



**CITY OF SNELLVILLE
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
PLANNING COMMISSION**

CASE SUMMARY

February 28, 2017

CASE NUMBER: #RZ 17-05

REQUEST: Zoning Modification, Change in Conditions,
and Request for Variances

LOCATION: 1905 Pharrs Road, Snellville, Georgia

PARCEL: 5056 009

SIZE: 2.0± Acres

PRESENT ZONING: BG (General Business) District

PROPOSED ZONING: BG (General Business) District

**FUTURE LAND USE MAP
DESIGNATION:** Commercial/Retail

DEVELOPMENT/PROJECT: 100± Room Hampton Inn & Suites Hotel

APPLICANT/PROPERTY OWNER: Park Place Snellville, LLC
Lawrenceville, Georgia 30044

CONTACT: Shane Lanham, Esq.
Mahaffey Pickens Tucker, LLP
Lawrenceville, Georgia
770.323.0000 or slanham@mptlafirm.com

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval with Conditions



**CITY OF SNELLVILLE
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
PLANNING COMMISSION**

CASE ANALYSIS

February 28, 2017

TO: The Planning Commission

MEETING DATE: February 28, 2017

FROM: Jason Thompson, Director
Department of Planning and Development

CASE NUMBER: #RZ 17-05

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The Department of Planning and Development has received an application from Shane Lanham, representing his client, Park Place Snellville, LLC, who are requesting a Change-in-Conditions from the 7-27-2015 approved rezoning case #LUP 15-02 RZ 15-02, to amend the rezoning concept plan approved in Condition #1 of the 2015 approved rezoning and request for certain variances from the Zoning Ordinance and Landscape Ordinance to allow for the development and operation of a five (5) story, 64,400± sq. ft., 100± room Hampton Inn & Suites Hotel on the 2.00± acre property, zoned BG (General Business) District and located in the Park Place commercial retail development at 1905 Pharrs Road, Snellville, Georgia (Tax Parcel 5056 009).

The property is located adjacent to the intersection of Pharrs Road and North Road and is neighbored by properties to the north, northwest, and west which are also zoned BG (General Business) District. Single-family residential uses are located across Pharrs Road and North Road to the south, southwest, and east.

REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting to amend the rezoning concept plan approved in Condition #1 of the 2015 approved rezoning to allow the development and operation of a five (5) story, 64,400± sq. ft., 100± room Hampton Inn & Suites Hotel on the 2.00± acre property. The applicant is also requesting variances from the Zoning Ordinance and Landscape Ordinance to maximize development of the property.

Variance Requests:

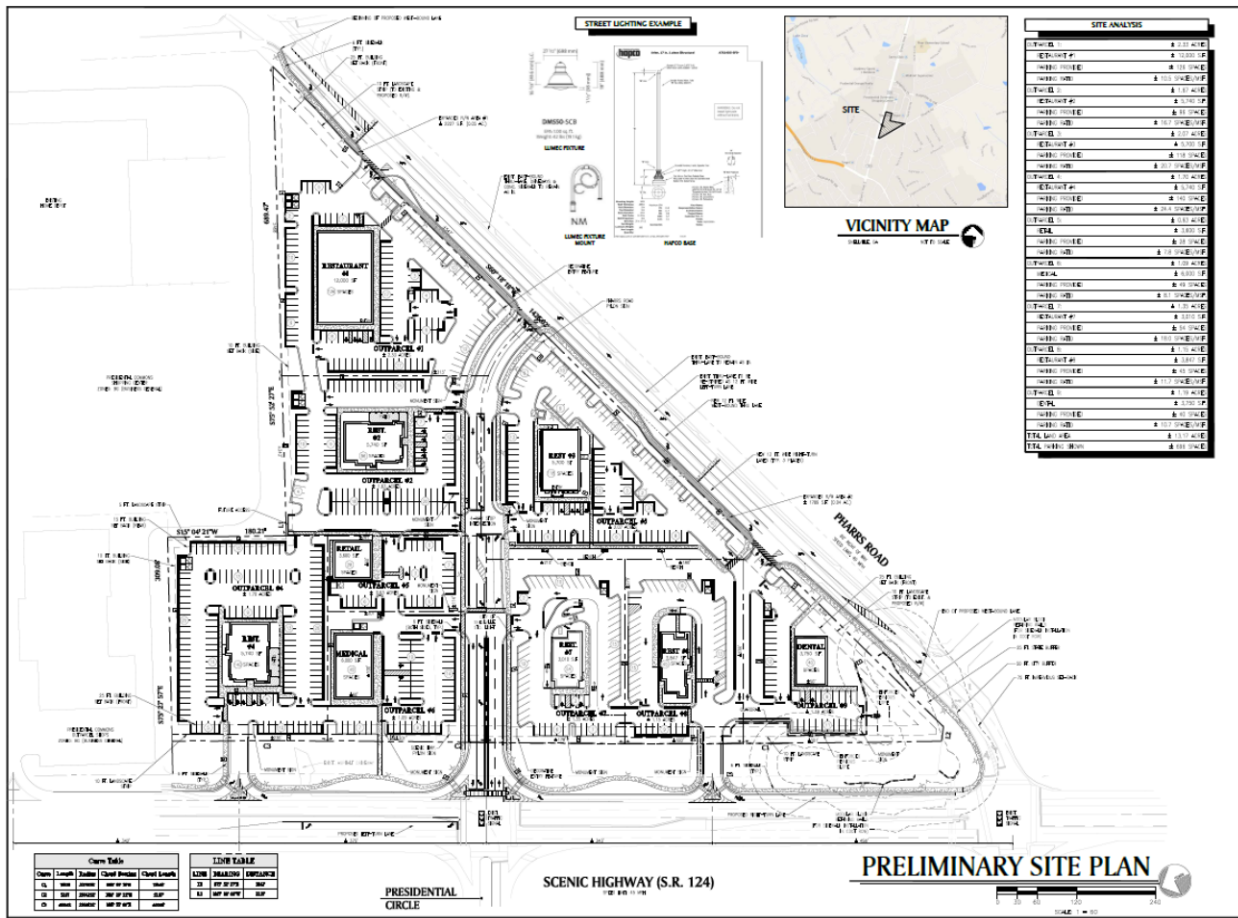
1. Allow an encroachment into the ten (10) foot side building setback to accommodate a dumpster enclosure and retaining wall stated in the City Zoning Ordinance, Article 9, Section 9.1.
2. Allow an encroachment of five (5) feet into the required ten (10) foot landscape strip along Pharrs Road to accommodate an internal driveway stated in the City Landscape Ordinance, Section 19-73 – Landscape Strips.
3. Increase the maximum allowed percentage of EIFS as an exterior building material to 69% from Section 7.7 of the Architectural Design Standards.
4. Reduce the nineteen (19) foot required length of parking spaces to eighteen (18) feet from Section 11.1 of the Zoning Ordinance.
5. Eliminate the loading zone requirement from Section 11.1 of the Zoning Ordinance.
6. Reduce the minimum required number of parking spaces from one space per room plus any space for meeting and conference rooms, and related facilities to 102 total parking spaces from Section 11.1 of the Zoning Ordinance.
7. Allow a flat roof in lieu of a minimum 4:12 pitched roof from Section 9.10 of the Zoning Ordinance.

BACKGROUND:

On July 25, 2015, the subject property was originally rezoned (case # LUP 15-02 RZ 15-02) to BG (General Business) District for a nine-parcel commercial development. The case sought to amend the 2030 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use map from North Road Redevelopment Area and GDOT Right-of-Way to Commercial/Retail and Official Zoning Map amendment from RS-180 (Single Family Residence) District to BG (General Business) District.

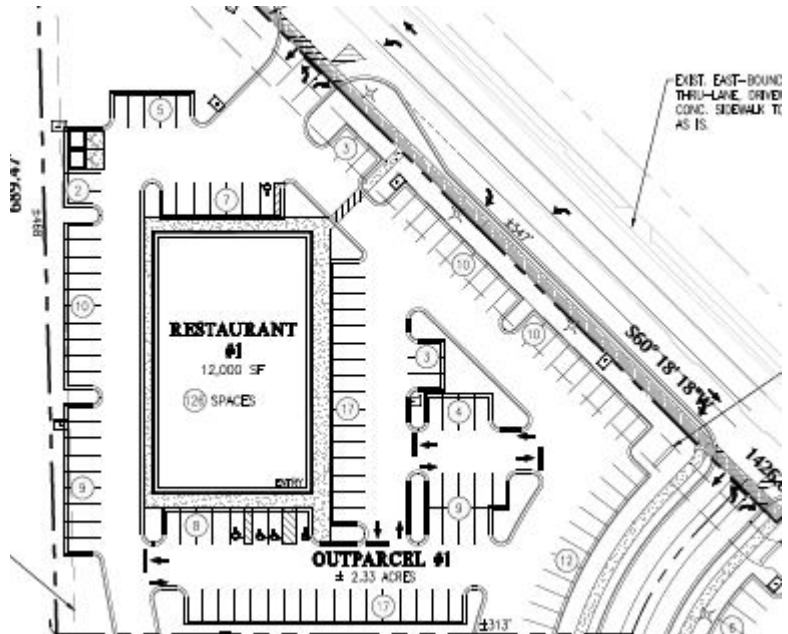
The proposed nine (9) parcel development was to consist of approximately 49,000 sq. ft. retail development featuring six (6) restaurants, one (1) retail use, one (1) dental office and one (1) medical office. The parcel subject to this request (Outparcel #1) was originally shown to be for a 12,000 sq. ft. restaurant with 126 parking spaces.

7-25-2015 Approved Rezoning Plan



STAFF ANALYSIS:

The 13.17± acre mixed commercial/retail development known as “Park Place Snellville” now contains eight individual commercial lots with four of the eight lots having already been developed and include an Aspen Dental Center, and fast-casual restaurants including Zaxby’s, Freddy’s, and most recently Cracker Barrel. It is anticipated that Outback restaurant will combine and occupy the two remaining tracts having frontage on Scenic Highway, leaving Outparcels #1, #2, and #3 undeveloped, as shown on the original conceptual rezoning plan.

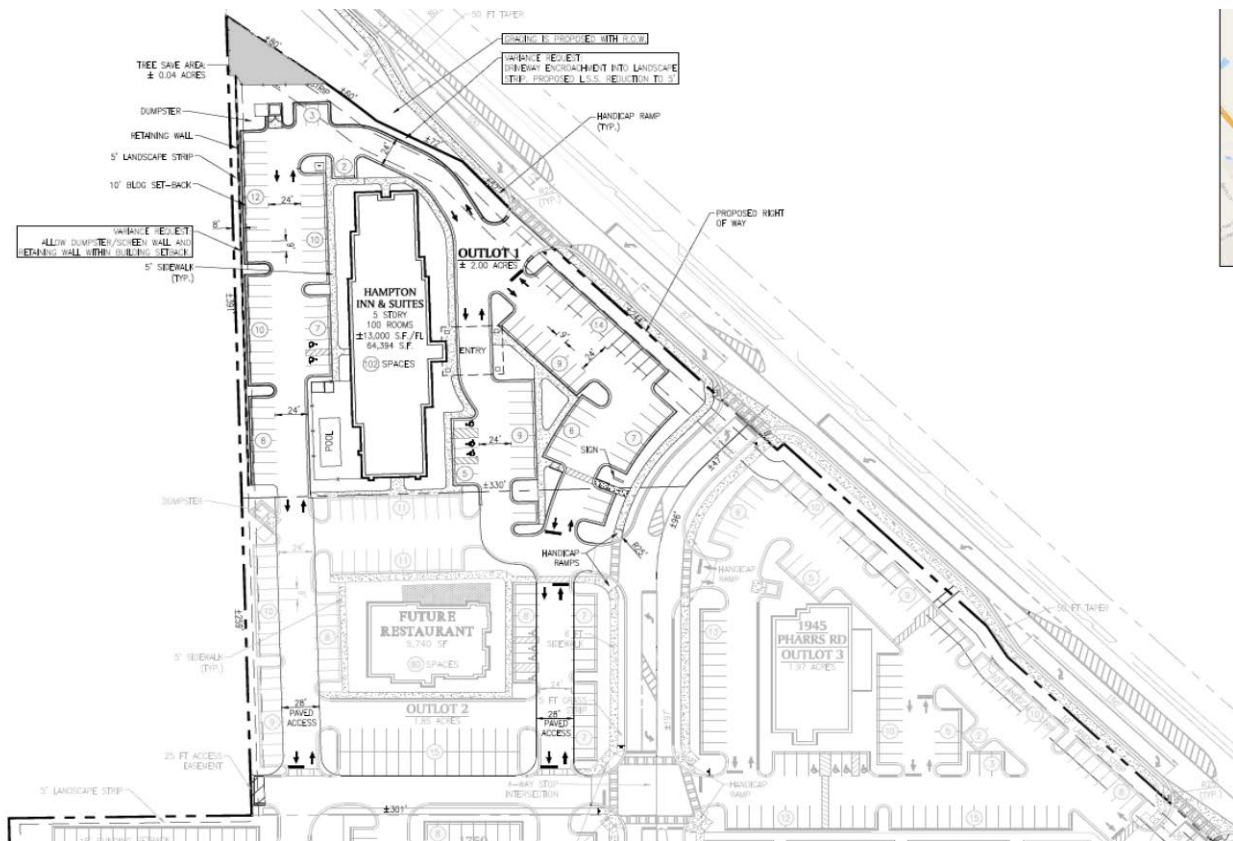


The proposed Hampton Inn & Suites Hotel is located on Outparcel #1 which is closest to the intersection of Pharrs Road and North Road. The original concept plan proposed a 12,000 sq. ft. restaurant and 126 associated parking spaces.

SITE PLAN ANALYSIS:

The proposed site plan amendment features a five (5) story 64,000± sq. ft., building, with 100 guest rooms, two 396 sq. ft. meeting rooms, a 499 sq. ft. conference room, swimming pool, a retaining wall along the north property line and 102 total parking spaces for guests and employees. The property has one proposed direct access point along Pharrs Road with available inter-parcel accessibility between lots and onto the private road that serves the development.

Preliminary Site Plan (12-12-2016)



Architectural Review:

The applicant is proposing a design that features typical Hampton Inn & Suites branding elements including a first floor brick water table, a covered entry on the front elevation, textured columns that extend the height of the building and which also provide articulation to the flat roof and parapets.

The design does propose use of synthetic EFIS for a majority of floors two through five in order to achieve the brand standard that is typical with Hampton Inn & Suites across the country. The amount of EFIS being proposed will require variance approval and will be addressed in the variance analysis section of the staff analysis.

The overall architectural design is aesthetically pleasing and should integrate well and complement the buildings that have already been constructed at Park Place.

Proposed Building Elevation (Main)



Zoning Requirements:

The City of Snellville Zoning Ordinance allows hotels and motels as principal permitted uses in the BG (General Business) District, provided they meet the following use provisions for the district:

- (a) Each motel/hotel shall be accessed through main or central lobby. The lobby size shall be a minimum of 700 square feet;
- (b) Each motel/hotel shall have a minimum of 60 rooms;
- (c) Each guest room shall be accessed through an interior hallway and shall not have access to the exterior of the building (except through the central lobby or as otherwise determined by fire codes);
- (d) Each motel/hotel site shall be a minimum of two acres;
- (e) Each motel/hotel must provide staff or management on duty 24 hours a day;
- (f) Each guest room shall have a minimum of 300 square feet;
- (g) Each motel/hotel building shall have a minimum roof pitch of 4:12;
- (h) Each motel/hotel shall provide an enclosed heated and air conditioned laundry space with a minimum of three washers and three dryers;
- (i) Any outdoor recreational areas provided shall be located to the rear of the site; and
- (j) Provide a 75-foot natural buffer, enhanced with an additional 25-foot landscaped buffer (total 100 feet) adjacent to residentially zoned property.

The application appears to meet requirements (a)-(f) and (h)-(i). The applicant is requesting a variance from the 4:12 pitched roofed requirement (g) and requirement (j) is not necessary as the subject property is not adjacent to residentially zoned property, which is located directly across Pharrs Road having an eighty (80) feet right-of-way.

Variance Analysis:

The applicant is requesting several variances from the Zoning Ordinance and Landscape Ordinance as outlined in more detail below.

1. Allow an encroachment into the ten (10) foot side building setback to accommodate a dumpster enclosure and retaining wall stated in the Zoning Ordinance, Article 9, section 9.10(4)(B).

This variance seems appropriate given the fact the rear setback is adjacent to Home Depot, another commercial development. The dumpster location will be below the grade of the Home Depot and should not cause any adverse impacts to the adjoining property owner.

2. Allow an encroachment of five (5) feet into the required ten (10) foot landscape strip along Pharrs Road to accommodate an internal driveway stated in the City Code, Landscape Ordinance, and Section 19-73 – Landscape Strips.

This variance seems appropriate as it allows room for the access drive while still allowing ample room for the required plantings along Pharrs Road.

3. Increase the allowed percentage of EIFS as a building material to 69% from the Zoning Ordinance, Section 7.7 of the Architectural Design Standards, Allowable Building Materials.

The applicant has supplied an addendum to their original submittal to justify the use of EIFS at a rate of 69% from the allowable 25% on the front elevation and 50% on the sides and rear. The 69% allowance that is being requested is for the totality of all the elevations. The applicant states that the architectural designs are in fact based on a brand standard but their proposal exceeds Hampton Inn's own exterior standards. The applicant argues that the use of EIFS also allows for increased energy efficiency as it reduces the amount of "thermal bridging" which allows outside weather elements to transfer to the interior of the structure.

The main concern with the use of EIFS is largely related to maintenance, if the product is not maintained it can fall into disrepair and cause aesthetic and structural issues. However, if maintained correctly the product poses very few problems as a building material. The applicant contends that in order to maintain the Hilton brand standard, franchisees are bound to a rigorous maintenance schedule and the property can be inspected by corporate representatives as often as every three months.

With the above facts in mind, we recommend approval for the variance to be allowed to use a maximum of 69% EIFS on the totality of all elevations. Creating and

maintaining brand standards are very vital to the success of the proposed development and thus concurrently the City of Snellville.

4. Reduce the nineteen (19) foot required length of parking spaces to eighteen (18) feet from, Section 11.1 Parking, of the Zoning Ordinance.

This variance allows the applicant to maximize the number of parking spaces while also maximizing the planter islands and landscape strips for landscaping. The twenty-four (24) feet minimum drive aisle width remains the same. The request seems appropriate as most vehicles are generally less than nineteen (19) feet in length, with the exception that crew cab and super crew pickup trucks may reach almost twenty (20) feet in length.

5. Eliminate the loading zone requirement from Section 11.1, Parking, of the Zoning Ordinance.

Again, this request is to maximize the total number of parking spaces on the site. This variance seems reasonable given that deliveries will usually be made during non-peak times and can utilize existing parking spaces that will not be in use.

6. Reduce the minimum required number of parking spaces from one (1) space per room plus any space for restaurants, meeting rooms, and related facilities to 102 spaces from Section 11.1 of the Zoning Ordinance.

The City's parking regulations require a minimum of one (1) space per room, which would equal 100 parking spaces; however, the regulations also require additional spaces for restaurants, meeting rooms and related facilities, but does not quantify the exact amount.

The proposed hotel will have 2 small 396 sq. ft. meeting rooms and one 499 sq. ft. conference room, for a total of 1,291 sq. ft. The proposed hotel will not have a lounge/bar or restaurant that would create a much higher demand for parking than the hotel guests.

Gwinnett County's Unified Development Ordinance requires a minimum of one space per room with a maximum of two-spaces per room and allows the property owner to determine the desired number of parking spaces within that range.

Demand for hotel guest room parking peaks between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. on weekdays and Saturdays; however, many hotels have lower occupancy on Friday evening, when business travelers have left to travel back for home. Meeting room and conference room activity typically bring about peak parking between 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m., weekdays.

This variance seems reasonable given the fact that at maximum occupancy every room would have an available space even when alternative forms of transportation are being utilized now more than ever. Furthermore, the conference and meeting

rooms would be utilized during non-peak parking times, generally after checkout and before check in, or by guests that are already staying on the property.

7. Allow a flat roof in lieu of a minimum 4:12 pitched roof from section 9.10 of the Zoning Ordinance.

This variance seems reasonable seeing that it is a five story building. The intent of this requirement was probably aimed more towards one and two story hotels and motels to create a more appealing and traditional roof design. A flat roof with parapet and roof line articulations would be allowed on any other commercial use per the City's architectural design standards.

Conclusion:

The proposed zoning modification is a complimentary use to those found in the Park Place Development and the surrounding area. Per the applicants amended traffic report the daily trips would be reduced by nearly two-thirds of what was previously approved for a 12,000 sq. ft. restaurant. Moreover, there is a need in the City for a quality limited-service hotel in the Scenic Highway Commercial Corridor as there are very few options for travelers to utilize while staying in the area. Eastside Hospital, adjacent restaurants/retail businesses, and neighboring residents could all benefit from having a nice Hampton Inn & Suites by Hilton within the City. Finally, Hampton Inn & Suites under the Hilton umbrella has a reputation for being a high-quality brand and product that would be an asset to the City for many years to come.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

In conclusion, the Department of Planning and Development recommends **Approval** of the request to modify Condition #1 of the 7-27-2015 approved rezoning case #LUP 15-02 RZ 15-02 to allow a change in the use and layout for Outparcel #1 for the construction and operation of a five (5) story, 64,400± sq. ft., 100± room Hampton Inn & Suites Hotel on the 2.00± acre property, zoned BG (General Business) District and located in the Park Place commercial retail development at 1905 Pharrs Road, Snellville, Georgia (Tax Parcel 5056 009), subject to the following **Conditions:**

1. The property shall be developed according to the zoning site plan entitled "Park Place Snellville - Preliminary Site Plan," sealed and dated 12-12-2016, with modifications permitted due to engineering restrains, ingress and egress, and/or to meet conditions of zoning or State, County, and City regulations; and
2. Conditions (2-14) and Variances (1-11) that were approved on 7-27-2015 for rezoning case #LUP 15-02 RZ 15-02 shall remain in full force and effect.

In conjunction with zoning modification, the following variances (1-7) are recommended for **approval:**

1. Allow an encroachment into the ten (10) foot side building setback to accommodate a dumpster enclosure and retaining wall stated in the City Zoning Ordinance, Article 9, Section 9.1, as shown on the 12-12-2016 Preliminary Site Plan.
2. Allow an encroachment of five (5) feet into the required ten (10) foot landscape strip along Pharrs Road to accommodate an internal driveway stated in the City Landscape Ordinance, Section 19-73 – Landscape Strips, as shown on the 12-12-2016 Preliminary Site Plan..
3. Increase the allowed percentage of EIFS as a building material to 69% from Section 7.7 of the Architectural Design Standards.
4. Reduce the nineteen (19) foot required length of parking spaces to eighteen (18) feet from Section 11.1 of the Zoning Ordinance, as shown on the 12-12-2016 Preliminary Site Plan.
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7. Allow a flat roof in lieu of a minimum 4:12 pitched roof from section 9.10 of the Zoning Ordinance.