

City of Sugar Hill
Planning Staff Report
DRB-CBD 21-004

DATE: December 29, 2021; **Updated 1/7/2022**
TO: Mayor and Council, Design Review Board
FROM: Planning Director
SUBJECT: Central Business District (CBD) Design Review
Mixed-use Development
1450 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard

REQUEST

The City of Sugar Hill has received an application from Joe Alcock/MPS Architecture requesting design review board approval for a mixed-use project with multi-family residential, for-rent rowhouse units, single family attached residential townhomes, and commercial use.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approval of the site plan and building elevations in material and architectural detail with the following conditions:

1. Final designs shall substantially resemble the attached exhibits labeled Exhibit 1 through 10. Building elevations fronting Hillcrest Drive shall be designed with a neutral color palette. Final material and color selections shall be subject to on-site mock-up approval, with identified materials ***subject to City Manager approval.***
2. A substantial gateway art feature shall be incorporated into the site design. The final design and location shall be approved by the City Manager prior to releasing permits and installed prior to final certificate of occupancy. ***Developer may elect to make a monetary contribution of \$25,000 to the City of Sugar Hill in lieu of installing the improvements.***
3. Shared use path shall be a minimum of 14' wide and constructed of concrete.
4. A public access easement along the entire length of the shared use path shall be recorded with the deed records prior to receiving certificate of occupancy for 50% of the total number of units.

DISCUSSION

- The proposed architectural style and material selection are significant departures from what Sugar Hill is accustomed to. However, given its unique location and transitional context from an automotive salvage yard, the contrasting style could add desirable variety to the local housing market. Building elevations along Hillcrest Drive should be designed with a more neutral color palette.
- While the Town Center Overlay design standards favor traditional styles and materials, its primary purpose is to foster visual harmony in the built environment. This can be accomplished with a variety of styles if each project is successfully reconciled to the immediately surrounding context.

It is also important that the design review process does not sanitize a project such that its unique character is lost.

- Incorporation of the shared use trail and public access drive between Hillcrest Drive and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard work together to satisfy the inter-parcel access and maximum block length design standards which are intended to promote a pedestrian friendly development format.
- ***Character of the semi-public community space is an important organizing element for the trail and overall site design. The trail and community space will help activate each other in a positive way.***

APPLICANT/OWNER: Joe Alcock with McMillan Pazdan Smith Architecture

EXISTING ZONING: General Business District (BG)
Town Center Overlay District (TCO)
Central Business District (CBD)

REQUEST: Design review approval, mixed use townhome residential development.

PROPERTY SIZE: ± 16.282 acres
Tax Parcel Id Number: 7-292-077A, & 7-292-194

LOCATION: 1450 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard.
Parcel is currently an existing auto salvage yard.

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 characterized by common side walls, building fronts abutting the sidewalk and on-street parking; breaking up large blocks; optimizing multi-modal connectivity and incorporating small public gathering spaces.

The proposed design is consistent with the adopted design guidelines. The buildings provide pedestrian-scale architectural elements and commercial uses. The site includes pedestrian-oriented streetscape elements and integrates space for public gathering as well.

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

The proposed designs are consistent with the adopted vision and emerging character of Downtown Sugar Hill.

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 elevations and conceptual site plans are compatible in scale, material selection, and general design character with the nearby proposed development.

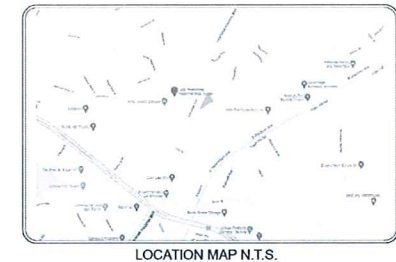
4. *Will the interior arrangement or use have any effect on exterior architectural features and otherwise complies with the standards of this ordinance?*

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.

While the proposed design is a departure from the traditional aesthetic Sugar Hill is accustomed, the project provides desirable variety and with proper conditions appropriately interfaces with immediately surrounding neighborhoods.



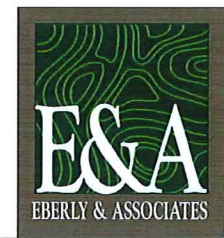
LOCATION MAP N.T.S.



SUGAR HILL II : MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

1450 PEACHTREE INUDSTRAL BLVD

NOVEMBER, 2021
SCALE: 1"=50'-0"





FRONT ELEVATION

1/16" = 1'-0"



ROWHOUSE ELEVATION FRONT

1" = 10'-0"



ROWHOUSE ELEVATION REAR

1" = 10'-0"



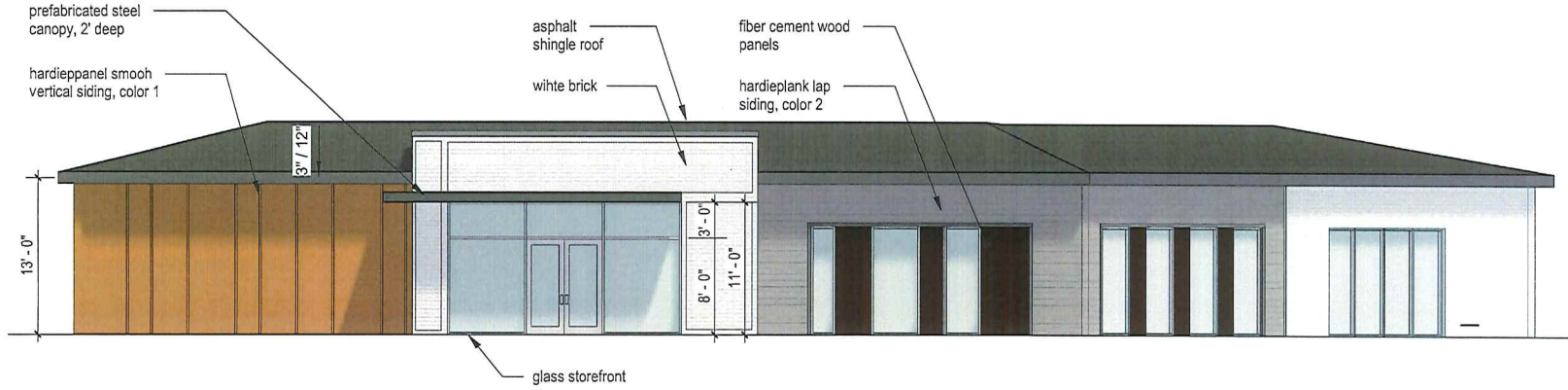
TOWNHOUSES ELEVATION REAR

1/8" = 1'-0"



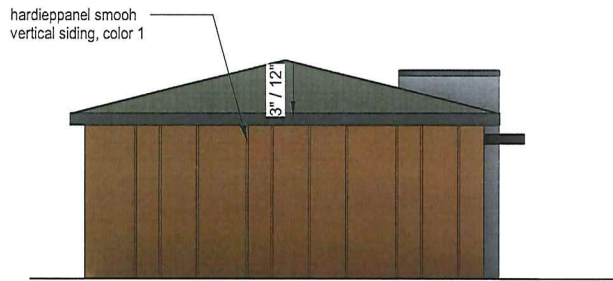
TOWNHOUSES ELEVATION FRONT

1/8" = 1'-0"



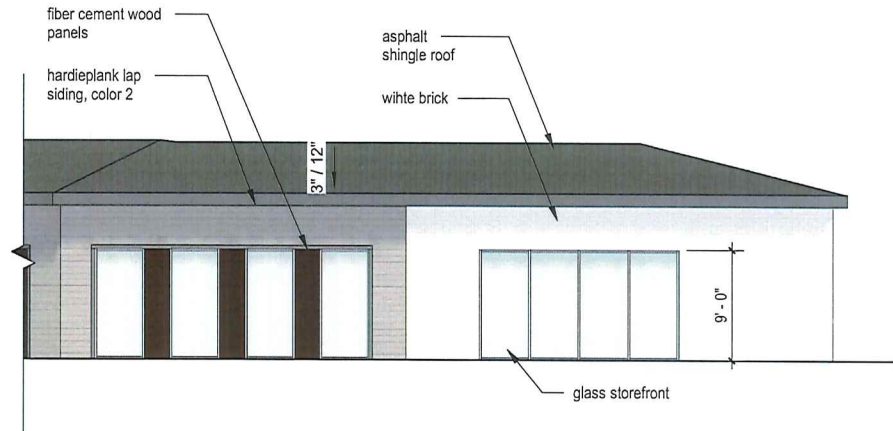
CLUBHOUSE ELEVATION WEST 2

1" = 10'-0"



CLUBHOUSE ELEVATION NORTH

1" = 10'-0"



CLUBHOUSE ELEVATION WEST

1" = 10'-0"



WEST ELEVATION



CONTAINERS STREET ELEVATION



















EAST ELEVATION



LAWN BOWLING ELEVATION

MATERIALS LEGEND

 <p>AW-1</p>	<p>ALUMINUM CANOPY WITH C CHANNEL EDGE PROFILE COLOR: DARK BRONZE</p>	 <p>AS-1</p>	<p>LANDMARK PRO ARCHITECTURAL ROOF SHINGLES COLOR: PEWTER</p>	 <p>WP-1</p>	<p>PAC-CLAD WALL PANELS CONCEALED FASTENER (HWP PROFILE) COLOR: HEMLOCK GREEN</p>
 <p>SF-1</p>	<p>JELD-WEN VINYL WINDOWS BETTER SERIES, INSULATED GLASS FRAME COLOR: WHITE</p>			 <p>WP-2</p>	<p>PAC-CLAD WALL PANELS CONCEALED FASTENER (HWP PROFILE) COLOR: MILITARY BLUE</p>
 <p>SF-2</p>	<p>STOREFRONT SYSTEM CLEAR LOW-E INSULATED GLAZING UNITS APPLIED ALUMINUM MUNTINS FRAME COLOR: CLEAR ANODIZED</p>	 <p>MTL-1</p>	<p>PREFINISHED METAL COPING. COLOR: GRAPHITE</p>	 <p>WP-3</p>	<p>PAC-CLAD WALL PANELS CONCEALED FASTENER (HWP PROFILE) COLOR: COLONIAL RED</p>
 <p>BR-1</p>	<p>MODULAR BAYHILL BRICK</p>	 <p>PT-1</p>	<p>PAINTED CEMENT SIDING COLOR: SW 7599 BRICK PAVER</p>		
 <p>PT-2</p>		 <p>PT-3</p>	<p>PAINTED CEMENT SIDING COLOR: SW 6377 BUTTERSCOTCH</p>		
 <p>PT-3</p>			<p>PAINTED CEMENT SIDING COLOR: SW 7028 INCREDIBLE WHITE</p>		
 <p>CB-1</p>	<p>HARDI PLANK SMOOTH LAP SIDING COLOR: VARIES (SEE PAINT COLORS)</p>				
 <p>CB-2</p>	<p>HARDI CEMENT TRIM BOARD SMOOTH COLOR: ASH GRAY</p>				
 <p>CB-3</p>	<p>NICHIHA FIBER CEMENT SIDING VINTAGE WOOD COLOR: CEDAR</p>				

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

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

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.