

**GAINESVILLE PLANNING AND APPEALS BOARD
MINUTES OF MEETING
APRIL 8, 2014**

CALL TO ORDER Chairman @ 5:30 p.m.

Members Present: Chairman Dean Dadisman, Vice Chairman Doyle Johnson and Board Members Dexter Stanley, Jane Fleming and John Snyder

Members Absent: Board Members Connie Rucker and George Hokayem

Staff Present: Community Development Director Rusty Ligon, Planning Manager Matt Tate and Recording Secretary Judy Foster

Others Present: Council Members George Wangemann and Bob Hamrick

MINUTES OF MARCH 11, 2014

There was a motion to approve the Minutes as presented.

Motion made by Board Member Snyder
Motion seconded by Board Member Fleming
Vote – 5 favor, 2 absent (Rucker, Hokayem)

NEW BUSINESS

A. Rezoning Request

- 1) Request from **Mercy Housing** to rezone a 2.2± acres tract located between Queen City Parkway, Banks Street, Gordon Avenue and Longstreet Avenue (a/k/a **620 and 628 Gordon Avenue SW; 0, 602 and 612 Longstreet Avenue SW; 627 Queen City Parkway SW; 504, 512, 514, 520 and 528 Banks Street SW**) from Residential-II (R-II), Office and Institutional (O-I), General Business (G-B) and Heavy Industrial (H-I) to Planned Unit Development (P-U-D).

Ward: Three

Tax Parcel Number(s): 01-013-002-001, 002, 003, 004, 005, 006, 007, 007A, 008, 009 and 010

Request: Multi-family housing

Staff Presentation: Planning Manager Matt Tate gave the following staff presentation:

The applicant is proposing to rezone the subject 2.2 acres property from Residential-II (R-II), Office and Institutional (O-I), General Business (G-B) and Heavy Industrial (H-I) to Planned Unit Development (P-U-D) for 90 multi-family apartments. The subject property is located within the Midtown Overlay Zone and consists of eleven separate parcels which contain eight older rental homes, various accessory buildings and one metal warehouse building currently occupied as a church. The subject tract fronts Banks Street, Gordon Avenue, Longstreet Avenue and Queen City Parkway.

The development is to consist of an L-shaped, 94,100 +/- square foot building that will include 5-stories mostly facing Queen City Parkway and a portion of Banks Street, and 4-stories facing Banks Street. The property will feature a leasing office, community space with computer center, tot lot, gazebo and BBQ area for residents.

A total of 131 parking spaces are proposed consisting of 69 surface parking spaces, 41 covered parking spaces and 21 on street parking spaces along Banks Street and Gordon Avenue. Vehicular access is proposed from two driveways located off of Gordon Avenue.

The apartments will be targeted toward households at 50% to 60% of the area medium income as well as there will be approximately 20% of the units that are unrestricted and will include 1, 2 and 3 bedroom units. The overall gross density for the project is 40.9 dwelling units per acre. On site management consisting of a Manager and maintenance person are present Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM and for approximately 5 hours on Saturday.

The Gainesville Future Development Map for the City of Gainesville places the subject property within the *Mixed-Use Midtown* land use category. The Character Area map places the property within the *Central Core* Character Area specifically within the *Downtown/Midtown* subarea. Both support the proposed use and state that Residential uses are strongly encouraged and should be the dominant land use wherever possible. In addition, mixed-income high quality multi-family housing development should be targeted to take advantage of the open space investment made in the Midtown Greenway and related parks.

The Police Department provided comments that in summary determined that amended traffic controls should be considered and recommended that no on-street parking be allowed. As well, the apartment complex have a good, aggressive, and diligent property manager on site willing to work with law enforcement to ensure the apartments are not a burden but an asset.

The Planning Division staff is recommending conditional approval of this rezoning request based on the Comprehensive Plan and the adjacent residential, nonresidential and public uses with the following conditions:

Conditions

- 1. The development standards within narrative, site plan and architectural renderings submitted with the applicant's rezoning application shall be made part of the zoning ordinance, and shall be subject to the Community Development Director approval.**
- 2. The proposed on street parking spaces along Banks Street and Gordon Avenue shall be subject to the approval of the Gainesville Public Works Director and both Banks Street and Gordon Avenue shall be required to maintain two, 12-foot wide lanes. Any required road and striping improvements shall be at the expense of the developer.**
- 3. An updated as-built survey/plat of the subject property, indicating existing conditions and all improvements shall be recorded prior to obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy for the future use.**

Applicant Presentation: Jason Braga, 1100 Howell Mill Road, Unit 410, Atlanta, representative for Mercy Housing which is an affordable housing developer, stated that this is a project that seems to be needed in this area. He explained that they will be targeting individuals, families and seniors whose income is 50% to 60% of the area medium income, noting that 20% of the 90 units will be unrestricted. Mr. Braga stated

that Community Development Department staff visited one of their projects in Rome called Etowah Terrace in 2013 and then approached Mercy Housing about the possibility of them doing a similar project here. He gave an overview of the application process through the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, noting it was a competitive process and would be funded through tax credits and banking partnerships. He also gave a timeline of 12 months for the construction cycle if they are awarded the project, and they would begin pre-leasing units before construction is completed. He hoped the project would spur other redevelopment in the area.

Vice Chairman Johnson asked if there were limits on the number of occupants per unit. Mr. Braga stated that normally it is 2 occupants per bedroom for a maximum of 6 occupants in a 3 bedroom unit and anything more than that would raise a red flag to the property management team.

Vice Chairman Johnson also questioned parking, noting if there are 2 adults per unit, there would not be enough parking spaces. Mr. Braga stated that some residents will not have cars at all, while others may have 1 or 2 cars. He stated that in other developments within the region, they have used 1.25 spaces per unit; however, this development would have 1.45 spaces per unit and they feel comfortable that it will be sufficient for the project.

Board Member Snyder asked about the percentage of success Mercy Housing has experienced with DCA in being awarded these projects. Mr. Braga stated that Mercy Housing has been in Georgia since 1996 and all their developments have been funded through tax credits. He stated that they generally submit 2 applications each cycle and are usually granted one of those, noting they have a good track record with the State and the State likes working with them. He also commented that they are currently working on a large development in Savannah with 500 units.

Board Member Fleming asked if Mercy Housing was a non-profit or for-profit organization. Mr. Braga stated that they were a non-profit agency, noting they were originally founded by a group of nuns back in the 1980s to help with low income families at a time when affordable housing was lacking and/or very dilapidated. He stated that Mercy Housing has grown to one of the largest non-profits in the nation.

FAVOR: None

OPPOSED: None

Planning and Appeals Board Comments: Board Member Fleming commented that housing is needed in Midtown and this looks like an attractive project; however, a lot of people have invested in this area and she was not sure that the location was the best choice for this project right now as it will have ramifications for years to come.

Upon inquiry by Vice Chairman Johnson, Community Development Director Rusty Ligon confirmed that the City was at a housing conference in Rome and was very impressed by the Mercy Housing development they visited. Mr. Ligon stated that Mercy Housing came to Gainesville, and staff showed them around the area and they zeroed in on the proposed site and moved forward from there, noting the City was not involved in property acquisition.

Vice Chairman Johnson asked if this project is a good fit for Midtown redevelopment. Mr. Ligon stated that he believed it was a good fit; however, he felt it should not be

replicated several times throughout the City. He commented that while the City needs affordable housing, they want it to be high quality development.

Mr. Ligon clarified that this project is not public housing, noting it would be privately owned, and the City would receive property tax revenue from the development as well as the residents would be paying rent for housing. He stated that it makes sense to redevelop here and felt it would lead to positive things in Midtown. Mr. Ligon stated that the City needs all kinds of housing in Midtown and this project should help with redevelopment.

There was a motion to recommend conditional approval of the request to rezone the subject property from Residential-II (R-II), Office and Institutional (O-I), General Business (G-B) and Heavy Industrial (H-I) to Planned Unit Development (P-U-D) with the following conditions:

Conditions

- 1. The development standards within narrative, site plan and architectural renderings submitted with the applicant's rezoning application shall be made part of the zoning ordinance, and shall be subject to the Community Development Director approval.**
- 2. The proposed on street parking spaces along Banks Street and Gordon Avenue shall be subject to the approval of the Gainesville Public Works Director and both Banks Street and Gordon Avenue shall be required to maintain two, 12-foot wide lanes. Any required road and striping improvements shall be at the expense of the developer.**
- 3. An updated as-built survey/plat of the subject property, indicating existing conditions and all improvements shall be recorded prior to obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy for the future use.**

Motion made by Vice Chairman Johnson

Motion seconded by Board Member Snyder

Vote – 3 favor, 2 opposed (Stanley, Fleming), 2 absent (Rucker, Hokayem)

ADJOURNMENT

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:50 PM.

Motion made by Board Member Fleming

Motion seconded by Board Member Stanley

Vote – 5 favor, 2 absent (Rucker, Hokayem)

Respectfully submitted,

Dean Dadisman, Chairman

Judy Foster, Recording Secretary