# City of Sugar Hill Planning Staff Report RZ 16-002

DATE:

June 28, 2016

TO:

Mayor and City Council

FROM:

Planning Director VA

SUBJECT:

Change in Conditions RZ 16-002 – Bellagio Properties



#### RECOMMENDED ACTION

Recommend deleting all existing conditions to be replaced and superseded by the following (6/27/2016):

- 1. A 35' enhanced buffer shall be required between the subject property and any property zoned for residential use. The enhanced buffer must consist of at least a staggered double row of evergreen and semi-evergreen trees and shrubs native or adapted to the area. Trees shall be at least 6' tall at time of planting. Plantings shall be arranged to provide an effective visual screen of at least 20' in height at maturity. Buffer must not contain more than 30% of a single species and must be shown on a landscape plan to be approved by Planning and Development prior to receiving any permits. Within enhanced buffer, any existing tree over 12" diameter at breast height (DBH) is to be preserved (except those identified by City to be dead or dying). Prior to receiving a land disturbance permit, all hardwood trees over 12" DBH shall be identified and located on an approved tree protection plan.
- 2. Provide a six (6) foot high decorative wood privacy fence directly outside of 35' buffer (on side nearest to parking lot) to be maintained on both sides by Owner.
- 3. Shopping carts are permitted to be stored outdoors in an enclosure adjacent to the principle building. Shopping cart storage areas shall be visually screened from the public street or adjacent properties and architecturally integrated with the principal building.
- 4. (Planning Commission recommended different language see below). Stucco/E.I.F.S, tilt/pre-cast, split face block, and concrete block shall be prohibited as exterior building materials.
- 5. Monopitch roof shall be allowed as shown with the condition that the roof be tinted cream or gray.

Planning Commission tabled the application at the May 16, 2016 meeting and requested that the applicant respond to staff recommendations and resubmit.

#### PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning Commission held a scheduled public hearing on June 20, 2016.

Planning Commission recommends APPROVAL to remove all previous conditions and replace as written by staff for conditions 1-3 and condition number 5. Planning Commission recommends modifying condition number 4 to allow each façade to be 25% stucco (rather than prohibiting stucco); the suggested sentence shall read: "The maximum stucco/E.I.F.S. material allowed is to be 25% per façade." The remainder of the condition shall remain as written by staff. (4-0).

Additionally, the following language was previously included for the Planning Commission Meeting, but staff now recommends not including it: "The number of materials, type of materials allowed, façade lengths, etc. must comply with the architectural design standards in the Sugar Hill Zoning Ordinance."

**ISSUE** 

The City of Sugar Hill has received an application dated April 1, 2016 from Bellagio Properties c/o Nick Thompson requesting to change the conditions of zoning on five parcels on  $\pm$  5.15 acres. The property is currently zoned General Business District (BG). The applicant proposed to change several conditions of zoning to accommodate a 36,170 square foot grocery store. The applicant also requested two variances to allow for a monopitch roof, to change the monument sign height from 12' to 14' and to allow the building materials as shown in their application materials.

An updated application was received on June 8, 2016. The applicant withdrew the variances regarding the signage and parking; the applicant requested to allow the loading dock and dumpster along the front façade and a variance regarding building materials. The applicant has indicated that the location of the loading dock on the current plan will minimize the impact on adjacent residential properties. The applicant also requested that staff not require screening of grocery cart corral area. Additionally, the applicant has proposed that the monopitch roof be painted cream or gray and the building be sited such that the roof is not highly visible from surrounding residential areas.

#### DISCUSSION

- The applicant would like to change several conditions to accommodate a grocery store: allow outdoor storage of shopping carts, increase amount of parking, allow the dumpster and loading dock doors to be located in front of the building, and allow a 35' enhanced buffer (previously reduced to 60' and 30').
- No supporting documentation has been provided by the applicant for removing the requirement to screen the grocery cart corral area.
- The provided elevation does not comply with the architectural design standards in the following ways:
  - O More than two primary building materials have been used (from Sugar Hill Zoning Ordinance, page 6.9, "With the exception of accent/trim materials, there shall be no more than two primary building materials used.")
  - O Use of a glass curtain wall (from Sugar Hill Zoning Ordinance, page 6.9, "Mirrored glass with a reflection greater than 20% and glass curtain walls shall be prohibited.")
  - O Use of a façade segment greater than allowed. On both the east and west elevations, the total length of the façade is approximately 130'. An unbroken brick facade segment that is 85'-4" in length has been used on the west elevation, and an unbroken glass façade that is 95'-9 3/4" has been used on the east elevation (from Sugar Hill Zoning Ordinance page 6.9, "Building facades shall be visually divided into segments through articulation of the façade achieved by methods such as, but not limited to, variation in building materials, roof line, building setback, the use of additional window bays, pilasters, etc." The chart on this page shows that for 50'-150' length facades, the maximum segment length is 50')
- Staff has additional concerns regarding the quality of the building elevations presented.
  - The overall horizontality of the building elements (clerestory windows, column bays, change in materials, etc) and lack of architectural elements on the pedestrian level does not relate well to a human scale.

- Overall, the building lacks substantially in ornamentation and detail. At the pedestrian level, the façade is mostly blank with very few windows or architectural detailing to attract interest (from Sugar Hill Zoning Ordinance, page 6.9, "These guidelines shall foster architectural diversity and interest, yet achieve and maintain a consistent, durable and pleasing aesthetic/visual quality.")
- o The building does not display a clear hierarchy between service space and served (public) space. Due to the siting of the building on a corner lot, there are effectively two front facades (south and east). The south elevation (facing SR 20) includes a loading dock, service doors, and clerestory windows with a small amount of glazing located around 8-10' height). The east elevation is primarily composed of a curtain wall. (from Sugar Hill Zoning Ordinance, page 10.12, "...utility/service areas shall be screened and incorporated into the design of the building and/or hidden from public view when viewed from any public space or street level." And from Sugar Hill Zoning Ordinance, page 6.6 "Roll-up type cargo bay doors shall be limited to the side or rear of buildings located in OI, HSB, and BG zoning districts.")
- O The stucco elements on the south elevation appear to read as columns; however, they do not penetrate the Urban Gray brick to the ground and in several locations are only located on the clerestory window portion and therefore appear to read as joists. The spacing and regularity between these two elements are not regular, and the function and/or aesthetics of these architectural elements are unclear. (from Sugar Hill Zoning Ordinance, page 6.6, "Each building design shall be made up of a compatible combination of these traditional architectural elements or similar elements...prominent columns, posts, and/or pilasters..."
- O As these stucco elements and joints in brick walls do not effectively divide the building into segments, this does not appear to meet the intent or spirit of the requirement within the zoning ordinance to visually divide facades into segments.
- The location of the loading dock and dumpster do not meet the zoning ordinance requirements and face SR 20 and the front driveway entrance to the parking lot.
- GA SR 20 is a busy and well-traveled thoroughfare, and any development will need a permit from Georgia/Gwinnett DOT. Georgia/Gwinnett DOT and city approval will also be required for abandonment of Henry Bailey Road.

#### BACKGROUND

Applicant / Owner: Bellagio Properties c/o Nick Thompson

Existing Zoning: General Business District (BG)

Request(s): Change in Conditions, Multiple Variances

Purpose: 36,170 square foot grocery store

Property Size:  $\pm$  5.114 Acres

Location: Tax Parcel Id Numbers: 7-339-068, 069, & 071, & 7-320-015 & 015A

Addresses: 5769, 6001, & 5711 Cumming Highway & 5705 Old

Cumming Road

Public Notice: Letters to adjoining owners via USPS regular mail on 4/28/2016

Sign posted on property on 4/28/2016

Ad in legal section of Gwinnett Daily Post on 4/28/16 & 5/26/16

Public Comments: None received.

#### FINDINGS OF FACT

The property in question consists of five (5) parcels zoned General Business District (BG).

The subject tract is surrounded by single-family, general business, and office/institutional properties:

- To the North: zoned Low Density Single-Family District (RS-150), General Business District (BG), and Medium Density Single Family District (RS-100);
- To the South across Cumming Highway, zoned General Business District (BG),
- To the East and West: General Business District (BG).

Parcels 7-339-068, 069, & 071 were annexed into the city via AX-97-003 on November 10, 1997 and zoned as Office Institutional (OI). The parcels were then rezoned via RZ-04-007 on February 14, 2005 to General Business District (BG).

Parcels 7-320-015 & 015A were annexed and rezoned via AX-04-025 on February 14, 2005 for General Business District (BG).

## REQUEST

The applicant proposes a 36,170 square foot grocery store with the exterior building materials as shown in the attached drawings. Additionally, the applicant is requesting specific changes to the current conditions placed on the properties under RZ-04-007 and AX-04-025.

In addition to these change in conditions, the applicant is requesting one variance:

1. Approval for a mono-pitch roof, which does not meet the definition of either a flat, mansard, or pitched roof described in the zoning ordinance.

The applicant has not requested a variance for the location of the loading dock/dumpster or for the building materials, but as these items do not comply with the zoning ordinance as currently shown, a variance would be required in order to deviate from the standard requirements.

Below is a summary of the previous conditions placed on the property and the proposed conditions in the application.

## 1. Proposed Condition by Applicant:

Reduced required 75' buffer between the proposed BG, RS-100/PRD zoning tracts to a 35' enhanced buffer.

# Original Condition per AX-04-025:

Reduce required 75' buffer between the proposed BG, RS-100/PRD zoning tracts, and abutting residential properties to 25'. Provide dense landscape buffer between commercial and residential uses. Where vegetation is not providing a visual screening, provide vegetation with a material of 6' high at the time of planting with a capacity to grow to at least 15' at the time of maturity. The plans must be submitted to the Director of Planning for approval.

### and RZ-04-007:

Reduce required 75' buffer between the proposed BG, RS-100/PRD zoning tracts, and abutting residential properties to (60' total) 40' with a 20' planted opaque with interior black coated 8' high chain link security fence in the middle of the buffer, a 5' no structure, and a 22' wide driveway as it relates to the side yards at the end of Emerald Lake Path. A 20' undisturbed and 10' opaque planted rear buffer on the property line abutting properties on Emerald Falls Way with a chain link security fence and 5' no structure zone and the 22' driveway. The plans must be submitted to the Director of Planning for approval.

## 2. Proposed:

Parking will be provided at a minimum of 1 space per 250 SF of gross floor area.

Original conditions per AX-04-025 and RZ-04-007:

None.

## 3. Proposed:

Shopping carts are permitted to be stored in an enclosure adjacent to the principle building. No other outdoor storage associated with commercial use shall be stored outside of the principle building.

## Original:

No outdoor storage of any materials associated with the commercial use shall be permitted on site.

## 4. Proposed:

All trash dumpsters shall be screened by an enclosure using the same exterior building material and color scheme as the adjacent principle building. The dumpster enclosure may be located between the principle building and SR 20.

# Original:

All trash dumpsters shall be screened by an enclosure using the same exterior building material and color scheme as the adjacent principle buildings. Pickup shall be limited between the hours of 8:00 AM and 8:00 PM.

#### 5. Proposed:

Monument signs shall use the same exterior building material and color scheme as the adjacent principle building.

#### Original:

A monument "sign" design plan compatible with the commercial architectural facades is required. The intent is to reduce the number of signs, clutter of signs, and discourage different (non-complementary to each other) designs for signs at the development. Ground signs shall be built with stucco, stone, and/or brick. Submit a "Sign Plan" for the whole development showing locations, sign type/design, color schemes, etc to the Director of Planning for approval prior to obtaining building permits.

## 6. Proposed:

In off-street parking lots, landscaped islands consisting of a minimum area of 75 square feet per island shall be provided per every 15 double row parking spaces (ie 15 contiguous spaces).

#### Original:

In off-street parking lots, landscaped islands consisting of a minimum area of 75 square feet per island shall be provided per every 15 double row parking spaces. Landscape islands shall be planted with at least one tree not less than six (6) feet in height at the time of planting and shall be suitable to this region. (addressed in Buffer, Landscape, and Tree Ordinance)

## 7. Proposed:

Following uses shall be prohibited (other prohibited uses were listed by applicant but are not allowed in BG zoning district per Zoning Ordinance):

- a. Group and congregate personal care homes
- b. Lodges, fraternal, and social organizations
- c. Mobile buildings (except temporary during construction)
- d. Hotels and motels
- e. Nurseries providing lawn and garden supplies and plants
- f. Parking lots and parking garages
- g. Public buildings and land uses
- h. Research and testing facilities
- i. Video games stores exclusive (exception of up to two video games where principal business is other than video games)
- j. Utility offices
- k. Contractor's offices
- 1. Transportation terminal for passengers
- m. Convenience store
- n. No loud speaker type broadcast systems, two-way intercom devices for drivethrough businesses only
- o. No fast food restaurants

Original:

Same as proposed.

Conditions below from AX-04-025 and RZ-04-007 are not applicable to current site plan layout and so will be deleted from conditions:

- 8. The entrances between commercial parcels 1&2, 5&6, and 7&8 must be right-in and right-out.
- 9. The main entrance from Hwy. 20 shall be completed prior to recording of the residential final plat or commercial final plat, whichever comes first.
- 10. Install 8' high vinyl coated chain link fence or other approved material with vegetation along the proposed detention pond(s). Plans showing location and material must be submitted to the Director of Planning.
- 11. Provide a landscaped island extended beyond the first entrance / turn to the commercial section west of the main entrance.
- 12. West most building 1 story.

Conditions below from AX-04-025 and RZ-04-007 are already sufficiently addressed by Zoning Ordinance, Development Regulations, Buffer, Landscape, and Tree Ordinance, and/or standard development procedures and so will be deleted from conditions:

13. With the Preliminary Plat, the Developer will provide a "traffic study" to determine transportation and traffic impact on Hwy. 20 and the proposed development. Traffic study must incorporate coordination and installation of traffic lights proposed and approved for GA 20 Venture/Bellagio Estate I. Any and all recommended improvements must be implemented by the developer. The study must be conducted and signed by a registered traffic engineer and submitted to the Director of Planning.

- 14. Outdoor lighting should be of a sodium type, contained in cut-off type luminaries and shall be directed towards the property so as not to reflect into adjacent residential properties. Security lights on the walls must be installed at the lowest possible height. The plans showing location and type must be submitted to the Director of Planning for approval with preliminary plans.
- 15. The applicant shall obtain an approval letter from Gwinnett/State DOT for the project and submit with the Preliminary Plans.
- 16. The applicant shall obtain abandonment clearance from Gwinnett County for Benefield Road and Old Cumming Road/Henry Bailey Road prior to approval of Preliminary Plans.
- 17. The Parking Plan should use as much landscaping as possible. The intent is to reduce impervious surface / number of parking spaces with a design to complement the adjoining parking lots for the various projected businesses. Such plans must show more open/green space with landscaping. Plans showing wider landscaped open spaces between paved road surface and sidewalks shall be encouraged. Plans must be submitted with preliminary plans for approval to the Director.
- 18. Must provide a tree preservation plan showing preserving trees to the maximum possible extent prior to obtaining permits for grading and clearing. Existing trees along the property lines must be preserved to the maximum possible extent. In the event that vegetation is not sufficient or providing a visual screen, then those areas must be vegetated with similar or complementary tree species. The Tree Preservation Plan and Landscape Plans prepared by a registered Landscape Architect must be submitted to the Director of Planning.
- 19. No clearing, grubbing, and/or grading permits shall be issued prior to approval of Preliminary Plans.
- 20. Storm water runoff shall be self contained so that no storm water flows above and beyond the existing flow will be allowed to run off onto Emerald Lake property in accordance with State Law and City Soil Erosion requirements.
- 21. All approved conditions must be deeded and recorded on the final plat.

#### **ZONING ANALYSIS**

1. Will the rezoning requested permit a use that is suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property?

Yes.

2. Will the rezoning requested adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby properties?

No.

3. Does the property for which the rezoning is requested have a reasonable economic use as currently zoned?

Yes.

4. Will the rezoning requested create an overcrowding condition with respect to the existing streets, transportation facilities, or schools?

Schools will not be affected. GA SR 20 is a heavily traveled thoroughfare, but it is currently being widened. Approval from GA DOT will be needed.

5. Does the rezoning requested conform to the Sugar Hill Land Use Plan?

Yes.

6. Are there other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property which would give support to an approval or disapproval of the rezoning request?

The current zoning and associated conditions were approved as part of a larger planned development. Much of the original project is no longer viable. Thus, the zoning conditions ought to be amended to reflect the actual site context as the property exists today. Staff has recommended conditions for the future development and use of the property in general and has made specific recommendations as required by the current applicant's requests.

# **Change in Conditions** RZ 16-002

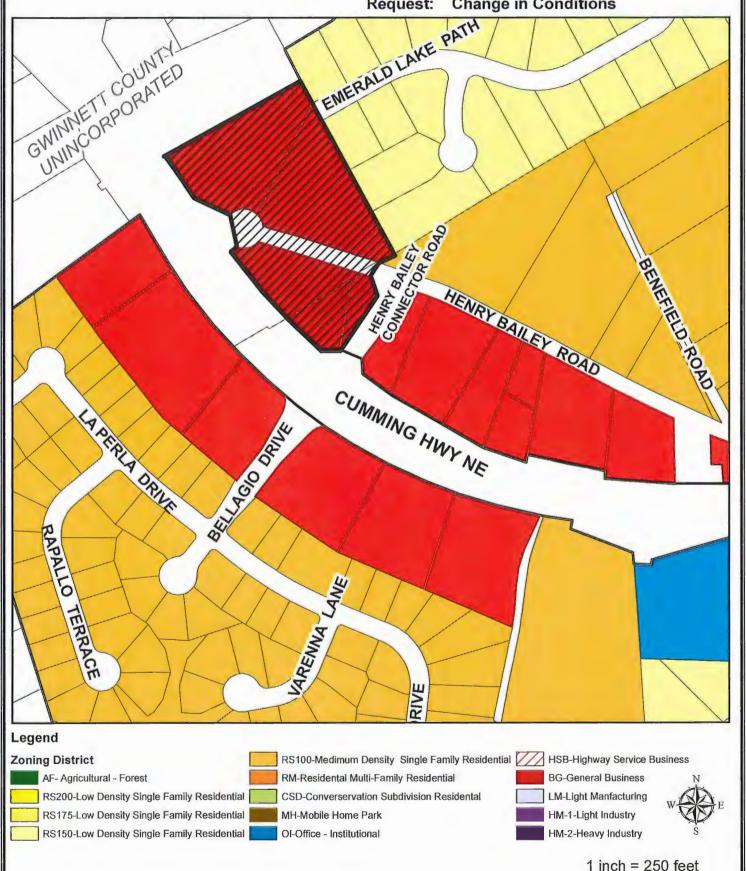
Applicant: Bellagio Properties

Zoning:

Location: 5769, 6001, 5711 Cumming Hwy and

5705 Old Cumming Road

**Change in Conditions** Request:





June 8, 2016

Mr. Kaipo Awana, AICP Planning Director City of Sugar Hill 5039 West Broad Street Sugar Hill, GA 30518

RE: Proposed Grocery Store by Bellagio Properties

RZ 16-002

W&A Job Number 16-CE-008

Dear Mr. Awana,

As a follow up to our conversation on May 31st, we have revised the building elevations and the site plan to address your concerns regarding the building materials and the location of the loading dock and dumpster.

# **Dumpster and Loading Dock**

As we discussed, the issue with the loading dock and dumpster locations is their visibility to SR 20. From a noise perspective, it is our opinion that the current location is best suited to minimize the impact on the adjacent residences. Given the volume of vehicles on SR 20 and the noise associated with those vehicles, the noise impact from the dumpster and loading dock to the properties south of SR 20 should be minimal.

To address the aesthetics, the site plan has been changed to create larger landscaped areas around the perimeter of the Right-in/Right-out driveway and within the parking lot. Additionally, we are proposing to landscape the portion of the island within the Right-in/Right-out driveway that is outside GDOT's right-of-way with the condition that GDOT approves it. It is our opinion that the combination of the dumpster enclosure and the additional landscaping will substantially screen both the dumpster and the loading dock from SR 20.

#### **Building Materials**

The issue with the building materials is the use of stucco. We are proposing to utilize more brick to break up the stucco along the side of the building facing SR 20. Considering the ordinance does not specifically address buildings over 30,000 SF in the BG zoning classification, we would ask for your consideration of these changes.

Mr. Kaipo Awana, AICP June 8, 2016 Page 2

Therefore, we'd like to request the following changes to your <u>Recommended Action</u> as summarized in your staff report dated May 12, 2016. The deleted items are indicated by a strike-through and the additional items have been italicized.

- 1. A 35' enhanced buffer shall be required between the subject property and any property zoned for residential use. The enhanced buffer must consist of at least a staggered double row of evergreen and semi-evergreen trees and shrubs native or adapted to the area. Trees shall be at least 6' tall at time of planting. Plantings shall be arranged to provide an effective visual screen of at least 20' in height at maturity. Buffer must not contain more than 30% of a single species and must be shown on a landscape plan to be approved by Planning and Development prior to receiving any permits. Within enhanced buffer, any existing tree over 12" diameter at breast height (DBH) is to be preserved (except those identified by City to be dead or dying). Prior to receiving a land disturbance permit, all hardwood trees over 12" DBH shall be identified and located on an approved tree protection plan.
- 2. Provide a six (6) foot high decorative wood privacy fence directly outside of 35' buffer (on side nearest to parking lot) to be maintained on both sides by Owner.
- 3. Shopping carts are permitted to be stored in an enclosure adjacent to the principle building. Shopping cart storage areas shall be completely screened; if screen walls are used, they shall be of sufficient height and length to screen all carts, and shall be architecturally integrated with the main building.
- 4. Stucco, E.I.F.S, tilt/pre-cast, split face block & concrete block shall be prohibited as an exterior building material. Building materials match the building elevation prepared by BRR dated June 3, 2016.
- 5. The location of the dumpster enclosure and loading dock are approved per the site plan by W&A dated 6/3/16 provided the approval of the Landscape Plan by David Albright, dated 6/8/16.

Recommend approval of variance:

Monopitch roof with the condition the roof color is a cream or gray color.

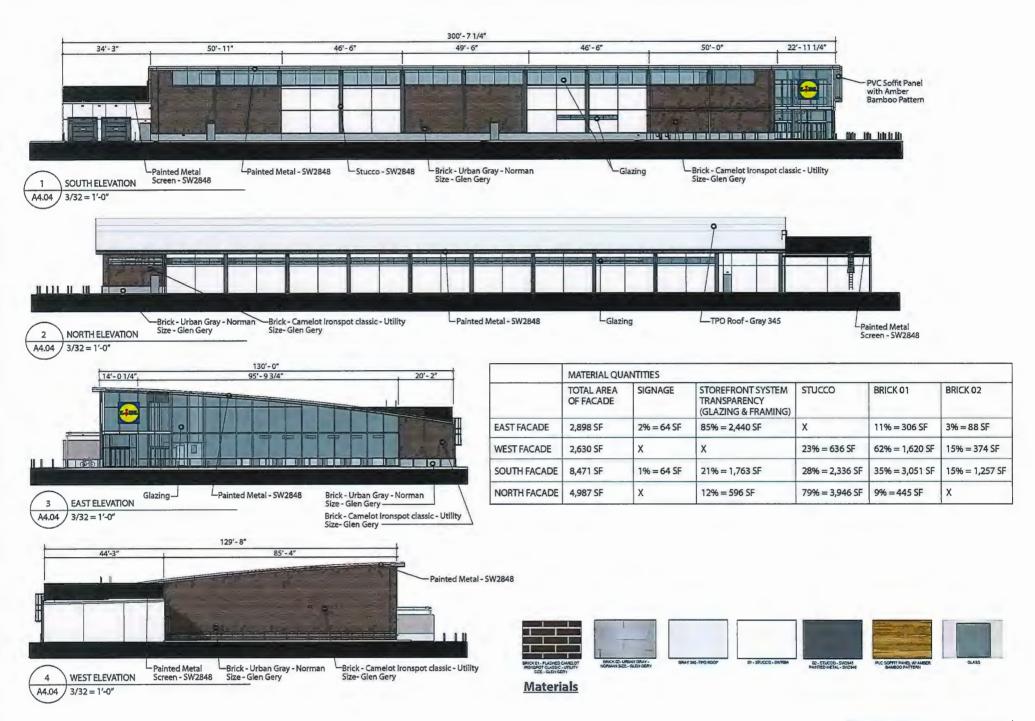
The requests for parking over the maximum ratio and a variance on the height of the monument sign are being withdrawn.

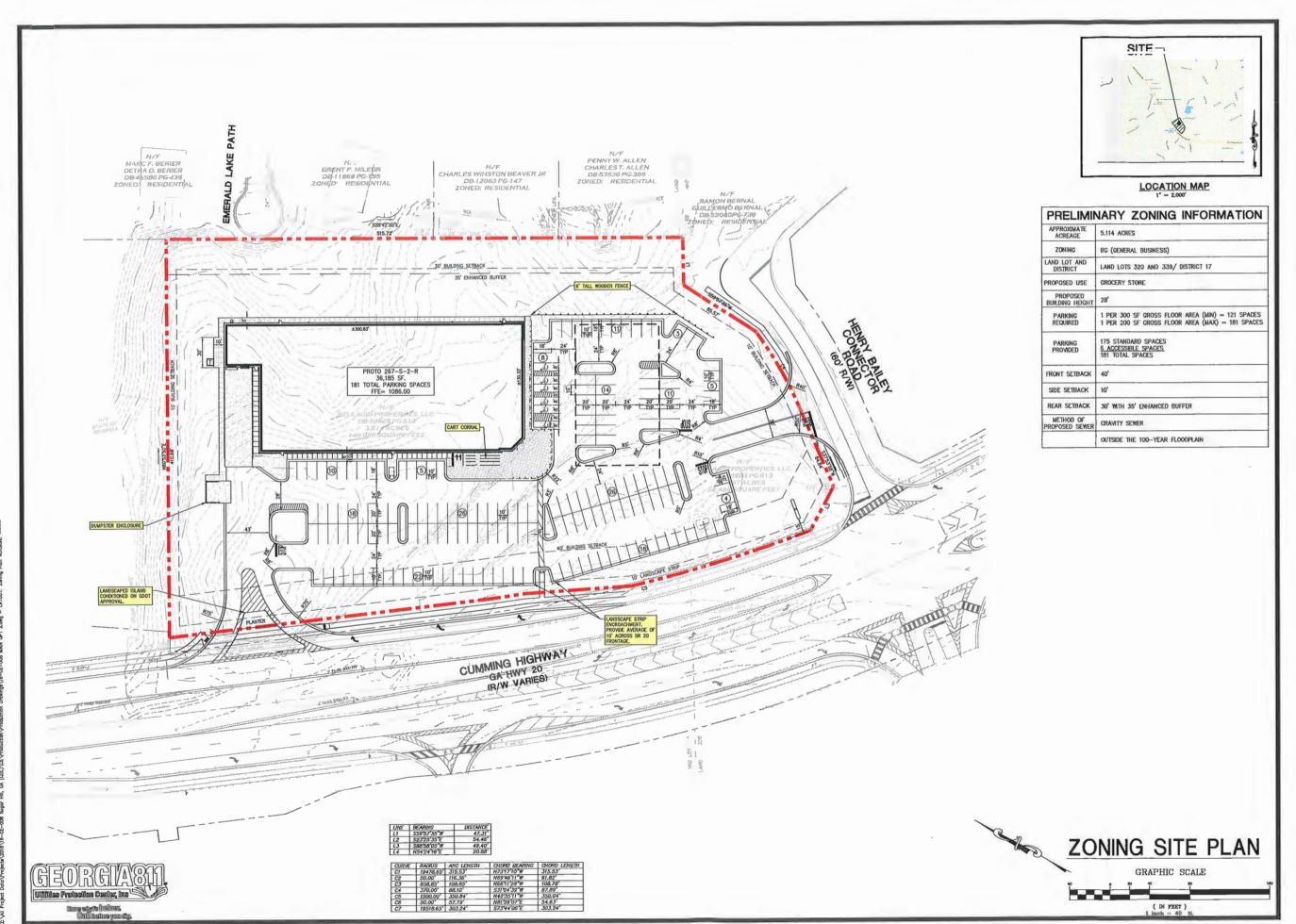
Sincerely,

Wolverton & Associates, Inc.

Jeff Belyez, P.E.

Director, Site Department

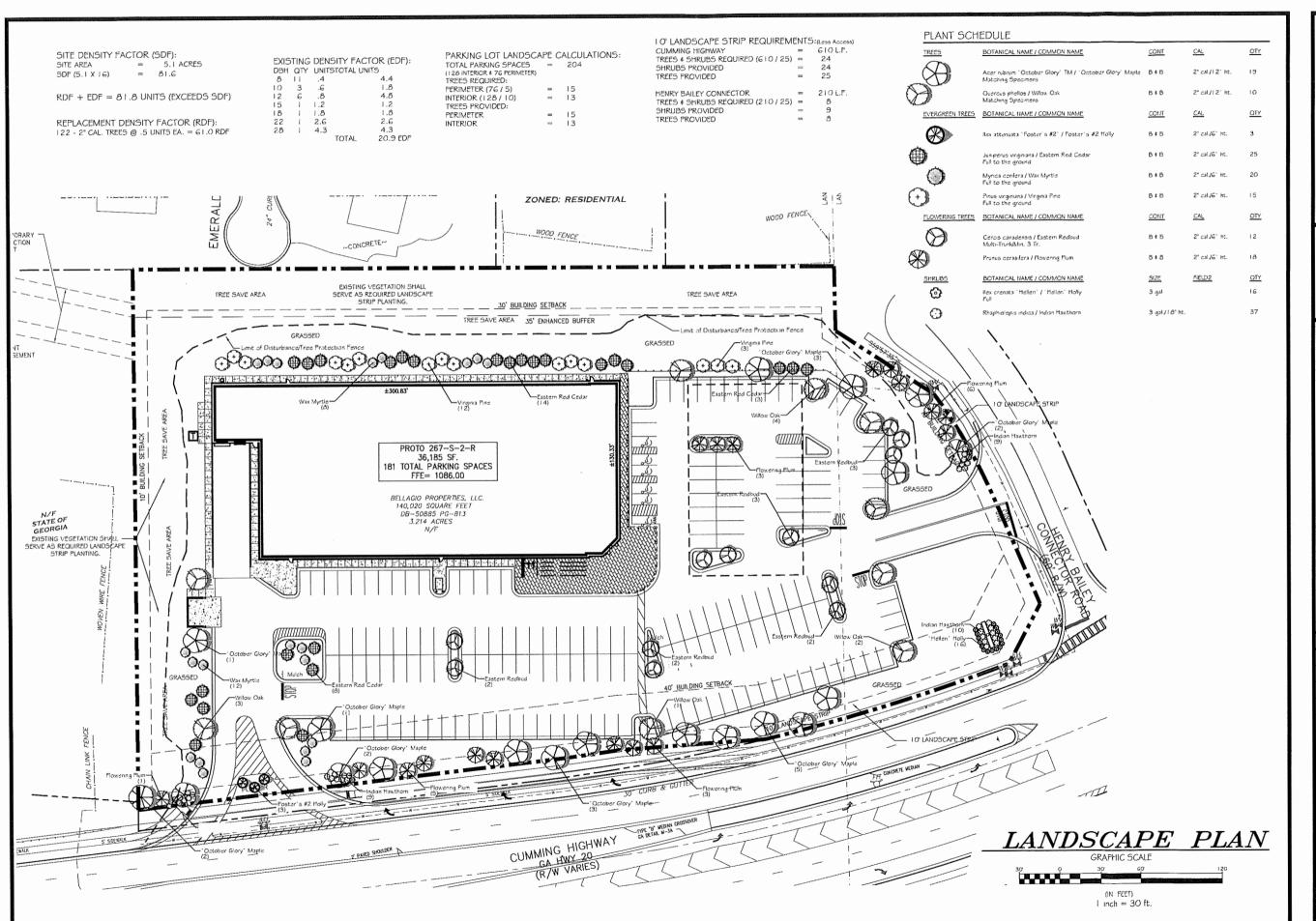




Associates
Land Surveyors
- Duluth, Georgia 20077 Wolverton
Consulting Engineers
6745 Sugarloat Parkway - Suf
Prone (770) 447-6899 Project Title
PROPOSED GROCERY STORE
SUGAR HILL, GWINNETT CO, GA
BY:
ATLANTA, GA REVISIONS BY DRAWN BY DMN JGB 6/03/2016 1"- 40" JOB No. 16-CE-008

16-CE-DOB MAIN OPT 2.DWG

SHEET NUMBER



ALBRIGHT & ASSOCIATES, INC.
PLANNERS & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
78 LAGRANGE STREET
NEWNAN, CORSIGN SOSSS
THE LAGRANGE STREET
THE L

DANIO FRANKMERICH

MERICH

M

DAVID

Project Title
PROPOSED GROCERY STORE
SUGAR HILL, GWINNETT CO, GA
BY: LIDL US OPERATIONS, LLC
ATLANTA, GA

ORAWN BY dfa
CHECKED BY dfa

DATE: 05/05/2016

SCALE: 1" = 30'

JOB No. 16-CE-008 SHEET NUMBER

SHEET NUMI