if the scope of operations is changed from what is approved by the Planning Commission, a new application for Planning Approval will be required.

The applicant proposes to renovate an existing church structure to allow it to be used as an entertainment venue with an occupancy load of 497 people (according to building plans submitted for building permit review).

The applicant states:

The owner has purchased this building, which was formerly owned by New Life United Methodist Church, to use as an entertainment/reception venue. The Church will continue to hold weekly worship services pursuant to a lease, but the owner will also have wedding receptions, speakers and concerts, some of which will involve serving alcohol, and which will be for more than 100 people. There will be some interior renovations done to this building, which will include adding restrooms, and those have already begun and should be completed in the near future. Although there are no parking requirements for downtown, this property does include 51 parking spaces. We request Planning Approval for this entertainment/reception venue.

The site is developed with a church structure completed in 1896, and a more recent addition from circa 1960. The primary change to the sanctuary area of the church structure is the removal of the fixed pew seating, to allow a large open area the can accommodate a wide range of uses, including movable chairs, tables, dance floors, etc.

As a church, the facility could have hosted events such as wedding receptions, speakers and concerts. Given that the facility is no longer owned by a religious organization, and given the fact that religious worship will no longer be the primary use of the building, Planning Approval review is required.

It would appear that the similarity of functions between prior and proposed uses would minimize any impacts to the surrounding neighborhood or city services and access. Parking is not required under the Downtown Development District regulations, but parking was also not required for the church use under the previous regulations that applied to the site.

To meet various Building and Fire Code requirements for the use of the property as an entertainment venue, improvements to the building will be required. If the Planning Approval request is approved, it should be contingent upon the completion of Code-related improvements prior to any use.

It should be noted that the site is within the Lower Dauphin Street Historic District, and the church building is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places. As the site is also within the Downtown Development District, any exterior improvements will require both Architectural Review Board and Consolidated Review Committee approvals prior to the commencement of work.

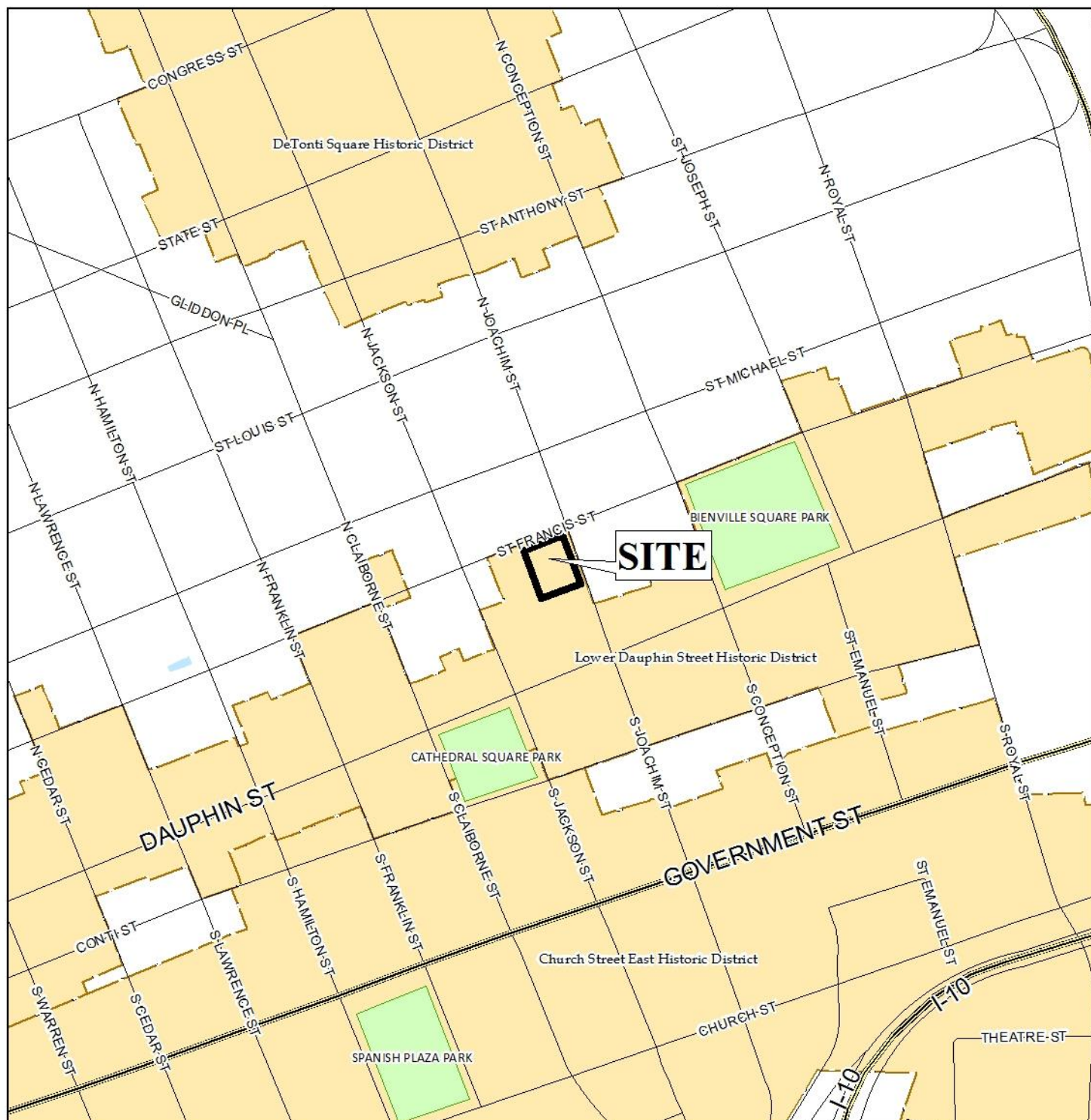
Finally, no information was provided regarding if the site is on a legal lot of record or on a tax parcel established prior to 1952. If the applicant is unable to provide a deed establishing the parcel boundaries as they currently existing for the site, first recorded prior to 1952, a Subdivision application will be required.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Approval: Based upon the preceding, the application is recommended for Approval, subject to the following conditions:

- 1) Limited to a maximum occupancy of 497 people;
- 2) Any change in scope of activities or increase in occupancy to require a new application for Planning Approval;
- 3) Completion of the Building, Fire and other associated Code compliance requirements prior to any use of the site as an entertainment venue; and
- 4) Provision of a pre-1952 deed or application for a Subdivision; and
- 5) Full compliance with all municipal codes and ordinances.

LOCATOR MAP



APPLICATION NUMBER 4 DATE March 3, 2016

APPLICANT St. Francis-Joachim, LLC

REQUEST Planning Approval



PLANNING COMMISSION VICINITY MAP - EXISTING ZONING



The site is surrounded by commercial units.

APPLICATION NUMBER 4 DATE March 3, 2016

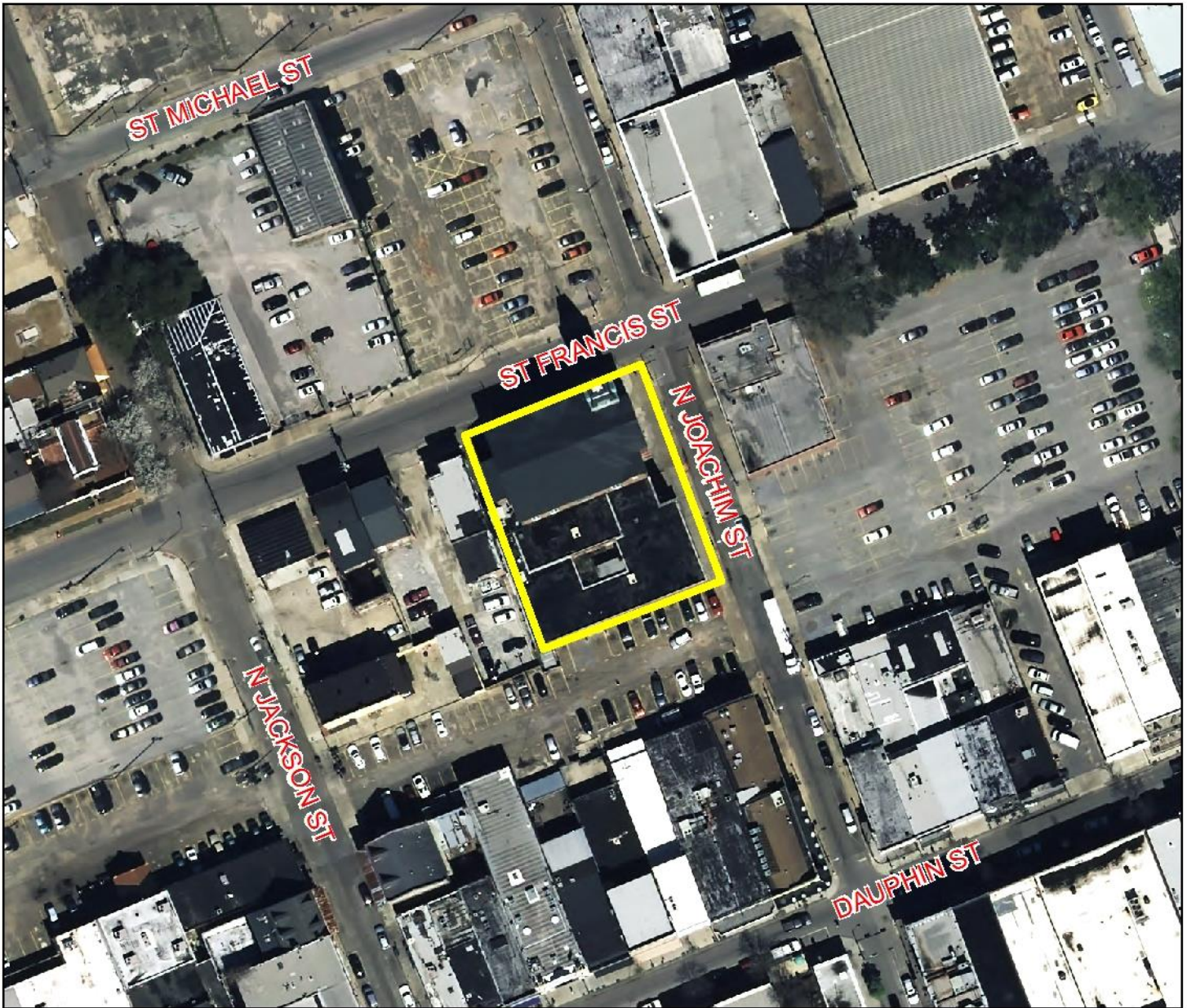
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REQUEST Planning Approval

R-A	R-3	T-B	B-2	B-5	MUN	SD-WH	T5.1
R-1	R-B	B-1	B-3	I-1	OPEN	T3	T5.2
R-2	H-B	LB-2	B-4	I-2	SD	T4	T6



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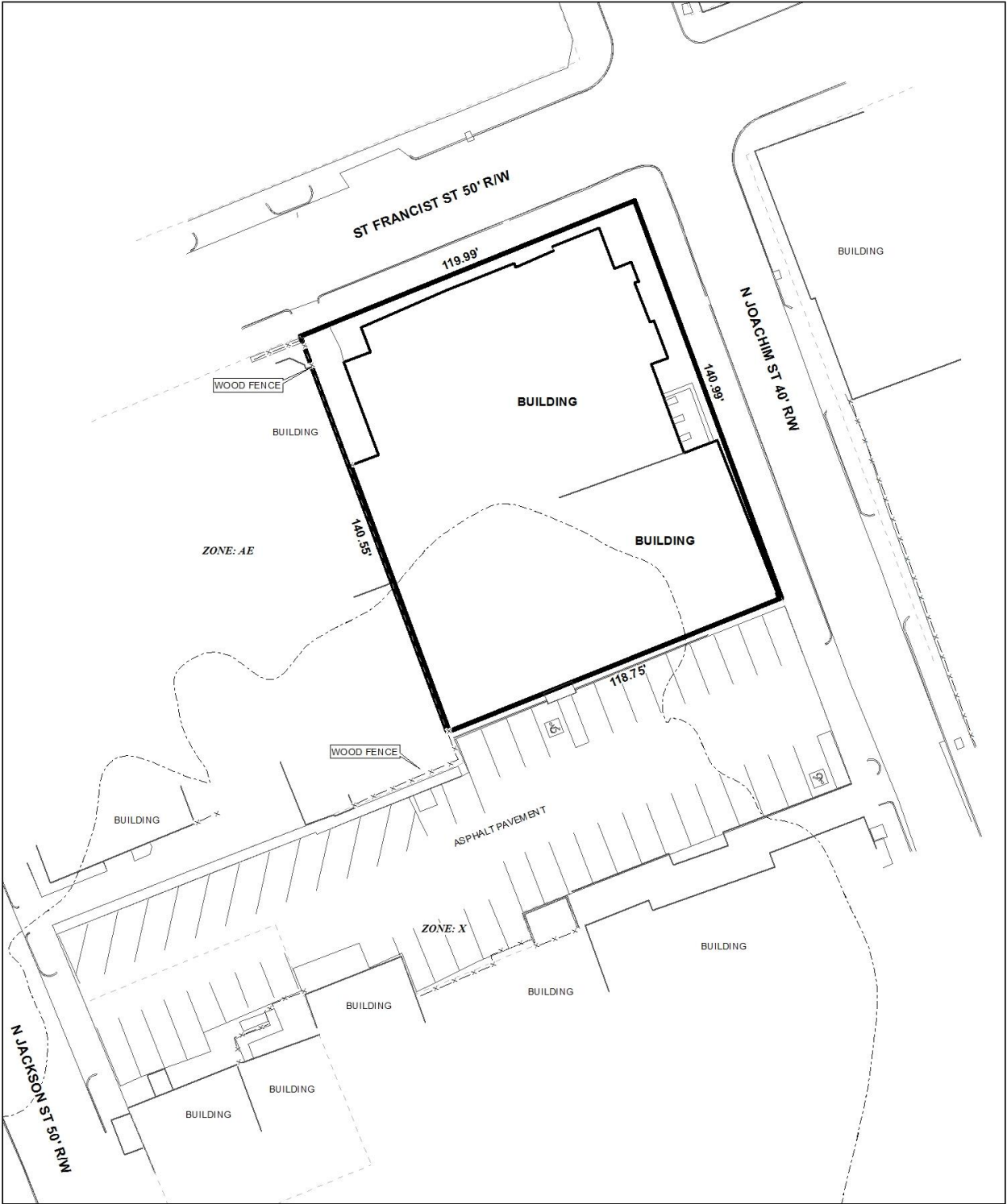
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SITE PLAN



The site plan illustrates the existing buildings, fences, and parking spaces.

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