

**GAINESVILLE PLANNING AND APPEALS BOARD  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
JANUARY 14, 2020**

**CALL TO ORDER** Chairman Carter at 5:30 p.m.

**Members Present:** Chairman Doug Carter, Vice-Chair Jane Fleming and Board Members Rich White, Eddie Martin, Kelvin Simmons, Carmen Delgado and Ryan Thompson

**Members Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Community & Economic Development Director Rusty Ligon, Community & Economic Development Deputy Director Matt Tate and Recording Secretary Gwen Fleming

**Others Present:** Council Members George Wangemann & Barbara Brooks

**MINUTES OF DECEMBER 10, 2019**

Motion made by Board Member Delgado  
Motion seconded by Board Member White  
**Vote – 7 favor**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Annexation Request**

- 1) Request from **Moez Hasni / WS Hotels, LLC** to annex a 5.503± acres tract located on the northeast corner of Jesse Jewell Parkway and Crescent Drive, having frontage on Exit 24 / I-985 (a/k/a **400 Crescent Drive**) and to establish zoning as General Business (G-B) with a special use.  
Ward Number: Two  
Tax Parcel Number(s): 15-033C-000-077  
Request: Extended stay hotel and retail building

**Staff Presentation:** Deputy Director Matt Tate gave the following staff presentation:

The applicant is proposing to annex the subject 5.5± acres property with a zoning of G-B with a special use. The special use portion of the request is to allow for an Extended Stay Hotel which is a use not inherently permitted within G-B zoning without further approval. The property is contiguous to the city limits to the east across I-985 and is currently zoned Highway Business (H-B) within unincorporated Hall County. The property consists of two tracts of land which includes surplus property from the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) that was recently sold to the applicant. There are no structures within the property as previously a single-family home was demolished and the site was graded for a stormwater easement and detention pond located on the north end of the property. As well, the property is located within the Limestone Parkway Overlay Zone and the Gateway Corridor Overlay Zone. Surrounding uses include single-family homes, Hall County Farmers Market, Hall County Fire Station #7, Mini-warehouses, Assisted living facility, apartments and vacant land.

The purpose of the request is to access sewer for the development of a 4-story, 123-room, Woodspring Signature Suites Extended Stay Hotel and a freestanding, 7,500 square foot retail building which may include a future Dunkin Donuts restaurant. According to the applicant, the proposed extended stay hotel will not include amenities such as a swimming pool or breakfast/kitchen operations. One access driveway is proposed along Crescent Drive near the center of the property. A possible second driveway on Crescent Drive may be proposed toward the north end of the property with further study. A traffic impact study was conducted for this proposal which included traffic counts at nine intersections: The proposed use would generate 1,526 total daily trips and 106 AM / 108 PM trips. A summary and recommendations were provided of which Gainesville Public Works Department has reviewed with recommended zoning conditions. The subject property is located within the *Retail/Commercial* future land use category and within the *Limestone Medical Corridor* Character Area. It is staff's opinion that a *standard* lodging services hotel and retail building is supported by the Comprehensive Plan and the ULDC.

It is staff's opinion that the subject property is less conducive for an extended stay hotel as the proposal does not meet the 100'-buffer requirements for extended stay hotels adjacent to the residential properties (75-foot natural buffer and 25-foot landscaped buffer). There are also no curb/ gutter and sidewalks for pedestrian connectivity and safety along Crescent Drive. In addition, the proposed 4-story structure will be required to meet the building height limitations within the Limestone Parkway Overlay Zone which will require a front yard building setback of 75-feet from Crescent Drive.

The Planning Division staff is recommending **conditional approval** of the proposed annexation request with **General Business (G-B) zoning**, based on the Comprehensive Plan and the adjacent residential and non-residential land uses with the following conditions:

1. **The development standards within the applicant's narrative, concept plan and architectural renderings shall be made part of the zoning ordinance, and shall be subject to the Community & Economic Development Director approval. Any zoning conditions adopted as part of this zoning ordinance that conflict with the applicant's narrative, concept plan and architectural renderings shall take precedence over the applicant's development standards.**
2. **Prohibited uses for the subject property shall include extended stay hotels, motels/hotels with rooms accessed from the exterior of the building, adult novelty stores, group homes, crisis centers, adult entertainment centers, pawn shops, dollar-type stores, massage parlors, hookah lounge, tobacco or vaping stores, gas station/convenience stores, tire stores, auto parts stores, auto body shops, automobile sales establishments, marine sales or repair stores, automated or non-automated car washes, truck stops, coin-laundry facilities, tattoo parlors, psychics, fortune tellers, clairvoyants and the like.**
3. **The proposed buildings shall meet the Limestone Parkway Overlay Zone and Gateway Corridor Overlay Zone standards.**
4. **The frontage landscape areas shall be sodded with grass and contain minimum 3-inch caliper size hardwood trees subject to the Community & Economic Development Director approval.**
5. **The subject property shall be limited to one (1) multi-tenant sign serving both the proposed hotel use and the retail building not to exceed 15-feet in height, 80 square feet of sign face area, 120 square feet of total sign structure area with internal or external lighting; or limited to two (2) monument signs, each not to exceed 10-feet in height, 50 square feet of sign face area, 96 square feet of total**

**sign structure area with internal or external lighting. Wall/building signs shall also be permitted upon meeting the standards of the Unified Land Development Code. No electronic message board sign, changeable copy sign or billboard shall be permitted.**

- 6. An updated as-built boundary survey/plat of the subject property, indicating all improvements required for the proposed use, shall be recorded prior to obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy.**
- 7. All access point design for the subject property shall require review and approval by the Hall County Public Works Department, Gainesville Public Works Director and the Georgia Department of Transportation. All required access / traffic / sidewalk improvements associated with the proposed development shall be constructed at the full expense of the property owner/developer and shall include a minimum of the following.**
  - a) Crescent Drive shall be improved to City standards along both sides of the roadway for the length of the proposed site. This includes roadway, curb and gutter, sidewalk, etc.**
  - b) Jesse Jewell Parkway frontage shall be improved to City standards along the front roadway side for the length of the proposed site. This includes curb and gutter, sidewalk, etc. There is currently an existing right turn lane at this location.**
  - c) The proposed RCUT at Crescent Drive and Jesse Jewell Parkway to allow left turns onto Crescent Drive shall be reviewed by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). This will require coordination between the development and GDOT for permitting approval/denial. Any correspondence from the GDOT shall be forwarded to the Gainesville Public Works Department.**
  - d) The westbound left turn lane on Jesse Jewell Parkway at Textile Way and the Jesse Jewell Parkway at East Crescent Drive intersection shall be reviewed by GDOT for improvements to accompany any U-Turn movements. This will require coordination between the development and GDOT for permitting approval/denial. Any correspondence from the GDOT shall be forwarded to the Gainesville Public Works Department.**
  - e) Southern site access on Crescent Drive is proposed to be a full access side street STOP. With the increased development in the area and the projected peak hour/daily trips for the development, it is recommended that the driveway also include a right turn decel lane into the development with sufficient spacing for the decel lane from the intersection of Jesse Jewell Parkway at no cost to the City. The decel lane should be a full width storage of 100 feet with a 50-foot taper.**
  - f) Northern site access on Crescent Drive is proposed to be a full access side street STOP. Should this access be built, site distance shall be evaluated to determine the type of access permitted and it shall meet all City of Gainesville requirements.**

### **Applicant Presentation:**

**Larry Bielski**, 639 Houston Valley Road, Ringgold, stated he is the architect consultant for the applicant. They would like to table the request and would like to examine options and interests for commercial tenants. The ordinance has changed since the application was submitted to the County and they would like to come back with a proposal to the Board. He stated they want to turn the property into something. Also, the applicant would like to speak about the extended stay hotel. He stated extended stay hotels have a bad reputation but this is not a typical extended stay. It has less amenities and less staff. He presented a brochure to the Board for their review. He stated Mark Acampora has been in contact with GDOT and will comply with improvements and with the recommendations.

**Moez Hasni**, 2118 DeFours Ferry Road, Atlanta, stated he is one of the applicants of the project. He advised that he would like to give some background information about the property. The property was originally and still is part of Hall County. He stated they have been to the Hall County Planning Board about zoning and was approved. In the process, the City of Gainesville stated it would need to be annexed into the City for water and sewer. He stated there have been meetings with the City Manager and Mr. Tate to explain the project and it is no different than another recent project that was approved at Town Center Suites down the road. This sort of falls into the same category. It is an extended stay but it's not your typical extended stay where someone could stay for six months in a row or one month in a row. Most of our clients typically stay for two weeks. A lot of these people are construction workers and hospital workers. There will be no swimming pool, no barbeque area, everything is in order, with 24-hour security on the property. He stated he tried to explain to the City that there are problems with extended stay hotels with a lot of these older properties in the past. In order to fix those problems, this is the answer. Because if you don't allow a better extended stay to come into the market, all you're doing is warning people and allowing people to keep doing what they're doing. They have no incentive, no reason to change what they're doing if they have no competition. Because they know if the City keeps denying anything new then they are protected by that and doing it. He stated this is the only way to help clean up. He stated once you put this product on the market it will affect their sales and reputation. They will be forced to remodel or to shut down because no one wants to stay at a hotel like that. The reason they are staying now is because of no other option. We spoke with people in the poultry industry and said they have people stay at Mall of Georgia or further down because nothing safe for extended stay locally. This is the reason they came up with this. He stated they were trying to do this project next to Kroger in New Holland which is a commercial district but at that time we were denied and now it seems they want to deny this request as well, noting the code amendment was adopted just two weeks ago. He stated they have had discussions with Cracker Barrel and Dunkin Donuts about locating here. We are trying to bring in some quality tenants, clean up the area. They have no issues with the proposed buffer zone as they can always move the building back. As far as sidewalks and streets, there is no problem in doing what the City wants as long as they work with us in having an extended stay hotel which we will of course follow all the rules and regulations. He would like to table the request to come back with new drawings showing the buffer zones and see the new layout. He stated it will give the Board time to think about it as well.

**Mark Acampora**, 858 Myrtle Street, Atlanta, stated he was the traffic engineer for this project. He stated there were discussions about a left turn lane at Crescent Drive in which they are working with GDOT on a design that might work there at Crescent Drive and East Crescent Drive. They are in discussions with GDOT to come up with a solution and are making progress.

**FAVOR:** None

**OPPOSE:** Chairman Carter shared an email with the Board from Rock Baker, a nearby property owner, regarding statistics on crime rate at extended stay hotels. Mr. Baker is opposed to the request and feels it would not be good for the area.

**Planning and Appeals Board Comments:** Chairman Doug Carter stated to the Board there are several options before them. He stated the applicant has made a request to table the application and there is the staff report and there is no rush for any motions or decisions. He stated if anyone has any questions for the applicant, they are here to answer any of those. Chairman Carter turned it over to the Board for any discussion and a motion.

**There was a motion to deny the request.**

Motion made by Board Member Martin  
Motion seconded by Board Member White  
**Vote – 7 favor**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**There was a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:56 p.m.**

Motion made by Board Member Simmons  
Motion seconded by Board Member Martin  
**Vote – 7 favor**

Respectfully submitted,

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Doug Carter, Chairman

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Gwen Fleming, Recording Secretary