



CITY COUNCIL MEETING STAFF REPORT

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
SUBMITTED BY: KATHI COOK
DRAFTED BY: MICHAEL WOODMAN

I. AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Z-17-03 THOMPSON STREET & BURNETT CIRCLE/DT-LW

CITY COUNCIL: MAY 22, 2017

This item was heard at the May 10, 2017 Planning Commission meeting. Two residents from Academy Park spoke regarding the applicant's request. Concerns were raised regarding the potential impacts of the applicant's stormwater outfall into the stream, as well as the need for a fence along the common property line with Academy Park. After discussion, the Planning Commission recommended to approve this item subject to the conditions below. Vote (4-2)

II. RECOMMENDATION:

Approve Z-17-03 Thompson Street & Burnett Circle/DT-LW request for rezoning, subject to the following conditions:

1. The site, consisting of approximately 5.722 acres, shall be zoned DT-LW and developed substantially similar to site plan submitted by PEC, dated 4/24/2017, except for modifications required to comply with the conditions below. However, lot yield depicted is not guaranteed and subject to meeting all City code requirements and conditions of zoning.
2. The residential density shall be limited to no more than 7.51 dwelling units per acre.
3. Minimum building setbacks shall be: 10' on Thompson Street and 20' on Westside Parkway.
4. A minimum 15' transitional, planted buffer shall be provided adjacent to the proposed City Park to the north, as shown on plan.
5. Final streetscape shall match the approved Thompson Street streetscape standards and include decorative pedestrian lighting as approved by Staff.
6. Roadways with on-street parking shall incorporate curb extensions at intersections. Internal road shall include on-street parking and sidewalk, if feasible, as approved by Staff.
7. Setback along Thompson Street shall be developed with a park like setting with heavy decorative landscape. The landscape shall tie into existing corner landscape and include plant selections promoting the entrance to the historic district. Area to be maintained by the HOA.
8. A stacked stone, brick or granite wall shall be constructed between homes and front landscape area. Under ledge wall lighting shall be required. Benches and a public art pedestal shall be approved by Staff.
9. Civic and amenity areas shall include a mix of trees, shrubs, and ground covers of varying heights, textures and colors as approved by Staff.
10. Development shall not be gated and roads will be private and maintained by the HOA.
11. Townhome architecture and materials shall be developed in compliance with the Alpharetta Downtown Code subject to approval by Staff. 4-sided architecture and materials shall be required.
12. In exchange for city-owned land and in lieu of payment for abandoned Burnett Circle right-of-way, the developer shall construct and dedicate a 0.98-acre City Park as depicted on the exhibit submitted by Site Solutions, including all depicted improvements. Trash in the stream at the northwest corner of the property shall be picked up by hand. City Park and Alpha Loop improvements shall be eligible for park impact fee credits. There shall be no credits for land value.
13. The greenspace amenity area between Units 5-10 and Units 33-38 shall link the Alpha Loop to the Thompson Street sidewalk through a pedestrian/bicycle connection. Connection shall be an 8' concrete accessible path and incorporated within a 10' pedestrian access easement dedicated to the City. Easement documents shall address maintenance responsibilities and remedies. The Decorative entrance signage with arch approved by Staff shall be provided in order to delineate public use of the Alpha Loop. Design to be approved by Staff in order to ensure uniform design. Trail shall be maintained by the HOA.
14. Developer shall also construct the Alpha Loop through the City Fitness Park property and receive parks impact fee credits.
15. Parking areas and internal driveways shall be heavily screened from Westside Parkway, Thompson Street and proposed City Park.

16. Internal sidewalks shall be provided to the fronts of units and shall be a minimum 5' with pedestrian-scale lighting provided throughout the development.
17. All buildings shall have connectivity to the sidewalk system.
18. Fencing visible from the street, Alpha Loop and City Fitness Park shall be decorative as approved by Staff.
19. Existing trees shall be preserved as depicted on Sheet Z5 zoning plan prepared by PEC, revised 4/24/2017. Additional encroachments shall be allowed per this plan with additional tree care to offset the encroachment as approved by Staff.
20. Remove exotic and invasive trees and shrubs within open space/tree save areas and within City Park area and replant where sparse as approved by Staff.
21. Street trees shall be required along Westside Parkway within the beauty strip, as well as behind the sidewalks as a continuation of what has been previously planted or designed along Westside Parkway along with heavy landscape screening as approved by Staff. Street Trees along Thompson Street shall follow the Thompson Street Standards or as approved by Staff.
22. Street trees of the proper size and locations shall be required along all internal roads as approved by Staff.
23. Off-site tree encroachment shall be limited to no more than 20% on the CRZ and shall require notification/approval by property owner, as approved by administrative variance.
24. Decorative paver aprons shall be required at the driveway as approved by Staff.
25. Landscape, hardscape, fences and walls shall compliment materials used along Thompson Street, as approved by Staff.
26. Developer shall provide easement to allow for a future road connection between the subject property and the property to the west.
27. No more than 10% of the residential units shall be permitted to be rented, as recorded in the HOA's declarations and covenants.
28. The developer shall procure and install a fence along the north side of the property adjacent to Academy Park, with input from Academy Park as to the location, type and height, final approval by Staff.

III. REPORT IN BRIEF:

The applicant, Residential South Partners, is requesting a rezoning on 5.722 acres from R-12 (Dwelling, 'For-Sale' Residential) and R-15 (Dwelling, 'For-Sale' Residential) to DT-LW (Downtown Live-Work) to allow for the construction of 43 'For-Sale' townhome units. The subject property is located on the north side of the Thompson Street/Westside Parkway intersection.

DISCUSSION

The submitted request, if approved, will allow Residential South Partners to construct 43 'For-Sale' townhome units on 5.722 acres with a residential density of 7.51 dwelling units per acre. The property is located on the north side of the Thompson Street/Westside Parkway intersection.

The subject property consists of 14 parcels of land zoned R-12 and R-15. Surrounding properties are zoned MU and R-15 to the east, R-4A to the north, MU to the south and R-12 to the west. These properties include a detached home to the west, Old Milton Holdings (A.K.A. East Village) and Avalon to the south, Academy Park to the north and Avalon and City Fitness Park to the east. The property has a comprehensive land use plan designation of Mixed Use Live Work, which permits the proposed townhome use.

The properties are currently developed with ten (10) single-family detached homes and two (2) parcels are City-owned. Many of the privately-owned properties on Burnett Circle have received Code violations over the years, including violations for inoperable vehicles, dilapidated structures, trash, unmaintained fences, and overgrown vegetation.

The applicant proposes a land swap whereby 0.62 acres of City-owned land would be provided to the applicant's development in exchange for a 0.98-acre improved City Park. The applicant also proposes the abandonment of the Burnett Circle right-of-way. If approved, the applicant will incorporate the abandoned right-of-way into the proposed development. New internal roads will be private and maintained by the HOA established for the subdivision.

As reflected in the table below, a total of 280 townhomes have been approved in the Downtown Overlay, including 111 along Thompson Street. For comparison, 156 single-family detached (SFD) units and 90 condominium units have been approved in the Downtown Overlay, including 94 SFD and 66 condominium units along Thompson Street. The Downtown Master Plan, which was approved in February 2015, included a Market Study (see table below) indicating that the Downtown area could absorb between 185 – 210 townhome units over the next five (5) years. It is worth noting that the *For-Sale Housing Demand Analysis for Downtown Master Plan; Alpharetta, GA* states the following:

“The outcome of this analysis is intended to provide a guide for master-planning the Downtown Alpharetta study area. As noted in the master plan document, the results are a measure of market viability not a prediction or recommendation for Downtown development.”

‘For-Sale’ Residential Approved within the Downtown Overlay

Development	Downtown Area	Number*
Edward Andrews Homes	Thompson St	23 TH/17 SFD
Thompson St Flats	Thompson St	24 C
Southerton	Thompson St	3 SFD
Old Milton Holdings	Thompson St	25 SFD/88 TH/42 C
Hedgewood (Voysey)	Thompson St	42 SFD
Aycock	Thompson St	7 SFD
East of Main	Academy St	41 SFD/42 TH
Lehigh Homes	Cumming St	9 SFD
Twelve on Canton	Canton St	12 SFD
Teasley Place	Canton St/Academy St	24 C
Chelsea Walk	Old Milton Pkwy	49 TH
Perling (Devore & South Main)	South Main St	78 TH
Total		156 SFD/280 TH/90 C

*SFD = Single Family Detached, TH = Townhome, C = Condominium

Downtown Master Plan 5-Year Market Study (Approved February 2015)

Housing Type	Number of Units
Townhomes	185 – 210
Single-Family Detached	40 – 45
High-end Condominium	45 – 50
Entry-mid Priced Condominium	220 – 250
For-Rent Apartments	315 - 340

Residential densities vary along Thompson Street, as shown in the table below. The applicant’s proposed density is 7.51 dwelling units per acre, which is consistent with other densities approved on Thompson Street.

Thompson Street – Residential Densities

Development Name	Type	Acres	Density
Southerton/Aycock	10 SFD	1.232 acres	8.1 units/acre
Hedgewood (Voysey)	42 SFD	25 acres	8.0 units/acre
Edward Andrews	40 TH	5.85 acres	6.8 units/acre
Old Milton Holdings/Notting Hill	25 SFD, 89 TH, 42 Condo	23.89 acres	6.53 units/acre
Thompson Street Flats	24 Condo	2.39 acres	10 units/acre
Thompson St/Burnett Circle	43 TH	5.722 acres	7.51 units/acre

SITE PLAN

The submitted site plan depicts 43 townhome units in nine (9) buildings. Each building is proposed to be three (3) stories or 40'. Townhome buildings along Thompson Street and Westside Parkway are oriented to those streets. 20 visitor parking spaces are depicted at various locations throughout the development, which complies with the Downtown Code requirement of 0.15 parking spaces per residential unit. One (1) project driveway is depicted on Thompson Street. 8' sidewalks are proposed along Thompson Street and Westside Parkway. Minimum building setbacks are shown as follows:

- Westside Parkway – 20'
- Thompson Street – 10'
- Internal (Side) Setbacks – 0'
- Internal (Rear) Setbacks – 10' (alley), 3' (No alley)

A 0.98-acre linear park is depicted along the north side of the property, including a 12' path (Alpha Loop), overlook of the stream, seating, landscape and green space with connection to the City Fitness Park to the east. An eight-foot (8') path is provided through the development connecting the Alpha Loop on the north side of the property to the sidewalk along Thompson Street. The park is proposed in conjunction with a land swap for city-owned properties along Westside Parkway and Thompson Street.

There are several trees on the subject property, consisting mainly of Hardwoods (Oak, Poplar, Maple and Dogwood). Staff had concerns with the applicant's initial site plan, which did not save many trees. However, staff encouraged the applicant to re-examine the proposed site plan and the applicant's revised site plan now incorporates several tree save areas throughout the site.

The applicant intends to provide for underground detention, which will outfall into the stream.

BUILDING ELEVATIONS & ARCHITECTURE

The applicant submitted the elevation below, which is described as Farmhouse Vernacular. Farmhouse Vernacular is not currently an approved architectural style in the Alpharetta Downtown Code. As depicted in the rendering below, the townhome buildings are proposed to be brick and stone accented with limited use of wood siding. Units 22, 32 and 39 have side elevations that could be visible from Westside Parkway. The applicant's architect provided the following description of the Farmhouse Vernacular style:

“The Farmhouse Vernacular is inspired by the iconic old farmsteads, the style offers a new or fresh look, capturing nostalgic memories, and blending with the spirit of modernism. It has classic, elegant and simple, but finer crafted exterior detailing. Exteriors feature porches, balconies and courtyards, which are accessed by Modern glass windows, French doors as well as sliding glass doors. Exterior materials are modern with the use of Brick and Stone accented with limited uses of wood siding, minimal cornice details and simply detailed wood columns. Color is the most basic element of farmhouse style with white being the predominate color of the past, todays modern farmhouse style will include touches of color using light beige or light gray.”



The City's Downtown Architect reviewed the proposed building elevations and finds that the proposed architectural style is not an approved style in the Alpharetta Downtown Code. The Farmhouse Vernacular style is consistent with the architecture historically common in rural areas. The Downtown Architect believes that this style is compatible with the approved architectural styles in the Alpharetta Downtown Code and supports adding this style to the Code. Staff will bring this style to Council for consideration in June. If the style is not approved, the applicant will be required to adhere to the existing architectural styles.

According to the applicant, townhome units will range in size from approximately 2,700 to 3,250 square feet, with an anticipated price points ranging from \$675,000 to \$800,000.

TRAFFIC

The applicant submitted trip generation figures for the proposed project showing that the proposed 43 townhome units would generate 30 PM Peak Hour trips.

SCHOOLS

Residential development is known to increase school enrollment. Fulton County calculated the potential maximum number of children who may live on the property by using the Fulton County Schools standard calculation to identify the number of children that a residential development will generate. The following chart outlines these figures:

FULTON COUNTY SCHOOLS – 43 Townhome Units

School	Single Family Average #
Manning Oaks Elementary School	2 to 11 students
Hopewell Middle School	0 to 4 students
Alpharetta High School	2 to 8 students
TOTAL	4 to 23 students

Based on the total figure for all three school levels, it can be assumed that the proposed development could house approximately 4 – 23 school age children. Numbers provided by Fulton County Schools show that Alpharetta High School has capacity; however, Manning Oaks Elementary School and Hopewell Middle School are currently over capacity.

STANDARDS FOR ZONING CHANGES

The Planning Commission and the City Council shall consider the following standards in considering a rezoning application, giving due weight or priority to those factors particularly appropriate to the circumstances of each application:

a. Whether the zoning proposal will permit a use that is suitable in view of the zoning use and development of adjacent and nearby property.

Response: The development proposal is consistent with the Downtown Master Plan and Comprehensive Plan. In addition, the proposed residential use is compatible with surrounding properties that are developed or being developed with residential uses.

b. Whether the zoning proposal will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property.

Response: The proposal would not adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby properties, as the proposed use is compatible with surrounding properties.

c. Whether the zoning proposal will adversely affect the natural environment.

Response: The proposed development will have impacts on the natural environment. However, the applicant has worked with staff to save several existing specimen and trees of quality throughout the site.

d. Whether there are substantial reasons why the property cannot or should not be used as currently zoned.

Response: The property could be developed under the current zoning. However, the applicant’s proposal is consistent with the Mixed Use Live Work comprehensive land use plan designation of the property and the existing zoning would not allow for a site layout that promotes a walkable downtown environment.

e. Whether the zoning proposal will result in a use that will or could cause an excessive or burdensome use of public facilities or services, including but not limited to existing streets and transportation facilities, schools, water or sewer utilities, and police or fire protection.

Response: The zoning proposal would result in an increased demand on public facilities and services. The applicant’s proposal will result in a net increase of 33 residential units. Ten (10) single-family detached units currently exist on the subject property. However, the applicant’s property is located within a walkable, mixed-use environment and has the necessary infrastructure to support the development. In addition, the applicant is developing a 1-acre City Park and a portion of the Alpha Loop.

f. Whether the zoning proposal is supported by new or changing conditions not anticipated or reflected in the existing zoning on the property.

Response: The subject property is located within the Downtown Overlay in an area designated Mixed Use Live Work. Therefore, the proposed use is consistent with this designation.

g. Whether the zoning proposal reflects a reasonable balance between the promotion of the public health, safety, morality or general welfare against the right to unrestricted use of property.

Response: The rezoning request reflects a reasonable balance as the proposed use complements other approved developments along the Thompson Street corridor.

h. Whether there are substantial reasons why the property cannot be used in accordance with existing zoning.

Response: The property could be developed under the current zoning. However, the applicant's proposal is consistent with the Mixed Use Live Work comprehensive land use plan designation of the property and the existing zoning would not allow for a site layout that promotes a walkable downtown environment.

i. The extent to which the zoning proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Response: The zoning proposal meets the Comprehensive Land Use Plan designation of the property, which is Mixed Use Live Work.

CONCURRENCES

City Staff has reviewed the applicant's proposal and finds that it can generally support the request for rezoning. The proposal will result in a residential development that is consistent with the Downtown Master Plan and Comprehensive Land Use Plan. In addition, the proposed City Park would represent an expansion of the City Fitness Park and Alpha Loop. While staff has concerns over the number of townhomes approved in the Downtown Overlay, the applicant's proposal will result in the redevelopment of several properties and further facilitate the Alpha Loop project. Staff recommends conditions requiring single-family detached units along Thompson Street, which is consistent with the Old Milton Holdings and Edward Andrews Homes developments along Thompson Street.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

The report submitted by the applicant states that letters were mailed to each property owner within 500' of the subject property stating the applicant's intent. The applicant held two (2) community meetings on February 2, 2017 and on April 17, 2017. According to the applicant's public participation report, there were no concerns from surrounding residents.

IV. ATTACHMENTS:

- Site Plan
- Building Elevations/Renderings