

CITY OF SMYRNA

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

MEMORANDUM

To: License and Variance Board

From: Rusty Martin, AICP, Community Development Director
Caitlin Crowe, Planner I
Joey Staubes, AICP, Planner II

Date: August 18, 2021

**RE: VARIANCE CASE V21-088
2323 Ward Street – Increase impervious lot coverage from 35% to 60%**

BACKGROUND

The applicant is proposing to redevelop the existing Luxury Ward Apartments at 2323 Ward Street to accommodate two new apartment buildings on the subject property. The proposed buildings will necessitate an impervious coverage increase to 60%. Section 801 of the Zoning Ordinance requires a maximum impervious area of 35% in the RM-12 zoning district.

ANALYSIS

The subject parcel is a 1.87-acre lot located on the east side of Ward Street (see Figure 1). The subject parcel and the adjacent parcel to the east and south are zoned RM-12 (Residential Multi-Family) and are occupied by the Ward Street Luxury Apartments and the Greens at Windy Hill apartment complex, respectively. The adjacent property to the north is zoned GC (General Commercial) and is occupied by the U.S Post Office. The adjacent properties across Ward Street are zoned GC RM-12 and are occupied by a parking lot and the Carriage House Apartments, respectively.

The subject property is currently occupied by a 11,435 square foot building that holds 9 individual apartment units. The applicant is proposing a redevelopment of the property to construct two new 3,392 square feet buildings that will each hold five new apartment units on the northern end of the property. With the additional units the density would increase to 10.69 units per acre. This expansion will include a new recreation area in the front of the complex off Ward Street as well as a new lane and parking area for the new apartments.

The new apartment units will have their own parking spaces, as well as ADA, on the north side of the property. The interior drive will be reconfigured so that appropriate access is available for emergency response vehicles and will improve the existing conditions.

The property was developed with the original nine units in 1977 with the intention to add new units in the future. However, Section 801 of the Zoning Ordinance restricts impervious coverage to a maximum of 35% in the RM-12 zoning district. With the additional 10 apartment units, the

impervious coverage will increase to 60%, but the density will remain below the maximum 12 units per acre. The applicant will mitigate the additional runoff by providing underground stormwater detention at the front of the property. The City Engineer believes the stormwater detention proposed will suffice to negate any impact on adjacent properties.

Community Development believes the hardship is not self-created since the original apartment building was constructed in 1977. The new units will meet code requirements other than impervious coverage. Stormwater detention will be installed to mitigate any negative impacts. Additionally, interior drive parking will be redesigned to comply with the current code requirements, and access for emergency response vehicles.

STAFF COMMENTS

The applicant is requesting to deviate from the City's required parking minimums and South Cobb Corridor overlay district requirements. According to Section 1403 of the Zoning Ordinance, variances must be reviewed under the following standards: (1) Whether there are unique and special or extraordinary circumstances applying to the property; (2) Whether any alleged hardship is self-created by any person having an interest in the property; (3) Whether strict application of the relevant provisions of the code would deprive the applicant of reasonable use of the property; and (4) Whether the variance proposed is the minimum variance needed. Community Development has reviewed the requests against the variance review standards and found them to be in compliance with the review standards. Community Development believes that the requested variances will not adversely affect surrounding properties. Therefore, Community Development recommends approval of the requested variance with the following conditions:

1. Approval of the requested variance shall be conditioned upon the development of the property in substantial compliance with the site plan and elevations submitted with the variance application.

Figure – 1



Figure – 2
Site Plan

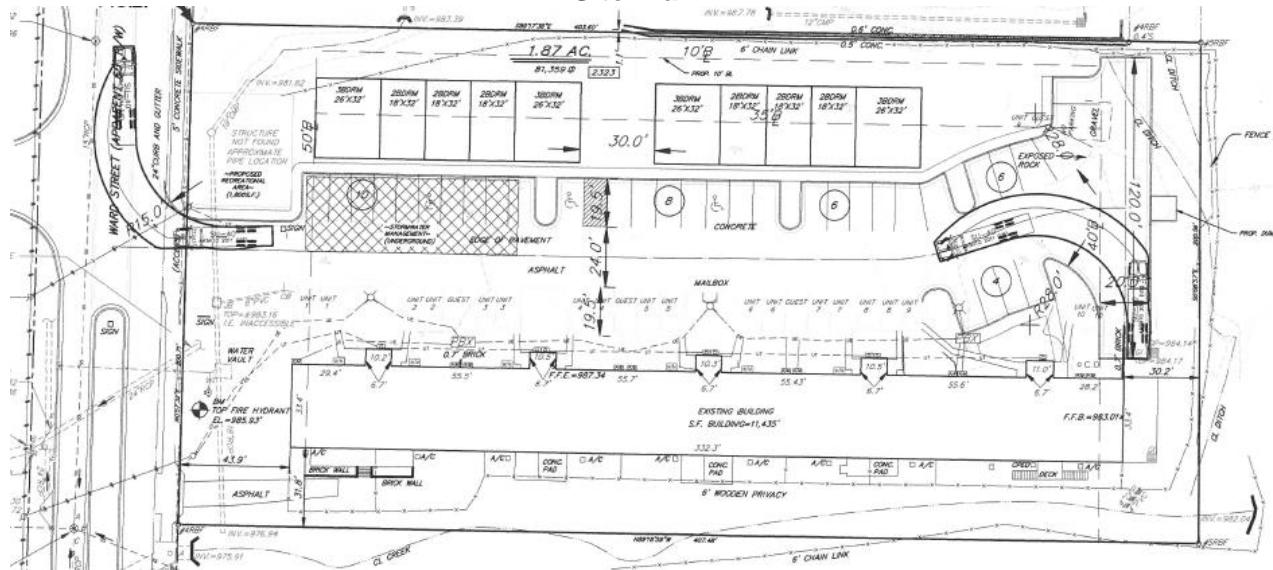


Figure – 3
Front Elevations

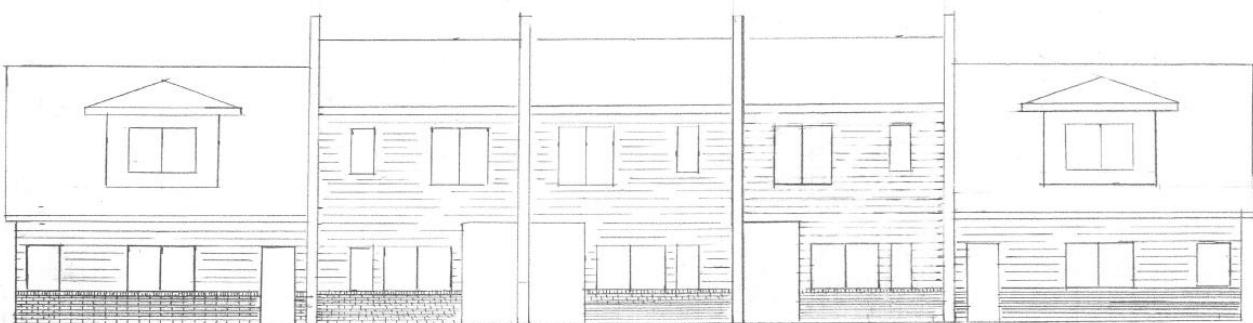


Figure – 4
Subject Property



Figure – 5
Existing Apartment Building on Subject Property



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Figure – 6
Location of Proposed Apartment Buildings



Figure – 7
Adjacent Properties across Ward Street



Figure – 8
Adjacent Property to the North



Figure – 9
Adjacent Property to the South

