

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
Draft | Not Yet Approved: Meeting Minutes
February 5, 2025 – 6:00 P.M.
Chamblee City Hall
3518 Broad Street, Chamblee, GA 30341

Call to Order (6:02 pm)

Members Present: Ashley Pecora, Kate Henry, Joshua Word, and Joanna Gargiula

Members Absent: Christine Simonton and Holly Jeffreys

City Staff Present: John Maximuk, Planning and Development Director, Gabrielle Peters, Deputy Planning and Development Director, Tiffany Moo-Young, Planner II, and John Torres, Planner I

I. Review of Meeting Procedures

John Maximuk provided an overview of the purpose of the Design Review Board and its meeting procedures.

II. New Construction

A) PZ2025-1403: 3063 Clairmont Road - Hilton Garden Inn

1. Tiffany Moo-Young provided a summary of the proposed project. The proposed develop consists of a 99,000 square foot, six story hotel, with 155 guest rooms and a coffee shop on the ground floor. This development was previously approved under DCI PZ2025-1403. The applicant is requesting four concurrent variances and seven concurrent waiver requests. These request are related to reducing the number of off street parking spaces from 190 to 165, to allow parking to be situated between a building and a street, to reduce the amount of wheel bumpers for a portion of the parking spaces that do not abut with the curb or sidewalk, encroachment into the 50- and 75-foot stream buffers reduce the streetscape dimension requirements and to not provide interparcel access.
2. Thomas Lemberg, the architect for the application, provided a brief history of the project and the challenges created due to the GDOT right of way. Erik Houston, the Senior Project Manager, provided further details about the topographical constraints associated with this site.

3. Public Comment

No one from the public was in attendance.

4. Board Discussion

The Board asked why the proposal has changed from the previous 2020 DCI. The applicant, Harish Patel, clarified that it was due to the cost to construct the previous plan. The new plan has implemented cost reducing measures, such as removal of the retaining walls and significant grading that the previous plan included.

The Board inquired about the rationale behind the design of the sidewalk. The applicant stated that the sidewalk was intentionally kept relatively straight and positioned close to Clairmont Road, while public spaces were strategically placed further back on the site to preserve existing trees. The design aimed to accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists by incorporating a 'bicycle bypass,' which would allow cyclists to avoid areas where pedestrians might gather, particularly near the proposed coffee shop patio.

The Board expressed concerns about whether these measures will indeed protect the trees, and about the narrowness of the bike lane and how it may interfere with the deceleration lane. The applicant stated that these plans were created with the intent of using the best practices to ensure tree survival while maintaining the usefulness of pedestrian and cycling facilities.

The Board requested more information regarding the waiver from the interparcel access requirements, stating that a lack of connection between the subject property and Century Center would be detrimental to the traffic flow of the street, as Clairmont Road is already heavily traveled. The applicant agrees that interparcel connectivity would be ideal, but explained that the adjacent property owners have been uncooperative, making the possibility of this connection difficult.

The Board asked the applicant why the interparcel access could not extend to the property line. The applicant replied that doing so would result in the loss of parking spaces. The Board then pointed out that if a waiver is granted, the applicant wouldn't need to provide interparcel access, even if the opportunity arises.

The Board inquired about the parking calculation, and staff provided clarification.

The Board also raised concerns about the inconsistent sidewalk width again. One member agreed and noted that the distance between the sidewalk and the landscape strip was inappropriate, suggesting it should be widened for safety. The applicant responded that the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) requires the sidewalk to be built within the right-of-way (ROW), rather than on private property. The Board then pointed out that the ROW is inconsistent, making it challenging to meet the requirements. The applicant clarified that these inconsistencies are the reasons behind the varying sidewalk widths.

The Board asked questions about the parking configuration of the smaller seven-space parking lot along Clairmont Road, to which the applicant provided a

detailed explanation. Another inquiry was made regarding the three parking spaces within the porte-cochère. The Board asked why these spaces were necessary, and the applicant provided justification for their inclusion.

Finally, the Board asked questions about the pull-through spaces in relation to the landscape strip, seeking further clarification from the applicant.

B) Recommended Approval of the following Variances and Waivers.

The board made the following recommendations:

1. Variance #1 from 250-2(a)(4) - The Board made no recommendation.
2. Variance #2 from 250-7(a)(1) – The Board recommended the applicants to explore reconfiguration of the parking lot between the building and street. Investigate if nose-in parking could eliminate the need for the variance. Ensure it works from a circulation and queuing standpoint.

Motion by Joshua Ward, seconded by Kate Henry, unanimous 4-0.

3. Variance #3 from Section 250-7(a)(11) - The Board recommended approval of the variance with the condition that it be limited to a maximum of 16 spaces.

Motioned by Kate Henry, seconded by Joshua Ward, unanimous 4-0.

4. Variance #4 from Section 310-19(e) - The Board made no recommendation.
5. Waiver #1 from Section 230-26(a) and Waiver #2 from 230-26(a) – The Board recommended approval of the waiver requests with the condition that the streetscape should remain consistent by reducing the sidewalk clear zone to a minimum of 6-feet-wide and the landscape zone to 4-feet-wide across the entire frontage except at the northern and southern end where existing trees are to be preserved and where the new streetscape is to tie into the adjacent sidewalk.

Motioned by Kate Henry, seconded by Joshua Ward, unanimous 4-0.

6. Waiver #3 from Section 230-26(a) and Waiver # 4 from Section 230-26(a) – The Board recommends approval of these requests.

Motioned by Kate Henry seconded by Joshua Word, unanimous 4-0.

7. The applicant shall provide a minimum 6-foot-wide sidewalk and 4-foot-wide landscape across the entire frontage except at the north end and south end, where existing trees are to be preserved and tie into the adjacent sidewalk.
8. Waiver #5 from Section 320-21(a)(4) - The Board motioned to combine this recommendation with Variance #3 from Section 250-7(a)(11).

Motioned by Kate Henry seconded by Joshua Word, unanimous 4-0.

9. Waiver #6 from Section 350-2(a)(2)(a) - The Board made no recommendation.
10. Waiver #7 from Section 350-2(c) -The Board recommended approval of the waiver with the condition that if any adjacent parcels are developed, the owner must provide an access easement and a construction easement in order to achieve interparcel connectivity at the time of redevelopment of the adjacent parcel.

Motioned by Kate Henry seconded by Joshua Word, unanimous 4-0.

C) Design Review Board Recommend Conditions of Approval

1. The variance permitting the omission of head-to-head landscaping shall be strictly confined to sixteen parking spaces located within the first row of the parking area.
2. The applicant shall provide a minimum 6-foot-wide sidewalk clear zone and a 4-foot wide landscape zone across the entire frontage of Clairmont Road except at the north end and south end, where existing trees are to be preserved, and the sidewalk is to be tied into the adjacent sidewalk.
3. If any adjacent parcels are developed, the owners shall provide access and construction easements to provide an inter-parcel connection at the time of redevelopment of the adjacent parcel.
4. The applicant shall provide additional architectural details on the north and east-facing facades by providing more variation in materials that are consistent with the proposed material palette.

Motioned by Joshua Word seconded by Joanna Gargiula, unanimous 4-0.

III. Approval of minutes: DRB Meeting – July 10, 2024

Motion:

On a motion by Joshua Word, seconded by Kate Henry, the Design Review Board voted to approve the meeting minutes of July 10, 2024.

Vote: Passed, unanimously 4-0.

IV. Other Business

No other business.

V. Adjournment

Motion:

On a motion by Joshua Ward, seconded by Kate Henry, the Design Review Board voted to adjourn.

Vote: Passed, Unanimously 4-0

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 PM.