

City of Sugar Hill
Planning Staff Report
DRB-CBD 22-002 / VAR 22-002

DATE: March 31, 2022
TO: Mayor and Council, Design Review Board
FROM: Planning Director *KA*
SUBJECT: Central Business District (CBD) design review and variances.
DRB CBD 22-002 / VAR 22-002
Stanley Street extension, residential component of phased mixed-use development.

REQUEST

The City of Sugar Hill has received an application from NGI Acquisitions LLC requesting design review board approval for a proposed development with multi-family residential and townhomes.

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 9. Final material and color selections are subject to on-site mock-up approval by City Manager.
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.
5. Minimum floor area ratio shall be reduced to .3:1. Prior to receiving the final certificate of occupancy, developer shall preserve a minimum of 5 acres of the 23-acre site in a permanent conservation easement or dedicate to the city for greenspace or recreation use.
6. Black vinyl coated chain link fence shall be an allowed fence material between the multi-use trail and the private use areas on the project site. Final design and location are subject to approval by city manager.

DISCUSSION

- Project is consistent with design criteria for architectural design, skyline and building materials. Generally, it relates well to existing and planned development patterns in this area of Downtown Sugar Hill.

- A proposed multi-use path which serves as an extension of the Sugar Hill Greenway from the future grade separated crossing over Highway 20 at or near the Alton Tucker Boulevard / Stanley Street intersection is the project's central organizing element connecting two new housing developments to a future neighborhood commercial node at Stanley Street and Highway 20 and earlier downtown development south of Highway 20.
- Given the significant land area to remain undeveloped for greenspace, stream buffers and steep topography, relief from the prescribed .5:1 minimum floor area ratio (FAR) is appropriate.
- In combination with the reduced FAR and the project's trail-oriented design, relief from the more urban streetscape design criteria for the site layout is also appropriate. (0-12' build-to-line, 500' maximum block length and rear inter-parcel access drives)

BACKGROUND

APPLICANT: NGI Acquisitions LLC, c/o Shane Lanham

OWNER: First Baptist Church of Sugar Hill

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

REQUEST: Design review approval for residential component of phased mixed-use development.

Multiple variances (detailed below).

PROPERTY SIZE: ± 23 acres

LOCATION: Stanley Street extended

Parcels: R7-305-009, R7-305-185, R7-292-156, R7-292-192, R7-292-200, R7-292-077

The applicant has articulated five specific requests as follows:

1. To allow single-use buildings with up to 150,000 square feet of gross floor area (§1004.E.1.VII). *Note: This standard does not apply to a multifamily residential building type. Therefore, the proposed use does not require variance for this ordinance section.*
2. To allow multifamily residential with a floor area ratio less than 0.5:1 (§1002.D.4).
3. To allow front loading garages (§1004.E.1.III). *Note: While the proposed townhome buildings do not have a walk-up entrance from a public street, the driveways and garage doors are in the rear yard relative to Hillcrest Drive. Therefore, the proposed use does not require variance for this ordinance section.*
4. To allow restricted fence materials adjacent to proposed greenway trail (§1002.E.1.IX).

5. To allow parking spaces to abut street and/or sidewalk (§1002.E.3.V). *Note: This standard is intended to apply to off-street parking along a public street or sidewalk where the streetscape is designed with a more urban pedestrian experience. Therefore, the proposed use does not require variance for this ordinance section.*

DESIGN REVIEW CRITERIA

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

Yes. The project is consistent with design criteria for architectural design, skyline and building materials. In consideration of land area allocated to greenspace and the proposed trail connection, the project is consistent with the intent of the design criteria for physical relation to streetscape, pedestrian experience, as well as vehicular and pedestrian access.

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

Generally, it relates well to existing and planned development patterns in this area of Downtown Sugar Hill and is consistent with the adopted vision and emerging character.

- 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 development.

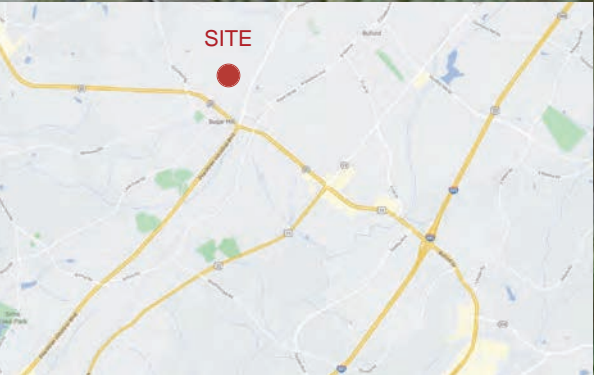
- 4. Will the interior arrangement or use have any effect on exterior architectural features and otherwise complies with the standards of this ordinance?***

No.

- 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.

No.



SITE INFORMATION

TOTAL SITE AREA (APPROX.) : 23.43 AC
RESIDENTIAL TRACT FAR : 0.382

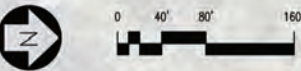
LEGEND

- MULTIFAMILY
- (M1) 4/5 SPLIT (TYPE VA) - 1 BUILDINGS
TOTAL : 117 UNITS (117 UNITS/BLDG)
 - (M2) 4/5 SPLIT (TYPE VA) - 1 BUILDINGS
TOTAL : 63 UNITS (63 UNITS/BLDG)
 - (M3) 4/5 SPLIT (TYPE VA) - 2 BUILDINGS
TOTAL : 108 UNITS (54 UNITS/BLDG)
- TOTAL UNITS : 288
TOTAL PARKING : 368 SPACES
PARKING RATIO PROVIDED : 1.25 SPACES/DU

- TOWNHOMES
- (TH) 2 STORY TOWNHOMES : 18 UNITS

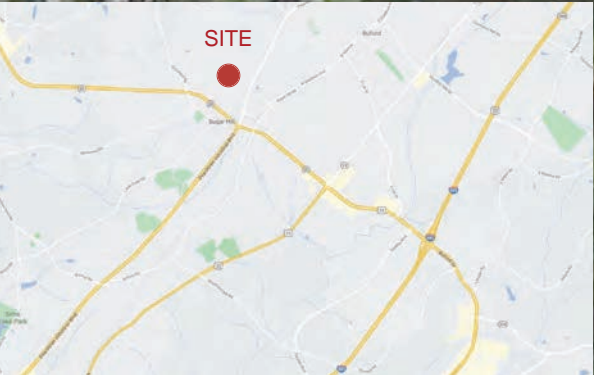
- AMENITIES
- (C1) MULTIFAMILY CLUB / LEASING
TOTAL : 7,000 SF
 - (C2) MAINTENANCE / DOG WASH
TOTAL : 950 SF
 - (C3) COURTYARD AMENITY AREA
- GREENWAY TRAIL PEDESTRIAN LIGHTING AND STANLEY STREET ROADWAY LIGHTING TO BE PAID FOR AND INSTALLED BY THE CITY OF SUGAR HILL

LAND AREA IS AVAILABLE ADJACENT TO GREENWAY TRAIL FOR PUBLIC ART ELEMENT TO PAID FOR AND INSTALLED BY THE CITY OF SUGAR HILL



SUGAR HILL MIXED USE
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SITE INFORMATION

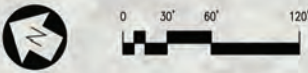
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BUILDING 600 - WEST ELEVATION



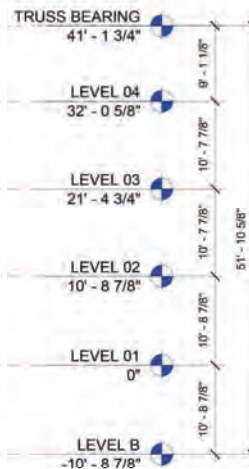
BUILDING 600 - NORTH ELEVATION



BUILDING 600 - EAST ELEVATION



BUILDING 600 - SOUTH ELEVATION



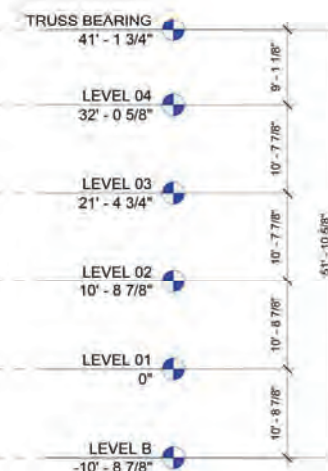
BUILDING 600 - WEST COURTYARD ELEVATION

MATERIAL PERCENTAGES:
FIBER CEMENT - 99%
BRICK - 1%



BUILDING 600 - EAST COURTYARD ELEVATION

MATERIAL PERCENTAGES:
FIBER CEMENT - 99%
BRICK - 1%



BUILDING 600 - NORTH CORTYARD ELEVATION

SUGAR HILL MIXED USE

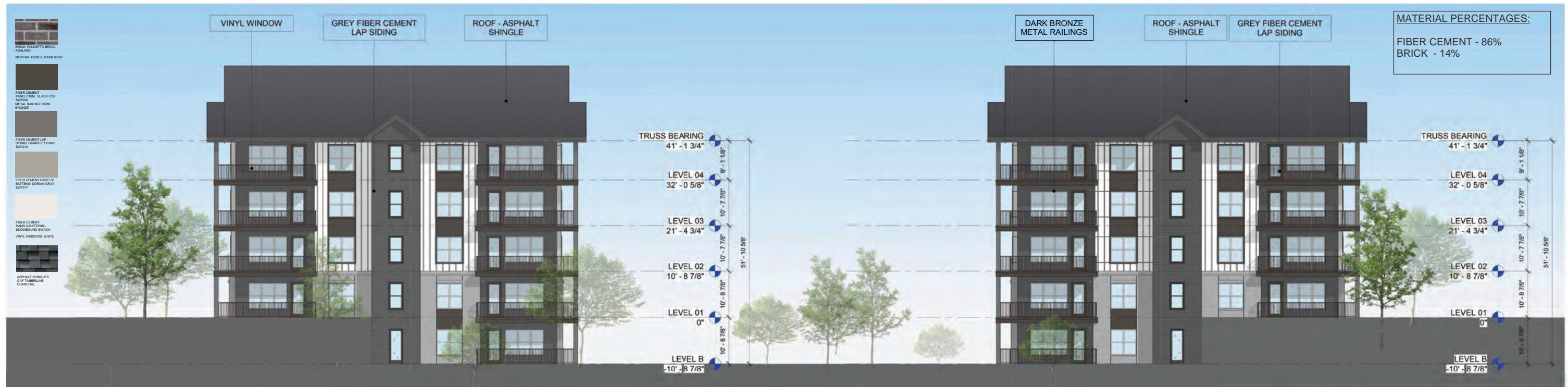
SUGAR HILL, GEORGIA
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NOV2020-04

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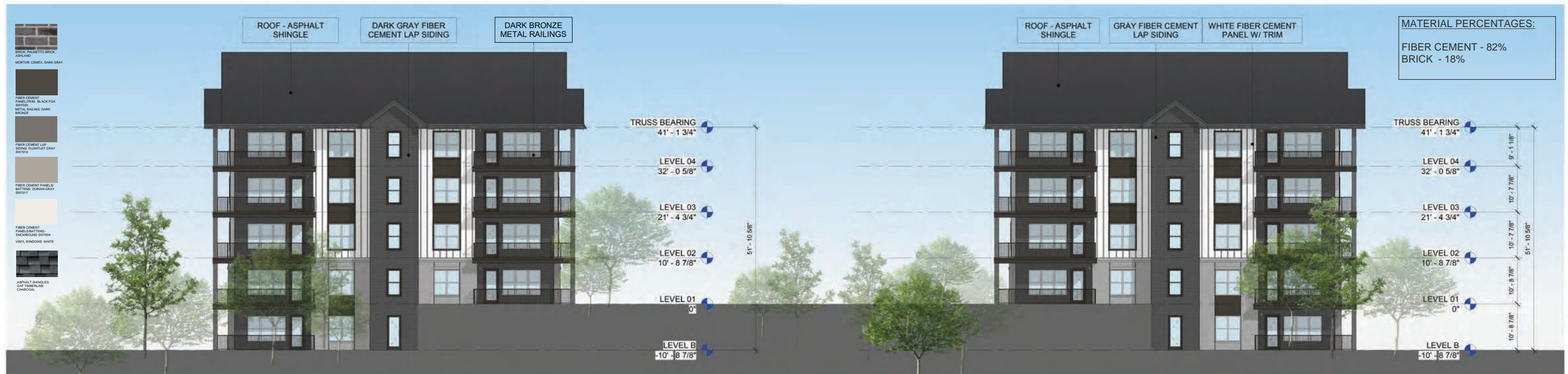




BUILDING 800/900 - SOUTH ELEVATION



BUILDING 700 - SOUTH ELEVATION



BUILDING 800/900 - NORTH ELEVATION



SUGAR HILL MIXED USE
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BUILDING 1300 - EAST ELEVATION

BUILDING 1300 - SOUTH ELEVATION
PERCENTAGES



BUILDING 1300 - WEST ELEVATION

BUILDING 1300 - NORTH ELEVATION

SUGAR HILL MIXED USE

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COMBINED LETTER OF INTENT FOR DESIGN REVIEW AND VARIANCE
APPLICATIONS OF NGI ACQUISITIONS, LLC

Mahaffey Pickens Tucker, LLP submits this Letter of Intent and attached Design Review and Variance applications (the “Applications”) on behalf of NGI Acquisitions, LLC (the “Applicant”), relative to an approximately 23.08-acre tract (the “Property”) located at the end of Stanley Street near its intersection with Nelson Brogdon Boulevard (State Route 20). The Property also has frontage on Hillcrest Drive and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard. The Property was recently rezoned to the BG zoning classification and annexed into the Central Business District Overlay to accommodate a proposed mixed-use development including single-family attached residential, multifamily residential, and commercial land uses.

Residential buildings in the proposed community would be constructed with facades of brick and fiber cement siding with additional attractive architectural elements as depicted on the building elevations submitted with the Application. A mix of 4/5 split multifamily buildings and two-story townhome buildings is proposed to create architectural diversity within the development and provide an appropriate transition of building heights moving north away from Nelson Brogdon Boulevard towards Hillcrest Drive.

The Applicant also requests approval of additional design elements and applicable variances from the requirements of The Zoning Ordinance of the City of Sugar Hill, Georgia (the “ZO”) relative to building square footage, townhome unit configuration, fencing, art features, gateway features at Stanley Street and SR 20, public/private access, trail alignment/design, trail easement/dedications, FAR, streetlights, sidewalks, maximum block length, building setbacks, location of parking areas, dumpster location, and inter-parcel access as set forth in the Applications.

The subject Property is oddly shaped, includes stream segments which meander across the Property, includes steep topography, and other special conditions and circumstances which do not result from the actions of the Applicant which frustrate strict compliance with the requirements of the ZO. Moreover, the residential component of the overall mixed-use development, which is the subject of the Applications, is located to the rear of the site and is thoroughly screened from view of adjacent right-of-way. A literal interpretation of the ZO would deprive the Applicant of the rights commonly enjoyed by other properties within the same district under the terms of the ZO by frustrating the development of a cohesive mixed-use development in accordance with the current zoning classification and site configuration of the Property as approved by the Mayor and Council of the City of Sugar Hill in October 2021. Approval of the requested relief would not confer on the Applicant any special privileges that are denied by the ZO to other lands, structures or buildings in the same district. The requested relief is the minimum necessary to allow the reasonable use of the land, buildings, and structures. Additionally, approval of the requested relief would allow the development of the Property in a manner which is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the ZO, and would not be injurious to the neighborhood, surrounding properties or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare.

The Applicant and its representatives welcome the opportunity to meet with staff of the City of Sugar Hill Planning and Development Department to answer any questions or to address any concerns relating to the matters set forth in this letter or in the Applications filed herewith. The Applicant respectfully requests your approval of these Applications.

Respectfully submitted this 3rd day of March, 2022.

MAHAFFEY PICKENS TUCKER, LLP

Shane M. Lanham

Shane M. Lanham
Attorneys for Applicant