

**MINUTES**  
**CITY OF SUWANEE, GEORGIA**  
**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**  
**July 10, 2018**

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

**CALL TO ORDER**

Michelle Budd called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

*Anthony Manners moved to adopt the agenda, second by Glenn Weyant. Motion carried 5-0.*

**ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES: March 6, 2018**

*Glenn Weyant moved to approve the March 6, 2018 minutes, second by Anthony Manners. Motion carried 5-0.*

**OLD BUSINESS**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**RZ-2018-003** – Applicant: Terwilliger Pappas Multifamily Partners LLC. Owners: TP Suwanee Assemblage LLC, Jed D. Manton and John P. Manton Investments LLC, and Estate of Eugene Baynes. The applicant requests a rezoning from R-140 (Residential Single-Family District) and PMUD (Planned Mixed-Use Development) to PMUD (Planned Mixed-Use Development) to allow for a mixed-use development. The site is located in Land Lots 211 and 236 of the 7<sup>th</sup> District along Buford Highway between Russell Street and Chicago Street and contains approximately 9 acres.

Josh Campbell presented the staff report as follows: The applicant requests a rezoning from R-140 (Residential Single-Family District) and PMUD (Planned Mixed-Use Development District) to PMUD (Planned Mixed-Use Development District) for a mixed-use project that would include 233 multi-family units within three 4-5 story buildings. These buildings would be 4 stories in the front facing Buford Highway and 5 stories in the back. Buildings A and B would be located directly adjacent to Buford Highway. Building C would sit further back within the property on axis with a new driveway providing access to the development from Buford Highway.

The subject property consists of 3 tracts of land totaling approximately 9 acres located along Buford Highway. The two tracts adjacent to Buford Highway are currently zoned R-140 (Residential Single Family District) and the third tract was rezoned to PMUD (Planned Mixed-Use Development) with the adjacent property to the north for a mixed-use development currently under construction. This tract of land was reserved for future

development. All three parcels are currently undeveloped and wooded. The site has steep topography that slopes down to what appear to be wetlands and a stream on the northern portion of the site.

The ground floor of Building A is proposed to provide 10,500 square feet of commercial space. This space would be designed to commercial use standards but could be divided in up to 8 residential units as an interim use until market conditions create more demand for commercial along Buford Highway. The leasing center for the three buildings would also be located on the ground floor of Building A. A paseo through the Building C would provide from Buford Highway a view of the pool and amenity area located behind Building C. The project amenities would include a fitness center, outdoor pool and indoor amenity space for tenants.

The concept plan shows 304 parking spaces for the project including 293 spaces for the multifamily units and 11 spaces for the commercial space. The buildings are also located directly adjacent to 19 on-street parking spaces that will be included as part of the Buford Highway reconstruction project. Parking would all be provided in surface lots located behind the buildings shielded from view of Buford Highway, except for the 19 on street parking spaces. Areas of pervious pavers are located in the larger parking lots to visually break up the parking.

The subject property is adjacent to Solis, a mixed-use project currently under construction, which is being developed by the applicant. The project under consideration would be similar to the current development in likeness, use and appearance. Similar to the multi-family units under construction on the adjacent site, the proposed project would have buildings that sit close to the street along Buford Highway. Units would have direct access to the Buford Highway with a slight transition between public and private through a low, brick wall adjacent to Buford Highway.

For the proposed multi-family units the average size would be approximately 971 square feet with units ranging from studios between 550 and 750 square feet to 1,469 square feet for 3 bedroom units. One bedroom units would range from 785 to 900 square feet and two bedroom units would range from 1,000 to 1,300 square feet. The unit mix would be 7 percent studios, 49 percent one bedrooms, 41 percent two bedrooms, and 3 percent three bedrooms. This is similar to the Solis project which was permitted for units that average 943 square feet and a unit mix of 9 percent studios, 54 percent one bedrooms, 32 percent two bedrooms, and 5 percent three bedrooms. The biggest difference between the two projects in regard to unit mix is that the subject proposal would have more 2 bedroom units and those 2 bedroom units would be slightly larger.

The applicant proposes a 20-foot-wide replanted landscape strip along the edge of the property where it abuts King Street. A 25-foot wide access easement is proposed along the southern edge of the property for a future connection from King Street to Buford Highway if practical.

The project would have two vehicular access points. The main entrance would be via a new driveway from Buford Highway. This driveway would have sidewalks, street trees, and a landscaped median. A second access point would be located off Trevi Lane, a private street off Buford Highway that is currently under development as part of the Solis project to the north. This access point would directly connect the proposed project to the new Solis mixed-use project.

Open space would include a small pocket park at the corner of Buford Highway and Trevi Lane. This area would have outdoor tables compatible with future commercial that could be located at the corner of Building A. Additionally, approximately 2 acres of the site would be left as natural open space at the northeastern portion of the site where there is a stream and wetlands. Detention is proposed to be located underground beneath the parking lot behind Building A.

A multi-use trail is proposed to run through the development and connect Old Town to Town Center. The trail would begin at King Street and then run parallel to King Street within a landscape strip and then wrap around apparent wetlands at the northern edge of the subject property. The new trail would terminate at Trevi Lane, where it would connect with the pedestrian network within the Solis project which then connects to Chicago Street in Town Center (via pedestrian facilities that are currently under construction).

As currently proposed, there does not appear to be enough parking to serve all of the development on the site. The applicant will need to be prepared to provide one parking space per multifamily bedroom and 4 spaces per 1,000 square feet of commercial, as provided by the adjacent Solis project.

In 2015, RZ-2015-001 rezoned the property at the corner of Buford Highway and Chicago Street to Planned Mixed-Use Development (PMUD) for the development of a mixed-use project including up to 240 multifamily units, up to 30,000 square feet of commercial, and a multi-level parking deck.

During the design of the project, topographical constraints made it necessary to spread the 240 multifamily units into four buildings instead of one larger building and extend the project further down Buford Highway. In order to do this the site that was rezoned per RZ-2015-001 needed to be combined with the adjacent property to the south, aka the lumber yard, all of which was rezoned per RZ-2016-004. The addition of this tract of land did not increase the overall number of multifamily units in the project. It did however allow those units to be disturbed over a larger area and allowed for the addition of 70 townhomes to the project. The project is now under construction and is referred to as the Solis project.

RZ-2015-001 and RZ-2016-004 both included a number of conditions of approval in order to ensure a high quality of development. These conditions called for traditional neighborhood design and consistency with pedestrian friendly design principles in order to make the project compatible with Town Center and supportive of the new pedestrian

friendly design of Buford Highway. The Buford Highway reconstruction project is underway.

The conditions for multifamily and mixed-use buildings included providing structured parking or locating parking behind buildings so that buildings could be pushed up to the sidewalk and sit close to the street; having direct entrances to ground floor uses from the Buford Highway sidewalk; screening parking lots and dumpsters from the pedestrian environment; using high quality materials and finishes with elevations that are broken up horizontally with materials and/or color changes to create a diverse experience along each block; and, providing a minimum amount of commercial space, and within the commercial space, providing high ceiling and glass storefronts at street level directly facing Buford Highway.

Other zoning conditions for the residential component were included to ensure the units would be high quality and provide housing options that were lacking in Town Center. These included restrictions on the number of 3 bedrooms to 5% of the total units and 2 bedrooms to 40% of the total units with all remaining units to be one bedrooms or studios; an average unit size between 900 and 1,000 square feet; separately metered units to allow for condominium conversion; controlled access at entry points; first class tenant amenities including a pool, workout center and electric car charging station; and design features such as 9 foot ceilings, 42 inch high cabinets, premium countertops and appliances.

When the lumber yard property was incorporated into the Solis Town Center project, 4.5 acres of the property was reserved for future development and referred to as “Phase III” without any depiction what would occur within this phase. This property is part of the subject property for the proposed development and is therefore included in this rezoning consideration. One condition for RZ-2016-004 specifically references to this portion of the property stating that “future development in Phase III shall be mixed-use including a minimum of 12,000 square feet of retail/restaurant on the ground floor.”

The subject property includes approximately 9 acres adjacent to Buford Highway. The site is heavily wooded and appears to include some state waters and wetlands. There do not appear to be any steep slopes on the property, although there is a significant change in elevation from the high point (998 feet above sea level) to the low point (940 feet above sea level). This change in topography can be used as an asset in order to minimize the visual impact of the taller buildings on nearby residences in the Old Town area. The applicant proposes 233 multifamily units distributed in 3 buildings.

The subject property is surrounded by a mixture of uses and zoning districts. The subject property is bound by King Street to the west and Buford Highway to the east. To the northwest, across Buford Highway, is mostly vacant, wooded property with one existing single-family home (zoned C-2). The mixed-use Solis development (zoned Planned Mixed-Use Development – PMUD) is located directly adjacent to the subject property along Buford Highway to the north. This development will include 4/5 story buildings

with multifamily, commercial, and single-family attached uses. The proposed development is similar and highly compatible with the adjacent Solis development.

A small undeveloped parcel to the south along Buford Highway is zoned R-140 residential. A second parcel adjacent to the southern property line of the subject property fronts King Street and is zoned R-140 and contains a single-family house. The proposed development does not propose a buffer along the shared property line with these residential properties. This adjacent property is anticipated to be developed more intensively in the future. As such, a buffer in this situation would not necessarily be appropriate.

Across King Street to the south, are large tracts of land zoned R-140 residential with single-family homes. One of these tracts abuts the subject property directly where King Street dead ends. The required stream buffer on the property is located near these properties, thus creating a natural buffer between the properties. There is a significant drop in grade between King Street and the subject property. As a result, the roofline of existing homes on King Street would be roughly equal to the roofline of the 4/5 story buildings proposed on the subject property. The impact of the proposed development on these single-family homes will be further reduced by a 20 foot planted landscape strip that the applicant proposes along King Street.

The Comprehensive Plan recommends a mixture of residential and non-residential uses for the property. The Comprehensive Plan allows for and encourages mixed-use development in specific areas. The subject property falls into the Town Center Character Area with a small portion in the Old Town Character Area as well. The Town Center Character Area is identified as an appropriate location for mixed-use developments, specifically mixed-use center, similar to Town Center in function and style. The Plan also called for Town Center to expand onto the subject property. *“Particular attention should be paid to expanding Town Center to the south...continuing development down Buford Highway to support the Old Town gateway at Russell Street...”* The Downtown Suwanee Master Plan adopted in 2009 anticipates up to 3 story multi-family residential uses on the subject property. The 2015 update to the Downtown Suwanee Master Plan calls for Town Center-style development to extend down Buford Highway toward Russell Street.

The Framework Plan for the Downtown Suwanee Master Plan calls for attached residential development on the subject property. To supplement the Framework plan an illustrative plan was prepared and included in the Downtown Suwanee Master Plan. This plan also goes into great detail about the proposed intensity of development anticipated to occur between Town Center and the roundabout at Russell Street. The potential development illustrated in the 2015 Downtown Suwanee Master Plan shows 500 multifamily units with 50,000 square feet of ground floor commercial along Buford Highway, decked parking, 50 townhomes, and 37 single family homes and cottages in the area that includes the subject property and the Solis development.

Solis will have 240 multifamily units, 12,000 square feet of commercial, and 70 townhomes. The current proposal for the subject property includes 233 multifamily units with several of those units being located in what would be built out as 10,500 square feet of commercial space. The two developments combined would have a maximum of 473 multifamily units, 22,500 square feet of commercial space, and 70 single family attached units. The illustrative plans in the Downtown Suwanee Master Plan do not take into account the environmental issues that encumber the Solis site and the subject property. As a result, the overall development is less intensive than anticipated with the multi-family component being forced up to the front of the two sites and further south on Buford Highway than anticipated.

The proposed project would provide added connectivity in Suwanee's downtown by connecting King Street to Buford Highway and the Solis mixed-use project via a pedestrian and bicycle connection. Connecting the Old Town to Town Center is one of the goals of both the Comprehensive Plan and the Downtown Suwanee Master Plan. All of Suwanee's recent planning efforts encourage development along Buford Highway to have a mixture of residential and commercial uses. The developments along Buford Highway were anticipated to have an appearance that compliments and to a certain extent emulates Town Center in order to extend the Town Center environment down Buford Highway to Russell Street, where a new roundabout will be constructed in the near future. This roundabout is expected to be a gateway/activity that announces the arrival into Town Center and historic Old Town.

RZ-2015-001 and RZ-2016-004 were both approved with conditions that required high quality development. These conditions set the expectations for development in the area. As such, if the subject request is approved, conditions of approval should be consistent with these prior approvals.

The proposed mixed-use project closely adheres to the recommendation of the 2015 Downtown Suwanee Master Plan and the intended land use and intensity prescribed by the 2030 Comprehensive Plan. The proposal extends and Town Center style development further down Buford Highway towards Russell Street. The proposal includes commercial space that would create vibrancy and interest for pedestrians and continue the presence of commercial uses down Buford Highway. Development intensity is comparable to the recommendations found in the Downtown Suwanee Master Plan and the Comprehensive Plan. If approved the development would create a desirable and inviting pedestrian connection from the Old Town area to Town Center that is currently missing. As such, the Planning Department recommends approval with conditions of RZ-2018-003.

Pete Charpentier asked about parking. Josh Campbell stated that there will one parking space per bedroom, not including the three bedroom apartments. Phase 2 will have more parking spaces than bedrooms. The expectation is for the developer to meet the conditions set by staff.

Lila Kelley stated that there could be a parking issue for the commercial portion of the development.

Discussion ensued amongst the Planning Commission members and staff regarding parking.

Michelle Budd called upon the applicant.

Greg Power, Terwilliger Pappas Multifamily Partners, 3565 Piedmont Road, Atlanta, Georgia. Mr. Power stated that there will be 233 luxury apartments in this development. There will be more two bedroom units than in Phase I of the development. The units will be condo convertible quality. There will be many amenities including a yoga studio, dog spa, rooftop clubroom and saltwater lap pool. Mr. Power stated that he plans to meet all of the parking requirements set by staff however, parking is trending towards less needed.

Lengthy discussion ensued between Planning Commission members and the applicant regarding parking.

Michelle Budd asked about the pocket park. Mr. Power stated that there will be a couple of pocket parks on the site.

Pete Charpentier asked about the commercial space. Mr. Power explained that there will be 10,000 square feet of commercial space. The commercial space could include live work units.

Michelle Budd called for opposition. There was none.

***Pete Charpentier called to approve RZ-2018-003 with amended condition, second by Glenn Weyant. Motion carried 5-0*** (additions = **bold**, deletions = ~~strikethrough~~).

1. Develop in accordance with the concept plan (dated June 25, 2018) and associated attachments and exhibits approved by City of Suwanee, and incorporated herein by reference, with changes as necessary to meet conditions of zoning or other development requirements. This shall include all proposed densities, roadways, land uses, planting, sidewalks, multi-use paths, or other proposed features shown on the submitted plan. If needed due to conditions of zoning that require substantial changes to the concept plan, within 180 days of approval, submit revised plans to the City that reflect the changes required herein by the conditions of zoning. Said plan shall be subject to the review and approval of the City Council.
2. Development shall be a unified mixed-use project containing up to 233 residential units and a minimum of 10,000 square feet of commercial space at street level and directly facing Buford Highway. The commercial space shall be built to commercial construction standards and shall be allowed those uses found in the Old Town Commercial District, live/work units and residential uses up to a

maximum of 10 units. Uses in the remainder of the buildings shall be limited to those found in the RM-8 Zoning District.

3. Residential development shall be subject to the following development standards:
  - a. Up to 4% of the residential units may contain 3 bedrooms.
  - b. Up to 41% of the residential units may contain 2 bedrooms.
  - c. All remaining units shall be one bedroom or studio units.
  - d. The average size of all the units must fall between 900 and 1,000 square feet.
  - e. All units shall be separately metered to allow for condominium conversion.
  - f. All units shall have a minimum 9 foot interior ceiling heights, 42” cabinet heights, premium countertop surfaces and premium appliances.
  - g. First class tenant amenities such as a swimming pool, a workout center, an electric car charging station shall be provided.
  - h. In addition to the standards listed above, development shall be subject to all applicable life safety and building codes.
  - i. Residential buildings shall have controlled access.
  - j. Parking: ~~Provide 1 parking space per bedroom for residential units (up to 2 spaces).~~ **Provide 1.5 parking spaces per residential unit.**
4. Commercial development shall be subject to the following development standards:
  - a. Primarily glass storefronts.
  - b. Minimum 20 feet interior ceiling heights.
  - c. Design shall allow for construction of restaurant uses in a portion of the project via the provision of adequate base infrastructure.
  - d. Parking: Provide 4 spaces per 1,000 square feet of commercial space.
5. The development of the site, including design and construction, shall be coordinated with the construction of Buford Highway, with an emphasis on ensuring that the “sidewalk area” is consistent with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. Materials, street furniture, street trees, lighting, etc. shall be consistent with the City’s plans for Buford Highway and are subject to the approval of the Planning and Inspections Department.
6. Outdoor dumpsters shall be contained in an enclosure constructed of a material consistent with the primary building material for the building.
7. Prior to issuance of a development permit a comprehensive signage plan shall be submitted for review and approval by the City.
8. If not specifically addressed in the Downtown Suwanee Master Plan, the City’s current zoning, sign, development building code and other regulations shall apply and remain in full force and effect. Nothing herein shall grant deviations to



- building, fire or other life-safety codes or regulations except as normally allowed by said codes.
9. The construction types for the site shall meet or exceed the construction types of the existing mixed-use buildings in Town Center. Specifically, commercial construction shall be Type 1 and the residential portions shall be Type 5A.
  10. Surface parking other than on-street parking shall be located behind or within buildings. Landscaping for any off-street parking areas shall be subject to the approval of the Planning and Inspections Department.
  11. All ground floor residential along Buford Highway shall have an exterior entrance accessible via a landing, patio, stoop or step connected to the public sidewalk as much as practical. Areas between individual patios, landings, stoops, or steps shall be landscaped. Building A and B shall provide one main entrance with direct access onto Buford Highway. Final design of the area between the front of the building and the edge of curb along Buford Highway shall be subject to the approval of the Planning Director.
  12. The façade of each building shall be broken up horizontally with vertical elements or a change in plane, a change in material or color, and/or a change in parapet height.
  13. Prior to issuance of a development permit, provide a plan book to the Planning Department for review. The plan book is subject to the approval of the Planning Director and shall include the following:
    - a. A Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan – The plan shall include a minimum 10-foot wide hard surface trail pedestrian facility throughout the project connecting all of the buildings to Buford Highway, King Street, and pedestrian facilities in the adjacent Solis project.
    - b. Architecture shall be of a first-class manner consistent with downtown styles, materials and features. Architectural quality shall be similar to that of the adjacent Solis project, but also distinctive from the Solis project. Final architecture shall be reviewed and approved by the City of Suwanee Planning and Inspections Director.
  14. Should traffic signalization be determined to be needed, signals shall be mast-arm style signals subject to the review and approval of Georgia Department of Transportation. Any signals installed to serve development of the property shall be installed at the expense of the developer.
  15. All utilities shall be located underground.
  16. Provide bicycle racks with a minimum of 5 spaces near the entrance of each multi-family building.

17. Landscaping shall be approved by the City of Suwanee Planning and Inspections Director. Development does not need to meet tree density or landscape strip requirements.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Anthony Manners moved to adjourn at 7:24 p.m.