

Model Tot Lot

A Collaborative Effort

Canaan Historic Neighborhood

In the city Comprehensive Plan (2009), the community identified a need to develop a series of safe play areas for younger children (6 and under). The Canaan Historic Neighborhood was designated as one of six subareas in need of revitalization in the Downtown Urban Redevelopment Plan (URP) (2011).

Conceptual Planning

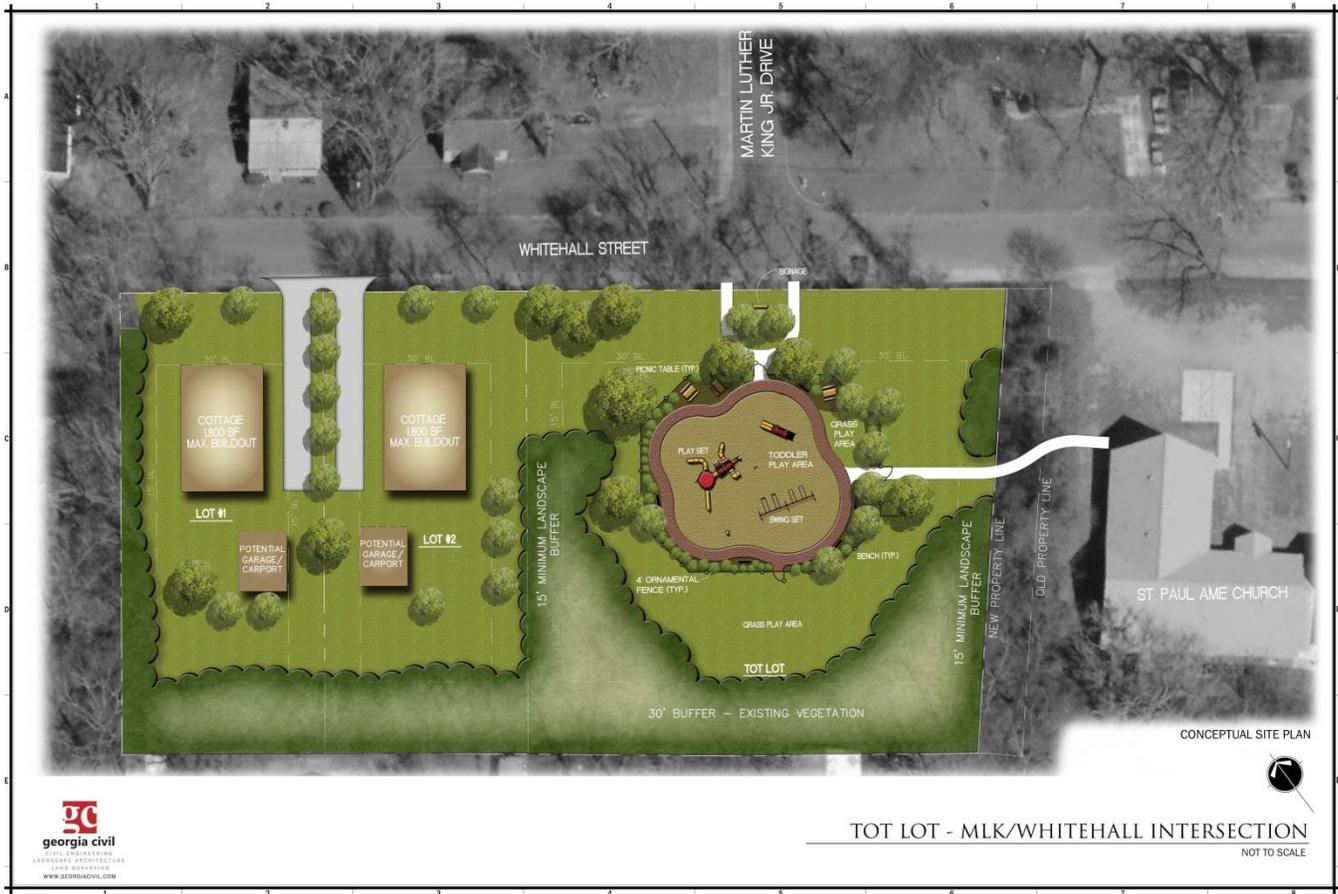
Acting as the city's urban renewal agent, the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) identified a vacant and overgrown lot with the potential to meet three goals: replacement land obligation to the city, the site for the city's first safe play area, and buildable lots for affordable housing. DDA developed a conceptual plan for the property, adopted it as part of its work plan, and presented the idea to the City Council in the annual report.

Leadership & Land Acquisition

DDA attempted to approach the owner but no progress was made. Thereafter, the owner made contact with Mayor, who indicated that the City/DDA was interested in the property and negotiated an agreeable price. The Mayor led discussions with Habitat for Humanity of Morgan County, Inc. and DDA, ultimately resulting in a Letter of Intent between organizations. Habitat for Humanity agreed to: 1) front the full purchase for a three month period, 2) retain two future development lots for new single-family affordable housing, and 3) sell the remainder of the property to the DDA for half of the acquisition cost. The DDA agreed to: 1) front procurement and pay for due diligence (vegetation clearance and archeological) and assist with rezoning action necessary for the proposed lot size. Parties agreed to split survey and subdivision expenses. The city's Greenspace Conservation Commission was approached and agreed to recommend use of SPLOST funds in the parks and equipment budget for the model "Tot Lot" in this location. The City of Madison agreed to a purchase DDA's portion of the land for \$6,500 for the Tot Lot, and initiated rezoning voiding zoning application fees.



*Vacant & Overgrown Lot (2013)
1130 Whitehall Street, Madison Georgia*



Win-Win-Win

In 2014, Habitat purchased the 1.71-acre tract for \$25,500, gaining two .45-acre residential lots (Habitat - @\$6,800/lot). DDA spent \$3,750 on due diligence services and purchased the residual .82-acre tract for \$12,750. DDA resold its tract to the City for \$6,500, thus replacing its land obligation - .12 acre/\$5,000 value. Also, DDA reserved the 1 development right, marketable for \$3,500 (DDA - \$1,500 net investment). The City of Madison leveraged SPLOST funding and negotiated a deal, resulting in a tract 7x bigger for its model Tot Lot (\$6,500), elimination of an overgrown lot, and two future tax base improvements that are affordable housing.

Development Partnerships

In 2015, the adjacent church has consented for use of its parking, in exchange for a connecting sidewalk for use by its new daycare; the City will utilize \$10,000 in Local Development Funds (donated by a developer); and GCC will raise another \$10,000 for development.



Mayor Fred Perriman & Habitat for Humanity of MC, President Cynthia England (2014)

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