

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT STAFF REPORT

Public Hearing Date: April 11, 2024

Item #: PZ2024-1262

BLOCK AND DRUM - ACCESSORY STRUCTURE VARIANCE

Project Name: Block and Drum
Applicant: Justin Staples
Owner: Salt Lick Partners
Zoning District: CC (Corridor Commercial)
Address: 5105 Peachtree Blvd Rear
Parcel ID: 18 300 09 005

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY WITH STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Proposed Project: Renovation of an existing commercial building.

Requests: One (1) variance

Summary Analysis:

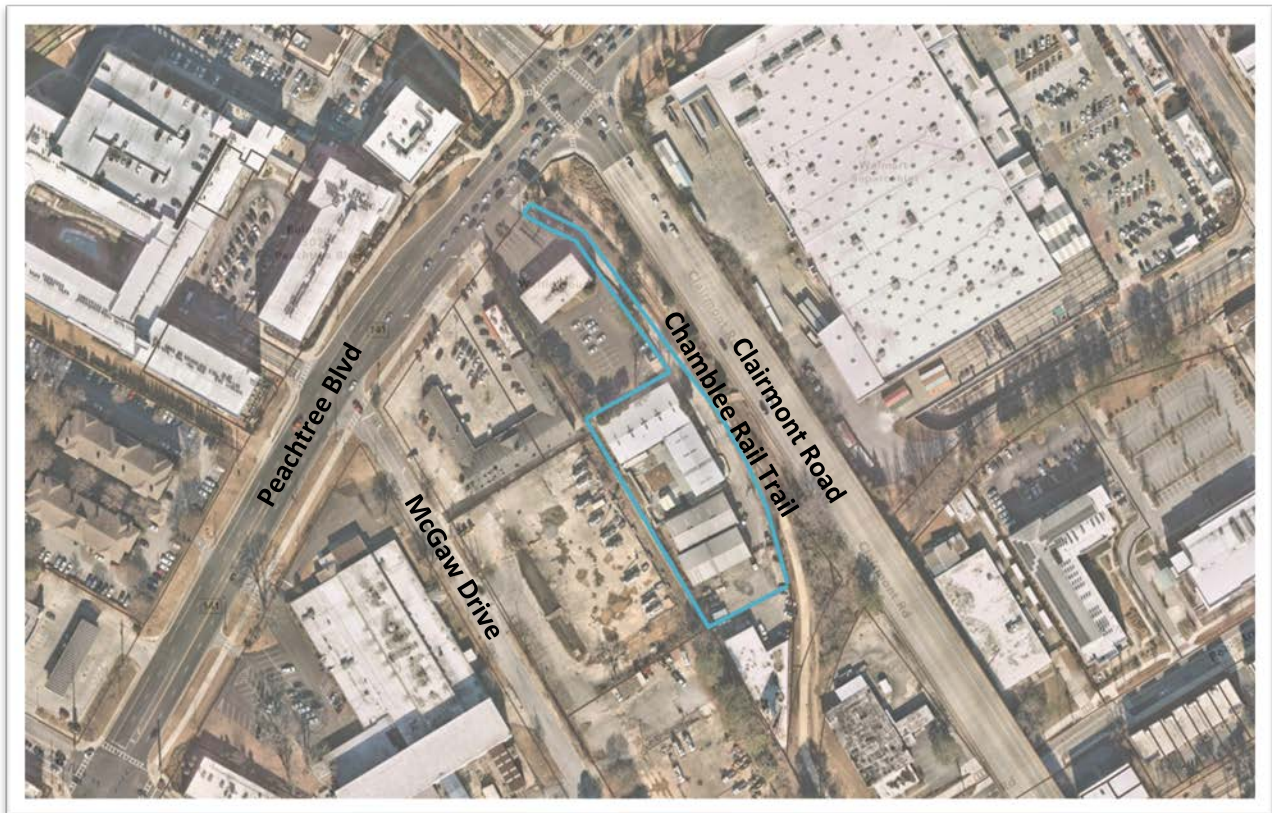
- The applicant proposes to renovate an existing commercial building for a distillery with a tasting room, event space, café, garden, and container kitchens. Due to the extent of the interior renovation, the applicant is required to make exterior improvements subject to the Adaptive Reuse Regulations.
- The applicant proposes to install a total of seven accessory structures. The UDO allows up to three structures.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends **APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS** of the following variance requests:

1. Variance from Section 230-8(a)(4), to allow a maximum of seven accessory structures.

Site Aerial:



Current Zoning:

The property is located in CC (Corridor Commercial)

This zoning district is intended primarily for commercial and mixed-use development and related accessory uses at a medium density. This district provides a location for residences, retail, goods and services and offices to satisfy the common and frequent needs of the city's businesses and residents. Design standards and design parameters encourage a pedestrian-friendly traditional urban form, oriented to pedestrians, which limits the conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians

Current Use:

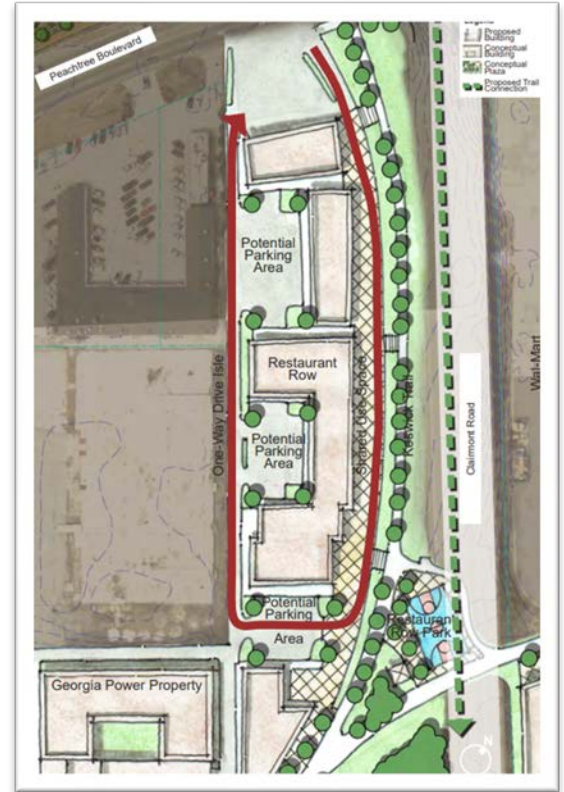
Industrial

Surrounding Land Uses:

North – VC: Mixed Use (Parkview on Peachtree)
South – CC: Industrial
East – TOD: Rail Trail and Retail (Walmart)
West – CC: Industrial (Georgia Power Company)

Site Description and History of Property:

The subject property is a 1.6-acre lot located at the rear of 5105 Peachtree Boulevard, underneath the Clairmont Road Bridge and adjacent to the Chamblee Rail Trail. The property is accessed off of a private service driveway from Peachtree Boulevard. The service drive varies in width and ranges from about 25' to 40'. It currently functions as a two-way drive with angled and parallel parking located throughout the service drive. According to DeKalb County property information, the property was developed in 1969 as an industrial auto garage. The subject site is one of four buildings on the site. According to the Chamblee Rail Trail Phase 2 Plan, this area is within Focus Area 2 – Restaurant Row. The plan calls for this area to be adaptively reused for restaurants or other trail friendly commercial uses that face the Rail Trail that would bring “eyes on the rail and park.” A portion of the service drive is to be transformed into shared use street that would allow vehicles and pedestrians to safely coexist.



Project Description:

The applicant proposes to complete an interior renovation of the existing building for a micro-distillery and music/event venue. Use of the space will include a micro-distillery, tasting room, café, outdoor area with a stage, container garden, storage room, and four container kitchens. The renovation will include:

- Installation of seven accessory structures in the rear of the site. Six of the seven structures will be comprised of recycled shipping containers. Four of these containers will be used as container kitchens that will provide “fast casual style” food service. One structure will be used for storage of refrigerated and dry food goods and the last will be used as a container garden. The seventh structure will be a freestanding covered stage.
- Improved storefront with a 15-foot-wide supplemental zone that includes outdoor seating, walkway to the parking lot located to the east of the site and a 12-foot crosswalk connecting the building to the Rail Trail.
- Update to the existing building façade with a mural that has been approved by the Chamblee Public Arts Commission. The storefront will also include a roll up garage window, additional fenestration, and a decorative awning.
- Over 1,600 square feet of open space. The project will include 340 square feet of public open space adjacent to the cafe and 1,296 square feet of private open space located in the recreation area at the rear of the building.

Applicant's Variance Requests:

The applicant requests variances from Title 2 of the UDO:

1. Variance from Section 230-8(a)(4), to allow a maximum of seven accessory structures.

Per the review and approval criteria found in Sec. 280-32(a), the Mayor and City Council may authorize variances from the provisions of the UDO only after making the following findings:

- a. **There are extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to the particular property in question because of its size, shape or topography;**

There are extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to the particular property. The property has no street frontage, is accessed through a private driveway, located under the Clairmont Road Bridge and adjacent to the Chamblee Rail Tail.

- b. **The application of this zoning ordinance to the particular piece of property would create an unnecessary hardship;**

The application of the zoning ordinance would create an unnecessary hardship. The applicant is proposing an adaptive reuse project within an existing industrial building. In order to fully comply with the zoning ordinance, the applicant would either need to construct an addition onto the industrial building or redevelop the site entirely.

- c. **Such conditions are peculiar to the particular piece of property involved;**

The conditions are peculiar to the particular piece of property involved. No other commercial site within this area has location restrictions like the subject property.

- d. **Such conditions are not the result of any actions of the property owner; or**

The conditions of the lot are not the result of the applicant, however the need for variances is the result of the actions of the applicant.

- e. **Relief, if granted, would not cause substantial detriment to the public good nor impair the purposes or intent of this zoning ordinance.**

Relief if granted, would not cause substantial detriment to the public good. The purpose and intent of the zoning ordinance would not be impaired if additional accessory structures are installed. The accessory structures will be located at the rear of the building, not visible from the public right of way or Rail Tail. The accessory structures would also allow for a use that would bring pedestrians and customers into the area, which has historically been underutilized and will bring "eyes" to an area that has several safety concerns. Additionally, the use could be a catalyst for other restaurants to join the area which would activate the vision for Restaurant Row.

Staff Recommendation:

Based on the analysis of this application, using the standards and criteria found in Chapter 280 and 300 of the UDO, Staff recommends **APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS** of the following variance requests, in application PZ2024-1262:

1. Variance from Section 230-8(a)(4), to allow a maximum of seven accessory structures.

Should City Council approve the variance requests, staff recommends the following conditions of approval:

1. The development shall be constructed in substantial conformity with the Site Plan received by the Planning and Development Department dated received on March 6, 2024, with revisions required by conditions of approval as reviewed and approved by the Planning & Development Director.
2. The site shall be limited to seven accessory structures.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – Application

Attachment 2 – Site Plan + Elevations

Attachment 3 - Rail-Trail Extension Conceptual Design Study: Focus Area 2 - Restaurant Row

Attachment 4 – Maps

Site Visit:

Frontage along Private Driveway



Rear Portion of Site





Proposed Accessory Structures