



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

CASE SUMMARY

January 25, 2022

CASE NUMBER: #RZ 22-01

REQUEST: Rezoning and Request for Variances

LOCATION: 2165 North Road, Snellville, Georgia

SIZE: 3.30± Acres

TAX PARCELS: 5039 220 and 5039 273

CURRENT ZONING: BG (General Business) District

REQUESTED ZONING: OP (Office Professional) District

CURRENT FUTURE LAND USE MAP: North Road Redevelopment Area

DEVELOPMENT/PROJECT: 2-Story, 20,000 SF Office Building

PROPERTY OWNER: PLG Partners, LLC
Duluth, Georgia 30097

APPLICANT/CONTACT: Tyler Lasser
Alliance Engineering and Planning
Alpharetta, Georgia 30009
770-225-4730 x819 or TylerL@allianceco.com

RECOMMENDATION: Approval with Conditions



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

**CASE ANALYSIS
January 25, 2022**

TO: The Planning Commission

MEETING DATE: January 25, 2022

FROM: Jason Thompson, Director
Department of Planning and Development

CASE NUMBER: #RZ 22-01

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The Department of Planning and Development has received an application from Tyler Lasser, Alliance Engineering and Planning representing the PLG Partners, LLC, applicant and property owner, requesting to amend the Official Zoning Map from BG (General Business) District to OP (Office Professional) District and variances from the Snellville Unified Development Ordinance (“UDO”) for the 3.30± acre site located at 2165 North Road, Snellville.

The applicant intends to develop the property and construct a 2-story, 20,000 sq. ft. office building and associated parking.

The property is located on the western side of North Road, directly across from the intersection of Eastwood Drive and North Road and abuts properties zoned BG to the north and west and properties zoned OP to the south. Properties directly across the site on the eastern side of

North Road are single-family detached dwellings of the Sunrise Estates Subdivision, original developed in the 1960's and the former Mason-Todd house built in 1888 located at the corner Eastwood Drive and North Road.

BACKGROUND:

The property is part of a larger 7.5± acre tract that was rezoned in 9-27-2004 (case #LUP 04-06 RZ 04-08) to OP and BG with conditions. On 10-12-2009, the Mayor and Council approved modification of several conditions from the 2004 rezoning and approving new conditions (case #RZ 09-03).

REQUEST:

The applicant and property owner is requesting to rezone the property from BG (General Business) District to OP (Office Professional) District with variances from the buffer requirements of UDO Sec. 207-2.1.C.5. to eliminate by reducing the twenty (20) feet undisturbed buffer to zero (0) feet where adjacent to North Road and variance to allow pedestrian and vehicular access through said buffer.

A ten (10) feet wide planted landscape strip will still be provided adjacent to North Road.

SNELLVILLE 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN RECOMMENDATION:

The property is located in the southern portion of the *North Road Transitional Corridor Character Area* (shown in dark green) and located just north of the *Towne Center Character Area* (shown in purple).



Existing Character Description

The North Road Transitional Corridor character area surrounds North Road, a parallel road to nearby Scenic Highway and a key north-south connection for locals. The southern end of the character area connects to the Towne Center, and several homes have already been converted to offices. Farther north, the area is mostly older, single-family ranch homes and a few small offices, all with a residential character and relatively deep setbacks. Properties on the west side of the corridor abut commercial properties on Scenic Highway. Natural vegetation provides greenery and shade along much of the corridor. Sidewalks are available along portions of North Road.

Predominate Land Uses

Low-density residential, medium density residential, North Road Redevelopment Area, office/professional.

Vision

With its proximity to the Towne Center, the southern portion of the North Road Transitional Corridor is well suited to office expansion. To the north, infill mixed uses are envisioned to help buffer the quieter residential neighborhoods to the east from the commercial development along Highway 124 to the west. North Road itself will be major corridor in Snellville's growing system of greenways, linking the City north toward the Shoppes at Webb Gin House. Traffic will be eased by consolidating the number of curb cuts, building roundabouts, and implementing access management strategies.

Key Implementation Strategies

- Construct planned roundabouts to improve turn movements at the intersections of Pharrs Road, Pinehurst Road, and Ridgedale Drive
- Implement the planned greenway route along North Road
- Expand sidewalks, particularly along Pinehurst Road and Pharrs Road
- Adopt the North Road Overlay
- Encourage shared driveway access and alleys for future redevelopment to minimize curb cuts
- Support the consolidation of parcels to encourage unified redevelopment
- Establish a consistent development pattern along the corridor by implementing design guidelines for signage, sidewalks, and landscaping
- Permit well designed, infill development small offices and medium density residences
- Continue active code enforcement



Existing character



Examples of potential future character in southern portion of the corridor

REZONING SITE PLAN ANALYSIS:

The rezoning site plan, sealed and signed 12-13-2021 shows the 3.29± acre site with the proposed two-story 20,000 sq. ft. office building setback approximately forty (40) feet from the North Road right-of-way with one full-access drive located at the northern portion of the site with the driveway continuing westerly and connecting to the adjacent Snellville Village Shopping Center located at 2118 Scenic Highway and two-story commercial building at 2092 Scenic Highway with signalized access to Scenic Highway. A speed-table is shown for traffic calming purpose.

One-hundred-nineteen (119) onsite parking spaces are located behind and to the south side of the building, well exceeding the forty (40) minimum number of spaces required by the code. Two solid waste dumpsters with enclosure is shown within the internal parking area. There is a notation that the existing above-ground stormwater management facility and associated wetlands will be replaced with an underground system. Two (2) pedestrian sidewalks/walkways are shown connecting to the existing public sidewalk adjacent to North Road.

There are two (2) existing stormwater catch basins shown in the North Road right-of-way at the proposed full-access drive location. These catch basins will need to be relocated with new drainage easements prepared to collect and convey the stormwater to the creek and in accordance with City and County regulations.

The size of the proposed development is well below the threshold requiring dedicated open space. Although not provided on the site plan, the maximum impervious ground coverage for lots in the OP District is seventy (70) percent. There is a forty (40) foot maximum building height for lots within two-hundred (200) feet of a residential district.

As a requirement in UDO Sec. 401-3.4.H. requiring inter-parcel connectivity when lots along State routes, arterial streets and *collectors* abut a lot zoned BG or OP, interparcel access is shown to the BG zoned parcel to the west (5039 270), but not shown to the BG zoned parcel to the north (5039 272) and OP zoned parcels to the south (5039 005) and (5039 015).

As North Road is classified as *Minor Collector* on the Gwinnett County Long Range Road Classification Map, the applicant shall be required to comply with the inter-parcel requirements as follows:

- a. Internal vehicular circulation areas must be designed and installed to allow for cross-access between abutting lots.
- b. Vehicle cross-access may not be gated.
- c. When an abutting lot is vacant or already developed, a stub for a future cross-access connection must be provided at the point where the connection to the abutting parcel is expected to occur in the future.
- d. If a cross-access driveway stub exists on an abutting parcel, the internal vehicular circulation area must connect to the stub to form a cross-access connection.

- e. When cross-access for vehicles is deemed impractical by the Director based on topography, the presence of natural features, or vehicular safety factors, relief from the requirement for cross-access may be granted by administrative variance. Bicycle and pedestrian connections must be provided between abutting parcels when cross-access relief is granted.
- f. Property owners who establish cross-access easements must:
 - i. Allow pedestrian and vehicular access to all properties on the same block face as the property owner establishing the cross-access. Pedestrian and vehicular access is contingent upon the granting of reciprocal vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian access rights to the granting property;
 - ii. Record an easement allowing cross-access to and from properties served by the cross-access easement;
 - iii. Record a joint maintenance agreement requiring each property owner to maintain the vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian access areas on their lot;
 - iv. Contain a provision prohibiting the erection of fences, walls, and other obstructions that prevent the use of vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian access ways;
 - v. Include a statement that the cross-access agreement is conveyed with the land, is binding on all successors, heirs, and assignees, and that the easement rights are perpetual; and
 - vi. The cross-access agreement must be signed by all of the owners of the granting property.

BUILDING ELEVATIONS:

As part of the application submittal, the applicant provided sample building elevations for the proposed two-story 20,000 sq. ft. office building. Although not shown, the maximum building height appears to be less than the forty (40) feet maximum height allowed in the OP District. And, although not specified, the exterior wall finish materials shall comply with the architectural design standards of UDO Sec. 201-3 (General Architectural Standards).

VARIANCE REQUEST AND ANALYSIS:

Included in the application submittal, the applicant filed an amended Letter of Intent received 12-20-2021 requesting the following two variances from the buffer requirements of the UDO:

1. Variance from Sec. 207-2.1.C.5. to eliminate and reduce the required twenty (20) feet, undisturbed buffer to zero (0) feet where adjacent to North Road and instead utilize a ten (10) feet landscape strip; and

2. Variance from Sec. 207-2.1.C.5. to allow access through the undisturbed buffer.

UDO Sec. 207-2.C.5. Buffer: A 20-foot, undisturbed buffer is required when a nonresidential use is separated from a residential district by a public right-of-way that is 60 feet wide or less. No access through this buffer is allowed. The buffer may be reduced or eliminated with the written consent of the affected residential property owner.

Variance Analysis: The rezoning site plan shows the proposed building location and associated parking setback approximately sixty-five (65) feet from the centerline of North Road and therefore not adversely impacted by:

- a) Dedication of additional right-of-way, measured thirty (30) feet from the centerline of North Road,
- b) Ten (10) feet front landscape strip, with an additional ten (10) feet enhanced landscape strip to buffer the parking area located to the south of the proposed building and provide a buffer from the rear of the adjacent shopping center building fronting Scenic Highway, and
- c) Ten (10) feet front building setback.

Recommendations: The Planning Department recommends *approval* of the variance request to eliminate and reduce the twenty (20) foot undisturbed buffer to zero (0) feet and instead require a twenty (20) foot enhanced landscape strip containing a staggered row of mixed of evergreen trees a minimum of eight (8) feet in height at time of planting, where adjacent to North Road, beginning at the southernmost corner of the property and running north approximately two-hundred-fifteen (215) feet then taper down to a ten (10) foot front landscape strip for the remaining three-hundred (300) feet, less the areas containing the full-access drive and two sidewalk connections.

The Planning Department recommends *approval* of the variance to allow access through the 'no-access buffer' as shown on the submitted site plan.

CONCLUSION AND STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Although the NR (North Road) District was created with the October 2020 adoption of the Snellville Unified Development Ordinance and identified as a key implementation strategy for the North Road Transitional Corridor Character Area in the February 2019 adoption of the Snellville 2040 Comprehensive Plan, the proposed development does not meet the 'Building Type' requirements for the NR District; and therefore better complements the requested OP zoning serving as the transitional zoning between the commercial and retail uses to the west; Towne Center and small office uses to the south; and single-family residential uses to the north and east.

The Department of Planning and Development recommends the following:

- A. **Approval** of #RZ 22-01, application to amend the City of Snellville Official Zoning Map from BG (General Business) District to OP (Office Professional) District.
- B. **Approval** of the variance from UDO Sec. 207-2.C.5 to reduce the 20-foot undisturbed buffer to zero (0) feet (see Condition #2); and **Approval** of the variance to allow access through the no-access buffer.

The recommendations above are subject to the attachment of the following recommended **Conditions**:

1. The property shall be developed in accordance with the zoning site plan entitled "Site Zoning Plan for Scenic Hwy. 124 Tract", dated 12-13-2021 (stamped received 12-14-2021), with modifications permitted to meet conditions of zoning or State, County, and City regulations. Substantial variation from the conceptual rezoning site plan, as determined by the Director of Planning and Development will require Mayor and Council approval, after receiving recommendations by the Planning Department and Planning Commission.
2. As a condition of variance approval to eliminate and reduce the twenty (20) foot undisturbed buffer to zero (0) feet where adjacent to North Road, the applicant shall provide a twenty (20) foot enhanced landscape strip containing a staggered row of mixed evergreen trees a minimum of eight (8) feet in height at time of planting, where adjacent to North Road, beginning at the southernmost corner of the property and running north approximately two-hundred-fifteen (215) feet then taper down to a ten (10) foot front landscape strip for the remaining three-hundred (300) feet, less the areas containing the full-access drive and two sidewalk connections.
3. The existing street trees located within the planter strip and North Road right-of-way shall not be removed and shall be protected from equipment damage during project construction.
4. In accordance with UDO Sec. 401-5.1.D. (Dedication of Street Right-of-way) applicant shall dedicate to GDOT additional right-of-way along the property frontage on North Road in accordance with the width requirements in Table 401-5.2 for streets classified as 'Minor Collector'.
5. Uses involving adult entertainment, including the sale or display of adult magazines, books, videos and as further defined by the Adult Entertainment Ordinance in effect on the date this condition is imposed, are prohibited.
6. Signs higher than 15 feet or larger than 225 square feet are prohibited.