

**MINUTES OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING
CITY OF KENNESAW
Council Chambers
December 6, 2023
8:00 AM**

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Whipple at 8:05 a.m.

Roll Call: Commissioner Ferguson, Commissioner Butler, Commissioner Gallagher, Commissioner Buffington

Absent: Commissioner Blandford

Staff Present: Darryl Simmons (Planning and Zoning Administrator) and Natalie Faustine (Community Development Administrative Assistant)

Speakers Present: Michael Miller (Applicant, Piedmont Residential), Nate Sirang (Applicant, Concord Wilshire), and Scott Peters (Applicant's Attorney).

2. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

A. Meeting Minutes from October 20, 2023

Chairman Whipple calls for a motion to approve meeting minutes from the meeting on October 20, 2023.

Motion by Commissioner Butler to approve.

Seconded by Commissioner Gallagher.

Chairman Whipple proceeds with a roll call for approval.

Vote taken, motion unanimously approved 3-0. Motion carried. Commissioner Buffington abstains.

3. Financial Report

Mr. Darryl Simmons reports that since the last meeting there have been no new expenditures by the HPC or by staff on their behalf. All the current amounts of training dollars and donated dollars remain unchanged. There is a \$1,000 budget item under Planning and Zoning, as well as \$3,000 for related training for use by the HPC. \$23,179 has been put in a special account for donated dollars per year.

Chairman Whipple calls for a motion to approve the financial report as submitted.

Motion by Commissioner Gallagher to approve.

Seconded by Commissioner Butler.

Vote taken, motion unanimously approved 4-0. Motion carried.

4. Old Business

5. New Business

A. Consideration for approval of a variance application submitted by Kennesaw

Square Development, LLC for the properties located at 6997 Keene Street (20016700340), Keene Street (20016603670, 20016701130, 20016701190), 2570 N Cobb Parkway (20016700730, 20016701180), and 2590 Keene Street (20016700420). Case #ZV2023-04.

Mr. Simmons states both agenda items pertain to the same project, the development of Kennesaw Square. Since part of the project is near downtown and within the Camp McDonald Historic District, the project must be approved by the Kennesaw Downtown Development Authority, the Historic Preservation Commission, the Planning Commission, and the Mayor & Council. He explains that the applicant will do their presentation, then the items will be addressed separately. One item deals with two variances in the proposal, and the other item is the overall Central Business District project approval. He yields the floor to the applicant.

Mr. Nate Sirang (Applicant) introduces his real estate development company, Concord Wilshire, and tells the Commissioners about previous and current developments. He describes the proposed project as a Cobb Parkway corridor improvement project that is intended to create a destination mixed-use development located along the northeast side of Cobb Parkway.

Mr. Michael Miller (Applicant) explains that the proposed site of this development consists of several parcels of land. Their vision is to build a mixed-use development containing commercial and residential space. They wish to incorporate a central plaza to be used as common space for the community to host seasonal events, farmers markets, and so forth. Four buildings are proposed to be strictly commercial retail, three are to be residential over commercial, and one is to be residential over an entertainment facility such as a theater. There will also be a parking garage to provide parking not only for the residents, but 500 additional spaces for the public.

Mr. Miller reviews the entrances to the proposed development and highlights its pedestrian-friendly connectivity to Main Street and vehicular traffic connectivity to Cobb Parkway. Various architectural renderings are presented to portray what the development is expected to look like from different points in the city, as well as to convey the proposed architectural style. He points out that they are aware the development will be next to the city's cemetery. During a survey of the property, they identified certain elements that are part of the cemetery that encroach on the property they acquired. He states that it is not a problem, and they are willing to work with the city to deal with those encroachments.

Mr. Scott Peters (Applicant's Attorney) goes to the podium to introduce the two variances they are seeking from the HPC. He briefly reviews the current zoning of the area and explains they have also submitted a rezoning application, so all parcels included in this project will be in the Central Business District. According to the Unified Development Code Section 4.02.03.B.4, site design standards for the Central Business District are subject to Historic District Design guidelines.

The first variance request is to vary from the Historic District Design Standard Section 5.2.03, non-

residential buildings shall not exceed 3 stories in height. This project proposes buildings that are four, five, or six stories in height. He mentions that apartments are being built next door that are four stories in height and are on a higher topography, so the development they are proposing will be consistent with that. He continues to explain that the purpose of the code is to ensure that buildings in the historic district match the existing downtown area, but this project is located in the Camp McDonald Historic District, which does not have any buildings to match. Given it is a Cobb Parkway redevelopment project, Mr. Peters states he believes that the proposed development is consistent with the city's vision, and they are asking for a variance for the height of the buildings.

The second variance request is to vary from section 5.4 of the Historic District Design Standard regarding exterior walls. Again, the purpose of the Historic District Design Standard is to ensure that new developments are designed to match the character of the existing buildings, but there are no existing buildings in this historic district. He mentions that they are conscious of the fact that the cemetery is right next door and, as a result, they are looking at using materials that are consistent with the cemetery from an appearance standpoint, such as stack stone and brick. He reiterates that this project is geared towards Cobb Parkway, not downtown, and the architectural standards for downtown are not consistent with those of Cobb Parkway.

Mr. Simmons presents a map of the five historic districts in Kennesaw. He points out Camp McDonald's location along Cobb Parkway and its closeness in proximity to modern buildings such as a car wash, pawn shop, bank, and dental offices. There is very little as far as historic assets to reference, so staff recommends this is looked at as a non-contributing district. He proposes that a monument or plaque should be built into the project to identify the history of the site.

Chairman Whipple asks about an ongoing survey of the historical districts and what their stance is on the Camp McDonald district. Mr. Simmons responds that they recommended the land area for the Camp McDonald district to be reduced to solely include land that still has historical significance, or that the district may be eliminated altogether. The Commission will ultimately determine what course of action is appropriate.

Commissioner Gallagher asks whether the external building materials will match the Historic District Design Standards or if they are seeking a variance for that as well. Mr. Peters responds that they are not seeking a variance for the materials, they are seeking variance for the style. He states they are comfortable with the permitted materials.

Chairman Whipple briefly reviews the variance requests and highlights some factors of consideration that are important to the HPC. He asks if there are architectural renderings of the view of the project from the cemetery or if the builders have ideas on how they plan to soften the look. Mr. Peters responds that they are still working on the design, and they are willing to have the design and materials go through HPC approval. Mr. Simmons adds that they also discussed the buffering of the cemetery for the project, so that it will be included in a resubmittal to the HPC once they determine what is suitable.

Commissioner Ferguson asks if the Cemetery Preservation Commission has been apprised of this project. Mr. Simmons responds that the project was presented to Mayor

& Council, and the council liaison to the Cemetery Preservation Commission is well aware of the project. However, the final submittal of the project will not be required to go before the CPC.

Commissioner Buffington asks if the buffer for the cemetery will go past the developed portion of the property onto the undeveloped portion that stretches to Keene Street. Mr. Simmons responds that the final landscaping plan will determine that, but for now they are focusing on the cemetery. He states that this project would be developed in one phase, so there will not be too much back and forth as far as revisions go.

Commissioner Gallagher asks where they are in the design phase of the structure and finishes. Mr. Sirang responds that they are still in the preliminary phase, which is why they do not have details regarding the materials to share at this time.

Commissioner Butler brings up her concern about building a five-story structure right behind our historic site on Summers Street and the six-story structure behind the cemetery. She expresses that she does not want the historic sites to be overshadowed by bigger buildings, as has been done in the city before.

Chairman Whipple comments that previously with large developments, the HPC has requested that developers present progress updates for review and approval and suggests the same is done with this project. He asks Mr. Simmons if there have been any similar motions made by other Commissions, so they could align what those progress updates will look like. Mr. Simmons responds that there have not. He explains the CBD project approval goes before the KDDA for the business plan, then it goes before the HPC and Planning Commission before going to the Mayor and Council. He reminds the commissioners that with some of the previous mixed-use developments, updates were requested for key milestones in the project, such as at twenty-five percent completion, fifty percent, seventy-five percent, and one hundred percent. He asks the Commissioners to keep in mind that at this point this project is entirely conceptual. As the design process progresses, other agencies outside the city will be required to weigh in, such as Cobb Water and Sewer as well as the Cobb County Fire Marshall. He states that conceptually it will be appropriate to ask for a timeline or milestone-based status report.

Chairman Whipple returns to the topic of a commemoration to the Camp McDonald historical site. He suggests the applicant works with Mr. Andrew Bramlett in developing the verbiage for a commemoration of Camp McDonald for review and approval by the HPC.

Mr. Miller says they would be happy to do that and mentions that Piedmont Residential previously built a commemoration to Mayor Pritchard in the Pritchard Park development here in Kennesaw.

Chairman Whipple thanks Mr. Miller and goes over the conditions that must be mentioned in the motion.

Chairman Whipple calls for a motion.

Motion by Commissioner Gallagher to approve under the following conditions:

- Design may vary from Kennesaw Historic District Design Standard 5.2.03 regarding building height.
- Design updates must be submitted at 25, 50, 90, and 100 percent completion until the approval of the final project.
- Design updates must include landscaping plans.
- Applicant will maintain consistency with HPC guidelines with the variance approval for section 5.4 of the Kennesaw Historic District Design Standards regarding exterior features.
- The mass and scale of the buildings that face the cemetery should be considered in the plan review process.
- A commemorative plaque or monument approved by the HPC should be prominently placed within the development to recognize the historical area of Camp McDonald.

Seconded by Commissioner Ferguson.

Chairman Whipple proceeds with a roll call for approval.

Vote taken, motion unanimously approved 4-0. Motion carried.

- B. Consideration to review a CBD project application request for a mixed-use development on five parcels located at 6997 Keene Street (20016700340), Keene Street (20016603670, 20016701130, 20016701190), 2570 N Cobb Parkway (20016700730, 030016701180), and 2590 Keene Street (20016700420). Case #CBD2023-02.

Mr. Simmons briefly introduces the next item, which is the CBD project approval.

Chairman Whipple calls for a motion to approve the application with conditions outlined in item A.

Motion by Commissioner Gallagher to approve.

Seconded by Commissioner Buffington.

Chairman Whipple proceeded with a roll call for approval.

Vote taken, motion unanimously approved 4-0. Motion carried.

6. COAA Approval by City Staff and HPC Chair

- A. COAA2023-19 - 2910 Cherokee Street NW, Suite 101

This Certificate of Appropriateness application was submitted by Katie Matthews on behalf of High Stakes Creative to change the face of a sign at 2910 Cherokee Street NW to reflect a business name change. There were no structural changes to be made. It was administratively reviewed and approved on October 26, 2023.

- B. COAA2023-20 - 2243 Lewis Street

This Certificate of Appropriateness Application was submitted by Kim Wakefield on behalf of Denyse Companies Inc to install two non-illuminated wall signs on the front

elevation of the building at 2243 Lewis Street. It was administratively reviewed and approved on November 9, 2023.

C. COAA2023-21 - 3001 N Main Street

This Certificate of Appropriateness Application was submitted by Fred Moore to re-roof his home at 3001 N Main Street with shingles matching the existing roof. It was administratively reviewed and approved on November 9, 2023.

D. COAA2023-22 - 2237 Whitfield Place NW

This Certificate of Appropriateness Application was submitted by Katie Matthews of High Stakes Creative to install a stand-alone sign at 2237 Whitfield Place NW. It was determined that the height and type of sign is appropriate, as it does not cause any motorist or pedestrian visibility issues. It was administratively approved on November 10, 2023.

7. Discussion

Mr. Simmons introduces the newest member, Commissioner Buffington, and mentions that there is still an opening on the Commission that needs to be filled.

8. Public Comment

Chairman Whipple calls for public comment, to which he receives no response.

9. Staff Comment

Chairman Whipple opens the floor for staff comment.

Mr. Simmons explains that this is Commissioner Ferguson's last meeting as a member of the HPC and thanks him for his consistent participation and thoughtful questions.

Chairman Whipple mentions that the next meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 15th but will be canceled if no new applications are received.

10. Adjourn

Chairman Whipple adjourned the meeting at 8:57 a.m.