

MINUTES
CITY OF SUWANEE, GEORGIA
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
February 7, 2017

PLANNING AND ZONING MEMBERS: Present: Anthony Manners, Michelle Budd, Pete Charpentier, Lila Adams, and Glenn Weyant. Staff members present: Josh Campbell, Alyssa Durden, and MaryAnn Jackson.

CALL TO ORDER

Josh Campbell called the meeting to order at 6:35pm

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON

Glenn Weyant nominated Anthony Manners as chairperson, second by Lila Adams. Motion carried 4-0.

Anthony Manners arrived.

Josh Campbell turned the meeting over to Anthony Manners.

Pete Charpentier nominated Michelle Budd as vice chairperson, second by Glenn Weyant. Motion carried 5-0.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Pete Charpentier moved to approve the agenda as presented, second by Glenn Weyant. Motion carried 5-0.

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES: January 3, 2017

Michelle Budd moved to approve the January 3, 2017 minutes with corrections, second by Glenn Weyant. Motion carried 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

RZ-2016-006 – Owner: SLF III-GA Suwanee Gateway, LLC. Applicant: John A. Hastings. 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 169 of the 7th District at 558 and 608 Northolt Parkway and contain approximately 11 acres.

Alyssa Durden presented as follows: The applicant requests a rezoning from PMUD (Planned Mixed Use Development District) to PMUD (change of conditions) to allow for construction of 67 townhomes. The subject property is made up of 2 tracts (identified as Tract 12 per RZ-2006-013) located along the southern side of Northolt Parkway within the Suwanee Gateway PMUD. The subject property consists of approximately 11 acres of undeveloped, wooded land currently zoned PMUD allowing office and institutional uses as part of the larger planned development.

The applicant proposes to construct a total of 67 attached single family townhomes. The project would have an overall density of approximately 6 units per acre. Proposed townhomes would have front and side facades of primarily brick with cement siding

accents. These units would be a minimum of 24 feet wide and 2,000 square feet. All units would have a front stoop lining the sidewalk, and corner units throughout the development would have wrap around porches.

The development is proposed to have one vehicular and pedestrian access point off of Northolt Parkway. There are currently two existing curb cuts onto Northolt Parkway, but the proposed development would abandon one of these curb cuts to allow more efficient use of the site due to the site constraints of stream buffers and steep topography. A new 24 foot wide street would bridge over a stream that bisects the site connecting two clusters of proposed rear loaded townhomes that would front this main street. Each cluster of townhomes would have a townhome building that faces Northolt Parkway. All townhomes would be accessible via alleys off of this main street.

In addition to providing a two car garage for each unit, the proposed development would include approximately 55 parallel on-street parking spaces and 16 additional 90 degree spaces dispersed throughout the development for a total of approximately 71 parking spaces within the development.

The subject property was rezoned in 2006 to PMUD (Planned Mixed Use Development District) to allow for a mixed-use development that included a mix of commercial, office, industrial, institutional and multi-family residential uses. The subject property is approximately 11 acres out of the entire 140 acre project. The subject property was zoned to allow for 4 story office buildings or senior living units.

The subject property contains steep topography and two streams that cross the site. The property is able to support the proposed development, however these site constraints make it impractical to connect to any adjacent parcels and limit the internal road network. The topography also makes retaining walls necessary throughout the site to accommodate rear loaded townhomes including 3 to 17 foot tall retaining walls along the existing sidewalk on Northolt Parkway. This wall should be constructed or faced with high quality materials due to size and presence it will have on the pedestrian realm along Northolt Parkway and view from the existing high quality development, Salude, across the street. As proposed, pedestrian access to the development would be limited to the sidewalks along the new street off Northolt Parkway.

The subject property is located on the edge of a planned mixed use development known as the Terraces at Suwanee Gateway. It is surrounded by elements of the planned project and residentially zoned property located in Suwanee and in unincorporated Gwinnett County. The property is across the street from the Salude transitional care facility and the Terraces at Suwanee Gateway apartments, which are both part of the same PMUD. There is a stream at the eastern edge of the property. Across the stream are 2 undeveloped tracts that are within the PMUD and zoned for 5 story offices. An existing trail also runs along the stream. The parcels to the west of the subject property are zoned R-100 and contain 2 single family homes on large lots, one of which is located within the City Limits of Suwanee. The subject property backs up to the existing Northbrooke

Square single family subdivision, which is outside the City limits in unincorporated Gwinnett County.

Townhomes would be a less intense land use than office or senior living, which the property is currently zoned for. However, townhomes would still be an appropriate for the larger PMUD as a whole, which already has office, retail, multifamily and institutional uses. Townhomes would add a new use to the PMUD and serve as a transitional use between adjacent single family and more intense uses. Furthermore, townhomes would be complimentary to nearby commercial uses allowing those that live in the proposed development to walk to retail, entertainment and offices.

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan calls for more intensive and mixed-use development in the Suwanee Gateway Character Area. The Gateway PMUD was intended to be a catalytic project to transform the Gateway into more intensive and higher quality development at Suwanee's front door. The proposed townhomes are of very high quality and will contribute to intensifying the residential in the area.

The requested rezoning is appropriate for this location. The addition of 67 townhome units is complementary to surrounding multifamily and commercial development and will positively contribute to the vitality of the Suwanee Gateway PMUD. Townhomes are a good transitional use between existing single family adjacent to the PMUD and the more intense development within the PMUD. Finally, the change of allowable uses from office to townhomes will not compromise the goal of the Comprehensive Plan or the Gateway tax allocation district to attract more office to the Gateway Area. There are still 2 large tracts of land remaining within the Gateway PMUD that are zoned for office and located closer to the existing office and Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road. Access from the site onto the existing sidewalks on Northolt is limited as currently proposed. If approved, a pedestrian connection should be made from the existing sidewalk along Northolt Parkway and a sidewalk running in front of and connected to the townhomes that face Northolt Parkway to provide more direct access to the rest of the Gateway by residents of the proposed development. The Planning Department recommends approval with conditions of RZ-2016-006.

Anthony Manners called upon the applicant.

Mr. Matt Reeves, Anderson Tate and Carr, 1960 Satellite Boulevard, Duluth, GA. Mr. Reeves is representing the applicant. Mr. Reeves stated that the 2030 Comprehensive Plan calls for a more intensive higher quality development in the Gateway area. The rezoning request is appropriate for this location. The concept plan has been well thought out. A minimum of 12 units will face Northolt Parkway. There will be street trees, sidewalks and extensive landscaping.

Mr. Reeves asked that condition 10b be changed to 25 foot wide replanted landscape strip.

Pete Charpentier asked what would be the benefit of the 25 foot wide replanted landscape strip. Mr. Reeves stated that the change would allow for development to occur. Discussion ensued amongst Planning Commission, Staff, and Mr. Reeves regarding the replanted landscape strip.

Anthony Manners called for opposition. There was none

Pete Charpentier moved to approve RZ-2016-006 with existing conditions from 2/2/17. There was no second.

Lila Adams moved to postpone RZ-2016-006 until the Planning Commission could see a site plan addressing the buffer/landscape strip along the edge of the property, second by Pete Charpentier. Motion carried 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

RZ-2017-001 – Owner: Kinada Capital, LLC. Applicant: Rajesh Patel. The applicant requests a rezoning from M-1 (Light Industry District) and C-2 (General Commercial District) to O-I (Office Institutional District) to allow for an assisted living and memory care facility. The site is located in Land Lots 209 and 210 of the 7th District at the southeast intersection of Buford Highway and McGinnis Ferry Road and contains approximately 6.61 acres.

Josh Campbell presented staff report as follows: The subject property consists of 2 tracts of land totaling approximately 6.6 acres at the southeast corner of Buford Highway and McGinnis Ferry Road. The tract at the corner is zoned C-2 (General Commercial District) and the second tract is zoned M-1 (Light Industrial District). Both tracts are currently undeveloped.

The applicant requests a rezoning from M-1 (Light Industrial District) and C-2 (General Commercial District) to O-I (Office-Industrial District) to allow for an assisted living facility including 60 assisted living rooms and 26 memory care beds.

The facility would offer amenities including social and recreational activities, meal services, housekeeping and laundry services, 24-hour emergency response, shuttle transportation service, physiotherapy, virtual doctor services, a beauty salon, and a movie theater for residents.

The applicant proposes one contiguous 66,795 square foot building. The portion of the building that faces McGinnis Ferry Road would be 2 stories and the remainder of the building would be 1 story. The front of the building would face Buford Highway and include a vehicular drop off beneath a porte cochere. The proposed architecture would have a residential craftsman character and a pitched roof, and building materials would be a combination of stone and cedar wood shakes.

The site would have 2 vehicular access points, one from McGinnis Ferry Road, which would be a right-in/right-out only entrance/exit, and one from Burnette Road. A total of

55 parking spaces are proposed. The subject property slopes away from McGinnis Ferry Road significantly so the proposed parking would not be visible from McGinnis Ferry Road. Almost all residents would not drive and would go to and from the facility via a shuttle operated by the facility; therefore, the parking would be primarily for staff and visitors.

RZ-2017-001 requests a rezoning from M-1 (Light Industrial District) and C-2 (General Commercial District) to O-I (Office-Industrial District) to allow for an assisted living facility. Assisted living is a permitted use within the O-I District. The subject property exceeds the minimum road frontage for the O-I District, and the proposed development meets all of the O-I development regulations governing minimum setbacks and maximum building height. There appear to be no streams or wetlands on the site, and it can accommodate the proposed development.

The subject property is located at the intersection of Buford Highway and McGinnis Ferry Road. The property is bound by Buford Highway to the west, McGinnis Ferry Road to the north, and Burnette Road to the south. An existing light industrial building occupies the adjacent property to the east. The property on the opposite corner across Buford Highway is zoned C-2A and is also undeveloped. The northeast corner of the intersection is also zoned C-2 and also undeveloped. The northwest corner is preserved open space for a planned mixed-use development, and should remain forested. All of the other nearby property across Buford Highway and south of Burnette Road is developed, light industrial property. The proposed assisted living project will not have a negative impact on any of these existing surrounding uses. The proposed development would create a good transition from the industrial uses to the south and the more urban character developing north of McGinnis Ferry along Buford Highway.

The Future Land Use Plan calls for industrial use on the subject site, which is consistent with the vision for the entire Buford West Character Area in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan. One of the two subject parcels is already zoned C-2; therefore, it is unlikely to be rezoned for industrial.

A need for senior housing was identified in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan (completed in 2008). The plan projected an increase in the average age of Suwanee residents. This trend was confirmed by the market analysis done as part of the 2015 Downtown Suwanee Master Plan Update. “Within the past 15 years, the number of households in the city limits with individuals age 55 and older has increased at more than 2.5 times the rate of Gwinnett County as a whole” (2015 Downtown Suwanee Master Plan Update, p. 40).

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan suggests that McGinnis Ferry is an appropriate place for commercial land uses within the Buford West Character Area. The subject site is unique to the character area due to its highly visible location at the corner of two major roads, McGinnis Ferry Road and Buford Highway. The current C-2 zoning of one of the parcels exists due to a history of locating commercial at prominent intersections. However, the 2030 Comprehensive Plan also generally calls for focusing commercial in key nodes and

not necessarily at every intersection. This encourages vibrancy at commercial nodes and discourages sprawling disconnected commercial development.

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan (completed 2008) stated that the Buford West Character Area was not a priority for growth and development at the time, but it recommends re-evaluation of the plan for development of this area in the future. In 2015, the Downtown Suwanee Master Plan Update defined the future development of Buford Highway within the downtown area as a mix-use corridor supported by the planned reconstruction of Buford Highway as a multi-modal, pedestrian oriented, urban street. The subject property is just south of the beginning of the Buford Highway corridor project.

There is development pressure for this highly visible site to be developed as a typical commercial site, which is currently allowed by zoning. Rezoning the C-2 property to O-I with the recommended conditions would insure a higher quality development at this highly visible corner and be more consistent with the current concept for the development of Buford Highway that encourages commercial to be part of a mixed-use development and mixed-use to be located north of McGinnis Ferry Road.

The project would satisfy a need for senior housing in Suwanee. The proposed assisted living project will not have a negative impact on any of the existing surrounding uses, and it would create a good transition from the industrial uses to the south and the more urban character developing north of McGinnis Ferry along Buford Highway. As such, the Planning Department recommends approval with conditions.

Josh Campbell explained to the Planning Commission that the second sentence of condition number three does not apply. If the Planning Commission recommends approval of conditions the second sentence should be removed.

Anthony Manners called upon the applicant.

Mr. Patel 2829 Pebble Hill Point, Duluth, GA. Mr. Patel indicated that he is aware and in agreement with all recommended staff conditions.

Pete Charpentier asked how many employees will be working at the location. Mr. Patel stated that there will be 15 to 55 full time employees.

Discussion ensued amongst the Planning Commission and Mr. Patel regarding parking spaces.

Anthony Manners called for opposition. There was none.

Glenn Weyant moved to approve RZ-2017-002 with removal of second sentence of condition number 3, second by Michelle Budd. Motion carried 5-0 (deletions = ~~striketrough~~).

1. Use shall be limited to a senior living facility including a mix of assisted living and/or memory care units. The total number of all units shall not exceed 86 units. All units shall be assisted living and/or memory care units and comply with all federal and state regulations. Amenities and services such as social and recreational activities, meal service providing residents 14 to 21 meals per week, housekeeping services, shuttle/transportation services, assistance with activities of daily living, and 24 hour emergency response shall be a required component of the use.
2. Architecture shall be residential in nature, be craftsman style, and have a pitched roof. The portion of the building facing McGinnis Ferry Road shall be a minimum of 2 stories. Siding materials other than trim, shall be limited to stone, cedar shakes, or brick. All facades facing Buford Highway or McGinnis Ferry Road shall be a minimum of 50% stone or brick. All windows shall have simulated divided lites with the exception of any special chapel windows along the interior courtyard. The City of Suwanee Planning and Inspections Director shall have final approval for all architecture prior to the issuance of a development permit.
3. All utilities shall be located underground. ~~Developer shall not be responsible for undergrounding existing transmission lines located to the rear of the site.~~
4. All parking shall be screened with an adequate hedgerow from any public street. Any off-street parking areas shall meet the minimum landscape standards for parking lots as indicated in the City of Suwanee Zoning Ordinance.
5. Landscaping shall be approved by the City of Suwanee Planning and Inspections Director.

RZ-2017-002 – Owner: Inland Sims Development, LLC. Applicant: Wayne Raffield. The applicant requests annexation and rezoning from M-1 (Light Industry District – Unincorporated Gwinnett County) to M-1 (Light Industry District – City of Suwanee) to allow for light industrial development. The site is located in Land Lots 171 and 172 of the 7th District on Satellite Boulevard north of the intersection with Smithtown Road and contains approximately 19.38 acres.

Josh Campbell presented the staff report as follows: The applicant is pursuing annexation of an approximately 19.382 acre tract into the City of Suwanee. The subject property is adjacent to the city limits and is located along Satellite Boulevard northeast of the Smithtown Road/Sawmill Drive intersection. The property is currently in unincorporated Gwinnett County. When land is annexed into the City, the land must be zoned to a City of Suwanee zoning district. In this case, the request is from Gwinnett County's M-1 - Light Industry District to the City of Suwanee's M-1 - Light Industry District. The property includes an existing 35,000 industrial building and gravel and paved parking areas. A portion of the building is already located within the Suwanee City limits. The applicant is proposing to develop 4 new buildings on the property that would total approximately 67,000 square feet.

Georgia has annexation statutes that regulate the annexation and de-annexation of land within the state. There are several types of annexations delineated by these regulations. In this case, the proposed annexation is regulated by the *annexation by the 100% method* (O.C.G.A 36-36-20 through 23). The “100% method” means that all of the property owners of the parcels subject to annexation (in this case 1 owner and 1 property) have requested annexation. This method allows municipal governing bodies the authority to annex unincorporated parcels contiguous to their municipal limits. Annexation may occur simply from an act of the municipality. Once a resolution to annex the subject property is adopted by the municipality, notice must be served to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and Gwinnett County. The City Council makes the decision to annex or not. The Planning Commission will only be voting to recommend the appropriate zoning district if the property is annexed.

The subject property consists of approximately 19.382 acres of land located on Satellite Boulevard, just northeast of the Smithtown Road/Sawmill Drive intersection. The site is developed with a 35,000 square foot office/warehouse building, partially located on the subject 19 acres and partially located on the adjacent 8 acres located in the City limits. The majority of the property is gravel or undeveloped. The applicant plans to develop the site in the next few years with other office/warehouse buildings totaling approximately 67,000 square feet. The future buildings would be served by a private 24-foot-wide driveway. Currently, the only access to the site is provided from Satellite Boulevard.

The property is zoned Gwinnett County M-1 (Light Industry District) and is bordered by land located within the City of Suwanee to the north and west. The properties to the north are residential and zoned R-140. To the east is open space for neighborhoods in unincorporated Gwinnett County. To the south, across Satellite Boulevard, are industrial/warehouse buildings in unincorporated Gwinnett County which are zoned Gwinnett County M-1. To the west of the subject property, is an industrial property that includes part of the 35,000 square foot building that is part of the subject property.

It should be noted that the buildings located partially within 2 different jurisdictions causes service delivery issues (i.e. who responds to a 911 call from the building, who issues a building permit for any renovations). Bringing the property and all of the building into the City limits should clarify service delivery for the existing building.

Since the property is outside of the City limits, it is not shown on the City’s Future Land Use Plan. However, adjacent properties within the City are recommended as office and industrial uses and Gwinnett County’s Future Land Use Map recommends “preferred office” uses for the property. The proposed M-1 zoning district is consistent with this designation. The City of Suwanee M-1 district is the zoning district in the City that is most similar to the County’s M-1 zoning district.

The proposed annexation would clarify service delivery for the building that is currently split by 2 jurisdictions. Bringing the property into the City as M-1 is the district that is most similar to the current zoning in the County and it is generally consistent with the City’s future plans for the subject property. The County was notified of the proposed

annexation and rezoning and did not state any objections for the proposed M-1 district. As such, if the City Council chooses to annex the subject property, approval as M-1 would be the most suitable category. The Planning Department recommends approval of the request.

Anthony Manners called upon the applicant.

Wayne Raffield, Rutledge, GA. Mr. Raffield is representing the applicant/owner. Mr. Raffield stated that the owner would like to annex and rezone the property.

Anthony Manners called for opposition.

Mr. Jon Scaman, 143 Leaf Lake Drive, Suwanee. Mr. Scaman indicated that he is not in opposition but has a question about the gunfire that happens on the property. Josh Campbell stated that he would be happy to speak with Mr. Scaman after the meeting.

Michelle Budd moved to approve RZ-2017-002, second by Glenn Weyant. Motion carried 5-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

Michelle Budd moved to adjourn at 7:38PM