

**MINUTES**  
**CITY OF SUWANEE, GEORGIA**  
**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**  
**July 11, 2017**

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

**CALL TO ORDER**

Anthony Manners called the meeting to order at 6:31pm

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

*Michelle Budd moved to approve the agenda as presented, second by Glenn Weyant. Motion carried 3-0.*

**ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES: May 2, 2017**

*Glenn Weyant moved to approve the May 2, 2017 minutes, second by Michelle Budd. Motion carried 3-0.*

**OLD BUSINESS**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**RZ-2017-004** – Owner: Kuang Hu Chien. Applicant: HomeSouth Communities. The applicant requests a rezoning from C-2 (General Commercial District) to PMUD (Planned Mixed-Use Development) to allow for townhomes. The site is located in Land Lot 251 of the 7<sup>th</sup> District at the northwest corner of the intersection of Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and Village Crest Drive and contains approximately 7.3 acres.

**RZ-2017-005** – Owner: Kuang Hu Chien. Applicant: HomeSouth Communities. The applicant requests a rezoning from C-2 (General Commercial District) to PMUD (Planned Mixed-Use Development) to allow for townhomes. The site is located in Land Lot 251 of the 7<sup>th</sup> District at the northeast corner of the intersection of Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and Village Crest Drive and contains approximately 7.6 acres.

Alyssa Durden presented the staff report as follows: The applicant requests a rezoning from C-2 (General Commercial) to PMUD (Planned Mixed Use Development District) to allow for development of a 146 lot townhouse neighborhood. The subject property is made up of 2 separate parcels containing a total of approximately 15 acres that flank Village Crest Drive, which connects Peachtree Industrial Boulevard (PIB) to the southern entrance of the Village Grove neighborhood. The properties front PIB and are currently undeveloped and wooded.

The applicant proposes to construct a total of 146 attached single family attached units (townhomes). The project would have an overall density of approximately 9 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 22 feet wide and 1,800 square feet.

The proposed development would be accessed by two new streets running east/west across Village Crest Drive, an existing public road running between PIB and the Village Grove mixed-use development. The existing road would be lined with rear loaded townhomes with covered front stoops on the front and 2 car garages accessed by alleys from the rear. A 5 foot wide sidewalk and on-street parallel parking would be constructed between the new townhomes and the two existing travel lanes. The sidewalk would continue all the way to PIB to the south and Village Grove to the north. The townhomes near the edge of the property would be two-story, front loaded units with driveways and garages facing the street. All units are proposed to have brick on the front elevations.

In addition to providing a two car garage for each unit, the proposed development would include approximately 30 parallel on-street parking spaces along Village Crest Drive and 32 additional 90 degree spaces for a total of approximately 62 parking spaces within the development.

The applicant proposes a large open space at the entrance to the neighborhood off of PIB. A monument sign similar to the sign at the main entrance to Village Grove off of Suwanee Dam Road is proposed within this open space. Additionally, a series of small pocket parks would be located throughout the neighborhood. The proposed site plan also indicates 2 potential storm water facilities located along the western property line for RZ-2017-004.

The subject property is heavily wooded. The parcels slope downhill from Village Grove down to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard. The property does not appear to contain any streams or wetlands that may inhibit development of the site. It would appear that the property could contain the proposed development.

The two subject parcels front Peachtree Industrial Boulevard to the south and are divided by an existing public road, Village Crest Drive, which leads to the southern entrance of the Village Grove planned mixed-use development, to the north of the property. RZ-2017-004 is located to the west of Village Crest Drive and RZ-2017-005 is located to the east of Village Crest Drive. The Stoneridge single family neighborhood, zoned R-85, is located to the west of the subject property for RZ-2017-004. The property to the east of RZ-2017-005 is zoned M-1 and is undeveloped and wooded. Further east is an existing commercial node that sits at the corner of PIB and Suwanee Dam Road. To the north of the subject property is a PMUD zoned for single family attached and detached residences located within the Village Grove neighborhood. Across PIB, to the south, there is existing commercial including a strip retail center, an auto repair shop, and office. These properties are zoned C-2, M-1, and C-2A.

The Future Land Use Plan envisioned a mixed-use center for the subject property. Mixed-use center allows for a mixture of commercial/office and more intensive residential uses. The proposed use of the property for attached residential units is consistent with this designation as it offers a transition from the more intensive Peachtree Industrial Boulevard to the Village Grove neighborhood. The subject property is in the PIB Suwanee Junction Character Area. The vision for this character area is “relatively intensive community-supportive retail” (2030 Comprehensive Plan p. 86). The Comprehensive Plan further states that “the corridor should also diversify to some degree in the future with additional office and residential uses, with residential development concentrated on parcels behind those with PIB frontage in the manner of Village Grove.” The PIB/Suwanee Dam Road intersection “should incorporate intensified retail on the PIB frontage parcels and TND neighborhoods like Village Grove on adjacent land.” (2030 Comprehensive Plan p. 86-87).

The proposed townhomes are located at the edge of the Village Grove neighborhood. Townhomes would be an appropriate use for the larger PMUD as a whole, which already has office, retail, and residential uses. Townhomes would 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 and offices. The 2030 Comprehensive Plan calls for a mixed-use center at this location, which is defined as “primarily commercial development that may include a variety of retail, commercial, and office uses as well as residences” (2030 Comprehensive Plan, p. 20). The plan states that these mixed-use centers may not necessarily be made up of mixed-use buildings but should be developments that are defined as mixed-use when viewed as a whole. The 2030 Comprehensive Plan illustrated a potential mixed-use development on the subject site. The illustration showed 3 story mixed-use buildings closer PIB with 2 story office buildings behind adjacent to the Village Grove PMUD. While the proposed development is reflective of this illustration, it is consistent with the mixed-use center designation when looked at in the context of the area, including the Village Grove neighborhood and the nearby commercial uses. Townhomes can contribute to the larger mixed-use node including Village Grove and the commercial node at the PIB/Suwanee Dam intersection.

The proposed project incorporates many of the design principles prescribed for the character area. The 2030 Comprehensive Plan states that new projects “should seek to have smaller, more dispersed parking; landscaped pedestrian walkways with intermittent plazas and pocket parks; areas of multilevel mixed-use; and buildings with quality materials and architectural detailing... and “every attempt should be made to promote parcel interconnectivity” (2030 Comprehensive Plan, p. 88).

The property is able to support the proposed development, however steep topography makes it difficult to provide alleys for rear loaded townhomes on all areas of the site, which are preferred. The proposed development includes 73 rear loaded townhomes and 73 front loaded townhomes. The topography also makes retaining walls necessary throughout the site. Where publicly visible, these walls should be constructed or faced with high quality materials.

In conclusion, the requested rezoning is appropriate for this location. The addition of 146 townhome units is complementary to the adjacent Village Grove neighborhood and offers a less intensive transition from Peachtree Industrial Boulevard than the current commercial zoning designation. Collectively the area making up the southwest quadrant of the intersection of PIB and Suwanee Dam Road could function well as a mixed use center with the addition of townhomes on the subject parcels. Townhomes are a good transitional use between existing single family in adjacent neighborhoods and the more intense commercial located at intersection. While the 2030 Comprehensive Plan projected a more intense use of the subject property including 2-3 story, vertical mixed-use with office over retail, the proposed project does not compromise the goal of the Comprehensive Plan to create a mixed-use center. Townhomes are also part of the vision for this mixed-use center node. As such, the Planning Department recommends approval with conditions of both RZ-2017-004 and RZ-2017-005.

Anthony Manners called upon the applicant.

Mitch Peevy, Mill Creek Consulting, 4480 Commerce Drive, Buford, GA. Mr. Peevy stated that he is requesting townhomes for this property. He has been working very hard with staff and has revised the current plan. Mr. Peevy reviewed the conditions with the Planning Commission. A copy of the revised site plan, dated July 11, 2017, was distributed to Planning Commission members.

The Planning Commission asked question of the applicant to clarify elements of the plan.

Anthony Manners called for those in support.

Joel Briggs, Elwyk Court. Mr. Briggs stated that he is not opposed to the rezoning but is concerned with the increase in kids to the local schools. Mr. Briggs also indicated that there are not enough parks for the children in the area.

Alyssa Durden explained that Gwinnett County Schools handles capacity issues with the schools. It is the school system's job to serve our population. It is the City's job to plan for the community.

Anthony Manners called for opposition.

Kelly Vanscoy, 725 Amberton Close, Suwanee, GA. Ms. Vanscoy stated that she is in opposition to the current plan. She is concerned with traffic. Ms. Vanscoy stated that there are plenty of new apartments and townhomes. The City of Suwanee does not need more townhomes. Ms. Vanscoy asks that the rezoning be tabled until more people in opposition are aware of the rezoning request.

Brad Alexander, 3420 Smithtown Road, Suwanee, GA. Mr. Alexander stated that he was a part of the 2020 Steering Committee and 2030 Comprehensive Plan. There were a lot

of people involved with the 2030 Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Alexander asked that the City of Suwanee stick to the Comprehensive Plan which calls for mixed-use/office.

Becky Jubon, 4885 Backbay Street, Suwanee, GA. Ms. Jubon stated that she is very concerned with on-street parking. Ms. Jubon indicated that there is a huge problem with on-street parking in Village Grove subdivision currently. Parking spaces should be deeper so parked cars do not interfere with traffic. She is also concerned about the Homeowners Association.

Harry Radcliffe, 800 Village Manor, Suwanee, GA. Mr. Radcliffe indicated that his concern is for the exterior maintenance of the townhomes and the potential for rentals. Mr. Radcliffe explained that the townhomes will need to comply with Article 44 of the Condo Act. Also, Mr. Radcliff stated that traffic will be an issue on Peachtree Industrial Boulevard if the rezoning is approved.

Anthony Manners explained to Mr. Radcliffe that the Homeowners Association will handle the exterior of the condos.

Larry Pettiford, 4374 Grove Field Court, Suwanee, GA. Mr. Pettiford stated that traffic will be an issue if the rezoning is approved. Also, approval of the rezoning will cause an over supply of townhomes in the City limits. Mr. Pettiford suggested that cluster homes may be better.

Nancy Adkins, 901 Cotton Mill Place, Suwanee, GA. Ms. Adkins asked why the new subdivision will not have a pool and tennis courts. Ms. Adkins also asked why the second roundabout is going to be removed from the plan.

Rosemary Pizza, 616 Village Manor Place, Suwanee, GA. Ms. Pizza expressed concern for traffic. She suggested the builder construct homes for empty nesters with master on the main because she is concerned the 50+ population is not being served.

Bob Hogberg, 665 Silver Peak Parkway, Suwanee, GA. Mr. Hogberg stated that the Planning Commission should slow down the proposed request. Mr. Hogberg expressed concern with density and traffic.

Tim Wilson, 4798 Arbor Crest Place, Suwanee, GA.- Mr. Wilson expressed concern for the sharing of amenities.

Helen Chang, 897 Village Manor Place, Suwanee, GA. Ms. Chang's home will back up to the proposed townhomes. The higher density will diminish her property value and lower her quality of life. The proposed subdivision should have its own amenities.

Mitch Peevy responded to the opposition. Mr. Peevy indicated that he is planning to market the townhomes to millennials who will not be very interested in amenities such as pool and tennis. The proposed subdivision will not be a part of the Village Grove

Homeowners Association. The Homeowners Association will handle maintenance of the townhomes.

*Glenn Weyant moved to postpone RZ-2017-03 and RZ-2017-004 until the next regularly scheduled meeting, second by Michelle Budd. Motion carried 3-0.*

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**ADJOURNMENT**