

**CITY OF PEACHTREE CORNERS  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

**REZONING AND VARIANCE ANALYSIS**

PLANNING COMMISSION DATE: APRIL 20, 2021

CITY COUNCIL DATE: MAY 25, 2021

CASE NAME: **3770 HOLCOMB BRIDGE TOWNHOMES**

CASE NUMBER: **RZ-2021-001/ V2021-001**

CURRENT ZONING: O-I

LOCATION: 3770 HOLCOMB BRIDGE ROAD

MAP NUMBERS: 6<sup>th</sup> DISTRICT, LAND LOT 304

ACREAGE: 1.64 ACRES

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT: REZONE FROM O-I TO R-TH TO ACCOMMODATE A 6-UNIT TOWNHOUSE DEVELOPMENT ALONG WITH ASSOCIATED VARIANCES

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT MAP: HOLCOMB BRIDGE CORRIDOR

APPLICANT: DERRICK CHEEK  
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OWNER: GAIL CHEEK  
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**RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS**

UPDATE:

At the Planning Commission hearing, there were no speakers in support of this request; there were two speakers opposed because of concerns about proximity of the development to the single-family homes to the rear of the site.

After consideration, the Commission voted 5-0 to recommend approval of this application with 12 conditions.

#### PROJECT DATA:

The applicant is seeking to rezone a 1.64-acre parcel located along the north side of Holcomb Bridge Road approximately 1400 feet west of the intersection of Peachtree Corners Circle. The property adjoins an R-100 single-family home to the rear (located at 6165 Stadium Court) with C-2 self-storage located to the east side and O-I office property located to the west side. Across Holcomb Bridge Road is RM-10 multifamily property.

The applicant requests to rezone the above-mentioned parcel along Holcomb Bridge Road for a small townhouse development. The proposal includes 6 townhomes in a non-gated community with a small resident recreational area in the rear of the property.

Each proposed home contains a one-car garage and is two stories tall. Parking is also provided on the driveway, with one space per unit. Additional parking includes five on-street spaces. The applicant is requesting a variance to the 3-per-unit parking requirement (17 spaces are being provided instead of the required 18).

The wooded property contains environmental features that make development difficult. A stream and accompanying 75' buffer wind through most of the property. A tree survey shows that nine specimen trees exist, several of which can be saved. To facilitate development of this challenging site, the applicant is requesting to encroach into the buffer for the entry road as well as into the 50' and 75' buffers for two of the townhomes and their accompanying access. At the widest point, this encroachment covers the full 75' buffer for a length of about 100' and covers about 80% of the 50' buffer for a length of about 50'. The applicant is also requesting to reduce the 30' buffer between the single-family home and three of the townhomes. The buffer width, if reduced, varies from 29' down to 10' at its smallest point.

#### PARCEL DESCRIPTION

The property is a 1.64-acre O-I zoned parcel located on the north side of Holcomb Bridge Road approximately 1400 feet west of Peachtree Corners Circle. The parcel is situated between an office development to the west and self-storage units to the east with single-family homes to the rear. The proposal includes one entrance to the townhouse development from Holcomb Bridge Road. The R-TH zoning classification permits a development density of up to 8 units per acre; the proposed project is designed at a density of 3.66 units per acre.

#### ZONING HISTORY:

The subject property was rezoned to O-I by Gwinnett County in 1979, however, no development was ever constructed. In 1989, the county approved a Special Use Permit for a day care center, but this project was never developed either. There were no further zoning actions on the property until the present application was submitted.

ZONING STANDARDS:

Zoning Code Section 1702 identifies specific criteria that should be evaluated when considering a zoning decision. These criteria are enumerated as 'A' through 'F' below. The applicant's responses and staff's comments are as follows:

**A. Will this proposed rezoning, special use permit, or change in conditions permit a use that is suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property?**

Applicant's Response: Yes.

Staff's Comment: The parcel requested to be rezoned is in an area mostly zoned O-I and C-2, but there is greater market demand for housing than office space. Additionally, the proposed R-TH zoning provides a transition between the single-family neighborhood to the rear and the busy commercial nature of Holcomb Bridge Road.

**B. Will this proposed rezoning, special use permit, or change in conditions adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property?**

Applicant's Response: No.

Staff's Comment: The proposal will have minimal impact on adjacent commercial and O-I zoned properties. Additionally, the single-family property to the rear will be buffered by a fully revegetated buffer.

**C. Does the property to be affected by a proposed rezoning, special use permit, or change in conditions have reasonable economic use as currently zoned?**

Applicant's Response: No.

Staff's Comment: The property has a reasonable economic use as currently zoned.

**D. Will the proposed rezoning, special use permit, or change in conditions result in a use which will or could cause an excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities, or schools?**

Applicant's Response: No.

Staff's Comment: Holcomb Bridge Road at rush hour peaks is difficult to navigate. While this project will not add significant traffic to the road, there will likely need to be turn restrictions put in place at the project's entrance. Left turns out of the development will

be difficult to make during peak traffic periods. City staff will evaluate the need as plans are refined. The impact on schools is insignificant.

**E. Is the proposed rezoning, special use permit, or change in conditions in conformity with the policy and intent of the land use plan?**

Applicant’s Response: Yes.

Staff’s Comment: (see Comprehensive Plan heading on the following page.)

**F. Are there other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property which give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the proposed rezoning, special use permit, or change in conditions?**

Applicant’s Response: Yes, the property has a creek and many setback requirements.

Staff’s Comment: The long-term vision for this area is for it to be an integral part of the redevelopment of the Holcomb Bridge Corridor, which can include single-use sites for townhomes.

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:**

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan Character Area Map indicates that the property is located within the Holcomb Bridge Corridor Character Area. Policies for this area encourage evolution into “a mixed-use corridor” with single-use developments, including townhouses, located along the corridor between higher-intensity nodes, typically at major intersections.

**DEPARTMENT ANALYSIS:**

The proposed 1.64-acre development is located on a parcel that has environmental challenges, is difficult to develop, and is currently vacant. Townhomes in this location would add a residential component to an area that already has a mix of uses. Additionally, the unique environmental features of the property will cause the small residential community to have a woodland or forest feel which is unique for new development in the area.

The proposed 6 townhouses are not likely to place an excessive burden on existing streets, transportation systems, or utilities, and would not adversely affect the adjacent residential property as the rear buffer will be replanted with dense vegetation to limit the impact to the single-family home on Stadium Court.

Based on standard school generation rates, a 6-unit townhouse development could be expected to generate up to 2 elementary school children, 1 middle school child, and 1 high school student and is, therefore, unlikely to burden the school system.

While the development is also unlikely to have a negative impact on existing streets, left turns into and out of the property, especially during peak travel times, would be problematic.

The applicant has requested concurrent variances to reduce the rear buffer, to encroach into the stream buffer, and to provide one less parking space than is required. These variances can be justified because the layout of the proposed neighborhood preserves the majority of the site in its wooded state and avoids additional stream buffer encroachments by shifting the townhomes to the east side and rear. The concept furthers the intent of the Comprehensive Plan and would not cause substantial detriment to the public good if granted. However, the proposed building elevations could be enhanced and offer greater detailing and variety among the six units.

Staff recommends approval with conditions of the proposed project as it meets the intent of the Comprehensive Plan, is suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property, and if approved, would not adversely affect the existing use of said properties.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

**After review of the applicant 's proposal and other relevant information, it is recommended that RZ2021-001 and V2021-001 be approved with the following conditions:**

1. The site development shall not exceed 6 single-family townhomes with a minimum 1-car attached garage and adjoining driveway of at least 18' in length with the overall minimum dwelling unit width of at least 20 feet.
2. The property shall be developed in general conformance with the site plan prepared by Urban Engineers dated January 30, 2021 and submitted with this application with revisions to meet these conditions and the requirements of all city codes and ordinances. In addition, the plan shall be modified, as needed, to address site issues such as adequate detention facilities, fire truck / garbage truck access, and the addition of a deceleration lane,
3. That the rear buffer is reduced to that which is shown on the site plan but in no case shall it be reduced to less than 10 feet in the narrowest location along the rear. The remaining buffer area shall be fully re-vegetated and landscaped with a row of evergreens at least 6' in height at the time of planting and spaced no more than 10' apart.
4. That encroachment into the stream buffer shall be limited to that which is shown on the submitted site plan.
5. Building elevations shall be enhanced and submitted to the Community Development Director for review and approval. Enhancements shall include a change in roof line and elevation plane between units; and a greater variety in window styles, garage door styles, building materials, and colors such that no elevation is duplicated more often than once in every four units.
6. The recreation space at the rear of the development shall be used and maintained as landscaped, common, open space with at least one amenity

feature provided. An amenity area plan, that includes a landscape plan, is required to be submitted and shall be subject to the review and approval of the Community Development Director.

7. Development shall include no more than one, ungated driveway on Holcomb Bridge Road with right-in, right-out access only.
8. A sidewalk in compliance with city standards shall be installed along the Holcomb Bridge Road frontage and shall connect to a sidewalk along one side of the new internal street leading to the townhomes.
9. Interior streets shall be private and maintained by the Homeowners Association.
10. Existing trees in buffers shall be preserved and buffers shall be enhanced with additional trees where sparse. In particular, specimen trees labeled 'A', 'B', 'F', 'G', and 'H' on the tree survey shall be protected and maintained.
11. A mandatory home-owners' association shall be established prior to the issuance **of the first certificate of occupancy for the subdivision. A copy of the HOA** document shall be provided to the Community Development Department and shall include, among other things, provisions for the maintenance of the common areas, including the roadways, recreation area, and fence; incorporation of the detention facilities into a common area; and a requirement that all units be owner-occupied with a prohibition on the rental of units.
12. An 8-ft. high wooden privacy fence shall be constructed along the entire rear of the property where it adjoins single-family properties.