



Planning Commission Meeting September 1, 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 6:30 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

- **Planning Commissioners present:**

- Francis Kung'u (Chair)
- Fergal Brady (Vice-Chair)
- William Perkins
- Martine Zurinkas
- Todd Stratton
- Jill Reynolds
- Karen Richard

- **Planning Commissioners Absent**

- Jamie Bendall (Alternate)
- Valerie Manley (Alternate)

- **Staff present:**

- Kathi Cook, Director of Community Development & Economic Development
- Michael Woodman, Planning + Development Services Manager
- Alexandra Callum, Planning + Zoning Coordinator
- Nikisha Mistry, GIS Specialist

III. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

- ❖ Vice-Chair Brady offered a motion to approve the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from August 4, 2022.

- Board Member Zurinkas second the motion.
- The motion was approved unanimously (7-0).

IV. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

V. ITEMS FROM STAFF

VI. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Z-22-13 / V-22-25 / Grand Communities / 2325 Old Milton Parkway

- Manager Woodman came forward to present this item.
 - The applicant, Grand Communities, LLC, is requesting a rezoning and variances to allow for the construction of twenty-four (24) 'For-Sale' townhomes on 6.15 acres in the Downtown. The proposed density is 3.9 dwelling units per acre. A rezoning is requested from R-12 (Dwelling, 'For-Sale', Residential) and O-I (Office-Institutional) to DT-LW (Downtown Live-Work). Variances are requested to allow up to twelve (12) townhomes to be front loaded, allow encroachments into a non-perennial stream buffer and impervious setback, and modify streetscape standards. The subject property is located at 2325 Old Milton Parkway, 0 Norcross Street, and 210 Norcross Street near the southeast corner of Old Milton Parkway and Haynes Bridge Road.
 - The undeveloped property is wooded and encumbered by approximately 3.1 acres of floodplain and stream buffers.
 - The applicant requests variances to modify Downtown Overlay site regulations (building orientation and streetscape standards) and Unified Development Code (UDC) regulations pertaining to a stream buffer encroachment. The property has an unusual shape, is situated between commercial properties, and has significant topography due to the presence of multiple streams and floodplain. The applicant proposes to mitigate the stream buffer and impervious setback encroachments (approximately 0.25 acres) by setting aside an equivalent buffer and impervious setback area on the property. The set aside area for the new stream buffer and impervious setback should be outside of the 100-year floodplain.
 - The submitted site plan depicts twenty-four (24), three (3) story 'For-Sale' townhomes with access from a new project entrance off Old Milton Parkway. Approximately four (4) acres of the property will remain undisturbed, including the property along Haynes Bridge Road. Most of the townhomes have access from a new private street, with eight (8) townhomes accessed from an alley. Half of the units will be rear loaded and half will be front loaded. Rear loaded units are twenty feet (20') wide and front-loaded units are 24' wide. Townhomes along Old Milton Parkway are setback approximately fifteen feet (15') from the right-of-way. Building setbacks comply with the DT-LW development standards.
 - Five-foot (5') sidewalks are depicted along Old Milton Parkway and along the west side of the new internal private street. If approved, a minimum eight-foot (8') sidewalk should be provided along Old Milton Parkway. A twenty-foot (20') planted buffer is proposed adjacent to the medical office building to the east. A double row of evergreen trees and shrubs should be provided along the west property line adjacent to My First Academy daycare center.
 - Each townhome unit will have two (2) side-by-side parking spaces within a garage and a Code-compliant driveway accommodating two (2) additional cars. Two (2)

guest parking spaces are provided near the mail kiosk. The Downtown Code requires 60 parking spaces for the proposed subdivision (2.5 parking spaces/unit), of which 98 spaces are provided on the site plan.

- The site plan depicts 1.35 acres, or 22%, open space within the proposed development. The DT-LW district requires a minimum 10% amenity space and 10% civic space for properties over five (5) acres. Amenity space is proposed to include a two (2) pocket parks, with one (1) located at the north end of the site and one (1) at the south end of the site. A mail kiosk is located near the southern pocket park and includes two (2) parking spaces. Civic space is noted to be a creek side greenway; however, improvements such as a trail are not depicted on the site plan.
- Of the 24 specimen and trees of quality called out in the arborist report as fair condition or better, six (6) trees are proposed to be removed. Trees located in stream buffers and floodplain will be preserved, except in those areas where stream buffer encroachments have been requested. A stormwater management pond and bioretention area are depicted at the south end of the property adjacent to a pocket park.
- The submitted elevations depict three (3) story townhomes in the Tudor Eclectic style, consisting primarily of brick with stone, board and batten and siding accents. Units will range in size from approximately 2,100 to 2,600 square feet and will be two (2) to four (4) bedrooms. According to the City's Downtown Consultant, the proposed renderings generally comply with the design regulations in the Downtown Overlay.
- 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.
- City Staff received correspondence from residents with concerns over flooding, habitat destruction, stream buffer impacts, proximity of detention pond to Chelsea Walk (buffers and potential for underground), and guest parking.
- CZIM was held on August 10, 2022. There were public comments with concerns over sufficient guest parking, stream buffer encroachments and proximity of detention pond to Chelsea Walk.
- Approve Z-22-13/V-22-25 Grand Communities/2325 Old Milton Parkway, subject to the following conditions:
 1. Approximately 6.15 acres shall be zoned DT-LW and developed substantially similar to site plan prepared by PEC, dated 4/19/22, except for modifications required to comply with the conditions below. However, lot yield depicted is not guaranteed and subject to meeting all City code requirements and conditions of zoning. Any development proposed on the property fronting Haynes Bridge Road shall require site plan approval from City Council.
 2. Architecture and materials shall be developed substantially similar to the submitted renderings, labeled Exhibit A, except for modifications required to comply with the Downtown Consultant's comments and in compliance with the Alpharetta Downtown Code, subject to final approval by DRB. Townhomes shall have 4-sided architecture, materials and details. Townhome side elevation facing Old Milton Parkway shall have a porch or other significant projection to give the appearance as a front elevation, as approved by DRB.
 3. Density shall not exceed 3.9 dwelling units per acre.
 4. Courtyards may encroach into landscape strips, subject to meeting the minimum landscape material requirements, as approved by Staff.

5. Developer shall improve Old Milton Parkway streetscape with a minimum 4' planter planted with street trees (subject to Staff and GDOT approval), minimum 8' sidewalk, and decorative pedestrian lighting, with final approval by Staff. In lieu of tree grates, the soil area around street trees shall be planted with evergreen ornamental grasses, groundcovers and/or shrubs.
6. Streets, alleys and sidewalks internal to the site shall be developed as depicted on the site plan prepared by PEC, dated 4/19/22, with final approval by Staff. Decorative pedestrian lighting shall be required throughout the development. Internal streets and alleys shall be private and maintained by the HOA.
7. Minimum 10' landscape strip shall be required along both sides of internal streets, not including alleys. Landscape strips shall be exclusive of utilities and easements, except that if Fulton County requires an unencumbered easement shrubs shall replace tree requirements on one side of the street.
8. Minimum 20' landscape strip/building setback shall be provided along Old Milton Parkway. Landscape strip shall be planted with shade trees as a continuation of what has been planted or designed in the Downtown and outside of utility easements and overhead utilities, as approved by Staff.
9. A 20' planted buffer shall be provided as depicted on the site plan prepared by PEC, dated 4/19/22. A double row of evergreen and hardwood trees and shrubs shall be planted along the west property line adjacent to Units 1-4, as approved by Staff.
10. Project entrance shall include a decorative paver apron, landscaping, decorative low wall and/or fencing with columns, as approved by Staff.
11. Open space shall be developed substantially similar to the site plan prepared by PEC, dated 4/19/22, as approved by Staff. Open space shall be developed with a park-like setting with decorative landscape, hardscape and seating. Landscape shall include plant selections promoting the historic Downtown.
12. Creeping vines shall be planted to cover retaining and low walls, as approved by Staff.
13. Tree removal of specimen sized trees and trees of quality, as noted in the James Mahoney arborist report, shall be limited to trees in poor condition and tree #305, 323, 325, 1387, 1388, and 1389.
14. Fences and walls visible from the public right-of-way shall be decorative, as approved by Staff. Unfinished wood fences and decks shall not be visible from the street.
15. HVAC and similar equipment shall not be visible from the public right-of-way.
16. Garbage pickup shall be from within the development.
17. No more than 10% of the residential units shall be permitted to be rented, as recorded in the HOA's declarations and covenants.
18. To mitigate stream buffer impacts, developer shall comply with one or a combination of the following measures, as approved by Staff:
 - a. Provide 50% additional runoff reduction or water quality volume above the standard city requirements.
 - b. Provide buffer enhancement on an agreed upon area equal to at least 2 times the area of encroachment/impact. Enhancements may include removing fallen trees inside the stream bed that are impeding flow, plant eroded or sparsely vegetated areas of stream banks with live stakes, add enhanced buffer plantings where sparsely vegetated, and remove invasive vines.

- c. Obtain any necessary state and federal approvals for the stream and buffer impacts.
 - d. Or alternative mitigation measures, as approved by Staff.
- The applicants came forward to speak on behalf of this application
 - We chose the name *The Post* for the neighborhood because historically, Alpharetta is a trading post.
 - This is our midtown collection.
 - There will be an HOA for low maintenance for the homeowners.
 - The homes will have 2-4 bedrooms.
 - The left side is 0.9 acres that forms the box, and then the stream starts.
 - Chelsea Walk and the office sit above this property, which makes the water drain towards us.
 - If you took away the acre in question, you still would not be above 4.5 units per acre.
- The Planning Commission discussed the following:
 - The number of units (twenty-four) was not defined in the conditions. *We typically base it on the density, and 3.9 units per acre gets you to the number 24. It is also limited to the site plan.*
 - How is the density calculated in this case? There are two parcels separated by what looks like an easement? Is it based on the total area? *It is based on the 6.15 total acreage.*
 - Is any of the stream supposed to be piped? *None of the stream will be piped.*
 - The left side of the site plan is completely being left alone.
 - The potential Haynes Bridge Road entry concerns me because that will affect the density.
 - I am struggling with the plan. I like what I see in the current plan with the density, but if the entire acre were to go away and not be included in this, I think that would change my position.
 - Where is the civic space on the site plan?
 - I do not see details on what type of screening will be between Chelsea Walk and the pond. *There are not any because it is a code requirement for a double row of evergreen trees around a detention pond. Around the pond will be a ten-foot access easement.*
 - Are there sidewalks? *There are sidewalks along the frontage of the property.*
 - The only additional parking spaces are the two by the mailbox, and one is a handicap.
 - If a firetruck came down the street, could they turn around? *Yes, this was reviewed by the fire marshal.*

- Did you build nineteen homes for St. Jude? *Tickets were sold, and the money raised went to St. Jude.*
- What is the price point of the homes? *Between \$700 – 800,000.*
- The Letter of Intent specifically states that the four acres are intended to be in an undisturbed state. I am a little confused on the Letter of Intent versus discussions tonight.
- Can you speak on the guest parking spaces? *We felt with the urban infill that it was plenty of parking.*
- Your residents really cannot use shared parking, and I see that as a downside to your model. If there is any way to try and squeeze a few more in there, I believe it would be advantageous to the project.
- Is the applicant in agreement with all staff conditions? *Yes.*
- On condition 8, Staff is recommending a 20-foot setback along Old Milton Parkway. *There's additional space from the front of the lot, so as it is drawn now, we are at 20 feet.*
- Regarding the plot of land adjacent to Haynes Bridge Road, would the applicant be interested in dedicating it back to the city as a potential park? *That is something we would have to take back for conversations.*
- I am happy the applicant is willing to relook at parking spaces. I would feel comfortable in doubling the amount to four.
- I would suggest that the four acres remain undeveloped, based off the Letter of Intent.
- Does this limit us with future opportunities? *No, a condition can be brought back.*

Public Comment:

- Michelle Brian – 205 Nottoway Lane
 - I am overall in support of the plan.
 - The plan is well thought out, and the style of homes matches the feel of the downtown area.
 - The applicant has been very thoughtful as far as setbacks and the impact on our community.
- ❖ Commissioner Richard offered a motion to approve the item, subject to the following conditions:
 1. On condition 1, strike the last sentence and add the following sentence:
 - "The remaining four acres will continue in an undisturbed state."
 2. Add a condition 19 that reads:
 - "The minimum number of four guest parking spaces shall be provided on the site plan."
 - Commissioner Perkins seconded the motion.
 - The motion was approved unanimously (7-0).

Final Conditions:

1. Approximately 6.15 acres shall be zoned DT-LW and developed substantially similar to site plan prepared by PEC, dated 4/19/22, except for modifications required to comply with the conditions below. However, lot yield depicted is not guaranteed and subject to meeting all City code requirements and conditions of zoning. ~~Any development proposed on the property fronting Haynes Bridge Road shall require site plan approval from City Council. The remaining four acres will continue in an undisturbed state.~~
2. Architecture and materials shall be developed substantially similar to the submitted renderings, labeled Exhibit A, except for modifications required to comply with the Downtown Consultant's comments and in compliance with the Alpharetta Downtown Code, subject to final approval by DRB. Townhomes shall have 4-sided architecture, materials and details. Townhome side elevation facing Old Milton Parkway shall have a porch or other significant projection to give the appearance as a front elevation, as approved by DRB.
3. Density shall not exceed 3.9 dwelling units per acre.
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10. Project entrance shall include a decorative paver apron, landscaping, decorative low wall and/or fencing with columns, as approved by Staff.
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 - a. Provide 50% additional runoff reduction or water quality volume above the standard city requirements.
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 - c. Obtain any necessary state and federal approvals for the stream and buffer impacts.
 - d. Or alternative mitigation measures, as approved by Staff.
19. The minimum number of four guest parking spaces shall be provided on the site plan.

B. PH-22-10 / Unified Development Code Text Amendments – Banner Signs

- Director Cook came forward to present this item.
 - The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) is conducting extensive construction along Highway 9, which has impacts on Alpharetta's Main Street. Main Street businesses have had negative economic impacts due to construction equipment covering existing business signage. In response, Staff proposes that the time restrictions on single, temporary banners be waived until December 1, 2023 for businesses located on Main Street from the southern border with City of Roswell to the northern border with City of Milton. Multi-tenant properties shall only be allowed a single banner. Highway 9 improvements are a GDOT project and, therefore the City is not responsible for any damage to the banners. Banners shall be placed behind any construction easements. If banners are not maintained in good condition, removal will be required.
- The Planning Commission discussed the following:
 - Are the banners hanging on the building? *Most will be. The businesses must move their monument sign, which is why they will more than likely put banners on the building.*
 - *If the program does not work, we will go back to remove this from the code.*
 - This is restricted to just restaurants and retail. *Yes, because these are not "destination" places.*
 - *This is aimed at long term construction to help businesses.*
 - Should we include language in terms of placement of the banners? *It can be either on the building or in the ground. It just depends on what construction is happening.*
 - I think placement should be subject to approval by director.
 - Are you sure you just want to limit to restaurant and retail? It seems like it would be a hardship to someone. *The businesses I have heard from are restaurant and retail.*

- I would limit the time, not the business.
- They are required to submit a site plan of where the banner is going, so we would be able to see the location.

Public Comment:

- There were no public comments for this item.
 - ❖ Commissioner Reynolds offered a motion to approve the item, subject to the following conditions:
 - In section "Ea," remove the term "for a restaurant or retail business" and change to "commercial business.
 - Vice-Chair Brady seconded the motion.
 - Commissioner Perkins offered a friendly amendment that the general provisions under 1 a. will read:
 - "The subject roadway construction must be related to a project performed by the city, the county, and the Georgia Department of Transportation as follows:"
 - Commissioner Reynolds and Vice-Chair Brady accepted the friendly amendment.
 - The motion was approved unanimously (7-0).

VII. ADJOURNMENT

- Chairman Kung'u adjourned the meeting at 8:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexandra Callum

Alexandra Callum, Planning + Zoning Coordinator