

MINUTES
CITY OF SUWANEE, GEORGIA
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
June 3, 2014

PLANNING AND ZONING MEMBERS: Present: Pete Charpentier, Larry Pettiford, Sharu Rajgiri and Elizabeth Sawicki. Staff members present: Josh Campbell, Matt Dickison and MaryAnn Jackson. Absent: Anthony Manners.

CALL TO ORDER

Pete Charpentier called the meeting to order at 6:38 pm

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Elizabeth Sawicki moved to approve the agenda, second by Sharu Rajgiri. Motion carried 4-0.

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES: April 1, 2014

Larry Pettiford moved to approve the April 1, 2014, second by Elizabeth Sawicki. Motion carried 4-0.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

JRZ-2014-001 – Owner: Danna Nelson and Brian McDonald. Applicant: Dixie Huthmaker. The applicant requests a rezoning from R-100 (Residential Single Family District) to OTCD (Old Town Commercial District) to allow for musical instrument sales, repair and rental. The site is located in Land Lot 236 of the 7th District at 3949 Russell Street and contains approximately 0.64 acres.

Matt Dickison presented staff report as follows: The applicant's business, Huthmaker Violins is currently located in downtown Duluth. The applicant is proposing to use 1,700 square feet of the house as retail space. The remaining square footage of the house will be used for office and storage space. The carriage house is proposed to be storage only. No residential uses are proposed on the property.

The Rhodes House is a well-known historic home built in 1880 as a hotel for railroad passengers. It has been used as a single family home in recent years.

The site is located at 3949 Russell Street adjacent to the railroad right-of-way. The property is surrounded by single family homes zoned R-100 to the south and west. An undeveloped property zoned R-100 is adjacent to the east and the railroad right-of-way is to the north. The house is in close proximity to the historic Old Town commercial area located along Main Street.

Currently, Old Town has a mixture of commercial, office and residential uses all within close proximity. This development pattern and mixture of uses is common with many small downtowns in Georgia. Old Town has professional offices including insurance, attorney and real estate offices, a hair salon, as well as industrial uses and single family homes. The majority of non-residential uses are located on Main Street between Scales Road and Calaboose Street. The subject property is located directly across the railroad tracks from this area.

It is an important goal of the City to preserve the historic assets in Old Town. The Comprehensive Plan and the Downtown Suwanee Master Plan both list historic preservation as a high priority. In December of 2013, Downtown Suwanee was listed as a National Register Historic District. At the same time, the City is working to make Old Town a destination so that area businesses are successful. According to the comprehensive plan, development in Old Town must be controlled and designed so that the best features of the area are not lost but rather enhanced. Adaptive reuse of a potentially historic home into a successful non-residential use will likely facilitate the long term viability of the property. In addition, additional businesses will draw more activity into the area increasing the visibility of other business in Old Town. The Future Land Use Plan recommends Mixed-Use Center for the property. The proposed rezoning of this building to OTCD is consistent with this designation, as the second story of the building may still be used as residential.

In conclusion, the proposed rezoning supports the goals and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. Mixing low intensity retail uses with residential is a common development pattern in small downtown areas and has proven to be successful in cities. The historic character of the home and area will be preserved even though the use will change from residential to commercial and will bring additional visitors to Old Town. Therefore, staff recommends approval with conditions of JRZ-2014-001.

Elizabeth Sawicki asked about signage. Matt Dickison explained that the applicant will be applying for a sign variance and a parking variance.

Pete Charpentier called upon the applicant.

Randy Winfield, 195 West Pike Street, Lawrenceville, GA. Mr. Winfield is the realtor representing the applicant. Mr. Winfield introduced the Huthmakers.

Anna Huthmaker stated that their business is a destination business. She is excited about having Huthmaker Violins in Suwanee, GA. They have been in business for 20 years.

Mr. Winfield indicated that the traffic will be low impact. The only changes made to the building will be for ADA Accessibility. The Huthmaker's intend to keep the character of the Rhodes House.

Sharu Rajgiri asked about the retail component of the business. Mr. Winfield explained that the clientele is very specific. There will not be much walk in business.

Pete Charpentier asked Josh Campbell about the business hours. Josh Campbell explained that hours of operation will not be an issue.

Pete Charpentier called for opposition. There was none.

Larry Pettiford moved to approve JRZ-2014-001 with staff conditions, second by Sharu Rajgiri. Motion carried 4-0.

1. The building must comply with all building, fire and ADA code requirements for business occupancy before obtaining a certificate of occupancy.
2. The existing primary structure shall be maintained. Changes in the architecture of the building shall require review and approval from the Planning and Inspections Department. Any new structures on the site must be approved by the Planning and Inspections Department. The architecture of any addition, renovation or new construction on the site shall be consistent with the existing building.
3. Uses allowed at the site include all of the permitted uses found in OTCD with the exception of: Bars, Nightclubs, Lounges, Taverns, and Commercial Laundry Stations.

JRZ-2014-003 – Owners: Beverly Johnson and Jessee and Randy Overton. Applicant: Quintus Development. The applicant requests a rezoning from R-100 (Residential Single Family District) to PMUD (Planned Mixed Use Development) to allow for multi-family residential uses as part of a larger planned mixed use development. The site is located in Land Lot 209 of the 7th District at 1031 and 1041 Scales Road and contains approximately 1.96 acres.

JRZ-2014-004 – Owner: First Covenant Bank. Applicant: Quintus Development. The applicant requests a rezoning from PMUD (Planned Mixed Use Development) to PMUD with a change of conditions to allow access to a multi-family development. The site is located in Land Lot 209 of the 7th District at 662 Scales Road and contains approximately 8.17 acres.

Josh Campbell presented the staff report as follows: The applicant requests a change of zoning for two parcels on Scales Road from R-100 (Single Family Residential District) to PMUD (Planned Mixed Use Development) and a change in zoning conditions on two adjacent parcels. The request to change zoning conditions is related to the Suwanee Station Planned Mixed-Use Development originally zoned in May of 2000, per RZ-2000-007. The site is located at 662, 1031 and 1041 Scales Road near the intersection of Scales Road and McGinnis Ferry Road. The majority of the development will be located behind existing townhomes located on Scales Road. If approved, all four subject parcels will be combined as part of the same multi-family development.

The applicant is proposing to construct 224 units. The units will be a mixture of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments ranging from 700 to 1,000 square feet. According to the site plan, the community will also contain a leasing office, clubhouse and pool. Two adjacent existing single family residential properties are included in the request, so that the property may be accessed from Scales Road instead of from within the existing neighborhood.

Suwanee Station was originally zoned to include a mixture of housing types, 327,000 square feet of office, and 113,000 square feet of commercial uses. The project allowed a total of approximately 1,100 residential units including single family detached homes, single family attached homes (townhomes) and apartments. To date, all single family detached homes, townhomes, the neighborhood amenity area and a 21,000 square foot 2-story mixed use office/commercial building have been constructed.

When the project was originally zoned it was divided into phases. The subject property is considered to be part of phase V of the development. This phase of construction allows for the development of up to 400 multi-family or townhouse units. To date 68 townhomes from this phase along Scales Road, Station Center Boulevard and Lake Point Boulevard have been constructed. An additional 40 townhome units from this phase were allowed to be constructed off Lake Point Way. Therefore, a total of 292 units remain to be built on the subject property. The applicant is proposing to build 224 units on the remaining land and two adjacent single-family parcels.

The Suwanee Station planned mixed-use development was originally rezoned in May of 2000 with a number of conditions. In 2003, the project went through the zoning process to amend a condition related to the location of a trail. More recently, in 2010, a change of conditions to allow for construction of 43 single-family attached homes was approved.

The two R-100 zoned parcels, subject to the rezoning request to PMUD, each contain a single family home and are roughly an acre in size. They are currently surrounded by residential uses. To the north, are the Colonial Grand Apartments zoned RM-8 (Residential Multi-Family Duplex District). To the east, is a single family home zoned R-100. To the west, is an undeveloped property (part of this rezoning) zoned PMUD and part of the Suwanee Station Planned Mixed Use Development. The two parcels, within Suwanee Station, seeking a change of conditions are adjacent to townhomes and single family homes within the subject neighborhood to the west and the south (zoned PMUD) and the Colonial Grand Apartments to the north (zoned RM-8). To the east are the two R-100 zoned properties included in this request and additional single-family homes, also zoned R-100.

The two adjacent, R-100 zoned, properties are included as part of the request so that the primary access point to the community can be located along Scales Road. These two properties will give the complex enough street frontage to have a driveway directly off of Scales Road as opposed to the interior streets. Having access directly off of Scales Road will minimize the impact of vehicles using the narrower, interior streets of Suwanee Station. In addition, utilizing these parcels allows more separation between the apartment

buildings and existing single family attached/detached homes. The original conditions of zoning for Suwanee Station required a 50-foot wide natural, undisturbed buffer where multi-family development abuts offsite single-family residentially zoned property. Currently, plans indicate a 25-foot wide buffer. The applicant should be prepared to provide a 50-foot wide buffer in these areas, including along the edges of the two R-100 zoned properties being rezoned to PMUD.

Plans also indicate gated entry to the site. According to the original conditions of approval, the design of the multi-family development shall reflect an integrated, non-gated Traditional Neighborhood Design. Since the perimeter of the property has been developed with townhomes that satisfy this condition, this requirement is no longer desirable. However, the proposed leasing center and apartment building along Scales Road should be located closer to the street and provide direct pedestrian access from the sidewalk. An additional condition requires that parking areas for non-residential uses, such as the proposed leasing office, be located at the rear of the building. Locating the building closer to the right-of-way will satisfy both of these conditions.

The subject properties are located in the Suwanee Station character area. The future land use plan indicates multi-family uses on the Suwanee Station PMUD parcels and Mixed-Use Village on the adjacent single-family parcels. According to the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, the area should continue to focus on residential development and capitalize on the possibility of a commuter rail station. Multi-family units have always been part of the overall vision of Suwanee Station. The original concept plan approved in 2000 indicates multi-family uses on this property. Including the adjacent single-family properties allows the applicant to implement the vision of the comprehensive plan and the Suwanee Station concept plan while minimizing impacts on adjacent property owners. The proposed development of the site with multi-family uses is consistent with the future land use plan designation of these properties.

The site is located within or adjacent to the Suwanee Station planned mixed-use development and is an appropriate location for the proposed multi-family community. Required changes to the approved conditions of zoning needed to accommodate the applicant's proposal do not significantly impact the overall intensity and type of development on the site. In fact, the applicant is proposing fewer units than currently allowed by zoning. Limiting access onto internal neighborhood streets minimizes the impact of the development and allows for additional development along Scales Road adhering to Traditional Neighborhood Design standards. In addition, the proposed development is consistent with the future land use recommendation for the site and supports the nearby future transit station. Therefore, staff recommends approval with conditions of JRZ-2014-003 and approval with conditions of JRZ-2014-004.

Pete Charpentier called upon the applicant.

Marian Adeimy, 1960 Satellite Boulevard, Duluth, GA. Ms. Adeimy explained that her client wishes to rezone the two acres that are currently zoned R-100 to PMUD to join with the existing multi-family zoned property that is adjacent to Suwanee Station. This

rezoning will move access to Scales Road. Ms. Adeimy has met with the Suwanee Station owners and everyone is in agreement that primary access should be moved to Scales Road.

Staff conditions address questions that were brought up in the community meeting. Ms. Adeimy indicated that the revised plan addresses these issues.

Elizabeth Sawicki asked about the leasing office. Ms. Adeimy indicated that the architecture of the leasing office will be consistent with the clubhouse.

Pete Charpentier asked about pedestrian access to the property. Ms. Adeimy stated that the pedestrian access will be through the driveway.

Pete Charpentier asked if there will be a fence. Ms. Adeimy explained that the property will be a gated community. Josh Campbell explained that there will not be a fence along Scales Road.

Pete Charpentier asked if there will be secondary access to the property. Ms. Adeimy stated that the secondary access will be for emergency vehicles only.

Pete Charpentier called for anyone in favor of the request.

Sharon Callahan, 1153 Station Center Boulevard. Ms. Callahan is vice president of Home Owners Association Master Board. Ms. Callahan read a letter from the Master HOA Board. See Attached.

Pete Charpentier called for opposition. There was none.

Discussion ensued amongst the Planning Commission and Ms. Adeimy regarding concerns addressed by Ms. Callahan and Home Owners Association Master Board.

*Elizabeth Sawicki moved to approve JRZ-2014-003 with amended staff conditions, second by Larry Pettiford (additions = **bold underline**, deletions = ~~strikethrough~~). Motion carried 4-0.*

1. All conditions from JRZ-2014-004 shall apply to this property.
2. The proposed compactor shall be relocated so that it is **screened and the access door are** not visible from the public right-of-way.
3. The proposed leasing office shall be setback **to line up with the existing townhomes along Scales Road** ~~no further than 15 feet from the edge of the right-of-way~~ and include direct pedestrian access from the public sidewalk.
4. Provide a decorative ornamental fence and 25-foot wide natural buffers, undisturbed except for approved perpendicular access or utility crossing, where

non-residential development or multi-family development abuts offsite single-family residentially zoned property.

Elizabeth Sawicki moved to approve JRZ-2014-004 with amended staff conditions, second by Sharu Rajgiri (additions = bold underline, deletions = ~~strikethrough~~). Motion carried 4-0.

1. All conditions from RZ-2010-001 shall remain in effect except as otherwise noted below.
2. Replace General Condition number 2 from RZ-2010-001 with the following:
“Phase V shall be limited to a total of 400 multi-family residential and/or townhouse units. This includes 108 townhouse units already constructed along Scales Road, Station Center Boulevard, Lake Point Way and Lake Point Boulevard.”
3. Replace General Condition number 13 from RZ-2003-003 with the following:
“Multi-family development within Phase V shall be designed to include two access points onto a public roadway. One of these access points may be a gated access for use by emergency vehicles only or in emergency situations. All buildings abutting Scales Road and Suwanee Station Boulevard shall reflect a design and architectural style consistent with the adjacent multi-story townhomes and shall be setback to line up with the existing townhomes along Scales Road, ~~no farther than 15 feet from the edge of the right-of-way.~~ All architecture; fence materials, colors, and locations; exterior signage; dumpster enclosures design and materials; covered parking design and materials; mail kiosk design and material; and other similar features shall be provided to the City in the form of a plan book prior to issuance of a development. The Planning and Inspections Department shall review said plan book for consistency with the Suwanee Station mixed-use development.
4. Phase V of the Concept Plan shall be amended to include parcels 7-209-069 and 7-209-073.
5. The site shall be developed according to an approved concept plan. Such concept plan shall be submitted to the Planning and Inspections Department within 60 days of approval and shall be approved by the Planning and Inspections Director. This plan shall be based on the site plan dated ~~4/28/14~~ 5/13/2014 (Exhibit C) with modifications to satisfy all existing and new conditions of approval.
6. Any apartment building located adjacent to Scales Road shall be setback to line up with the existing townhomes along Scales Road ~~no further than 15 feet from the edge of the property~~ and include direct pedestrian access from the sidewalk.
7. A pedestrian access point onto existing public right-of-way shall be located near the emergency access point on Lake Pointe Court and shall be reflected in the

approved pedestrian accessibility plan to be reviewed and approved by the Planning and Inspections Director.

8. A decorative fence shall be provided along the perimeter of the property where development abuts existing single family detached homes and townhomes. Fence materials, height and location shall be indicated in the approved project plan book.
9. Street trees shall be provided along Scales Road. Trees shall be planted on 40 foot centers. The species of tree shall be consistent with existing street trees on Scales Road and shall be a minimum of 3” caliper at the time of planting. The location of the trees in relationship to the road shall be consistent with existing streets along Scales Road.
10. Development shall be limited to a maximum of 224 units on 10.4 acres. The following development standards shall supersede any previous standards for the site:
 1. Building Height: 3/4 stories
 2. Parking Spaces: 1.8 spaces/dwelling unit maximum
 3. Maximum Number of 3 bedroom units: 10 percent
 4. Maximum Density: 22 dwelling units/acre
 5. Minimum square feet per unity: 675 square feet

OTHER BUSINESS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Matt Dickison stated that he will be sending out the Annual Comp Plan Update.

ADJOURNMENT

Larry Pettiford moved to adjourn at 7:34 pm.