

MINUTES
CITY OF SUWANEE, GEORGIA
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
October 6, 2015

PLANNING AND ZONING MEMBERS: Present: Anthony Manners, Larry Pettiford, Michelle Budd and Sharu Rajgiri. Staff members present: Josh Campbell, Alyssa Durden, Daniel Robinson and Tammy Hiler. Absent: Pete Charpentier

CALL TO ORDER

Anthony Manners called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Larry Pettiford moved to approve the agenda as presented, second by Sharu Rajgiri. Motion carried 4-0.

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES: August 4, 2015

Larry Pettiford moved to approve the August 4, 2015, second by Michelle Budd. Motion carried 4-0.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

SUP-2015-005 – Owner: Errol Kantor. Applicant: Nick Ali. The applicant requests a special use permit to allow for the expansion of a gas station/automotive service and repair facility. The site is located at 3034 Lawrenceville Suwanee Road and contains approximately 0.66 acres.

Josh Campbell presented the staff report as follows: The applicant requests a Special Use Permit to allow for the expansion of an existing automotive service station located at 3034 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road. The site is located on Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road at the south-bound I-85 on ramp. The property is zoned C-2 (General Commercial District) and contains a Shell gas station, an emission testing facility and an auto repair shop. The property totals approximately .66 acres. It should be noted that the site is adjacent to the right-of-way for what was Burnette Road. This road was closed several years ago when the nearby Terraces at Suwanee Gateway site was developed.

Emission testing facilities and auto repair shops are not permitted uses in the C-2 district. The uses on the site were established at a time when they were allowed as a use by right. The City subsequently adopted an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance that allowed these uses as a special use. Therefore the current uses are considered to be legal non-conforming uses. As such, they are allowed to continue to operate, but they are not allowed to expand without obtaining a Special Use Permit.

The site has two driveways onto Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road. The site contains a one story building that totals approximately 2,100 square feet and includes two garage bays. There is also a small storage shed on the site, and a gas canopy with 4 gas pumps underneath. The applicant is proposing a rehabilitation of the site, which would include expanding the existing emission and repair shop from 2 bays to 8 bays. The new building would be 2 stories tall and contain approximately 3,800 square feet. The existing shed would be removed, but the gas canopy and pumps would remain.

If the special use permit request is approved, the expansion will go through the development review and building permit processes in order to ensure compliance with applicable regulations. It should be noted that as proposed, the addition encroaches into the setback along Burnette Road. A variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals would be required in order to develop the site as proposed.

Recently, there has been considerable private and public investment in the immediate area of the subject property. The City has invested millions of dollars to build a police substation, demolish a dilapidated motel and improve the landscape and hardscape in front of and around the subject property. These investments were in response to many planning initiatives such as the Comprehensive Plan and the 20/20 vision plan that recommended action by the City that would help spur private investment and redevelopment. Recent private sector investments include the development of the road network associated with the Terraces at Suwanee Gateway as well as the nearby multi-family buildings, the transitional care facility and the recently completed Storgard Self-Storage on Sawmill Drive. The private sector is continuing to invest in the area with the ongoing development of a McDonald's and Starbucks in the Terraces at Suwanee Gateway north of the subject property. The applicant in this case recently completed the redevelopment of the Chevron north of the property. That project removed an old car wash, an emission trailer and an old convenience store and replaced it with a newer multi-tenant retail building. The requested SUP in this case would allow for a similar redevelopment to occur at the Shell station. The redeveloped site would contain a larger building that improved functionality and aesthetics of the site.

The requested Special Use Permit to allow the expansion of legal non-conforming uses is appropriate at this location with certain conditions to ensure the quality of development called for by the Comprehensive Plan. As such, the Planning Department recommends approval with conditions of SUP-2015-005.

Larry Pettiford asked about additional parking spaces. Josh Campbell stated that there will be sixteen additional parking spaces.

Anthony Manners asked if there is an alternative way to access the site. Josh Campbell stated that there is not an alternative way to access the site.

Anthony Manners called upon the applicant.

Nick Ali, 3974 Bennigan Lane, Duluth, GA. Mr. Ali stated that he is in agreement with the proposed staff conditions. Mr. Ali indicated that there will be an additional 14 parking spaces, not 16.

Sharu Rajgiri asked about additional landscaping.

Jose Villarosa, no address given. Mr. Villarosa stated that there will be additional landscaping on the back side of the property.

Discussion ensued amongst Planning Commission members, Mr. Villarosa and Mr. Ali regarding landscaping.

Larry Pettiford asked about the use of the second floor of the service station. Mr. Ali stated that the second floor will be used as office space for the owner.

Anthony Manners asked for opposition. There was none.

Sharu Rajgiri moved to approve SUP-2015-005 with additional condition, second by Larry Pettiford. Motion carried 4-0(additions = bold italics).

- 1) Gas canopy columns shall be wrapped in brick that matches the brick used on the principal building.
- 2) Architecture for any structures on the property shall be approved by the Planning Director. Architecture shall be substantially similar to Exhibit 'A'. The walkway in front the building shall be a minimum of 6 feet wide. Awnings shall protrude a minimum of 4 feet horizontally from the building.
- 3) The site design shall be substantially similar to Exhibit 'B'.
- 4) No outdoor storage of tires shall be allowed.
- 5) Landscaping shall be approved by the Planning Director.
- 6) ***The maximum number of vehicles stored on the property shall not exceed the number of delineated parking spaces plus the number of services bays provided on the property. All vehicles stored on the site shall be stored in a service bay or delineated parking space. Vehicles, whether operable or inoperable, shall not be parked/stored in such a way that inhibits pedestrian or vehicular traffic into or throughout the property, on a surface that is not intended to accommodate a vehicle, or in such a way that adversely impacts landscaping on the property.***

OTHER BUSINESS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Josh Campbell introduced Alyssa Durden, Planning Division Director

ADJOURNMENT

Larry Pettiford moved to adjourn at 6:57 pm.