

City of Sugar Hill
Planning Staff Report
CBD Design Review 18-01552

DATE: November 2, 2018
TO: Mayor and Council, Design Review Board
FROM: Planning Director KA
SUBJECT: Central Business District (CBD) design review
1091 Level Creek Road
Proposed multi-family development, 360 Residential LLC.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approval of the site design concept and buildings in material and architectural detail with the following conditions:

1. Final site and building designs shall substantially resemble the attached exhibits labeled C1 through C4.
2. Multi-use path connecting New Road A to Roosevelt Circle shall be constructed of asphalt or concrete and shall be at least 10' wide. Wood boardwalk or bridges are acceptable for stream crossings or other sensitive areas.
3. As shown on exhibit C1, the areas along New Road A in front of buildings 3, 4 and 5 shall be incorporated into the streetscape as garden or plaza space (does not have to be programmed for use, can be visual only). Turf grass shall be discouraged between the sidewalk and buildings and shall not exceed 15% coverage in the final landscape design.
4. A soft surface trail shall be incorporated into the project greenspace connecting the multiuse path to the project site and sidewalk along Peachtree Industrial Boulevard sidewalk.
5. The building setback from Peachtree Industrial Boulevard shall be between 25' and 40'.
6. At least six (6) resident access gates shall be provided to the external pedestrian areas.
7. Gas lanterns shall be incorporated into the internal common areas and external resident access points.

REQUEST The City of Sugar Hill has received an application from 360 Residential LLC requesting design review board approval for a mid-rise courtyard multi-family residential development at 1091 Level Creek Road. Concurrently, the applicant is requesting the following variances from the Central Business District (CBD) overlay.

Variance #1: Allow setback of more than 12' from Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and New Road A.

Variance #2: Allow block length of more than 500'.

Variance #3: Allow pedestrian access as shown.

Variance #4: Allow surface parking adjacent to right-of-way.

Variance #5: Waive requirement for 24' inter-parcel access driveway for two-way traffic.

DISCUSSION

- With subtle exceptions, the proposed development concept is similar in mass and scale to the most recent iteration of the downtown master plan. However, the internal pedestrian infrastructure and the project's interface with the CBD at its edges will be critical to successful implementation of the community's vision for this area of downtown.
- Allowing a deeper building setback and surface parking along the Peachtree Industrial Boulevard (PIB) right-of-way is appropriate for the design context associated with an urban freeway.
- A slightly deeper setback along New Road A is agreeable if the design team uses the additional space to integrate the building into the streetscape. i.e. plaza space, gardens, pocket parks, etc.... Wide areas of turf grass between the sidewalk and building are not appropriate.
- New Road A must create a strong visual and physical connection to the core downtown area.
- Currently, the project straddles the outer limits of the 10-minute walk area as mapped in the downtown master plan. New Road A brings the entirety of the project to within a 12.5-minute walk from the center of downtown. Proposed multi-use path connecting New Road A to Roosevelt Circle brings it within a 10.25-minute walk. Therefore, both elements are critical to the overall project fitting into the CBD context.
- Relief from the maximum block length along PIB is agreeable provided the project includes a trail connection from the multi-use path through the green space to the sidewalk at PIB. At least two resident access gates should be incorporated to allow residents access to the Greenway.
- Relief from the 24' inter-parcel access driveway is agreeable provided the project includes the east-west multi-use path connecting New Road A and Roosevelt Circle and the north-south trail connecting the multi-use path to PIB.
- Overall, the internal and external pedestrian access is inadequate as shown. However, these elements are difficult to visualize at this scale. Once incorporated into the design staff's proposed conditions will satisfy the intent of the design standards.

BACKGROUND

APPLICANT: 360 Residential LLC
PROPERTY OWNER: DonRob Investments, LP
EXISTING ZONING: Residential Multi-Family District (RM), Highway Service Business District (HSB), Medium Density Single-Family Residential District (RS-100) and Town Center Overlay District (TCO).
REQUEST: Residential Multi-Family Use Project – Design Review Approval.
PROPERTY SIZE: ± Total Site Acres 26.62, seeking Design Review Approval for 12.042 Acres, Tax Parcel #7-291-021 (a portion of).
LOCATION: 1091 Level Creek Road.

DESIGN REVIEW CRITERIA

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

The CBD requirements are designed to foster development of the city center using traditional block patterns, building fronts abutting the sidewalk and on-street parking; breaking up large blocks; optimizing multi-modal connectivity and incorporating small public gathering spaces.

Mass and scale of proposed development is appropriate for the central business district. Building profiles, selected materials and physical relationship to streetscape are in line with the adopted design guidelines. Pedestrian experience and accessibility elements are satisfied provided the developer constructs sufficient pedestrian infrastructure along New Road A, Level Creek Road, Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and the multi-use path connection to Roosevelt Circle as recommended.

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

Yes. Several developments of similar scale and use exist nearby. i.e. Plantation Ridge, Castlegate Townhomes and Buford Housing Authority. The proposed use is a suitable transition between established single-family residential neighborhoods and other planned or constructed apartment uses.

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 proposed development is consistent with recently approved development in the CBD and is appropriately responsive to the development context along PIB. It is also compatible in material selection and the scale of the buildings with the residential uses to the north due in part to the topography and relatively deep rear setbacks on the single-family lots.

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?*

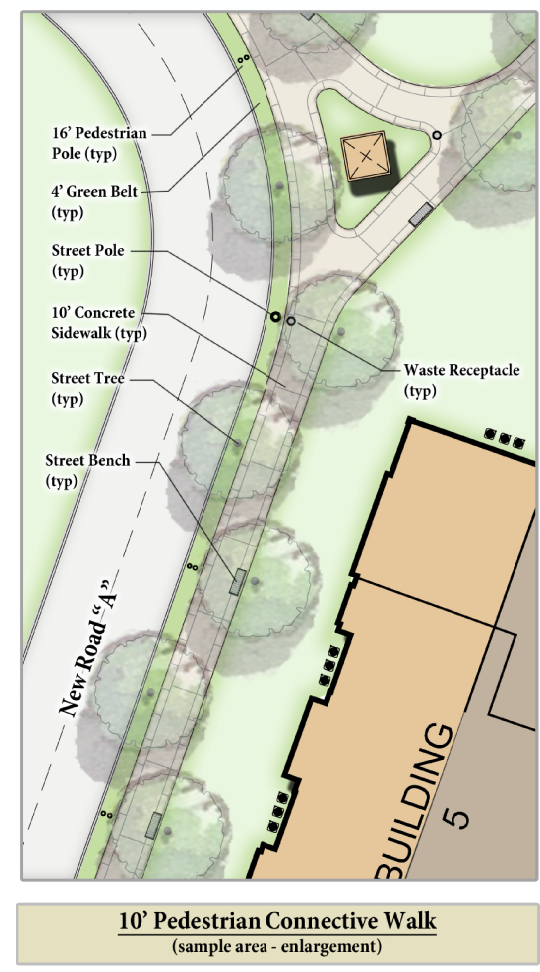
Character foreign to the area / Arresting and spectacular effects / Violent contrasts of material or color, or intense or lurid colors / A multiplicity or incongruity of details resulting in a restless and disturbing appearance / The absence of unity and coherence in composition not in consonance with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

There is some dissonance in the mass and scale of the buildings in comparison to the existing Level Creek Hollow neighborhood which is mitigated by the selection and arrangement of building materials and placement.



Landscape Design Notes:

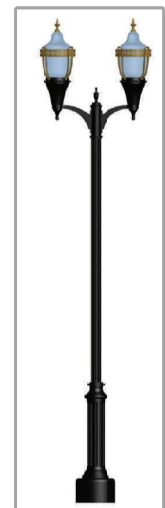
Site design will include all required Tree Replacement and Buffers per Municipal codes. All state waters and setbacks will be intact. All parking areas will receive canopy tree planting to reduce heat island effects. Entrance corridor along PIB to be selectively laid back to allow for views into property and onto signage and directional components. Main entrance components will be ornamentally planted to accent approaches and design features. Primary buildings will have foundation plantings to ease transitions between horizontal and vertical planes. All areas of disturbance will be replanted with trees, shrubs, groundcovers and sod or mulch. In no circumstance will raw or tilled earthen soils be left exposed.



Street Bench
(Sample for Review)



Waste Receptacle
(Sample for Review)

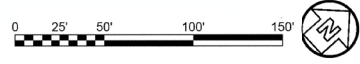


16' Pedestrian Pole
(Sugarhill Specification)

Streetscape Design Notes:

Areas along new Road "A" will be treated with a 10' pedestrian connective walk that will run the entire length of the new road and branch at the community courtyard to produce a future connection to Roosevelt Circle. (Alternate property owner responsible for construction and final routing of off-property development.)

10' Pedestrian Walk will be constructed at minimum 4'-0" off the back of curb creating a continuous green belt along the curb to allow for street trees (60'-0" o.c.) and the integration of street lights intermingled with pedestrian poles (seen below). The 10' concrete walk will be scored in different patterns to create a furniture and active zone. The furniture zone will contain Sugarhill approved benches and waste receptacles to maintain community fabric. Examples seen below. These features will occur approx. every 60' or so to create a rhythm of usable along the walk. All features will be coordinated with a canopy tree for shade as well as lighting component for evening use. Bike racks will be considered once realistic nodes of need are identified. Current design lend these locations to off-property areas including the Commercial Tract and the very northern point of Road "A" adjacent to the town home tract.



Disclaimer: Illustration represents intent of development, home plans and layout may change without notice. For final layout review, refer to civil engineering set once submitted.

360 at Sugar Hill



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VIEW FROM NEW ROAD CONCEPTUAL SKETCH

Exhibit C2



C SHAPE BUILDING CONCEPTUAL SKETCH

Exhibit C3



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BAR SHAPE BUILDING CONCEPTUAL SKETCH

Exhibit C4