

**MINUTES
CITY OF SUWANEE, GEORGIA
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
OCTOBER 2, 2007**

PLANNING AND ZONING MEMBERS PRESENT: Pete Charpentier, Anthony Manners, Jodi Nevels, Joy Mitchell and Earl Mitchell. Staff members present: Josh Campbell and MaryAnn Jackson.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pete Charpentier called the meeting to order at 6:42 pm.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

*Anthony Manners moved to approve the agenda as presented, second by Earl Mitchell.
Motion carried 5-0.*

ADOPTION OF MINUTES: September 4, 2007

*Jodi Nevels moved to adopt the minutes as presented, second by Anthony Manners.
Motion carried 5-0.*

PROCEDURES FOR PUBLIC MEETING

Pete Charpentier read the procedures for the Public Meeting for the record.

OLD BUSINESS

RZ-2007-010 – Applicant/Owner: Opus South Corp. Requests a rezoning from PMUD (Planned Mixed Use Development District) to PMUD with a change of conditions (to reduce the minimum allowed unit size for a multi-family unit from 800 square feet to 600 square feet and to amend access requirements for a required trail). The site is located in Land Lot 169 of the 7th District along Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road between Satellite Boulevard and Burnette Road and contains approximately 148.32 acres.

Josh Campbell presented the staff analysis as follows: The applicant seeks a change in zoning conditions on an approximately 148 acre tract in order to change two of the conditions of zoning for a Planned Mixed-Use Development. The subject property was rezoned to the Planned Mixed Use Development District (PMUD) earlier this year per RZ-2006-013 with several conditions of approval.

The applicant seeks a change in zoning conditions to reduce the minimum unit size for multi-family units from 800 square feet to 600 square feet on Tract 8, and to remove the requirement for a grade separated crossing for a trail crossing a proposed parkway.

Due to its size, the project is considered a Development of Regional Impact (DRI). The proposed amendments to the conditions of zoning would not impact the projects status as a DRI.

The subject property totals approximately 148 acres. The two proposed condition changes should not impact the current approved concept plan, nor are the residential density and commercial/office square footages affected by the current request.

The site is located on the southwestern side of Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road in the I-85 business district. The surrounding area consists of a mixture of single-family residential, light-industrial, and commercial/retail development.

The comprehensive plan does not address the issue of residential unit size. However, it does encourage residential uses above commercial and office uses. The proposed 800 square foot minimum is more consistent with the minimum unit size for multi-building garden style apartments. The applicant proposes a more in-town style building that generally appeals to young professionals. A reduced minimum unit size for the apartments would allow the applicant the flexibility to design units that are more likely to appeal to young professionals.

Regarding the trail, the Main Street/Lakeside character area, like the rest of the comprehensive plan encourages pedestrian friendly design. Grade separated crossings for trails are generally more pedestrian friendly. The existing Suwanee Creek Greenway has only one at grade crossing and this is for Martin Farm Road which is a low speed two-lane road. The proposed parkway has a design speed of 30 miles per hour, but is four lanes wide with a median. The applicant is concerned about the aesthetics and safety of grade separated crossings.

In conclusion, neither of the proposed amendments will impact the overall design of the project or impact the intensity of development. The proposed reduced minimum unit size is generally consistent with more in-town style apartments. However, the elimination of the grade-separated crossing is not consistent with encouraging pedestrian friendly design. It is also not consistent with the City's greenway. The Suwanee Creek Greenway extends under Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road and McGinnis Ferry Road. As such, the Planning Department recommends approval with conditions of the request.

Earl Mitchell asked Josh Campbell about the square footage of the apartment. Josh Campbell explained the minimum size of any of the units would be 600 square feet. The multi-family building has to be a minimum of 4 stories.

Pete Charpentier called upon the applicant.

Martin McFarland, OPUS South Corporation, 925 North Point Parkway, Alpharetta, GA. OPUS South is the developer of the property. Mr. McFarland indicated it is very difficult to do a one bedroom unit or a studio unit larger than 800 square feet. He is requesting that 10 units be above 600 square feet and the majority would be around 720 square feet. The average size will be around 850 square feet. The prices will be very expensive. He wants to design the right type of product that is happening around the City of Suwanee in a more vertical, urban, live, work, play community. Professional people, empty nesters, or divorcees do not want roommates. The apartments are indicative of a very urban

Atlanta, 4 or 5 story wrap product around a parking deck where people can live more in a condominium type of arrangement.

Pete Charpentier asked Mr. McFarland if the number of overall units will change. Mr. McFarland indicated the number of units will be much less than originally anticipated.

Pete Charpentier asked Mr. McFarland about the path. Marty McFarland stated he would like to remove the path from the request. He is aware of the benefits of having the path. He will have to work hard to make sure the path is not a dangerous situation or one that floods.

Pete Charpentier called for opposition. There was no opposition.

Anthony Manners asked Josh Campbell how much smaller will these apartments be compared to existing apartments in the area. Josh Campbell stated the minimum size for all the units in Suwanee is 800 square feet.

Earl Mitchell moved to approve RZ-2007-010 with staff conditions, second by Jodi Nevels. Motion carries 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS - None

OTHER BUSINESS

November Planning Commission meeting will take place in the City Hall Conference Room on November 6, 2007 at 6:30 pm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

Anthony Manners moved to adjourn at 7:06 pm.