

**MINUTES
CITY OF SUWANEE, GEORGIA
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
December 1, 2015**

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

CALL TO ORDER

Pete Charpentier called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Anthony Manners moved to approve the agenda as presented, second by Michelle Budd. Motion carried 5-0.

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES: August 4, 2015

Larry Pettiford moved to approve the October 6, 2015, second by Anthony Manners. Motion carried 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

RZ-2015-002 - Owner: First Covenant Bank. Applicant: The Providence Group of Georgia, LLC. The applicant requests a rezoning from PMUD (Planned Mixed Use Development) to PMUD (Change of Conditions) to allow for townhomes. The site is located in Land Lot 208 within the Suwanee Station neighborhood at 1431 Park Commons Square and contains approximately 2.72 acres.

RZ-2015-003 – Owner: First Covenant Bank. Applicant: The Providence Group of Georgia, LLC. The applicant requests a rezoning from PMUD (Planned Mixed Use Development) to PMUD (Change of Conditions) to allow for townhomes. The site is located in Land Lot 208 within the Suwanee Station neighborhood at 1395 Station Center Boulevard and contains approximately 2.24 acres.

RZ-2015-004 – Owner: First Covenant Bank. Applicant: The Providence Group of Georgia, LLC. The applicant requests a rezoning from PMUD (Planned Mixed Use Development) to PMUD (Change of Conditions) to allow for townhomes. The site is located in Land Lot 208 within the Suwanee Station neighborhood at 1305 Station Center Boulevard and contains approximately 1.44 acres.

Josh Campbell presented the staff report as follows: The applicant requests a change of conditions to allow for construction of 73 townhomes within Suwanee Station. The subject property consists of 3 undeveloped tracts of land totaling approximately 6.4 acres that are currently zoned for mixed-use per the original Suwanee Station rezoning to

PMUD (Planned Mixed-Use District). A single applicant is requesting the rezoning of all 3 tracts of land, but since none of the 3 tracts are adjacent to each other, each tract requires a separate rezoning case. The applicant requests a change of conditions to allow for development of residential without providing commercial and office space currently required by conditions of zoning.

All 3 tracts were zoned with specific uses and densities as conditions of the Suwanee Station PMUD (Planned Mixed-Use District) in 2000. Tract 1 currently allows mixed-use with commercial on the ground floor and either residential lofts or office above or an assisted living facility. Tract 2 currently allows mixed-use with commercial on the ground floor and either residential lofts or office above. Tract 3 currently allows mixed-use with a combination of commercial and office.

The applicant proposes to construct a total of 73 attached single family townhomes as a single project dispersed throughout the 3 tracts as illustrated in 'Exhibit A'. The project would have an overall density of 11.56 units per acre. Each of the 3 parcels would include a mail kiosk for the nearby units. This deviation from the original zoning conditions requires a change of conditions. If approved, the applicant proposes the following development for each tract:

Tract 1 (RZ-2015-002) is approximately 2.72 acres and is located along the western side of Station Center Boulevard near its intersection with Paces Lane and Park Commons Square. Proposed development of Tract 1 is 29 townhomes with front facades of brick and/or stacked stone and cement siding accents. These units would be a minimum of 1,600 square feet. The site density would be 10.66 units per acre. The proposed development of Tract 1 includes townhomes close to the sidewalk fronting Station Center Boulevard, the village green and the multi-use trail. A sidewalk would create a direct connection to the multi-use trail from these units. A new alley off of Paces Lane would provide access to rear entry, 2 car garages for these units. An additional 19 parking spaces would be provided around a landscape island at the interior of the block, and there are 26 existing on-street parking spaces for a total of 103 parking spaces. The proposed project also includes a pocket park at the corner of Park Commons Square and Station Center Boulevard.

Tract 2 (RZ-2015-003) is approximately 2.24 acres and is located along the eastern side of Station Center Boulevard near its intersection with Park Pass Way. Proposed development of Tract 2 is 27 townhomes with front facades of brick and/or stacked stone and cement siding accents. These units would be a minimum of 1,600 square feet. The site density would be 12.05 units per acre. The proposed development of Tract 2 includes 15 rear entry townhomes close to the sidewalk along Station Center Boulevard and 12 front loaded townhomes within the interior of the parcel. Access to the interior units and garages for rear loaded units will be from a new alley off of Suwanee Center Boulevard. Each townhome would have a 2 car garage, and there are 14 existing on-street parking spaces. A total of 68 spaces would be provided.

Tract 3 (RZ-2015-004) is approximately 1.44 acres and is located east of Tract 1 and 2 along the northwestern side of Station Center Boulevard at its intersection with Station Way. Proposed development of Tract 3 is 17 townhomes with front facades of brick and/or stacked stone and cement siding accents. These units would be a minimum of 1,600 square feet. The site density would be 12.5 units per acre. A new alley off of Station Way will provide access to rear entry 2 car garages for these units. There are 10 existing on-street parking spaces, so a total of 44 spaces would be provided. Most townhomes would sit close to the sidewalk fronting Station Center Boulevard, with 3 units facing a new pocket park along Station Way and 3 units facing the neighborhood amenity area. Two sidewalks will directly connect townhomes to the multi-use trail.

Suwanee Station was originally rezoned to PMUD (Planned Mixed Use Development) in May of 2000 in anticipation of a future commuter rail stop. In 1995, the Georgia Rail Passenger Authority identified six commuter rail lines that would radiate outward from Atlanta. Suwanee was identified as a potential stop along the Atlanta to Gainesville commuter rail line. More recently, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) identified a route from Atlanta to Charlotte as an intercity passenger rail corridor in the proposed Southeast High Speed Rail (SEHSR) network. A current study is being done by the Georgia Department of Transportation to determine the final route of this potential passenger rail line. Suwanee is a planned stop in 3 of the 6 routes under consideration. The original rezoning allowed up to 96 residential units for Phase IV (Tracts 1 and 2) as well as commercial, and office and commercial for the land included in Tract 3.

In 2003, the project went through the zoning process again. This rezoning, RZ-2003-003, was to amend a condition related to the location of a trail. Other portions of the Suwanee Station project have been the subject of rezoning. In 2010, RZ-2010-001 rezoned the property along Park Pass Way to allow for the construction of 43 townhomes without simultaneously building commercial and office space required by the original conditions of zoning. As part of the rezoning, an assisted living facility was added as a permitted alternative use for land included in Tract 1. The most recent rezonings were in 2014. JRZ-2014-004 was a change of conditions to existing PMUD zoning to allow a change in the locations of access to a multifamily project from the original concept plan for Suwanee Station.

The following comments are provided to inform the owner/developer of certain issues that may need to be addressed:

If approved, the City will formally review the project during the normal development process.

When the subject property is developed it may use the existing detention facilities, but the project will need to demonstrate compliance with all of the current storm water requirements for the City.

Suwanee Station was approved with a condition that requires the approval of plan books by the Planning Department for all phases of development. A development permit will

not be issued by the City until a plan book including proposed site plans, building elevations, building materials and colors, illustrations of public spaces, and other relevant information is approved.

The subject properties include approximately 6.4 acres of undeveloped land within 3 different tracts of Suwanee Station. These tracts were zoned with specific uses and densities as conditions of the Suwanee Station PMUD (Planned Mixed-Use District) in 2000. Tract 1 currently allows mixed-use with commercial on the ground floor and either residential lofts or office above or an assisted living facility. Tract 2 currently allows mixed-use with commercial on the ground floor and either residential lofts or office above. Tract 3 currently allows mixed-use with a combination of commercial and office. All of the parcels were cleared and graded several years ago with some vegetation growing back in recent years. There are no environmental issues, creeks, floodplain or wetlands that should inhibit development of the 3 parcels. The parcels can support the proposed development.

Tracts 1 and 2 are surrounded by previously developed phases of the Suwanee Station PMUD including townhomes, multifamily and open space. Tracts 1 and 2 are located across from each other to the west and east of Suwanee Center Boulevard respectively. These parcels surround the Village Green of the Town Commons District, an established open space with an amphitheater, which is just north of Tract 1. Suwanee Station's multi-use trail is adjacent to the southern border of both Tracts 1 and 2. An apartment complex borders Tract 1 to the west, and existing townhomes are located on the property north and east of Tract 2. The proposed townhomes are consistent with surrounding uses.

Tract 3 is located east of Tracts 1 and 2 to the south of the Suwanee Station multi-use trail at the corner of Suwanee Center Boulevard and Station Way. Across the trail are townhomes. The subject property is part of the Station Center District, which is yet to be developed with the exception of the Suwanee Station community center, which is adjacent to the subject property on the east side. This district is zoned for mid-rise mixed-use commercial and office and a future rail station. The property to the south and west of Tract 3 are also in the Station Center District and remain undeveloped. The proposed use is generally consistent with the existing nearby uses.

In 2000, in an effort to plan for a potential commuter rail line, the city identified the Suwanee Station character area as an appropriate location for a rail stop within the City. Suwanee Station was rezoned to PMUD (Planned Mixed-Use District) to allow for a denser, mixed-use development that could support a future rail stop. The Comprehensive Plan identifies a need to provide housing to meet Suwanee's growing population and recommends focusing development in mixed-use centers that can accommodate greater densities. Suwanee Station is one of these targeted mixed-use centers. The Comprehensive Plan states that increasing densities should correspond with transportation strategies. Since Suwanee Station is a potential commuter rail stop, it is appropriate to add medium density housing units on the subject properties, which are within a half-mile walking distance of the future station.

The proposed concept plan does not follow the Land Use Plan because it does not include any commercial uses with the residential. The Land Use Plan calls for “Mixed-Use Center” land uses on the subject property, which include a mixture of medium density residential, office and commercial. However, the potential for Suwanee Station to become a mixed-use, urban center as envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan will not be compromised by eliminating the requirements for commercial, office and lofts on these tracts because enough land area still remains to build out future demand for such uses. Suwanee Station was envisioned over 15 years ago in anticipation of a future rail station. While the vision of Suwanee Station as a future mixed-use, TOD (transit oriented development) has not changed, there will not likely be a market for mixed-use development in this location until a rail station is actually operating. The City owns most of the remaining undeveloped land, which is adjacent to the location of the planned rail stop within Suwanee Station, so the City will be able to insure that the core of the neighborhood is developed with appropriate density and mix of uses for a successful TOD (transit oriented development) when a transportation component is implemented.

While the proposed project deviates from the expected building type in current zoning conditions, the applicant’s project could still help achieve the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. The intent of the residential component of the Suwanee Station mixed-use center is to focus residential density near the proposed rail station to encourage ridership and attract commercial to the core planned for the neighborhood for the purpose of creating an active, mixed-use center typical of TOD (transit oriented development). 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 is allowed a total of approximately 1,100 residential units including single family detached, single family attached, and apartments. Since 2000, 112 single family detached homes, 277 townhomes, and 560 multi-family units have been constructed, but only one 2 story mixed-use office/commercial building has been built. At this point, there are no single family attached and detached residential tracts of the project left to build on. The remaining residential is intended to be built as part of mixed-use buildings. The City included certain conditions in the original zoning to ensure non-residential uses would be a component of the project and constructed concurrently. The current request would allow the overall Suwanee Station project to further defer including a non-residential component until there is a station.

Current zoning conditions allow up to 96 loft units to be built on Tracts 1 and 2, and the proposed request is to build 73 townhome units distributed on Tracts 1, 2 and 3. This is a less intense land use, but it will fulfill the residential requirements of these tracts. Building more residential units, as proposed by this request, will contribute to the additional density needed to support transit at this location, which ultimately supports the City’s long range plan of creating a mixed-use development able to support rail.

In addition to adding needed housing units, the proposed development will also help implement the vision of the Suwanee Station neighborhood plan. The proposed townhomes will sit close to the sidewalk and front the Village Green providing the

desired sense of enclosure for this public park similar to the buildings originally envisioned for the site in the concept plan.

In conclusion, the requested change in conditions is appropriate. The addition of 73 townhome units is consistent with surrounding development and will positively contribute to the pedestrian environment and public spaces that surround each tract. Furthermore, the construction of housing units will support the attraction of future rail and commercial development to Suwanee Station, which is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Finally, the potential for Suwanee Station to become a mixed-use, urban center as envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan will not be compromised by eliminating the requirements for commercial, office and lofts on these tracts because enough land area still remains to build out future demand for such uses. As such, the Planning Department recommends approval with conditions of RZ-2015-002, RZ-2015-003, and RZ-2015-004.

Anthony Manners asked if there will be a ban on overnight parking on the street. Josh Campbell stated that there will be a huge amount of on street parking in Suwanee Station.

Larry Pettiford asked to see the location of the proposed rail station. Josh Campbell showed Larry Pettiford the location of the proposed rail station on the exhibit.

Pete Charpentier called upon the applicant.

Lee Tucker, The Providence Group. Mr. Tucker stated that he is in agreement with staff proposed conditions. Mr. Tucker stated that there will be internal parking bays for visitors and guests.

Warren Jolly, The Providence Group. Mr. Jolly stated that The Providence Group built Three Bridges Subdivision. The townhomes in Suwanee Station will be very similar to the ones in Three Bridges Subdivision. Mr. Jolly stated that the Providence Group is working closely with the Home Owners Association for Suwanee Station.

Barbara Allen, President of Suwanee Station Home Owners Association. Ms. Allen indicated that she is in favor of the rezoning.

Pete Charpentier asked for opposition.

Nathan Calhoun, 662 White Street, Suwanee, GA. Mr. Calhoun asked if a traffic study had been conducted. Josh Campbell explained that a traffic study would not be conducted for a project of this size.

John Ford 1525 Station Center Boulevard, Suwanee, GA. Mr. Ford stated that he has an issue with parking for Tract 1. Josh Campbell stated that there will be 103 parking spaces for 29 units on Tract 1.

Larry Pettiford moved to approve RZ-2015-002 with staff conditions, second by Sharu Rajgiri. Motion carried 5-0.

1. All conditions from prior rezonings shall remain in effect except as otherwise noted below.
2. Tract 1 of Phase IV shall allow a maximum 29 townhomes and shall not require any commercial or mixed-use development.
3. Site design shall be substantially similar to Exhibit 'A' including a pocket park at the corner of Station Center Boulevard and Park Commons Square. Frame the interior edge of the public pocket park at the corner of Station Center Boulevard and Park Commons Square with a hedge row or decorative fence to make a clear distinction between private property and the public pocket park. The design of any pocket park on the property shall be reviewed by the Planning and Inspections Director. No development permit shall be issued until the design of the parks is approved.
4. Provide a sidewalk connection to the existing multi-use trail to the south of the property.
5. District Development Standards:
 - a) Minimum unit size shall be 1,600 square feet.
 - b) Townhomes shall be located on fee simple lots with a minimum width of 20 feet.
 - c) Townhomes will have a front yard setback of 5 feet from the right-of-way. Stoops (covered or uncovered), steps and landscaping may be located within this setback.
 - d) Minimum distance between buildings shall be 20 feet.
6. All buildings facing Station Center Boulevard or Park Commons Square shall be a minimum of 2 stories tall at the front.
7. Architecture shall be substantially similar to "Exhibit 'D' and shall use high quality building materials, such as brick and/or stone and wood windows with simulated divided lites. The City of Suwanee Planning and Inspections Director shall review and approve all architecture prior to the issuance of a development permit. The architecture and location of the mail kiosk will be a part of this review.
8. Landscaping shall be approved by the City of Suwanee Planning and Inspections Director.
9. Provide tree protection fencing around all street trees. No equipment may be stored on or cross landscape strips except as expressly approved by the Planning Department.

Michelle Budd moved to approve RZ-2015-003 with staff conditions, second by Anthony Manners. Motion carried 5-0.

1. All conditions from prior rezonings shall remain in effect except as otherwise noted below.
2. Tract 2 of Phase IV shall allow a maximum of 27 townhomes and shall not require any commercial or mixed-use development.
3. Site design shall be substantially similar to Exhibit 'A'.
4. Provide a hedge row along the perimeter of the property where adjacent to existing townhomes. Plants used for this shall be anticipated to grow to a minimum of 4 to 6 feet in height.
5. District Development Standards:
 - a) Minimum unit size shall be 1,600 square feet.
 - b) Townhomes shall be located on fee simple lots with a minimum width of 20 feet.
 - c) Townhomes will have a front yard setback of 5 feet from right-of-way. Stoops (covered or uncovered), steps and landscaping may be located within this setback.
 - d) Units shall be no closer than 20 feet to any property with existing townhomes.
 - e) Minimum distance between buildings shall be 20 feet.
6. All buildings facing Station Center Boulevard shall be a minimum of 2 stories tall at the front.
7. Architecture shall be substantially similar to "Exhibit 'D'" and shall use high quality building materials, such as brick and/or stone and wood windows with simulated divided lites. The City of Suwanee Planning and Inspections Director shall review and approve all architecture prior to the issuance of a development permit. The architecture and location of the mail kiosk will be a part of this review.
8. Landscaping shall be approved by the City of Suwanee Planning and Inspections Director.
9. Provide tree protection fencing around all street trees. No equipment may be stored on or cross landscape strips except as expressly approved by the Planning Department.

Michelle Budd moved to approve RZ-2015-004 with staff conditions, second by Larry Pettiford. Motion carried 5-0.

1. All conditions from prior rezonings shall remain in effect except as otherwise noted below.
2. The portion of Phase VIII noted as buildings 12 and 13 shall allow a maximum of 17 townhomes and shall not require any commercial or office development.
3. Site design shall be substantially similar to Exhibit 'A' including a pocket park along Station Way subject to the review and approval of the Planning and Inspections Director. Provide a hedge row or decorative fence at the rear edge of the public pocket park along Station Way to make a clear distinction between private property and the public pocket park.
4. Provide a 5 foot wide sidewalk and 5 foot wide planting zone along Station Way. Plant street trees at 40 feet on center. Trees planted to satisfy this requirement shall be consistent with existing street trees on Station Way. Trees shall have a minimum caliper of 3 inches. A root barrier shall be planted with all trees adjacent to sidewalk.
5. Provide a sidewalk connection to the existing multi-use trail to the north of the property.
7. District Development Standards:
 - a) Minimum unit size shall be 1,600 square feet.
 - b) Townhomes shall be located on fee simple lots with a minimum width of 20 feet.
 - c) Townhomes will have a front yard setback of 5 feet from the right-of-way. Stoops, steps and landscaping may be located within this setback.
 - d) Minimum distance between buildings shall be 20 feet.
8. All buildings facing Station Center Boulevard or Station Way shall be a minimum of 2 stories tall at the front.
9. Architecture shall be substantially similar to "Exhibit 'D'" and shall use high quality building materials, such as brick and/or stone and wood windows with simulated divided lites. The City of Suwanee Planning and Inspections Director shall review and approve all architecture prior to the issuance of a development permit. The architecture and location of the mail kiosk will be a part of this review.
10. Landscaping shall be approved by the City of Suwanee Planning and Inspections Director.
11. Provide tree protection fencing around all existing street trees. No equipment may be stored on or cross landscape strips except as expressly approved by the Planning Department.

RZ-2015-005 – Owners: Mark S. Brock, Mary Ann Folger, Donald Johnson, Beverly Burnette Long, Linda J. Cochran, A.M. Laski, Inc., Teresa D. Kimble, Mike and Robin McGuire and Shawn Adams Nollen. Applicant: Vanquish Property Partners, LLC. The applicant request a rezoning from R-100 (Single Family Residential) and C-2 (General Commercial) to PMUD (Planned Mixed Use Development) to allow for a planned mixed use development with a mix of single family attached and detached units. The site is located in Land Lots 209 and 210 along White Street and White Lane at the northwest corner of the intersection of Buford Highway and McGinnis Ferry Road and contains approximately 32.2 acres.

Josh Campbell presented the staff report as follows: Josh Campbell stated that the applicant is requesting postponement so that they have time to address some of the issues brought up by staff.

Pete Charpentier called upon the applicant.

Mike Embry, Vanquish Properties, LLC. Mr. Embry asked that his rezoning request be postponed until next month.

Pete Charpentier called for opposition.

Will Mashburn, 712 White Street, Suwanee, GA. Mr. Mashburn stated that he is concerned about traffic on White Street. The road is barely two lanes. There are lots of children on bikes.

Nathan Calhoun, Mr. Calhoun stated that he is also concerned about traffic. He would like to maintain the country charm of White Street.

Anthony Manners moved to postpone RZ-2015-005 until the January 5, 2016 Planning Commission meeting, second by Michelle Budd. Motion carried 5-0.

PROPOSED 2016 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING CALENDAR

Michelle Budd moved to approve the proposed 2016 Planning Commission Meeting Calendar, second by Anthony Manners. Motion carried 5-0.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE (5:00 P.M.)	ADVERTISEMENT DATES	P & Z MEETING DATE
12/04/15	12/17/15 12/31/15	01/05/16
12/31/15	01/14/16 01/28/16	02/02/16
01/29/16	02/11/16	03/01/16

	02/25/16	
03/11/16	03/24/16 04/07/16	04/12/16
04/01/16	04/14/16 04/28/16	05/03/16
05/06/16	05/19/16 06/02/16	06/07/16
06/03/16	06/16/16 06/30/16	07/05/16
07/01/16	07/14/16 07/28/16	08/02/16
08/05/16	08/18/16 09/01/16	09/06/16
09/02/16	09/15/16 09/29/16	10/04/16
09/30/16	10/13/16 10/27/16	11/01/16
11/04/16	11/17/16 12/01/16	12/06/16
12/02/16	12/15/16 12/29/16	01/03/17

OTHER BUSINESS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

Anthony Manners moved to adjourn at 7:15 pm.