

**CESAS Form 19 Support Documentation
CAT Ferry Dock
Chatham County, Georgia**

The following information is submitted as support documentation in association with the attached application requesting authorization to impact waters of the U.S. pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and the Coastal Marshlands Protection Act of 1970 pursuant to the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, Part 12-5-286 (OCGA).

1.0 Project Description

Chatham Area Transit (CAT or applicant) is proposing to install a new floating dock along Savannah's Riverfront Plaza to provide ferry service to the City of Savannah. The float will provide a new location on the upstream side of River Street where tourists and residents can access the City from Hutchinson Island. The project site is located in front of the new J.W. Marriott hotel at Plant Riverside near the intersection of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd and River Street in Savannah, Chatham County, Georgia.

2.0 Permitting Background

In 2015, CMPA Permit #702 was issued to SRD, LLC for extension of the riverwalk along the Savannah River in front of the Plant Riverside development for public enjoyment and access to the waterway. The initial permit application included two floating docks channelward of the riverwalk extension for transient boaters. Following the public notice period, comments were received from the Savannah Pilots Association concerning potential conflicts between larger container vessels/tugs and boats moored at the proposed facility. After several meetings with the Harbor Pilots, the two parties agreed to remove the floats from the permit proposal until the pilots obtained more real-world experience piloting the larger vessels past the project site. The CMPA permit was issued in April 2015 and subsequently extended and transferred to a new entity – Plant Riverside, LLC – on October 2, 2020.

Based on the previous coordination and concerns from the Harbor Pilots, SECI and Thomas & Hutton coordinated the proposed CAT ferry dock with Mr. Trey Thompson, master pilot and president of the Savannah Pilots Association. Mr. Thompson indicated that they would still have concerns over transient recreational vessels moored at this location but would support a floating dock for temporary usage by the CAT ferry. A copy of the permit plan set was provided to the bar pilots and a letter of support was issued on October 26, 2021. A copy of the letter is attached to this application.

3.0 Site Conditions

The habitats within the footprint of the proposed waterside activities consist of open water. The adjacent upland area consists of existing development. No vegetated salt marsh is located within or adjacent to the project area. Adjacent land uses consist of upstream and downstream commercial and industrial facilities with bank armoring and waterside facilities similar to those proposed for this project. The Savannah River at the project site is approximately 833 feet wide at MLW and 25 - 35 feet deep at the project site. The south edge of the federal navigation channel is located between 88 and 99 feet channelward of the existing face of the riverwalk. The channel is maintained at a depth of -47 feet MLLW.

At the project site, existing structures within jurisdiction consist of the permitted bulkhead, pile supported riverwalk platform, and backfill landward of the bulkhead totaling 34,703 square feet or 0.7966 acre. More specifically, the existing permitted structures include:

- 1,100' of steel sheetpile bulkhead with concrete cap
- 5,868 sq. ft. (0.1347 ac.) of backfill landward of the sheetpile
- 15' – 45' wide (27,619 riverwalk platform)
- 1,216 sq. ft. performance platform channelward of the riverwalk.

The existing structures extend no closer than 58' from the south edge of the federal channel where the river is 835' wide

4.0 Needs Assessment

The Savannah Belles Ferry is operated by CAT and provides passage across the Savannah River between the City's riverfront and Hutchinson Island, home of the Westin Resort and Convention Center. The ferries run 16 hours a day, 7 days a week and are integral for local connectivity for guests and residents. Of the nearly one mile of riverwalk, the ferry service only has two landings – one on the east end at Morrell Park, and one near the center at City Hall. The proposed project will give the ferry service a much-needed landing area for the western end of River Street, enhancing this public transportation service.

5.0 Proposed Activities in Jurisdiction

The applicant is proposing to install a 15' x 20' pile supported platform (300 sq. ft.) off of the upstream end of the riverwalk. A 5' x 80' (400 sq. ft.) ADA-compliant gangway will extend downstream from the platform to a 20' x 120' (2,400 sq. ft.) concrete floating dock. In all, the proposed improvements will total 3,100 sq. ft. The applicant will also install a 14' x 24' covering on top of the existing riverwalk on the landward side of the proposed platform to act as a landing shelter for ferry passengers. This covered area will be on top of the existing riverwalk but will not impact any Coastal Marshlands. The proposed floating dock will extend approximately 30' from the channelward face of the riverwalk where the river is 833' wide.

The proposed structures have been designed to accommodate the ferry while withstanding the natural and anthropogenic forces in the Savannah River. The proposed platform will be supported by approximately six 20" concrete piles. The float will be attached to approximately 20 20" steel pipe guide piles for stability and will contain appropriate cleats, facias, bumpers, and other mooring hardware.

The float will be used exclusively by the Savannah Belles Ferry for temporary loading and unloading of passengers. No permanent or transient recreational mooring will be allowed at the dock which will avoid any conflicts with container ships or navigation in the federal channel. The dock will have water and electricity but no fuel or pumpout facilities. All water components will be routinely inspected and maintained to ensure no leaks or other functional issues occur. No restrooms, laundry facilities, showers, restaurants, etc. will be associated with the dock. No dredging, fill, bank stabilization, or maintenance dredging is required for the project. All work will be conducted from upland or by waterborne crane and barge in a manner to minimize turbidity in the waterway. During construction, the applicant will ensure that no oils or other pollutants are released into the waterway.

6.0 Upland Component:

The proposed project is necessary to provide an additional public ferry landing at the City's riverfront. This is a public transportation improvements project, and no upland facilities are associated with the project. Therefore, there is no upland component associated with the proposed project.

7.0 Avoidance and Minimization of Impacts

Because the proposed structures are water dependent, alternative sites for the proposed project were not considered. It is assumed that alternative sites would still require structures within jurisdiction. The proposed project only requires 0.07 acre of impact to jurisdiction. All structures are either pile-supported or floating structures. No loss of habitat will occur as part of the project, and no filling or

excavation is required. The float length was minimized to safely and adequately service the ferry. There are no alternatives that would result in less impact.

8.0 Threatened and Endangered Species

The Savannah River is known to support shortnose sturgeon, Atlantic sturgeon, and west Indian manatee. The project site is too far inland to support sea turtles. The project consists of installation of a short floating dock and pile supported platform at an existing developed facility. Only six concrete piles are proposed to be driven to support the dock structure. The piles will be installed with an impact hammer using a wooden cushion block to reduce noise. The guide piles for the floating dock will be (20) 20" steel pipe piles which will be installed with a vibratory hammer. Vibratory hammer is not known to have any adverse noise effects to sturgeon. Specifically, the applicant proposes the following measures to ensure the project will not affect protected species:

- All impact driving of concrete piles will utilize the "soft start" method using a series of low energy taps at the beginning of pile installation to disperse any aquatic species which may be in the immediate area.
- A wooden cushion block shall be used when driving concrete piles with an impact hammer. Cushion blocks are known to reduce underwater noise levels by a minimum of 11 dB.
- The 20 steel guide piles will be installed with vibratory hammer only. No impact hammer will be used.
- Pile driving will occur during daylight hours only, leaving an estimated 12 hours per day of quiet time for fish to pass the project site.
- The applicant will adhere to NMFS's *Sea Turtle and Smalltooth Sawfish Construction Conditions*, applied to Atlantic and shortnose sturgeon.

Based on a minimum of four piles per day, it is estimated that the total pile driving period will only last 7 days, and concrete pile installation will be less than two days. It is commonly held that projects involving such a small number of small-diameter concrete piles (6) and installing steel piles with vibratory equipment does not affect Atlantic or shortnose sturgeon, especially given the above construction conditions that are proposed. Therefore, an in-house Section 7 determination of "no effect" can typically be made by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) without formal consultation with NMFS. To avoid adverse effects on the west Indian manatee, the USACE standard manatee conditions will be followed during construction.

9.0 Essential Fish Habitat

The proposed waterside activities are located within the Savannah River which has been identified as Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). The proposed project, however, only requires a minor amount of pile supported or floating structure over deep open water. It is widely accepted that structures or shading over deep water is not known to have an adverse effect on the benthic community. No shading of vegetated marsh, intertidal area, or shallow subtidal habitat is proposed, and no loss of habitat will occur from filling or dredging. It was therefore concluded that the proposed project would not adversely affect EFH.

10.0 Impaired Waters

The project site is located on the Savannah River which is listed as an impaired water; however, the proposed project will simply add a small floating dock adjacent to the existing riverwalk. No upland development is associated with the project, and no dredging, filling, or other waterway modification is proposed. Therefore, the project will not contribute to water quality degradation in the Savannah River.

11.0 Supplemental Information

This additional information is provided for compliance with Coastal Marshlands Protection Act of 1970 information requirements:

OCGA 12-5-286. Permits to fill, drain, etc., marshlands.

(b) Each application for such permit shall be, properly executed, filed with the department on forms as prescribed by the department, and shall include:

(1) The name and address of the applicant-

Chatham Area Transit
Attn: Ms. Faye DiMassimo - CEO
900 E. Gwinnett Street
Savannah, Georgia 31401

(2) A plan or drawing showing the applicant's proposal and the manner or method by which such proposal shall be accomplished. Such plan shall identify the coastal marshlands affected-

See attached updated permit drawings from Thomas & Hutton

(3) A plat of the area in which the proposed work will take place-

The plat to the property has been provided.

(4) A copy of the deed or other instrument under which the applicant claims title to the property or, if the applicant is not the owner, then a copy of the deed or other instrument under which the owner claims title together with written permission from the owner to carry out the project on his land. In lieu of a deed or other instrument referred to in this paragraph, the committee may accept some other reasonable evidence of ownership of the property in question or other lawful authority to make use of the property; The committee will not adjudicate title disputes concerning the property which is the subject of the application; provided, however, the committee may decline to process an application when submitted documents show conflicting deeds-

Upon completion of the activities approved under CMPA Permit #702, Plant Riverside, LLC, transferred ownership of a narrow strip of land immediately adjacent to the riverwalk to the City of Savannah for their maintenance and management as a public facility. Both the City of Savannah and Plant Riverside, LLC have issued Letters of Permission to CAT authorizing CAT to act as permittee for the subject project. See attached.

(5) A list of all adjoining landowners together with such owners' addresses, provided that if the names or addresses of adjoining landowners cannot be determined, the applicant shall file in lieu thereof a sworn affidavit that a diligent search, including, without limitation, a search of the records of the county tax assessor's office, has been made but that the applicant was not able to ascertain the names or addresses, as the case may be, of adjoining landowners-

Georgia Power Company
214 Ralph McGill Blvd, NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30308

Plant Riverside, LLC
4901 Vineland Road, Suite 650
Orlando, Florida 32811

(6) A letter from the local governing authority of the political subdivision in which the property is located, stating that the applicant's proposal is not violate of any zoning law;

Zoning sign-off has been provided from the City of Savannah Zoning Department.

(7) A non-refundable application fee to be set by the board in an amount necessary to defray the administrative cost of issuing such permit. Renewal fees shall be equal to application fees, which shall not exceed \$1,000.00 for any one proposal and shall be paid to the department.

A check in the amount of \$100.00 has been provided.

(8) A description from the applicant of alternative sites and why they are not feasible and a discussion of why the permit should be granted-

All proposed structures are water dependent, and there is not a non-water dependent alternative to provide an additional landing for ferry service on Savannah's river front. Any other alternative sites would require the same or more impact. See above project description for details.

(9) A statement from the applicant that he has made inquiry to the appropriate authorities that the proposed project is not over a landfill or hazardous waste site and that the site is otherwise suitable for the proposed project-

To the best of the applicant's knowledge, the property is suitable for the uses/structures proposed by this application. According to a review of the EPD Hazardous Site Inventory (Revised July 2013) there are no known Landfill or Hazardous waste materials present. The adjacent upland is fully developed with commercial (hotel/dining) facilities.

(10) A copy of the water quality certification issued by the department if required for the proposed project-

The proposed project only requires installation of pile-supported and floating structures. No discharge of fill is required, and there is no Section 404 action. As such, the project will be approved by a Letter of Permission from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and a 401 Water Quality Certification would not be required. A confirmation email will be provided from the USACE upon receipt.

(11) Certification by the applicant of adherence to soil and erosion control responsibilities if required for the proposed project-

The project will conform to all required land disturbing and stormwater management permits as required by the City of Savannah.

(12) Such additional information as is required by the committee to properly evaluate the application.

This application has been prepared with consideration for the interests of the general public of the State of Georgia as defined in OCGA 12-5-286(g).

OCGA 12-5-286. Permits to fill, drain, etc., marshlands.

(g) In passing upon the application for permit, the committee shall consider the public interest, which, for purposes of this part, shall be deemed to be the following considerations:

(1) Whether or not unreasonably harmful obstruction to or alteration of the natural flow of navigational water within the affected area will arise as a result of the proposal-

See above project description regarding navigation. The proposed project will not alter natural flow of navigable waters nor will it obstruct public navigation. The proposed float will extend approximately 30' from the channelward face of the riverwalk where the river is approximately 833' wide. The proposed structures will be located no closer than 54' from the south edge of the federal navigation channel.

(2) Whether or not unreasonably harmful or increased erosion, shoaling of channels, or stagnant areas of water will be created-

The proposed project will not increase erosion, shoaling of channels, or create stagnant areas of water. The project only requires installation of a single floating dock on the upriver side of the Savannah Riverwalk. No dredging or fill is required.

(3) Whether or not the granting of a permit and the completion of the applicant's proposal will unreasonably interfere with the conservation of fish, shrimp, oysters, crabs, clams, or other marine life, or wildlife, or other resources, including but not limited to water and oxygen supply-

The proposed project will not interfere with the conservation of fish, shrimp, oysters, crabs, clams, or other marine life, or wildlife, or other resources, nor affect water and oxygen supply.

Brandon Wall

From: Trey Thompson, III <pilot23@savannahpilots.com>
Sent: Monday, October 26, 2020 4:40 PM
To: Brandon Wall
Cc: Jen Hayes; Windsor, Rusty
Subject: Re: CAT Ferry Dock Plans
Attachments: CATDock.pdf

Sorry for the delay. Let me know if you need anything more.

On Mon, Oct 12, 2020 at 12:43 PM Brandon Wall <B.Wall@slighec.com> wrote:

Trey,

Hope you are well. As per our meeting on July 30, the CAT dock project in front of Plant Riverside has been narrowed down to just the proposed CAT ferry dock on the upstream side of the site. No floats are proposed at this time on the downstream side of the site. Attached are the conceptual permit plans that will be submitted to DNR and the Corps. Please note that some very minor tweaks may be made before we submit these, but the overall project footprint will not change. As shown, the project includes construction of a 15'x20' pile supported platform with a gangway extending upstream to a 20' x 100' concrete floating dock. The float will be located a minimum of 58' from the edge of the navigation channel. The dock will provide a new loading and unloading area for the CAT ferry service. No permanent mooring will be allowed at the facility.

Given our previous conversations and coordination in late 2014 on the Plant Riverside project, we are requesting a brief letter or email from your office supporting the proposed project. If you have any questions or need anything else, or if you wish to discuss, please don't hesitate to call me.

Thanks,

Brandon W. Wall

Project Biologist

sligh environmental consultants, inc.

31 Park of Commerce Way, Suite 200B

Savannah, Georgia 31405

t. 912.232-0451 / f. 912.232.0453

Savannah Pilots Association
130 Houston Street
Post Office Box 9267
Savannah, Georgia 31412
(912) 236-0226

October 26, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

The Savannah Pilots Association is given the responsibility of guiding all foreign flagged commercial vessels into/out of the Savannah River. We have examined the proposed project of adding a dock at Plant Riverside. This dock will be for the exclusive use of Chatham Area Transit vessels.

The Savannah Pilots support this -project as submitted.

Sincerely,

Robert T. Thompson, III
Master Pilot/President

STATE OF GEORGIA
CHATHAM COUNTY

Permission from Adjoining Highland Owner to Carry Out a Coastal Marshlands Protection Act of 1970, as amended, Permitted Project, as Required by Official Code of Georgia Annotated Section 12-5-286(b)(4).

I, DAY B. DANZLER (Print Name), in my capacity as an officer of Plant Riverside, LLC having a street address of 4901 Vineland Road, Suite 650, Orlando, Florida, 32811, do on behalf of Plant Riverside, LLC, as owner of Tract B 500 W. River Street (Property), hereby give permission to Chatham Area Transit (CAT) to use the inter-tidal area or adjoining marshland and/or tidal water bottoms for the purpose of construction, operation, and use of the CAT Ferry Dock to access the Savannah River as described in the application for a Coastal Marshlands Protection Committee Permit, dated March 11, 2022 and in accordance with the revised permit drawings (7 sheets) completed by Thomas and Hutton, dated June 30, 2022, Job #J-28403.0000, submitted by CAT and attached hereto.

The proposed project includes construction of a pile-supported platform with gangway to a single floating dock fronting the Property and a covered landing area on the existing Riverwalk. The site is located at Lat. 32.08438', Long - 81.09600'. I have reviewed and am familiar with the permit application and the proposed activity. By signing below, I do not object to CAT, whose mailing address for the purpose of the permit application is: 900 E. Gwinnett Street, Savannah, Georgia 31401, to use the inter-tidal area adjacent to the Property.

I understand that this permission does not create any contract rights, and I understand that the proposed activity is subject to change, pending final permit approval. In such an event where revisions are made to the proposed project during the permitting process, Plant Riverside, LLC's concurrence with the revisions shall be required prior to issuance of a permit for construction.

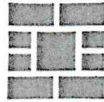
This 6th, day of July 2022.

PLANT RIVERSIDE, LLC

SIGNED: _____

PRINT NAME/TITLE: _____

V.P.



March 14, 2022

Brandon W. Wall
31 Park of Commerce Way, Suite 200B
Savannah, GA 31405

RE: 500 W River St
PIN: 20003 01003 (the Property)

Dear Brandon W. Wall:

Per your request, I hereby certify that I am the duly appointed Senior Planner within the Planning & Urban Design Department of the City of Savannah, Georgia (the Jurisdiction); and I am responsible for the administration and interpretation of the Zoning Ordinance of the Jurisdiction. Furthermore, I have access to the information required to make the following certifications:

1. **Current Zoning Classification:** On July 18, 2019, and in conjunction with a New Zoning Ordinance, the Jurisdiction rezoned the Property from Bayfront Business (B-B) to Downtown Waterfront (D-W), effective September 1, 2019. In doing so, the Jurisdiction's first comprehensive zoning ordinance adopted on July 29, 1960, as amended was replaced.

As of March 14, 2022, the Property is zoned D-W.

2. **Permissible Uses:** The uses allowed in the zoning district are identified in Article 5 Sec. 5.4 Principal Use Table of the zoning ordinance. The proposed ferry dock to be associated with transport governed by the Chatham Area Transit Authority does not violate any zoning ordinances. In relation to the zoning ordinance, the Jurisdiction does not object to the attached plans.
3. **Development Standards:** The general development standards that govern the parcel may be found in Article 5 Sec. 5.14 Downtown Districts, Article 8.0 Use Standards, and Article 9.0 General Site Standards.
4. **Overlay Districts:** The Property is within the boundaries of the Savannah Downtown Historic District. The Property is subject to Article 7 Sec. 7.8 and Article 9 Sec. 9.9.17. Therefore, any proposed exterior alterations shall require the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.
5. **Variances, Zoning Map Amendments, Special Use Permits, etc.:** I am not personally aware of any variances, zoning map amendments, special use permits, etc. associated with the Property except for the previously mentioned rezoning.
6. **Zoning Violations:** I am not personally aware of any action or proceeding by the Jurisdiction pending before any court or administrative agency with respect to the zoning of the Property or any improvements located thereon.
7. **Code Violations:** I am not personally aware of any existing violations related to the Zoning Ordinance on the Property.

This confirmation is made as of the date of this letter and does not constitute any representation or assurance that the Property will remain in the current Zoning District for any specified period of time or that the list of uses permitted in the Zoning District will remain in effect for any specific period of time.

The undersigned certifies that the above information contained herein is believed to be accurate and is based upon or relates to the information supplied by the requester. The Jurisdiction assumes no liability for errors and omissions. All information was obtained from public records, which may be inspected during regular business hours.

Sincerely,


Candra E. Teshome
Senior Planner

Enclosures: Proposed Site / Engineering Plans