



Planning Commission Meeting

January 6, 2022

Department of Community Development

ALPHARETTA CITY HALL | 2 PARK PLAZA

6:30 PM

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I. CALL TO ORDER

- Chairman Kung'u called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

- **Planning Commissioners present:**
 - Francis Kung'u (Chair)
 - William Perkins
 - Jill Reynolds
 - Todd Stratton
 - Valerie Manley (Alternate)
 - Jamie Bendall (Alternate)
- **Planning Commissioners Absent**
 - Fergal Brady (Vice Chair)
 - Dana Davis
 - Larry Attig
- **Staff present:**
 - Kathi Cook, Director of Community Development & Economic Development
 - Michael Woodman, Planning and Development Services Manager
 - Ben Kern, GIS Specialist/ Planner
 - Alexandra Callum, Planning + Zoning Coordinator

III. SWEARING-IN CEREMONY FOR LARRY ATTIG, JAMIE BENDALL, TODD STRATTON, & JILL REYNOLDS

IV. ELECTION OF THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

- ❖ Commissioner Perkins offered a motion to elect Commissioner Kung'u as Planning Commission Chairman.
 - Commissioner Manley seconded the motion.
 - The motion was approved unanimously (6-0).
- ❖ Commissioner Bendall offered a motion to elect Commissioner Brady as Planning Commission Vice-Chair.
 - Commissioner Perkins seconded the motion.
 - The motion was approved unanimously (6-0).

V. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

- ❖ Commissioner Perkins offered a motion to approve the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from November 4, 2021.
 - Commissioner Manley seconded the motion.
 - The motion was approved 4-0-2, with Board Members Stratton and Reynolds recusing themselves because they were not at the January 6, 2022 meeting.

VI. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

VII. ITEMS FROM STAFF

VIII. PUBLIC HEARING

A. CU-21-15 Reserve 116 Event Venue / 4150 Old Milton Parkway

- Planning + Development Services Manager Michael Woodman came forward to present this item.
 - The applicant, Reserve 116 Event Venue, is requesting a conditional use to operate a 'Special Event Facility' in a 1,960 square foot suite within The Shops at Old Milton center. A maximum capacity of up to 100 people is requested. The subject property is located at 4150 Old Milton Parkway, Suite 116 near the northeast corner of Old Milton Parkway and Park Woods Circle.
 - The property is zoned CUP (Community Unit Plan) and is subject to the Park Bridge Master Plan Pods B & C, which allows 'Special Event Facility' with approval of a conditional use. Surrounding properties are zoned CUP, except the property across Old Milton Parkway to the south is zoned O-P (Office-Professional). Tava Indian Cuisine and Kalos Financial are located to the west, office condominiums to the north, Manhattan NY Deli & Bagels and Alara Park Bridge Apartments to the east and The Swan Building to the south.
 - The CZIM was held on December 8, 2021. There were no public comments. The report submitted by the applicant states that property owners within 500' were contacted regarding the applicant's intent. The report states that no comments were received.
 - Staff reviewed the applicant's proposal in consideration of the review criteria for a conditional use. The proposal should not have significant impacts on surrounding properties, which are mostly developed with non-residential uses. In addition, there is sufficient parking available in the center and the use should improve synergy with other businesses operating in the center and nearby. If approved, a condition is recommended requiring that the business remediate any parking problems identified by the City and to have valet parking available for events over 60 people.
 - Staff is recommending approval of Reserve 116 Event Venue/4150 Old Milton Parkway, subject to the following conditions:
 - a. 'Special Event Facility' shall be added as a conditional use at 4150 Old Milton Parkway, Suite 116 and limited to no more than 1,960 square feet.
 - b. Conditional use approval shall be limited to Reserve 116 Event Venue; no additional 'Special Event Facility' use or subleasing shall be permitted within the approved space.
 - c. Special event facility shall be limited to no more than 100 people, with final maximum occupancy subject to Fire Marshall approval.
 - d. Hours of operation shall be limited to Monday – Thursday 6:00 AM – 12:00 AM, Friday 6:00 AM – 1:00 AM, Saturday 6:00 AM – 1:00 AM and Sunday 6:00 AM – 12:00 AM.
 - e. Valet parking shall be provided for events hosting 60 or more people. Valet operation shall not overflow onto Old Milton Parkway. If valet operation is deemed deficient by the City Transportation Planner, operator shall work with Staff to develop an alternative service plan.
 - f. If a parking problem is identified by the City, Reserve 116 Event Venue shall be required to correct the problem by reducing the capacity of events or providing an off-site parking agreement for parking within 500' of the facility, as approved by Staff. Signage indicating 'No Parking' in adjacent parking lots shall be posted in a conspicuous place at the event facility.
- The applicant, Lele Wright, came forward to speak on behalf of this application

- Most events we plan will be after hours- the bigger crowds will be at night.
- The goal is photography usage and content creation.
- Ms. Wright agrees with all staff recommendations.
- People want smaller, intimate settings.
- The Planning Commission discussed the following:
 - Were there any concerns about establishing maximum noise level? It has not been brought up, but we did not think there would be any issue. We did not receive any feedback from tenants.
 - Does the facility only hold 100 people? The request is for 100 people max- this is at the request of the applicant. The fire marshal felt that based on the size of the space, the original request of 150 people would not be appropriate.
 - Was there any discussion on valet being based on the timing? The traffic engineer did review this, and he did not believe valet was possible even at max capacity, but the applicant offered it.
 - Is this the first place you're doing this business? The applicant has been doing this business for 15 years, but this will be the first event venue that she has.
 - Do we have this type of business anywhere in the city? We don't have many- there are a few locations.
 - If Covid still continues to be an issue, does your model have room in it for social distancing? The applicant stated she has so many ideas just in case they can't have large scale events- content creation, photography.
 - Commissioner Bendall is requesting the language be changed in reference to the valet parking.
 - Senior Planner Michael- What you may want to consider with condition 5- strike altogether and add to condition 6: "and/or providing valet services, as approved by Staff."

Public Comment:

- There were no public comments for this item.
 - ❖ Commissioner Bendall offered a motion to approve the item subject to the following conditions:
 1. If a parking problem is identified by the City, Reserve 116 Event Venue shall be required to:
 - a. correct the problem by reducing the capacity of events,
 - b. providing an off-site parking agreement for parking within 500' of the facility,
 - c. and/or providing valet services, as approved by Staff.
 - Commissioner Stratton seconded the motion.
 - Chairman Kung'u offered a friendly amendment to include and/or in the language.
 - Commissioner Bendall agreed.
 - The motion was approved unanimously (6-0).

B. PH-21-21 Atlanta Signs Unified Development Code (UDC) Text Amendment- Sign Code Change, Tenant Panels

- Planning + Development Services Manager Michael Woodman came forward to present this item.
 - The applicant, Atlanta Signs, is requesting consideration of text amendments to Unified Development Code (UDC) Section 2.6 Sign Code, to amend the maximum allowable tenant panels allowed on a

monument sign in a shopping center. The current regulation allows up to four (4) tenant panels on a monument sign in shopping centers. The applicant proposes allowing up to twelve (12) tenant panels on a monument sign.

- The applicant states that the UDC text amendments are needed to accurately convey businesses and services to the public, avoid consumer confusion in locating businesses and to not damage businesses and property owners by limiting advertising.
- Staff believes the applicant's proposed change could be a public safety issue as the overall monument sign area of 42 square feet would not change. This would lead to smaller tenant panels that are less discernable to motorists. In addition, vehicle navigation is more commonly used to locate businesses that are unfamiliar to the customer.
- Staff looked at sign code regulations in surrounding and nearby jurisdictions, as it relates to monument signs in shopping centers. Most jurisdictions do not specifically address tenant panels and do not limit tenant panels to a maximum number. However, except for the City of Milton, the other jurisdictions that were looked at allow monument signs that are greater in sign area and mostly greater in height than Alpharetta's sign regulations.

Monument Sign Regulations – Surrounding and Nearby Jurisdictions

Jurisdiction	Tenant Panels	Height	Sign Area
City of Roswell	Unlimited	Up to 12'	Up to 96 SF, 6 or more tenant panels
City of Johns Creek	Unlimited	Up to 8'	Up to 64 SF, tenant panels can be measured separately
City of Milton	Not addressed	Up to 6'	32 SF
City of Sandy Springs	Not addressed	Up to 8'	Up to 64 SF
City of Woodstock	Not addressed	Up to 12'	Up to 120 SF
City of Chamblee	Not addressed	Up to 8'	Up to 64 SF
City of Tucker	Not addressed	Up to 20'	Up to 270 SF

- The CZIM was held on December 8, 2021. There was one (1) public comment asking about the number of proposed tenant sign panels.
- The applicant, Dave West, came forward to speak on behalf of this application
 - The examples that were given don't apply- they are for major shopping centers.
 - The goal is representation for smaller businesses.
- The Planning Commission discussed the following:
 - It is acknowledged that the number of panels allowed has affected some businesses.
 - Commissioner Manley stated that she always looks up a business first. It seems that people's habits are shifting more in that direction. She has seen lots of examples done badly and refers to them as "visual noise". A marketing analysis study would possibly be beneficial to provide some answers.
 - There's a lot of moving parts here. There is more to be discussed. We should take into consideration the tenants and the merchants. It seems like there would be clutter in the city.
 - Are we considering the application intact? Can we table for review?
 - Director Kathi Cook: You have the option of tabling, but we will have to talk to Council to see if this is something they want to move forward with. It is better to move forward with the recommendation. Tabling does not help because Staff will not have any different information.
 - Could we decide how many spaces this would not apply to? Yes, the additional research would take some time.

Public Comment:

- Patti Huxford- 165 Tidwell Drive
 - Ms. Huxford stated that she has three different projects that ask for more panels. She wants to see the

outcome of this hearing. She is neither for nor against this against. She thinks the City of Alpharetta should allow for the signs to be slightly bigger to allow for more panels.

- ❖ Commissioner Manley offered a motion to deny the item.
 - Commissioner Reynolds seconded the motion.
 - The motion was approved unanimously (6-0).

C. PH-21-17 Unified Development Code (UDC) Text Amendments- Downtown Sign Code

- Director Kathi Cook came forward to present this item.
 - At the direction of the Design Review Board (DRB), Staff organized a committee to research appropriate Downtown Sign regulations. The committee consisted of sign company professionals, members of the DRB and Staff. The results of the research were presented to the DRB on April 16, 2021 and updated to reflect feedback provided at that meeting. As a result, Staff proposes the following text amendments to Unified Development Code (UDC), Section 2.6 Signs, as it relates to signage in the Downtown Overlay;
 - A. Prohibit sign cabinets;
 - B. Prohibit face illuminated signs; and
 - C. Add design regulations applicable to external illumination, monument signs, wall signs, perpendicular or hanging signs and window signs.
- The Planning Commission discussed the following:
 - Unique materials are a little broad, correct? Any materials will have to go to the Design Review Board- this won't be an interpretation from Staff.
 - This does not affect anything that is already in place.

Public Comment:

- There were no public comments for this item.
 - ❖ Commissioner Stratton offered a motion to approve the item as presented today.
 - Commissioner Perkins seconded the motion.
 - The motion was approved unanimously (6-0).

D. ADJOURNMENT

- Chairman Kung'u adjourned the meeting at 8:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexandra Callum