

**MINUTES
CITY OF SUWANEE, GEORGIA
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MAY 3, 2011**

PLANNING AND ZONING MEMBERS: Present: Anthony Manners, Jodi Nevels, Pete Charpentier and Larry Pettiford. Staff members present: Josh Campbell, Matt Dickison and MaryAnn Jackson. Absent: Joy Mitchell

CALL TO ORDER

Planning Director Josh Campbell called the meeting to order at 6:40 pm.

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON

Anthony Manners nominated Pete Charpentier as chairperson, second by Larry Pettiford. Motion carried 3-0-1 (Pete Charpentier abstained). Josh Campbell turned the meeting over to Pete Charpentier.

Jodi Nevels nominated Larry Pettiford for Vice Chairperson, second by Anthony Manners. Motion carried 3-0-1 (Larry Pettiford abstained).

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Larry Pettiford moved to adopt the May 3, 2011 agenda as presented, second by Jodi Nevels. Motion carried 4-0.

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES: January 4, 2011

Anthony Manners moved to approve the January 4, 2011 minutes, second by Larry Pettiford. Motion carried 4-0.

PROCEDURES FOR PUBLIC MEETING

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

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

RZ-2011-001- Applicant: Davis Development. Owner: SLF-Suwanee Gateway, LLC. Requests a rezoning from PMUD (Planned Mixed Use Development) to PMUD to modify the conditions of zoning related to the multifamily and townhome component of the overall project. The site is located at the intersection of Wanstead Park Drive and Northolt Parkway and contains approximately 21.58 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 allow for construction of two separate multifamily developments totaling 335 units on 19.47 acres. The applicant proposes to construct the two developments simultaneously on Tract 8, Tract 9 and an area previously planned for formal open space.

The subject property was rezoned in January, 2007 per RZ-2006-013. In the approved concept plan, Tract 8 was intended to accommodate a maximum of 340 multifamily residential units. Tract 9 was intended to accommodate 140 single family attached (townhouse) units.

The applicant intends to reduce the overall number of units on Tracts 8 and Tract 9 from 480 units to 335 units. 207 of the multifamily units will be accommodated in 4 separate apartment buildings, with three story and four story split configurations, on Tract 8. Tract 8 will include 77 one bedroom units, 113 two bedroom units and 17 three bedroom units. The proposed apartments will slightly deviate from the approved development standards for the site. The current proposal would require a reduction in building height from no less than 4 stories in height to no less than 3 stories in height. In addition, any multifamily development within the project is currently required to construct a parking structure to accommodate associated parking. The applicant proposes to construct a surface parking lot on Tract 8. The applicant intends to meet the intent of the original concept plan and construct “urban style” apartments on Tract 8 with direct connections to public sidewalks, minimal setbacks and interior parking. According to the applicant, the units will range in size from 660 square feet to 1,417 square feet. 43 or 21% of the units will be less than 700 square feet.

The remaining 128 units will be accommodated in 12 separate apartment buildings, with a two story configuration, on Tract 9. Tract 9 will include 48 one bedroom units, 56 two bedroom units and 24 three bedroom units. This would require an amendment to allow for the construction of multifamily units where they were previously prohibited. This portion of the proposed development also utilizes the formal open space area shown on the approved concept plan referenced in condition 16. These units will substantially deviate from the approved concept plan and approved development standards for the site. Minimum required setbacks would need to be revised to more closely resemble setback requirements for Tract 8 in order to accommodate apartment buildings rather than townhomes. A minimum unit width and special garage access requirements would no longer be necessary, while the minimum square footage requirement would require a reduction from 1200 square feet to 678 square feet. The applicant also proposes to accommodate associated parking with a surface parking and individual garages as opposed to a structured parking facility. According to the applicant’s letter of intent, this phase will be constructed with “Big House” apartment buildings. The letter further states, that the “Big House” is an alternative to the traditional townhouse row product and is comparable in architecture to a large house. Units will range in size from 678 square feet to 1,467 square feet. 20 or 16 percent of the units will be less than 700 square feet.

The City’s Future Land Use Plan recommends Mixed Use Center for this site. The proposed development is consistent with this designation. The 2030 Comprehensive Plan designates the area as the Suwanee Gateway Character Area

The Planning Department prepares an Economic Indicators Report for City Council on a quarterly basis. Staff presented the 2nd Quarter 2010 report in August which included a detailed housing study. According to this study, as of July 2010 there had only been 6

townhome sales for this year. In comparison, there were 50 townhome sales in 2007. More recently, no townhome permits have been issued in the previous 20 months and only 13 have been issued in the previous 33 months. Additionally, while single family detached sales prices declined 18 percent during the time period of the study, townhome prices declined 24 percent. The proposed development for Tract 9 provides an alternative housing choice that should be more successful than townhomes, at a comparable density. However, the design of the “Big House” units will be important to the long term success of the project.

In conclusion, the site is located within the previously developed Terraces at Suwanee Gateway project and is an appropriate location for the proposed multifamily units. Required changes to the approved development standards needed to accommodate the applicant’s proposal do not significantly impact the overall intensity and type of development on the site. The elimination of townhomes from the project addresses the City’s concern, about the single-family attached units remaining undeveloped indefinitely. In addition, construction of a high quality project is possible with the inclusion of architectural and site design components that go beyond what is included in the typical multi-family development. Therefore, the Planning Department recommends approval with conditions of RZ-2011-002.

Pete Charpentier asked about the amount of parking in the other apartment complexes in the City of Suwanee. Josh Campbell explained that the other apartment complexes have approximately 2 spaces per unit. The Planned Mixed Use Development allows for deviation from the parking requirements.

Larry Pettiford asked Josh Campbell how many units will be on Tract 8. Josh Campbell stated there will be 207 units. Larry Pettiford asked how many 3 bedroom units will be on Tract 8. Matt Dickison explained that there is a condition for Tract 8 that states there will not be more than twenty 3 bedroom units.

Jodi Nevels asked if the elimination of the parking deck will impact the adjacent planned office-retail component. Josh Campbell indicated that the office retail will have to meet the parking requirements for the square footage they propose to build on their tract. The parking deck was proposed mainly for the residential component.

Anthony Manners asked if there will be room for spill over parking. Matt Dickison stated that there will be on street parking for guests.

Pete Charpentier called upon the applicant.

Heath Hawkins, 1050 Eagles Landing Parkway, Stockbridge, GA. Mr. Hawkins stated he is with Davis Development.

Pete Charpentier asked Mr. Hawkins about pedestrian connectivity between the urban complex and the rest of the mixed use portion. Mr. Hawkins indicated that there will be

direct pedestrian connectivity along Northolt Parkway, Wanstead Park Drive and Redbridge.

Fred Hayes, 1050 Eagles Landing Parkway, Stockbridge, GA. Mr. Hayes explained that pedestrian interconnectivity will be along the sidewalks along the thoroughfares. Inside the development, crossing Wanstead Park Drive, there will be interconnectivity. There will be more pedestrian interconnectivity along Redbridge. Mr. Hayes explained the layout of the amenity center to the Planning Commission.

Further discussion ensued amongst the Planning Commission and Mr. Hayes pertaining to the pedestrian access to the amenity center, parking requirements and garages for the residents.

Pete Charpentier asked Mr. Hayes if his company tried to preserve any green space. Mr. Hayes explained that the green space will be used for the residents in a park like manner.

Larry Pettiford asked if the units on Tract 9 are in the buffer. Josh Campbell explained that the units are not in the buffer.

Larry Pettiford asked if the units on Tract 8 will lease the garages. Mr. Hayes stated that any resident will be able to lease a garage while living in an apartment. The garages are not tied to a specific apartment unit.

Heath Hawkins asked if condition 5f could be changed from 15% to 16%.

Pete Charpentier called for opposition.

Jung Ok Seon, 3250 Northcliff Parkway, Suwanee, GA. Mr. Seon asked about the detention pond. Josh Campbell explained that the detention is already established on the property.

Mr. Seon asked about the standard parking space size in the City of Suwanee. Josh Campbell explained that the average parking space size is 9 feet by 18 feet.

Cassandra Lee, 2940 Northcliff Drive, Suwanee, GA. Ms. Lee stated that her major concerns are the traffic that will be brought into the area and home values.

Discussion ensued amongst the Planning Commission and staff regarding pedestrian connectivity and traffic impacts.

Anthony Manners moved to approve RZ-2011-002 with amended conditions, second by Jodi Nevels. Motion carried 4-0 (additions = bold italics, deletions = strikethrough).

1. Tract 8 and 9 shall be developed in accordance with the site plan dated March 11, 2011 (Exhibit C).

2. All conditions of zoning from RZ-2006-013 & RZ-2007-010 shall remain in full effect, except for the following conditions, which shall be revised to read as follows:

4.e. Tract 9 shall be allowed those uses and development standards found in the RM-8 district, except as otherwise noted.

5.e. Tract 8 shall be limited to a maximum of 207 units.

Minimum building setbacks:

Front: 0'

Side: 0'

Rear: 0'

Building Height: No less than 3 stories in height.

Minimum Number of Parking Spaces: 1.8 per unit

Maximum Number of 3 bedroom units: 20

Minimum Unit Size: 660 square feet, provided the following:

- a. A maximum of 25 percent of units may be less than 700 square feet; and
- b. A maximum of 50 percent of units may be between 700 and 800 square feet; and
- c. The remaining units must be greater than 800 square feet.

5.f. Tract 9 shall be limited to a maximum of 128 residential units.

Minimum setbacks:

Front: 0'

Side: 0'

Rear: 0'

Building Height: No greater than four (4) stories in height.

Minimum Unit Size: 678 square feet

- a. A maximum of ~~45~~ **16** percent of units may be less than 700 square feet; and
- b. A maximum of 50 percent of units may be between 700 and 800 square feet; and
- c. The remaining units must be greater than 800 square feet.

7. Prior to issuance of a Development Permit for each phase of the project, the applicant shall submit architectural elevations in the form of a "Plan Book" for typical structures for review and approval by the City of Suwanee. At a minimum, the "Plan Book" shall include allowed building elevations, exterior colors, materials, massing, define the sidewalk zone, define the relationship between buildings and the public and private roads, and other pertinent information. The exterior elevations of all single-user buildings exceeding 60,000 square feet shall be designed so that they include no expanses of blank walls that exceed a width of 60 feet. This requirement shall be met by employing the use of columns, horizontal and

vertical offsets, decorative cornices, awnings, and/or canopies. Other architectural treatments (such as alternate brick patterns, bonds, or colors) shall be implemented as needed to ensure architectural interest is maintained in blank wall sections less than 60 feet in width. The color scheme(s) employed on the front elevation of any big box building shall be continued along the other elevations of the building. While color scheme of the rear façade of any big box shall be required to match the other three sides of the building, the rear façade shall not be required to incorporate the same materials as the other three sides. Building heights are restricted to a maximum of 60 feet.

Further architectural requirements for specific tracts include:

- a) **Multifamily residential buildings on Tract 8 shall present a front face to the public street and shall reflect a more urban style design.**
- b) **Multifamily residential buildings on Tract 8 9 shall present a front face to the public street when abutting a public road and shall reflect the “Big House” style design which arranges groups of apartments in buildings that look, from the outside, like large single-family homes.**

~~15. The formal open space part of which is located on tract 8 and the other part on tract 9 shall be completed prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the multi-family building.~~

~~16. The formal open space part of which is located on tract 8 and the other part on tract 9 shall be completed prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the multi-family building.~~

SUP-2011-001 – Applicant: Pacific Investors Forum, LLC. Owner: Chevron Food Mart. Requests a special use permit to allow for an emission testing facility. The site is located at 310 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and contains approximately 1.02 acres.

Matt Dickison presented the staff analysis as follows: The applicant requests a Special Use Permit on an approximate 1.02 acre tract to allow for a 900 square foot emissions testing facility in the C-2 zoning district. The site is located at 310 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, east (towards Sugar Hill) of Kroger. Access for the emissions testing facility is proposed via an existing shared driveway on Peachtree Industrial Boulevard. The proposed emissions testing facility is located at the end of the Chevron convenience store in an area which was formerly used as an automatic car wash.

The subject property currently contains a Chevron gas station with a convenience store and automatic car wash facility. In the past, the Planning Department has been approached about special use permits for car washes with exterior activities such as

vacuuming and detailing for this site. A concern of the Planning Department regarding this and similar automotive related uses is the potential for “visual clutter” with directional signs, employees vacuuming vehicles, drying vehicles, exterior equipment, etc. The applicant in this case is proposing that the emissions testing facility and all associated activities be located inside the existing car wash area.

Vehicles entering the site wishing to get an emissions test should circle around the building and enter through the back. This will allow the stacking of vehicles to occur behind the convenience store and out-of-sight of drivers on Peachtree Industrial Boulevard. The proposed special use would not increase the size or the exterior of the building. It would also not enlarge any impervious surface area.

In conclusion, the requested Special Use Permit for an emissions testing facility would be appropriate at this location. The inclusion of an emissions testing facility would be a consistent use with the current automotive activities on the subject property. The additional use will be completely enclosed in an existing structure and a condition ensuring that vehicle stacking will be screened from view by the convenience store will minimize any impacts. Creative reuse of existing buildings should be encouraged whenever possible. As such, the Planning Department recommends approval with conditions of the request as currently proposed

Josh Campbell stated that an opposition letter has been distributed to the Planning Commission.

Pete Charpentier called upon the applicant.

The applicant did not wish to speak.

Pete Charpentier called for opposition. No one spoke in opposition.

Anthony Manners moved to approve SUP-2011-001 with conditions, second by Larry Pettiford. Motion carried 4-0.

1. Any signage necessary for the emissions testing and the subject property shall conform to Article XVI Signs of the zoning ordinance. Any temporary signage shall also conform to Article XVI Signs of the zoning ordinance.
2. Special uses on the site shall be limited to an emissions testing facility. No other vehicular services or other special uses are allowed under this special use permit. All activities related to emissions testing shall be conducted inside the former “car wash” area of the building.
3. Vehicle entry to the emissions testing facility will be through the rear entrance.

OTHER BUSINESS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Strategic Plan is underway and will be a year long process.

An update to Alternative Transportation Plan has been approved.

ADJOURNMENT

Jodi Nevels moved to adjourn at 7:38 pm.