


City of Sugar Hill
Planning Staff Report
RZ 21-007

DATE: September 29, 2021
TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Planning Director 
SUBJECT: Rezoning RZ 21-007, Mixed-use Development
1450 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Rezone the property to BG and expand the CBD to include the subject property with the following conditions:

1. A minimum of 2,000 square feet of retail space shall be provided at full build-out of the overall project, which may be developed in separate phases from the multifamily residential portion of the overall project.
2. The developer shall conduct a traffic impact study to include a signal warrant analysis at project entrance on Peachtree Industrial Boulevard prior to receiving the first development permit. If signalization is warranted the developer shall construct the necessary intersection improvements prior to the first certificate of occupancy.
3. Prior to 50% occupancy on the residential tract(s), developer shall dedicate right-of-way or easement, at no cost to the city, for the trail and surrounding greenspace (not including the area for the storm water management pond) shown on the attached concept plan. Developer shall also construct the trail connection as depicted on the attached concept plan with specific locations and alignment to be determined through subsequent design review board application.
4. Each townhome shall have a minimum of three natural gas appliances installed into each unit prior to certificate of occupancy.
5. Prior to certificate of occupancy, each non-residential building shall be stubbed for gas service.

PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING AND RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning Commission held a scheduled public hearing on September 20, 2021. Applicant representative Chuck Young with Prestwick Development and architect spoke on behalf of this request. There were no other public comments. The public hearing was closed.

Vice Chairman Julie Adams motioned to approve the rezoning to BG and expand the CBD to include this property with conditions as recommended by staff. Commission Member Jason Jones made the second. Motion approved 5-0.

ISSUE The City of Sugar Hill has received an application dated July 1, 2021, from Joe Alcock/McMillian Pazdan Smith Architecture requesting to change the zoning from existing Agricultural-Forest (AF), Medium Density Single-Family Residential (RS-100), Light Manufacturing (LM), Heavy Manufacturing (HM-1), Town Center Overlay (TCO) to General Business (BG). The applicant is also requesting to remain in the TCO and expand the Central Business District (CBD) for the development of a mixed-use project with multi-family residential (154 units), two-family attached residential (21 single-bedroom and 21 three-bedroom for-rent rowhouse units) single-family attached residential (104 for-rent townhomes), and commercial use.

DISCUSSION

- Proposed redevelopment upcycles an existing auto salvage yard into a compact mixed-use community with a wide selection of home styles in a wide variety of sizes and pricing.
- In terms of land area, the TCO is less than 9% of the total area encompassing the city limits. When you consider the city limits combined with surrounding unincorporated neighborhoods (Greater Sugar Hill) it's less than 5%.
- The boundary of the CBD currently encompasses around 2% of Sugar Hill's current city limits boundary. It's closer to 1% of Greater Sugar Hill. Even with the proposed expansion the area of land covered by the CBD will be right around 3% of the current city boundary and less than 2% of Greater Sugar Hill.
- A major element of the downtown development strategy consists of making efficient use of our remaining developable land, focusing growth strategically, helping relieve development pressure in areas outside of the downtown or other major activity nodes and corridors.
- The development affords an opportunity for the private sector to construct a portion of the Hillcrest segment of the Sugar Hill Greenway (2020 LCI plan) connecting the Richland Creek corridor to the downtown core.
- Enhances vehicular access to SR20 by providing direct access to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard for the development's residents as well as an optional route to SR20 for area residents along the Hillcrest Drive corridor.
- Pedestrian crossing at the Peachtree Industrial Boulevard entrance drive potentially connects neighborhoods previously isolated from the rest of the downtown community. This requires coordination with Gwinnett Department of Transportation (GwDOT) and will be considered in more detail through the design review process after zoning.
- Items to be addressed with design review board after zoning: Hillcrest Drive and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard project access improvements, art features, trail alignment/design, trail easement/dedications, FAR, maximum block length and inter-parcel access.

BACKGROUND

Applicant/Owner: Joe Alcock with McMillan Pazdan Smith Architecture / TLJ Land Group LLC

Existing Zoning: AF, RS-100, LM, HM-1, TCO

Request(s): BG, TCO, CBD

Purpose: Mixed-use development with 300 residential units multifamily (154 units), two-family attached (21 single-bedroom + 21 three-bedroom rowhouses), single-family attached (104 townhomes) and, commercial (2,000 square feet).

Property Size: ± 16.282 acres

Location: Tax Parcel Id Number: 7-292-077A, & 7-292-194
1450 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard

Public Notice: Letters to adjoining owners via USPS regular mail on 9-1-21
Sign posted at 5000 & 5252 Nelson Brogdon Boulevard on 9-1-21
Ad in legal section of Gwinnett Daily Post on 9-1-21

Public Comments: None submitted at this time.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Adjacent Zoning

North: Medium Density Single-Family Residential (RS-100), Agricultural-Forest District (AF)

South: Light Manufacturing District (LM)

East: Mobile Home District (MH), General Business District (BG)

West: Medium Density Single-Family Residential District (RS-100)

The city has determined in its efforts to provide safe, clean, and reliable energy to its residents that securing and distributing natural gas in its service area is an essential part of diversifying energy solutions. Natural gas is a very cost-effective way for our future residents, tax payers, and rate payers to provide hot water, heat the home, and cook for their family. As examples, natural gas water heaters heat water twice as fast as electric water heaters; gas dryers dry clothes faster than electric (extending the life of the clothes); and most gas cooking appliances cost half as much to operate as their electric counterpart. A little-known fact about natural gas supply is that 92% of the energy value in natural gas makes it to the end user while only 37% of the energy value for electric supply makes it to the end user due to system losses across long transmission lines.

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. The mixed-use development product is an appropriate replacement for the existing salvage yard and is a desirable assortment of single-family attached and multifamily residential housing products at various sizes and price points.

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

No. The multifamily buildings are situated toward Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and single-family attached building types are situated toward Hillcrest Drive where surrounding uses remain predominantly residential.

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

Yes.

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

No. Peachtree Industrial Boulevard is a principal arterial road and currently operates at an acceptable level of service. Most of the units proposed (65%) are smaller one and two-bedroom multi-family and attached residential units which are expected to have limited impact on future school enrollment. The 104 three-bedroom units should be expected to contribute a higher number to the projected student enrollment as compared to the smaller units. The site is within the Lanier school cluster and within the Sycamore Elementary School district zone. City planning staff coordinates with school officials on enrollment projections and future development. There does not appear to be an overcrowding condition within the schools that this site is zoned for. Nor does this proposed development create an overcrowding condition with respect to those schools.

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

Yes. The character area Town Center District identifies residential multi-family as a compatible land use.

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?*

Excerpt from the Comprehensive Plan (2019):

Maximize development potential with a mix of uses to create critical mass within a 10-minute walk.

Develop transitional areas of housing between higher densities in the urban core and suburban residential areas.

Revitalize aging commercial and residential areas through redevelopment and infill strategies.

Improve connectivity between the downtown core and future growth areas.

Excerpt from the Downtown Master Plan (2018):

Downtown Sugar Hill is an attractive place for all to make a home; where neighborhoods are inter-connected and accessible to a wide variety of cultural, recreation, entertainment, dining, and shopping resources in a compact walkable area; where the opportunity to connect to regional transit is an option available to residents; and where real estate values appreciate but affordable options remain accessible to a wide variety of household types.

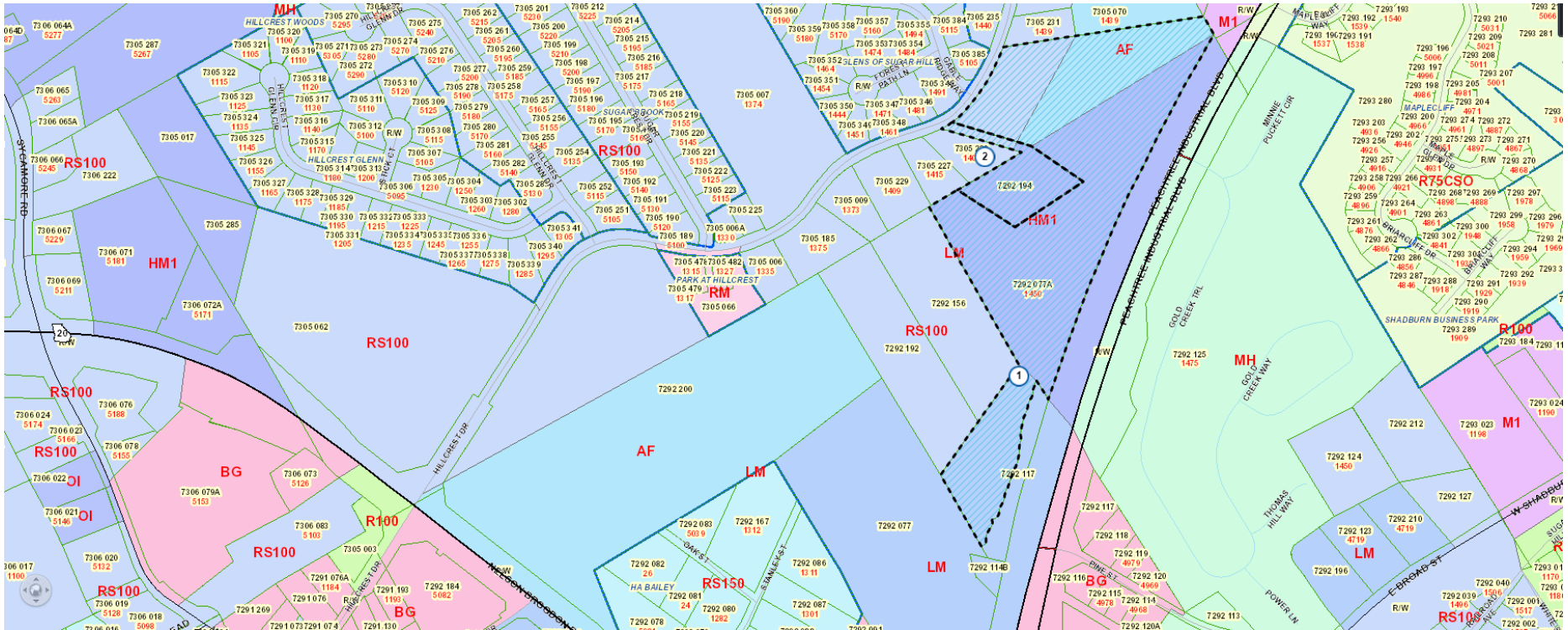
Excerpt from the Comprehensive Plan (2009):

The Town Center District should include a relatively high-density mix of retail, office, services, residential, and family entertainment activities.

Residential development should reinforce the town center through locating higher density housing options adjacent to the center, targeted to a broad range of income levels. The mixture of housing should meet the needs identified by the Market Assessment conducted for the LCI Plan.

LOCATION MAP

Mixed Use, multifamily residential, single-family attached residential (townhomes) and commercial



LETTER OF INTENT

Revised July 23, 2021

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed development is envisioned as an urban project that provides a mixture of residential and commercial uses that will accommodate a variety of residents and users and is walking distance to the existing amenities in downtown Sugar Hill. Two mid-rise multifamily buildings are proposed on the eastern portion of the property, overlooking a drop-off to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard at the bottom. The multifamily buildings face a lawn bowling court which serves as a central gathering spot for the development and includes dedicated pads for food trucks and several small commercial buildings for retail and office uses. Additional amenities include a pool, club house, dog park, playgrounds and a segment of the Sugar Hill Greenway which will connect the development to the Chattahoochee River to the north and downtown Sugar Hill and parks and schools to the south once the Greenway is completed. A pedestrian crosswalk will be provided at the Peachtree Industrial Boulevard entrance to the development, subject to approval by the AHJ, to connect residents on the opposite side of the road to the proposed development and the future greenway. A suggested route for the greenway is shown on the site plan and the final connection of the greenway will be coordinated with the City and the adjacent property to the south, which has also been recently submitted for re-zoning to mixed-use. Townhomes and rowhouses fill out the north and eastern portions of the site. All townhomes will include a gas connection. All residential units are currently planned to be rental units. Stormwater management facilities including a retention and detention pond are located on the southern portion of the site to take advantage the natural slope of the site. Due to the scale of the development, the project may be developed in several phases.

The property is presently used as a vehicle salvage yard and the remainder of the lot is undeveloped. The itis currently zoned as four different zoning categories: Light Manufacturing (LM), Heavy Manufacturing (HM1), Agricultural (AF) and Medium Density Single Family Residential (RS-100). The majority of the adjacent properties are undeveloped wooded lots. Nearby properties on the opposite side of Hillcrest Dr. are single-family residential. The site is an irregular shape with a dog leg on the south end and significant topography with a high point to the northwest and steel drop off at the eastern property line.

Proposed Use of Property: Multifamily Residential, Townhouses, Rowhouses (townhouse with accessory dwelling unit), Commercial

Acreage: 16.282 Acres

Revised 7/23/21 KBL

REZONING APPLICATION FOR 1450 PEACHTREE INDUSTRIAL BLVD

Zoning requested: BG, CBD overlay

Number of lots proposed: 1

Number of dwelling units proposed: 300 Dwelling units total

House Size proposed:

Townhouse: +/- 2,400 SF, 3 bedrooms. 2 garage parking spaces per unit

Rowhouse: +/- 3,840 SF. 1 bedroom unit + 3 Bedroom Unit. 3 garage parking spaces per unit

Apartment: Studio: +/- 450 SF; 1 Bedroom: +/- 700 SF; 2 Bedroom: +/- 1,100 SF. 242 parking spaces

Price Range of homes: Rental Rate of \$799-\$2,199/month

Density: 300 dwelling units on 15.98 acres = 18.8 units/acre

6500 SF commercial on 13,000 SF = FAR 0.50

Parking Spaces: Approximately 513. 1.71 Parking spaces per dwelling unit

Height of Buildings: Multifamily: +/- 55'

REZONING APPLICANT'S RESPONSE

STANDARDS GOVERNING THE EXERCISE OF ZONING POWER

A: Whether the proposed Rezoning or Special Use Permit will permit a use that is suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property:

The proposed Rezoning will permit a use that is suitable in view of use and development of adjacent and nearby property. The majority of the adjacent properties are undeveloped wooded lots. Nearby properties on the opposite side of Hillcrest Dr. are single-family residential. The proposed rezoning would be fully compatible with residential uses and undeveloped wooded lots. The construction planned at this development that is adjacent to residentially-zoned properties will be single-family townhomes. The proposed development would also provide public amenities to adjacent properties such as a dog park, playgrounds and a walking trail. The property directly to the south of the proposed development is zoned Light Manufacturing and is currently undeveloped, however, a re-zoning application was recently submitted for the adjacent property proposing a mixed use office and

REZONING APPLICATION FOR 1450 PEACHTREE INDUSTRIAL BLVD

multifamily development. A detention pond is planned on the southern portion of the proposed development and is a suitable use should the adjacent property be developed in the future as a manufacturing use. The property is located in the Town Center overlay district and is approximately 1,100 feet away from the present edge of the Central Business District overlay. Presently, Sugar Hill does not have a zoning classification that permits both residential and commercial uses on the site. Extending the CBD overlay to the property would allow both the proposed residential and commercial uses on the site and promote the development of urban-style walkable development surrounding the present amenities offered in downtown Sugar Hill.

B: Whether the proposed Rezoning or Special Use Permit will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property:

The proposed Rezoning will not adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property. The majority of the adjacent and nearby properties are residential and the proposed rezoning would be fully compatible with residential uses. The construction planned at this development that is adjacent to residentially-zoned properties will be single-family townhomes. The proposed townhomes would provide a buffer between adjacent sites and the limited commercial uses located in the center of the proposed development. The proposed development would also provide public amenities to adjacent properties such as a dog park, playgrounds and a walking trail.

C. Whether the property to be affected by a proposed Rezoning or Special Use Permit has a reasonable economic use as currently zoned:

The property is currently zoned as four different zoning categories: Light Manufacturing (LM), Heavy Manufacturing (HM1), Agricultural (AF) and Medium Density Single Family Residential (RS-100). The portion of the property zoned Heavy Manufacturing is presently used as a vehicle salvage yard and the remainder of the lot is undeveloped. The different zoning categories within the single lot do not allow a reasonable economic use because Single Family uses are not compatible or economically viable adjacent to Heavy Manufacturing uses.

D. Whether the proposed Rezoning or Special Use Permit will result in a use which will or could cause and excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities or schools:

The property has direct access to Peachtree Industrial Blvd which is a 4 lane divided highway and the proposed development would not significantly increase the traffic on Peachtree Industrial Blvd. The property also has frontage on Hillcrest Drive which has sufficient capacity and a signalized intersection at Buford Dr to facilitate traffic flow. Additionally, the Sugar Hill Greenway is currently planned along Hillside Dr. and at Stanley St NE per the 2020 LCI Study by Tool Design. The Greenway would provide access to pedestrians and cyclists to Downtown Sugar Hill and nearby parks and schools. The proposed development will build out a portion of the Stanley St. Greenway alignment that will connect the southern edge of the property to Hillcrest St. The Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources has indicated that there is water and sewer capacity for the proposed development. The townhomes and

rowhouses will have gas connections to reduce electrical demand. The proposed development will be served by Sycamore Elementary School, Lanier Middle School and Lanier High School, all of which presently have capacity for additional students.

E. Whether the proposed Rezoning or Special Use Permit is in conformity with the policy and interest of the Land Use Plan:

The proposed Rezoning will be in conformity with the policy and interest of the Land Use Plan. The 2019 Sugar Hill Comprehensive Development Plan shows the property in the Downtown Character Area, characterized by a dense, vibrant and walkable mixes of uses with high quality architecture, and a variety of open spaces that will attract and engage citizens of all ages. The proposed development is compatible with the Downtown Character area because it will provide a mixture of housing types to accommodate citizens of all ages, from studio apartments and 1 bedrooms for young professionals and empty nesters to 2 bedroom apartments and 3 bedroom townhouses for families as well as 2-unit rowhouses for multi-generational families. A vibrant and walkable development will be facilitated by variety of green spaces such as the Lawn Bowling court, the segment of the Sugar Hill Greenway passing through the site, a dog park and playground, the club house and pool, as well as commercial pop-ups. An urban-style streetscape is proposed with parallel parking for residents and guests, boulevard-style roads with street trees and sidewalks. The addition of this property into the CBD overlay will allow for a higher density and higher quality building design as required by the design standards of the overlay district. The proposed uses on the property match the appropriate land uses listed in the Downtown Character Area: General Business, Residential Multi-Family, and Medium Density Single Family.

F. Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property which give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the proposed Rezoning or Special Use Permit:

The property is in proximity to the central business district, a dense, walkable city center with a high concentration of public amenities. The adjacent properties are developed or zoned as medium density single-family residential and this area of Sugar Hill is currently undergoing a rapid development of single family and multi-family uses. The current zoning of the property is primarily manufacturing and it is used as a vehicle salvage yard, which is not compatible with the adjacent residential uses or the desired future use as a walkable mixed-use development. Rezoning this property to BG-CBD would not only serve the interests of the owner, but also benefit adjacent property owners and residents of Sugar Hill by redeveloping the site with uses that are fully compatible with the residential zonings of adjacent properties and the desired future use of the site per the 2019 CDP.

The 2021 Sugar Hill City Housing Study + Needs Analysis identified an annual gap of 133 rental units particularly in units that rent for less than \$875/month and \$1,250 - \$1,750/month, but also in all other price categories. The study also noted that there is room to grow for new rental units, particularly in the downtown area. The proposed development will help address Sugar Hill's need for units all of the price

REZONING APPLICATION FOR 1450 PEACHTREE INDUSTRIAL BLVD

ranges indicated in the study by providing a mix of units that cater to a wide variety of incomes and living arrangements, from affordable studio apartments to multi-unit rowhouses for large families.

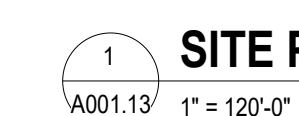
ADDRESS: 1450 PEACHTREE INDUSTRIAL BLVD., BUFORD, GA 30518

PUBLIC SEWER LINE TO BE PROPOSED METHOD OF SEWAGE DISPOSAL

- *300 TOTAL DWELLING UNITS
*1 LOT

CLUBHOUSE: 4,500 SF

± 2,000 SE RETAIL CONTAIN



SUGAR HILL, GEORGIA

SHEET NO. PROJ. NO.
02119

A001.13



mcmillan | pazdan | smith
ARCHITECTURE

SUGAR HILL, GEORGIA

07/08/21



Prestwick
companies

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