

9/13/2019

City of Smyrna – Community Development Office
3180 Atlanta Road
Smyrna, GA 30080

Re: **Rezoning Analysis**
Pebblebrook Road @ Buckner Road
Planners and Engineers Collaborative, Inc. Project No. 19102.00A

1. Whether the zoning proposal will permit a use that is suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property.

The zoning proposal permits a use that is suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property. The proposal would annex an approximately 12.7-acre parcel in currently unincorporated Cobb County into the city limits of Smyrna. The simultaneous rezoning from Cobb County’s R-20 zoning district to the City of Smyrna’s RDA – single-family detached zoning district would facilitate the development of a 43-lot single family subdivision. The surrounding future land use designation in the City of Smyrna is PI – public and institutional uses, which primarily consists of the Whitefield Academy complex across the street from the site. Adjacent sites that will remain under the jurisdiction of unincorporated Cobb County are mostly undeveloped/vacant. To the west is the Stoneybrook Court subdivision with single-family detached homes on approximately 20,000 square foot lots. The proposed residential use is compatible with the surrounding context of residential and institutional uses.

2. Whether the zoning proposal or the use proposed will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property.

The zoning proposal will not adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property. As mentioned previously, the majority of parcels directly adjacent to the site are currently vacant or undeveloped, and will therefore not be affected at all by the proposed development. Existing conditions on the site, coupled with the site plan design, will offset any effects to neighboring properties: Due to existing conditions on the parcel, including a 150-foot power easement and a stream, 3.7 acres (nearly 30% of the site area) will be reserved for open space. The areas reserved for open space, including the stream, a detention area, and significant property setbacks, create a buffer between the proposed homes and the adjacent subdivision to the west of the site. Additionally, the majority of the site frontage that directly faces the school will be left open or undisturbed, due to the location of the power easement on the site. The rest of the frontage along Pebblebrook Road will be screened from the street by the 20-foot wide front buffer. The design of the site has intentionally created an insular, single-family community that will be buffered and screened from neighboring parcels on all sides, contributing to the quality of life for the new residents, and also leaving adjacent properties virtually unaffected by the development.

3. Whether the property to be affected by the zoning proposal has a reasonable economic use as currently zoned.

The current zoning severely limits the economic potential of this property. Mentioned above, existing conditions on the property that are outside of the applicant’s control—the 150-foot electrical easement and the portion of the site that is cut off from the rest of the developable area, and the stream and required buffers—significantly reduce the development potential of this site by approximately 25%. The current Cobb



County R-20 zoning district requirements on top of the existing site constraints further limit the development potential of this site. Under the R-20 zoning, the total 12.7-acre site could be developed with approximately twenty-five (25) 20,000 square foot lots; however, due to the above-described constraints, the potential lot yield would be approximately 12 to 15 lots, which is far below the density permitted in the R-20 zone.

4. Whether the zoning proposal will result in a use which will or could cause an excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities or schools.

This proposal will not overburden existing public utilities, facilities, or resources. It is likely that existing infrastructure and resources are not operating at capacity for several reasons: As mentioned before, the site is surrounded by several undeveloped parcels, which are not currently utilizing existing available infrastructure. As with all new residential development across the metro area, additional traffic is a concern. However, one of the benefits to the project is that the site is situated in close proximity to major thoroughfares such as South Cobb Drive, and Veterans Memorial Highway, which serve as direct links to I-285. It is not anticipated that this development will overburden schools. The number of proposed units is so few, that the number of new students potentially generated by the development and added to the Whitefield School (across the street) or local public schools is likely negligible.

5. Whether the zoning proposal is in conformity with the policy and intent of the land use plan.

This property is not currently located in the City of Smyrna, but is proposed to be annexed into the City Limits while the rezoning occurs simultaneously. Because of this, the property does not have a City of Smyrna future land use designation, as specified within the comprehensive plan. The parcel is proposed to be rezoned as RDA – Residential Detached/Attached, which would take advantage of this relatively new zoning district and facilitate the development of 43 new, single-family detached residences. This zoning proposal matches that of a substantial area across Pebblebrook Road, which is zoned the now-legacy zoning designation of RAD (Residential Attached/Detached). This proposal would fall under the ‘MODR – moderate density residential’ future land use designation as specified in the comprehensive plan. The applicant team is of the opinion that this future land use designation would be appropriate in this location, given the proximity the existing, similarly-zoned swath of residential development north of Pebblebrook Road, and the location of the site in relation to major arterial thoroughfares.

6. Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property which give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the zoning proposal.

As described above, existing site conditions have significantly reduced the usable area of the property. The annexation into the City of Smyrna and the simultaneous rezoning to Smyrna’s RDA zoning district makes the development of the property much more feasible and will improve the value of the land. This process will also add to and match the area of already-zoned RAD/RDA parcels, creating a more unified zoning map.

7. Whether the development of the property under the zoning proposal will conform to, be a detriment to or enhance the architectural standards, open space requirements and aesthetics of the general neighborhood, considering the current, historical and planned uses in the area.

The development of the property under the zoning proposal will enhance the open space requirements and aesthetics of the general neighborhood, in the view of existing and proposed development. As mentioned previously, a significant portion of the 12.7-acre parcel cannot be developed due to existing site conditions out of the applicant’s control. As a result, almost 30 percent of the site area will be dedicated to open space and undisturbed space. The required setbacks around the perimeter of the site create a significant buffer that will screen the adjacent parcels from the proposed development. Both ends of the development will be left natural, undisturbed, or dedicated to open space, and the residents of the proposed development will benefit from ample open space and a dedicated community green.



8. Under any proposed zoning classification, whether the use proposed may create a nuisance or is incompatible with existing uses in the area.

The applicant is of the opinion that the proposed development would neither create a nuisance nor be incompatible with existing uses in the area. The surrounding parcels are also developed with residential uses, there is a large school across the street, and many parcels directly adjacent to the site are currently vacant. The future land use plan features institutional and residential uses in such proximity in several locations throughout the City. Additionally, as mentioned above, the ample buffers and open space would screen both new residents and existing neighbors from noise, lights, and views associated with the new development, reducing the potential for complaints to arise.

9. Whether due to the size of the proposed use, in either land area or building height, the proposed use would affect the adjoining property, general neighborhood and other uses in the area positively or negatively.

As mentioned throughout this analysis, the proposed development sets aside a significant portion of the land area (nearly 30 percent) to buffers, undisturbed space, open space, and easement area. In addition to providing screening from noise and light, the preserved or enhanced plantings will refine the aesthetic quality of the site, which would be a positive effect on the surrounding neighborhoods. As described above, the proposed use is similar to existing uses in the surrounding area, and residential uses often complement institutional uses, such as the large school across the street. The proposed homes would be compliant with maximum height restrictions as prescribed by the RDA zoning district.

Sincerely,
Planners and Engineers Collaborative, Inc.

Kenneth J. Wood, P.E., LEED AP
President

For the Firm

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