

**MINUTES**  
**CITY OF SUWANEE, GEORGIA**  
**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**  
**December 1, 2020**

**PLANNING AND ZONING MEMBERS:** Present: Michelle Budd, Glenn Weyant, Brad Cox, and Alan Dandar. Staff members present: Josh Campbell, Alyssa Durden, and MaryAnn Jackson. Absent: Muthu C. Narayanan.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Michelle Budd called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

*Glenn Weyant moved to adopt the agenda as presented, second by Brad Cox. Motion carried 4 - 0.*

**ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES: November 3, 2020**

*Glenn Weyant moved to approve the November 3, 2020 minutes, second by Brad Cox. Motion carried 4-0.*

**OLD BUSINESS**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**RZ-2020-004**– Owner: John T. Barrett. Applicant: One Street Development, LLC. The applicant requests a rezoning from M-1 (Light Industry District) to RM-8 (Residential Multi-Family Duplex District) to allow for an age-restricted residential community. The site is located in Land Lots 237 and 251 of the 7<sup>th</sup> District at 813 Eva Kennedy Road and contains approximately 12.6 acres.

*Josh Campbell presented the staff report as follows:* The applicant requests a rezoning from M-1 (Light Industrial District) to RM-8 (Residential Multi-Family Duplex District) to allow for an age-restricted residential community. The subject property is approximately 12.6 acres located at 813 Eva Kennedy Road. The property has road frontage on both Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and Eva Kennedy Road.

The applicant proposes to develop an age-restricted active adult community that would be commonly owned and maintained by a leasing company. The development would include a total of 98 units made up of a mix of 5 different product types: 4 “Type A” +/- 1,200 square foot single family detached cottages; 14 “Type B” +/- 1,350 square foot single family detached homes; 4 “Type C” +/- 1,550 square foot single family detached homes; 6 “Type D” +/-1,150-1,700 square foot single family detached homes; 16 “Type D” single family attached homes (+/-1,150-1,700 square feet); and 27 “Type E” stacked duplexes (+/-1,850 square foot two bedroom units over +/-1,100 square foot one bedroom units). The mix would include 27 one-bedroom units, 49 two-bedroom units, and 22 three-bedroom units.

The subject property has environmental challenges due to the wetland and the stream on the property. The stream is currently piped. The applicant proposes to use the water that is currently being piped to supply stormwater for a wet pond that would be created in the center of the property in the wetland area. The pond would serve as a focal point and amenity for the development including a clubhouse overlooking the pond and a walking trail around it.

The clubhouse would include the management office and a fitness center, serving kitchen for resident use (no meals would be provided), and a community room. Other proposed amenities or exterior gathering areas include a dog park/wash area, an outdoor grilling area, and a “social lawn” with fire pit overlooking the central pond.

The majority of homes front green open spaces with pedestrian pathways that connect to the larger sidewalk network within the development that connects to the walking trail around the central pond as well as the surrounding streets, Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and Eva Kennedy Road. Most homes are served by rear alleys to access parking behind the units.

One main road provides access to the development from Eva Kennedy Road. This road curves through the development and also connects to a gated exit-only access point that would provide residents direct access onto Peachtree Industrial Boulevard. The east side of this road would be lined with front loaded duplexes.

No new curb cut is proposed off of Peachtree Industrial Boulevard. The applicant proposes a gated exit at the northwest corner of the subject property. This exit would utilize an existing curb cut on the adjacent property to provide exit-only access to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard. This would allow residents to exit directly onto Peachtree Industrial Boulevard from the development. The gate would prevent residents or cut-through traffic from entering from Peachtree Industrial Boulevard. Most of the road frontage along Peachtree Industrial Boulevard drops steeply over 50 feet below the grade of the road. The subject property slopes steeply away from Peachtree Industrial Boulevard towards Eva Kennedy Road, so most of the development would not be easily visible or accessible from Peachtree Industrial Boulevard. The area between the right-of-way and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard would remain wooded and if disturbed would be replanted.

The proposed development would have a total of 324 parking spaces dispersed throughout the site in individual garages (125 spaces), driveways (121 spaces), and on-street spaces (78). With the exception of the 4 cottages clustered around an open space in the southeast corner of the site, all units would have a minimum of two spaces either in attached garages or dedicated driveways for the unit. 90 degree parking adjacent to the open space would be provided for the cottages. An additional 70 on-street parking spaces would be provided for overflow parking and guests including 12 parallel parking spaces along Eva Kennedy Road.

The subject property is zoned M-1 (Light Industry District) and is surrounded by residential and commercial uses. The property is bound by Eva Kennedy Road to the south and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard to the north. Adjacent property to the west is zoned C-2 (General Commercial District) and contains automotive repair uses. Adjacent property to the east zoned C-2 (General Commercial District) contains a variety of commercial uses including a daycare, offices, a music school and faith-based facilities. Directly across Eva Kennedy Road is the Brushy Creek neighborhood, which is zoned R-75 (Single Family Residence District), and two residential parcels zoned R-100 and R-75 that are largely encumbered by wetlands and power lines. One parcel has a single family detached house and the other is wooded and largely consumed by a Georgia Power easement. The Forest Plantation and Stoneridge single family neighborhoods, which are zoned R-85, are located across Peachtree Industrial Boulevard from the subject property.

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan states that future development in the Peachtree Industrial Corridor Character Area, which the subject property is in, should “have diverse housing options as appropriate to the adjacent context” (2040 Comprehensive Plan, p. 13). Since the property slopes steeply away from Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, the context of the proposed development is the single family homes along Eva Kennedy Road. Most units in the proposed project would be complimentary to nearby single family homes. Although the development would be multi-family residential, the form of the units in the development would be detached single family houses and two-unit residences designed to look like detached single family homes particularly along the Eva Kennedy Road frontage. The ten structures that would face Eva Kennedy Road would consist of six 1.5 story single family detached cottages (types B and C), and four 2 story two-unit residences (type E). These proposed two units are vertically stacked with a two-bedroom unit above a one-bedroom unit with individual entrances off side porches. The design of the 16 side-by-side two-unit residences (type D) along the west side of the development are not compatible with the surrounding single family homes. However, these are located deeper within the development and would not be visible from Eva Kennedy Road.

The 2040 Plan prescribes that “new development and redevelopment should design smaller, more dispersed parking; landscaped pedestrian walkways with intermittent plazas and pocket parks; a mix of uses or housing types, and buildings with quality materials and architectural detailing” (2040 Comprehensive Plan, p. 13). The proposed development eliminates the need for any large parking lots by spreading it throughout the development in garages and driveways similar to a single family neighborhood and creates a network of sidewalks and open spaces. The mix of multiple housing types also satisfies this vision, but the architecture of the side-by-side two-unit residences should be designed to more closely resemble a single family home to better fit in with the context of the site.

Other than the side-by-side two-unit residences, most of the proposed architecture is compatible with nearby single family homes along Eva Kennedy Road. The proposed materials are siding and brick, and the scale is similar to the mix of 1 story ranch style homes and 1.5-2 story traditional style homes found along Eva Kennedy Road and elsewhere in Old Town. If approved, the details of the final architecture should be

subject to review and approval of the City of Suwanee Planning and Inspections Department during the permitting process to insure the development is built to high standards.

The 2040 Future Land Use Plan calls for a Mixed-Use Village on the subject property. Mixed-Use Villages are defined as “residential developments that include a variety of medium density housing types, both single-family and/or multifamily, and/or limited small-scale nonresidential uses such as a church, corner market or other neighborhood-oriented service uses” (2040 Comprehensive Plan, p. 26). The proposed age-restricted development meets the criteria of a Mixed-Use Village.

Medium density is defined as approximately 7 units per acre. The proposed development includes 98 units on the approximately 12.6 acre property, which at 7.72 units per acre would be less than the 8 units per acre allowed by the requested RM-8 zoning but slightly more than the 7 units per acre recommended by the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

The proposed mix of single family detached homes and attached homes in an age-restricted rental community would increase housing options in Suwanee for independent seniors. The number one housing issue identified in the public outreach efforts for the 2040 Comprehensive Plan was the need for housing suitable for empty nesters and seniors as they downsize from larger lot single family to smaller homes” (2040 Comprehensive Plan, p. 96). Suwanee does not currently have any age-restricted communities aside from senior living centers. The proposed development would provide an option for those that want to downsize and eliminate maintenance concerns but remain in a single family neighborhood setting.

Public input also voiced that high end housing with neighborhood character, smaller footprint and master on main, such as flats and cottage style housing are desirable” (2040 Comprehensive Plan, p. 96). The proposed development would create this type of housing.

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan defines a policy for the creation of new neighborhoods to ensure they offer a similar quality of life and quality of design that Suwanee’s established neighborhoods do. The policy states that “new neighborhoods should be well designed with quality architecture, have unique identities, provide inviting public spaces, and connect to surrounding properties and roads. (2040 Comprehensive Plan, p. 33). The proposed development would have a unique identity with the pond and amenity area creating a sense of place. The architecture could also contribute to that character, but the proposed architecture needs to be refined to meet this standard. Some of the “type D” units do not meet this expectation of quality. If approved, this would need to be addressed prior to issuance of a development permit.

The proposed residential development is appropriate for this location and consistent with the land use recommendation in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Age-restricted, single family detached and attached homes as proposed would be compatible and

complementary to the surrounding area and increase housing choice for seniors. As such, the Planning Department recommends approval with conditions of RZ-2020-004.

The applicant did point out an inconsistency between condition number 5 and number 14. If the Planning Commission chooses to approve the request, please reference the conditions dated December 1, 2020 that address the inconsistency. Also, the applicant had originally intended to have a fitness center in the club house but has now decided to has pickle ball courts. Conditions 9 and 10 will need to be modified to include the pickle ball courts.

Discussion ensued between Josh Campbell and the Planning Commission regarding pickle ball courts and housing types.

Michelle Budd called upon the applicant.

Kathryn Zickert, Smith Gambrell & Russell, 1230 Peachtree Street NE, Atlanta, GA. Ms. Zickert is representing the applicant.

Ms. Zickert stated that the development will be restricted to residents aged 55 and older. Amenities will include a club house, pickle ball courts, dog park, wash area, and outdoor grilling space. There will also be extensive walking trails. The main access will be located on Eva Kennedy Road. There will be an exit onto Peachtree Industrial Boulevard for residents only.

Glenn Weyant asked about the rental rate and the plan for the clubhouse. Ms. Zickert indicated that the rental rate would range between \$2000 and \$2800. The clubhouse will serve as a community gathering space, which can be used for holiday parties and social functions.

Michelle Budd called for opposition.

Jean Connelly, 792 Eva Kennedy Road, Suwanee, GA. Ms. Connelly explained that she lives across the street from the proposed development and will be the main person impacted. Ms. Connelly is concerned about the water runoff, increased noise, traffic, light and on-street parking spaces on Eva Kennedy Road. She would like increased plant screening. Ms. Connelly requested that the water run off be addressed as it is her main concern.

Ms. Zickert stated that the parking spaces were imposed by staff. The developer plans to address the water runoff issue.

Brad Cox asked Josh Campbell about the onstreet parking spaces. Josh Campbell explained that the parking spaces were recommended for traffic calming and guest parking.

Glenn Weyant asked where the onstreet parking will be located. Josh Campbell presented the exhibit which showed the onstreet parking. Discussion ensued amongst the Planning Commission regarding onstreet parking.

**Glenn Weyant moved to approve RZ-2020-004 with the amended December 1, 2020 staff conditions, Brad second. Motion carried 4-0 (deletions = ~~striketrough~~, additions = bold).**

1. Develop in accordance with the concept plan (dated September 18, 2020) 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, parking 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. Use shall be limited to a maximum of 98 age-restricted housing units. Units shall be limited to single family attached and detached homes and other traditional ancillary residential uses. A minimum of 28 units shall be single family detached units. A maximum of two units may be attached in any one building.
3. Minimum unit size shall be 1,100 square feet.
4. Developer shall create a wet pond as the focal point of the project as depicted in the concept plan and renderings in Exhibit B and C. The pond shall include a walking trail around the pond with multiple connections to the community pedestrian network. At least two viewing platforms/overlook areas shall be designed along the pond. Landscaping materials around the pond including hardscape, grasses, shrubs, trees, and any fencing or walls shall be included on the landscape plan and subject to the approval of the Planning and Inspections Department prior to issuance of a development permit. Any fencing or walls around the pond shall be decorative and constructed of high quality materials.
5. All proposed new streets shall be private including the access easement through the adjacent property. ~~With the exception of the entry street/drive, all proposed new streets shall have a minimum of a 5 foot wide sidewalk on at least one side of the street/drive connecting all residential units to Eva Kennedy Road and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard via a connected pedestrian network. Trees shall be planted on 40 foot centers within a 5 foot wide minimum planting strip located between the curb and the sidewalk. Trees shall have a minimum caliper of 3 inches. A root barrier shall be planted with all trees adjacent to a sidewalk.~~ Final design of the roads and alleys shall be approved by the City Engineer.

6. ~~On street parallel parking shall be provided consistent with the concept plan. Said on street parking shall be delineated by bulb outs.~~
7. Provide landscaping to screen all rear-loaded driveways from view of public or private streets. Plants used for this shall be anticipated to grow to a minimum of 4 to 6 feet in height. Landscaping shall be approved by the City of Suwanee Planning and Inspections Director.
8. Architecture shall be consistent with the renderings identified as Exhibit B. Architecture for “type D” units should be modified as noted by the Planning and Inspections Department. Final architecture for all units shall be subject to the approval of the Planning Department.
9. In addition to residential dwellings, development shall include a clubhouse with a ~~fitness center~~, serving kitchen and community room. The final architecture of the clubhouse shall be subject to the approval of the Planning Department.
10. Site amenities shall include a dog park/wash area, outdoor grilling area, and a fire pit overlooking the central pond, **and pickle ball court.**
11. The design of any open space on the property shall be reviewed by the Planning and Inspections Director. No development permit shall be issued until the design of the open space and pedestrian network is approved. The final landscape plan shall be approved by the City of Suwanee Planning and Inspections Director.
12. A maximum of 11 units may be front-loaded and are only permitted in the area identified on the concept plan.
13. Sidewalks shall be a minimum of 5-feet-wide and shall connect every unit with the exception of front-loaded units to open spaces, amenity areas, Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and Eva Kennedy Road.
14. Overstory street trees (selected from the list of approved street trees) shall be provided on 40-foot centers within a minimum 5-foot wide planting strip ~~located adjacent to the sidewalk~~ along both sides of all streets within the neighborhood **excluding alleys.** ~~Except where on street parallel parking is provided, Said planting strip shall be located between~~ **adjacent to the curb and or the sidewalk where a sidewalk is provided.** Trees shall be a minimum 3-inch caliper. A root barrier shall be planted with all trees adjacent to a sidewalk.
15. Landscaping along Eva Kennedy Road and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard shall be substantially similar to that shown on the approved concept plan.

16. The material of the walls along the pond, Eva Kennedy Road, and any other visible walls shall be constructed of high quality materials subject to the approval of the Planning and Inspections Department.
17. Provide a minimum 5-foot-wide sidewalk along the road frontage of Eva Kennedy Road. Between the sidewalk and Eva Kennedy Road provide a minimum 5-foot-wide landscape strip. If possible, plant street trees along the Eva Kennedy road frontage between the sidewalk and asphalt. Street trees should be planted on 40 feet centers and have a minimum caliper of 3 inches at the time of planting. Certification of installation of root barriers should be provided by the developer at the time of planting.
18. Prior to the issuance of a development permit, architecture for all buildings shall be subject to the review and approval of the City of Suwanee Planning and Inspections Department. Excluding windows and railings, materials shall be limited to brick, wood, and fiber cement siding or trim. Wood or fiber cement materials may be used as trim on brick elevations. Windows on front elevations and elevations facing a street (excluding alleys) shall be simulated divided lite windows.
19. All new utilities shall be located underground.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Glenn Weyant moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 PM.