

City of Sugar Hill  
Planning Staff Report  
**DRB TCO 17-01893**

**DATE:** August 1, 2017  
**TO:** Mayor and Council, Design Review Board  
**FROM:** Planning Director VA  
**SUBJECT:** Town Center Overlay (TCO) Design Review  
1329 & 1335 Hillcrest Drive, Southern Heritage Home Builders

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RECOMMENDED ACTION

***Approval with the following conditions:***

1. Provide pedestrian walkway from front doors of units to existing sidewalk along Hillcrest Drive.
2. A single common entry drive shall be aligned with the existing intersection at Hillcrest Glenn Drive.
3. Rear entry or detached garages shall be provided. No front entry or individual driveways shall be allowed to directly access Hillcrest Drive.
4. Final design shall substantially resemble the attached elevations and site plan. Except minor deviations required to address project access in accordance with these conditions and material selection in compliance with the minimum standard.
5. Windows and façade articulations shall be placed in a regular pattern and relate to doors, columns, and other façade articulations.
6. If used, shutters shall be sized exactly half the size of the window. Curved shutters must match the curve of the window. Shutters must be mounted directly to the casing with proper shutter hardware.
7. The following architectural design conditions are prohibited: Material changes on outside corners. Recessed front porches. More than two principal building materials. Chimneys on outside walls that do not extend completely to the ground.

**ISSUE** The City of Sugar Hill has received an application from Southern Heritage Home Builders requesting design review board approval for the construction of a 6 unit townhome within the Town Center Overlay District.

**DISCUSSION**

- The side façades of the end units appear to lack sufficient expressive character. Additional windows and/or appropriate structural articulation should resolve the issue.
- Current architectural standards limit siding to 20% of side / rear facades.
- Town Center Overlay District requires design review approval by City Council.

- The subject property is currently zoned RS-100 and has been subdivided for three homes, the applicant is requesting to rezone to RM to construct a 6 unit townhome and is seeking design review approval.
- The property is adjacent to a parking lot owned by the Sugar Hill Church zoned Medium Density Single Family Residential District (RS-100) and to the rear of the property is vacant land owned by Sugar Hill Church which is zoned Agriculture and Forest (AF) zoning classification which are both located in the Town Center Overlay District.
- Design demonstrates simple massing with stoops, porches, roof eaves, and balconies which provides an expressive character without over articulation of building massing and shape. Roof lines are appropriately simple and do not excessively overlap. The length:height ratio of the front facade appears to nearly hold to a simple 3:2 proportion. Each individual townhouse feels a touch tall and spindly but when placed side to side in a six unit building this observation is subdued.

APPLICANT: Southern Heritage Home Builders – Michael Phelps  
 PROPERTY OWNER: BBC Investments  
 EXISTING ZONING: Medium Density Single Family Residential District (RS-100).  
 REQUEST: 6 unit Townhome – Design Review Approval  
 PROPERTY SIZE: ± 1.299 Acres, Tax Parcel #7-305-422, 066, & 423  
 LOCATION: 1329 & 1335 Hillcrest Drive.

Section 1001.F. requires Mayor and City Council approval of all new construction or land improvements within the TCO and CBD. The TCO and CBD requirements are designed to promote attractive and integrated urban design features, small town urban character, and pedestrian-oriented public and commercial spaces.

These parcels are located at 1329 & 1335 Hillcrest Drive. It is currently subdivided for the construction of three Single Family homes.

## DESIGN REVIEW CRITERIA

1. *Is the proposed project consistent with the adopted design guidelines for the type of development, and/or the proposed use?*

Except for a few design details on the side facades and rear façade material selection, yes. From Section 1001, TCO Overlay, E. Design Criteria and Standards, 1. Design Criteria – Architectural Design: “Each individual building or project must contribute to a consistent architectural identity for the TCO by using traditional forms, authentic materials, and quality craftsmanship.”

2. *Is the proposed project consistent and compatible with the nature and character of the surrounding areas?*

The proposed design has a residential character, but it is not inappropriate for the location. The building has a traditional style, which will blend with the architecture within the area.

3. *Are the site design, landscaping, general design, character, arrangement and scale of buildings, texture, materials and colors of the project similar to or compatible with features or structures in the area?*

The general design, character, arrangement, materials, color, and scale of the building are compatible with the emerging character of the area. The site design and landscaping should be modified to contribute a more pedestrian-accessible streetscape by providing walkway from front doors of the units to existing sidewalk along Hillcrest Drive. A single common entry drive shall be aligned with the existing intersection at Hillcrest Glenn Drive.

4. *Will the interior arrangement or use have any effect on exterior architectural features and otherwise complies with the standards of this ordinance?*

The design team will need to ensure that any interior changes to the configuration do not adversely affect the layout of the facade.

5. *Does the project contribute or resemble the following criteria for considering a design inappropriate?*

*Character foreign to the area / Arresting and spectacular effects / Violent contrasts of material or color, or intense or lurid colors / A multiplicity or incongruity of details resulting in a restless and disturbing appearance / The absence of unity and coherence in composition not in consonance with the density and character of the present structure or surrounding area.*

The proposed changes do not contribute to any of the listed inappropriate design criteria. However, there are a few competing elements and contrasting materials that could be better integrated into the overall design.