

Planning Commission of Peachtree City
Meeting Minutes
Monday, September 23, 2024
6:30 PM

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Scott Ritenour opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Vice Chairman Kenneth Hamner, Andrew Kriz, Mitzi Johnston, Felicia Reeves, and Alternate Ray Liotta were also in attendance. Also present were Planning Director Robin Cailloux, Senior Planner Lora Hooks, Recording Secretary Martha Barksdale, and IT Specialists Steven Shelton and Katelyn Daws.

Additions or Deletions

Cailloux announced that the public hearing for the Special Use Permit for 400 Crosstown Drive would be postponed until October 28 due to an illness on the applicant's team.

Ritenour suggested the new agenda items be moved ahead of the public hearing. Kriz made that motion, and Hamner seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Announcements and Reports

Ritenour announced this was Johnston's last meeting and thanked her for her service and commitment.

Approval of Minutes

1. Planning Commission Meeting September 9, 2024

Hamner moved to approve the September 9, 2024, Planning Commission meeting minutes. Johnston seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing

1. Special Use Permit request for 400 Crosstown Drive

Postponed until October 28, 2024

2. Rezoning request for a portion of 201 Aberdeen Parkway from GC to GR

This request was to rezone 14.6 acres of a 38-acre tract at 201 Aberdeen Parkway from General Commercial (GC) to General Residential (GR), which allowed up to 12 dwelling units per acre, for an active senior living community. Cailloux pointed out the property on a zoning map, saying most of the property was undeveloped and that they would not be making any changes to the Crown Plaza property. She presented a rendering of the proposed development, showing two courtyards flanked by residential buildings and a community building up front.

The zoning ordinance requires they consider six criteria when reviewing a rezoning, and Cailloux said the first four could be assessed at staff level; the remainder were the applicant's responsibility.

The first asked if the proposal was in conformity with the policy and intent of the future land use plan, which had two parts—Comprehensive Plan policies and Future Land Use (FLU) map. Staff had identified policies that were addressed by the request. Cailloux showed a map of the village centers in this area. The policies were:

- Encourage safe, walkable, aesthetically pleasing Village Centers that include spaces for social gatherings;
- Maximize utilization of existing infrastructure, reduce the service-delivery impacts created by suburban sprawl, and practice sound financial stewardship of tax revenue by encouraging redevelopment of property;
- Continue using enhanced landscape standards throughout the City;
- Promote the availability of senior living accommodations in order to keep up with changing demographics;
- Offset dense residential developments with greenbelts, parks, and civic plazas.

The other part of the criteria called for them to see if the proposal complied with the FLU, which for this property was commercial. Appropriate land uses in a village center included single-family cluster, multi-family, open space, community services, office, mixed use, and commercial. Appropriate zonings include GR, limited use residential (LUR) for higher density housing, GC, and limited use commercial (LUC) for mixed use.

The next criteria considered if the development impacted surrounding uses or vice versa. Compatible uses with GR, which was not the same as single-family, Cailloux observed, included other GR, and staff recommended adding a minimum 10-foot-wide evergreen landscape buffer between this and the adjacent GR properties. GR also could be compatible with GC if the noise and light intrusion was mitigated, so staff suggested evergreen buffers there, as well.

Connie Engel of Strada Communities spoke for the applicant, recalling that they had proposed a similar development more than a year ago at another site. Citizens told her then that they liked the concept, but not the location, and she said they began talking with Crown Plaza, which offered many amenities they could use. Engel pointed out that the population was aging, and there was no one solution that fit every person's circumstances. This would be a fun development, she said, with many activities on-site. It was not apartments nor was it assisted living or memory care. It was for people who wanted to get out of their big houses and the responsibilities that went with home ownership.

Ritenour opened the public hearing, asking first for anyone who supported this request. He noted that there would be no opportunity for public input after the hearing was closed.

Keith Larson said he was in favor of this proposal. He noted that the 1972 master

plan said Peachtree City would be oriented towards people of every age and called for a variety of housing types. Peachtree City needed additional housing for its growing senior population who no longer wanted to keep their larger homes but wanted to stay in Peachtree City. Their old houses would then be available for others to purchase, Larson remarked. He added that additional traffic might not be a problem—many seniors relied exclusively on golf carts.

Jerry Ragsdale of Thrive Senior Living said he lived in Atlanta now but grew up in Fayette County. Thrive had 47 of these type communities throughout the southeast. This community might not be attractive to everyone, but it was to a lot of people, and he urged the audience not to look at this only through the filter of their own opinions.

Bob Patel represented the ownership of Crown Plaza and wanted to state that the Crown Plaza was not in receivership, as some people were saying. They intended to stay long-term in Peachtree City. He felt this would be great for people who wanted to downsize. Crown Plaza wanted to have a synergy with this development. He noted that portion of the land was not utilized currently, and this was a great opportunity to develop and bring in tax revenue.

No one else wished to speak in support, and Ritenour called on opponents.

John Dufresne called for the Planning Commission to recommend denial because he said this proposal did not meet many requirements of the ordinance, such as the requirement of two parking spaces per dwelling unit; this had 1.2. He said a 40-foot rear setback was required because of the adjacent residential. The number of units per building was too large to meet the zero-foot side setback requirements, he continued. He said a 50-foot-wide city-owned greenbelt was required here. GC properties had to have direct access to a public road, and Dufresne said this eliminated Crown Plaza's access. He also reported that Crown Plaza had many fewer parking spaces than were required, and there was not a transition buffer, which was required between GC and GR zoning districts. Dufresne said that meant Commerce Drive properties would become nonconforming if they sought to redevelop.

Claudia Eisenberg told the Commission she was confused by conflicting information. They were told there was a need for senior housing, but the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) said they had too many seniors and needed to attract younger residents and use commercial property as it was zoned. She said there were many retirement homes already in the area.

Lynn Roberts questioned the need for this, too, saying she felt smaller, affordable cottage-type homes were needed to attract younger people. Maybe this property would be better suited for that type of development.

Linda Ellis said she did not feel more senior living options were needed. Bill

Rousseau said they needed single-family homes here to bring in property taxes.

Peggy Bracken wanted more information. She questioned that this was suitable for a senior community and felt it could be turned into apartments for anyone. Kathy Embry said she would hate to see apartments in this area.

Myrna Robson, president of the Ridgelake Condos HOA, said they had a variety of ages in their community, and that's what Peachtree City needed. Peachtree City also needed to solve its traffic problems before bringing in more renters.

Bill Hewitt stated he didn't want to see more golf carts on the trails and thought they should get car traffic off Aberdeen Parkway. He also was concerned about new people from outside Peachtree City moving there.

Harriett Batson wondered about traffic and said they needed more information. She said she wouldn't want to move to a development like this, as did another resident who spoke after her. Traffic in this area was already dangerous, Jake Jackson said, so he could not support this development in this location.

Leslie Dell said she loved the trees in her neighborhood and did not want this development there. She suggested another location. Ryan Evans said he had seen a lot of trees removed since he moved to Peachtree City three years ago and did not want Aberdeen Parkway denuded. Another citizen stated that he felt this was being shoehorned into an available space that was not suitable for high-density housing. He said they needed more details.

Cal Beverly, president of the Coventry HOA, proclaimed that development along Aberdeen Parkway would put a stake through the heart of Peachtree City. Ralph Hail added that this property was already zoned the way it should be.

Before closing the public hearing, Ritenour asked if any citizens had questions. Claudia Eisenberg asked if there would be age restrictions.

Cailloux said there had been questions brought up during the comments that could be answered. No one else wished to speak, and Ritenour closed the public hearing.

Attorney Rick Lindsey replied that age could be restricted, and they would be happy to add it as a condition. He said there had been a lot of misinformation about this project on social media and wondered if the Planning Commission would postpone their decision to allow the developers to meet with citizens and address their concerns.

Cailloux said that would be permissible. Lindsey suggested it be held at the Crown Plaza and said they would publicize it so everyone in the city could come. The Planning Commission could move to continue this item to a date specific, Cailloux

remarked, adding that the public hearing had been held and closed, so this would be an item under Old Agenda when it came back to the Planning Commission. She reminded the citizens that the Planning Commission made recommendations to City Council; it did not make a final decision. The City Council public hearing had been advertised but could be re-advertised if the motion to continue was passed. Cailloux and Lindsey discussed possible dates, and Lindsey said he would need to talk to his clients.

Cailloux addressed some other questions. She said the buffer on Aberdeen would not be changed. It was included because this project had to use the detention pond, which had to be upgraded.

Regarding parking spaces, the ordinance said if the use was not listed, the zoning administrator could make that decision at an executive level. She had asked the applicant to state what they wanted in order to have a public discussion about the parking requirement. Multi-family required two spaces per unit, but this was not multi-family; it had different trip generation and different market demands. They requested 1.2 spaces and provided reasons to back up that amount. That was a decision the Planning Commission could make.

The Crown Plaza would be considered a grandfathered development and would not have to come into conformance if this was approved. Ritenour said that was a good point, and both he and Cailloux emphasized that the Crown Plaza was not being rezoned or changed in any way. Therefore, the standards brought up by Dufresne would not apply.

Hamner said he would be absent for the October 14 Planning Commission meeting, and Ritenour noted that would also be the first meeting for the new members. Lindsey said the November 21 City Council meeting would be best for them and proposed returning to the Planning Commission on October 28. Cailloux said that would work logistically, so the Commissioners agreed that would be the recommended date.

Discussion continued. Kriz said he was concerned about traffic and noted the trip generation information proposed that the average age of residents would be 80. One of the architects said that 82 was the average age for these types of projects. He also mentioned it was doubtful everyone would have both a car and a golf cart. They asked for the 1.2 parking spaces per unit because most apartments would be occupied by only one person.

Kriz asked Cailloux to talk more about the storm water issue. She said they would be required to meet all storm water treatment and mitigation measures and would have to use the detention pond on the Crown Plaza property. Liotta confirmed that they would have to subdivide the current Crown Plaza lot to accommodate this facility. He asked if the wooded portion was needed for storm water management. The architect said that strip was just for easement access; it would remain

wooded.

Was that area designated for storm water when originally developed? Cailloux said this property was originally developed in 1972, when only erosion control was required. So there was no requirement that the woods be maintained as a condition of development? Cailloux said there was not. He asked about the entrance drives; was that area restricted? Cailloux again said there were no storm water requirements or aesthetic easements. Aberdeen Parkway could not be built today, she remarked.

Reeves asked if everyone living there had to be over a certain age? Lindsey told her that usually only one spouse had to meet the age requirement, adding that this development would only be appealing to active older people. Could children live there? Lindsey said deed restrictions could prevent that, and it could be discussed in the public meeting. Ragsdale noted you could write pretty much what you wanted in a deed restriction, and property management could enforce it. They were open to restricting resident minimum age to 55 or 62.

Was this 100% rentals? Reeves asked, and Ragsdale said it was, with one-year leases. Why did they choose Peachtree City? He commented that providing a place for active seniors who wanted to downsize freed up their larger houses for younger people. They looked at age- and income-qualified potential residents and also at their adult children. There was a lot of data on penetration rates in those groups. Their calculations showed ample unmet demand in this market, he said. Reeves asked if there had been input from citizens, and he said they had not solicited any.

Again, she asked why Peachtree City? Ragsdale replied it was for the same reasons that anyone had. He cited the cart paths, along with the overall feel of the community.

Would there be elevators? Reeves asked. Ragsdale said each building would have an elevator, in addition to stairs.

Johnston noted this was for active seniors; if they became less able to care for themselves, would they be asked to leave? Lindsey said it was possible, and that ability to manage a situation was a strong point in favor of rentals. Ragsdale added that residents would be able to bring in home care for rehab or on a longer-term basis. The only case in which they would ever ask someone to leave was if they became a problem for the community. He said his company had never evicted a resident in their 17 years of business.

Ragsdale said he wanted to clear up a statement a citizen made about homeowners being needed for property taxes. This community would pay a lot of property taxes. A senior homeowner might be exempt from school taxes, but this development would be taxed on a commercial basis and be a valuable addition to

the tax rolls.

Johnston asked if there were rentals in Cresswind? Cailloux told her all the homes were privately owned, and there were covenants that the City could not enforce that put restrictions on things ranging from how many homes could be rented to how many times grandchildren could use the pool. That level of covenants could be done at a private level, but they had to be done voluntarily, not as a requirement by the City.

Johnston asked Patel from Crown Plaza if the hotel guests would be impacted by this development. He said there were numerous hotel developments that have a residential component and it shouldn't impact hotel guests. Families coming to visit relatives would find it convenient to stay there. This was under-utilized land that could benefit Crown Plaza by adding amenities, such as a walking trail.

Reeves again asked about the length of the leases. Lindsey said a one-year lease that automatically renewed was standard in this industry. Ragsdale noted that the average stay in a property like this was five years.

Hamner thanked the applicant for this presentation and the citizens for participating. The Comp Plan defined the village concept and was last updated in 2022. He said it should guide their decisions and was based on the City's needs. There were things in the Comprehensive Plan that did support this development, such as the goal to provide a broad range of housing for people in all stages of life. The plan described a village center as a place of high activity with a diversity of land uses so that a person could reach all their daily needs within a 15-minute walk, and he acknowledged that this proposal was within that walking radius.

The village policy stipulated the use of step-down density so that high density was within and next to village centers, stepping down to medium density, then lowest density most distant from the village center. Hamner said you could argue that this location was in line with that.

However, he continued, the Comp Plan did say that commercial uses should be located in a village center. Most of the land in Peachtree City was already in use, so this was a rare opportunity to develop commercial in a village center. The Comp Plan also had a policy that said they should discourage strip-type commercial developments. Hamner said they lacked the space to create substantial commercial zones, and rezoning this to residential would be at a cost of commercial land that they could not replace. He said there was a lot of residential within a 15-minute walk of this village center, and there were other locations where this development could go.

He concluded by saying this request was an opportunity for us to define who we are and how we utilize our land. The Planning Commission needed to look at the decisions they made and how they would impact Peachtree City 100 years down

the road, Hamner said. Switching this property to residential would be an impactful decision they couldn't get back. He said he liked the proposal but felt Peachtree City needed to preserve its limited commercial space.

Liotta noted that this land was designated for commercial use in the most recent Comp Plan and wondered how the developer reconciled the request with this? Cailloux said another way to look at it was through review criterion 4, which asked if there was reasonable economic use as currently zoned?

Lindsey said it was currently owned and underutilized by the conference center. He said commercial would be a more intense use than a senior living community and pointed out that there were senior communities in other village centers. This property was appealing because of its proximity to the hotel, the Westpark Shopping Center, and medical offices. Other places, such as on Rockaway, where this could be were not conducive to walkability. He said he appreciated Hamner's position, but other pieces of commercial property would become available for redevelopment in the future. Another team member pointed out that trip generation for commercial development in this area would be extremely high.

Could they get input from Police and Fire before the meeting with the public? Liotta asked. Cailloux said they could and noted they were part of the internal review process. However, there was already service provided in a village center, she stated, and new development that concerned Public Safety was along the edges in areas not previously served. Liotta went on to say that this area was different from areas with wide driveways and more space.

Reeves thanked the applicant for their presentation. Johnston agreed. She said it was important to continue this discussion because it was so complex.

Hamner said he was not saying no to this proposal; he was saying no to rezoning commercial to residential.

Kriz said there was a need for senior housing in Peachtree City. The density and potential traffic concerned him. He said he understood about the storm water easement, but still felt that portion of the property was too large to be just that easement. He thought it was meant to increase the number of units and the density. Kriz said he felt something should fit into an area.

Ritenour agreed there was need for senior housing such as this. He could understand how someone could decide they didn't want to take care of a house and yard. Some of the objections, he continued, could be NIMBY (not in my backyard). Peachtree City was built out, with very few open commercial properties left, and those were challenging to develop. The only new village centers would come from annexation, which had its opponents, but that was the reality, Ritenour stated. There would be a lot of redevelopment in the future, which would be opposed as well, but it would be needed.

He said it was important for citizens to get involved, but many times they did not show up for meetings, then claimed they didn't know about something. He thanked the citizens for coming out and thanked staff for their work. He said he wanted more information before deciding on this, and they would reconvene in a few weeks after the developers had met with citizens.

Hamner moved to continue this discussion at the October 28 Planning Commission meeting. Johnston seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Old Agenda Items

None

New Agenda Items

1. Landscape Plan, Gerresheimer Expansion, 305 Naeco Way

Hooks indicated this property on a zoning map, noting that Naeco Way would be extended during the development of this property and of the property across the road. She pointed out the adjacent detention pond and the Planterra Golf Course on an aerial photo.

The impervious surface area was 348,136 square feet, including buildings, drives, parking areas, and sidewalks for building 1 and future building 2. The landscape ordinance required at least 1,044 caliper inches of canopy trees and 696 inches of understory trees for this. City Council had granted Gerresheimer an exemption from alternate compliance methods as long as they provided at least 50% of the required caliper inches. The proposal was for 522 caliper inches of canopy trees, which came to 50% of the requirement, and 476 inches of understory trees, or 68%.

As a condition of the conceptual site plan approval, enhanced landscaping with evergreen plant material was required to supplement existing vegetation around the truck court and along the truck access drive to create a visual buffer to screen these areas from the golf course. She pointed out these plantings and said staff felt they met the conditions and that the request also met the requirements of the City ordinances.

Gerresheimer's Andreas Kirschenbauer spoke for the applicant. He said they focused on shielding the golf course and the employee entrances.

None of the Commissioners had questions. Liotta observed that he was not a fan of granting exemptions from the ordinance requirements. Kriz and Ritenour said they believed it was a good plan that would protect the views from the golf course.

Kriz moved to approve the landscape plan for the Gerresheimer expansion, 305 Naeco Way. Reeves seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Landscape Plan, Gerber Collision, 445 HWY 74 S

Hooks showed the location on SR 74. The amount of impervious surface on the project site was 66,309 square feet for which the landscape ordinance required a minimum of 198 caliper inches of canopy trees and 132 caliper inches of understory trees. A condition was added during the final site plan review that required the 60-foot undisturbed landscape buffer to be reforested where it was disturbed for the grading and installation of stormwater facilities on both this parcel and the adjacent parcel. Those trees would not count towards the minimum 50% caliper inch requirement.

The proposal for the project site was 189 caliper inches of canopy trees and 108 caliper inches of understory trees, which was less than the total requirement. Therefore, the tree fund alternative compliance option was requested. This could be used after all canopy and understory trees that could reasonably be planted on the site were provided, and Hooks stated that staff was of the opinion this condition had been met.

Applicant Warren Elwell explained they tried to provide adequate screening on all sides, although drainage issues in one area prevented plantings there. Hooks showed that area, saying there was a lot of drainage coming from the adjacent property, so they used rocks to create a riverbed instead of landscaping. She also indicated the location of underground utilities along the storm water pond that prevented the planting of large trees in that area.

Liotta asked about the location of the disturbed buffer, and Hooks showed it and said an easement had been created and could not be planted in. They were proposing to plant the remaining 30 feet. Was the tree save area respected? Liotta asked, and Hooks said it was. The Commissioners agreed that the plan was good.

Reeves moved to approve the landscape plan for Gerber Collision at 445 SR 74 South. Kriz seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Conceptual Site Plan, Magnolia Dental, 100 Gates Entry

This parcel, at the entrance to The Gates subdivision, was one of two office parcels annexed into the City in 2012. The proposal was for a 12,000 square foot medical office with 59 parking spaces.

Several zoning conditions were applied to this lot during the rezoning, including a maximum combined building size of 20,000 square feet for the two lots. The building on the adjacent lot was 4,800 square feet, so this met that condition. Another condition said parking should not be visible from the internal road when entering the development, and Hooks indicated how this was accomplished. Dumpsters and loading areas could not be located within building setbacks and shall be screened from view. The architecture of the building was required to be residential in character to complement the homes in the subdivision.

They were providing 123% of the required parking, just below the maximum 125% allowed. Hooks noted that no additional buffer was required along SR 74; there was an existing 60-foot buffer owned by The Gates Neighborhood Association. There was also a transition yard separating the parcel from the residential neighborhood that was also owned by the neighborhood association. There were no new path connections required, and the network could be accessed through the neighborhood streets. Staff was of the opinion that the site plan met the ordinances and recommended approval.

Architect Jefferson Brown said they met with The Gates Neighborhood Association and incorporated their input into the final plan, which included providing conduits for the association's existing irrigation system. They also moved the dumpster as far from the residences as possible and put as wide a buffer as possible between the residences and the building. The architectural style would complement the adjacent building, Brown continued. He also explained that they tried to get five parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of building for medical offices.

Johnston confirmed that there would be one dumpster. She asked about signage, and Brown said they would present a signage package with the building elevations. There were no golf cart spaces, Johnston asked, and Brown said that was correct.

Liotta said he would like to see some designated golf cart spaces, but Brown said they preferred to use any extra space to create larger lanes for loading and unloading patients. Carts could park in regular spaces, he observed.

Hamner thanked Brown for seeking input from The Gates residents. He said he looked forward to seeing the architectural design.

Kriz said he understood this was not a centrally located area, but he would like to see some golf cart spaces. Reeves, too, thanked Brown for reaching out to homeowners.

Ritenour asked Brown to see if they could find space for golf cart parking, although he understood the need for more parking at a medical facility.

Kriz moved to approve the conceptual site plan, Magnolia Dental, 100 Gates Entry. Johnston seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Building Elevations, Indoor Training Facility & Warehouse, 1001 Moba Drive

Cailloux showed the conceptual site plan that had been approved for this development, indicating that the area facing SR 74 would be considered the front elevation as it was most visible to the public. The north and south elevations would be considered sides.

She presented an elevation as shown from SR 74, saying raised parapets, awnings and brick surrounds delineated individual business spaces. The main entrance to

the indoor training facility was accessed from an interior parking lot and was highlighted with a different color brick. A brick water table ran down that entire side of the building, and the brick turned the corner of the building, as well. The water table carried over to the back, topped by metal panels. She also displayed an elevation showing the building from Moba Drive.

The ordinance said front facades should be 80% brick or stone, and side facades should be at least 50% brick or stone. In this proposal, there was a brick coverage of 79% on the west façade, 45% on the north side façade, 55% on the south side façade, and 11% on the rear east façade. The color scheme met the requirement for neutral colors. Cailloux stated that staff was of the opinion that the design satisfied the intent of the ordinance.

Chuck Ogletree of Southtree Development was the applicant. Liotta was concerned about what he saw as a long, flat elevation. Ogletree said there were slight differences between brick and metal panels, and changes in colors would also give depth perception. Architect Brown added that they often utilized colors to add depth in industrial buildings. He also said the metal panels would be recessed back five inches. The awnings would add an additional shadow line, too. The requirements in order to hold national pickleball tournaments were what drove the overall height, he explained.

The Commissioners agreed they liked the design and were excited about this addition to the community.

Reeves moved to approve building elevations, Indoor Training Facility & Warehouse, 1001 Moba Drive. Hamner seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Workshop Items

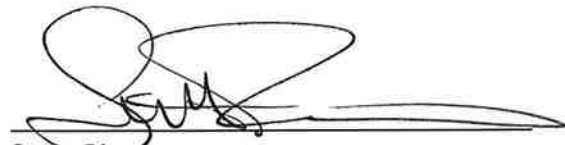
1. Planning Commission Presentation to City Council about Ordinance Updates

Hamner said he would be absent for the next meeting but would be sharing his ideas for the upcoming presentation to City Council via email.

There being no further business, Kriz moved to adjourn at 9:16 p.m. Reeves seconded. Motion carried unanimously.



Martha Barksdale



Scott Ritenour