



City Hall  
2529 J O Stephenson Avenue  
Kennesaw, GA 30144

*Doug Rhodes – Chairman,  
Cindi Michael – Vice-Chair,  
Dan Harrison, Don Bergwall,  
Phillip Jackson, SaVaughn Irons  
Lacey Ragus*

## KENNESAW PLANNING COMMISSION

October 6, 2021 – 7:00 P.M.

Action Minutes

City Hall Council Chambers

This public meeting is being conducted via the use of real-time telephonic technology allowing the public simultaneous access to the public meeting. The meeting may be accessed using Facebook Live via the following link: <https://www.Facebook.com/City of Kennesaw/>. **Any comments made on Facebook Live will not be visible by City staff.**

If you will like to provide public comment on a specific agenda item, you can email [kennesawcouncil@kennesaw-ga.gov](mailto:kennesawcouncil@kennesaw-ga.gov) no later than 6:00 P.M. the night of the regular meeting. Your comment will be read aloud or grouped into categories for the record. All interested parties may attend the meeting in person with limited seating available at both the City Hall Council Chambers and the Ben Robertson Community Center, if needed. Please note that the Planning Commission serves as an advisory board that makes recommendations to Mayor and Council unless otherwise noted.

**Mayor and Council Meeting: Monday, October 18, 2021**

### I. Call Meeting to Order/Roll Call

- Meeting called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Chairman Doug Rhodes.
- Roll Call: Doug Rhodes, Cindi Michael, Don Bergwall, Phillip Jackson and Lacey Ragus
- Absent: Dan Harrison and SaVaughn Irons
- Staff Present: Darryl Simmons (Zoning Administrator), Albert Trevino (Assistant Zoning Administrator & Planner), Tanyel Aviles (Zoning Clerk) and Ricky Stewart (Public Works Director)
- Applicants Present: David Versel (Representative for United Consolidated Group), Mitchell Cooke and Bill Okvist (BlueTiger Properties, LLC), Parks Huff, Esq. and Tyler Gaines (TPA Residential)

### II. Approval of Meeting Minutes: September 1, 2021

- Motion by Commissioner Bergwall to approve the September 1, 2021 Meeting Minutes
- Seconded by Commissioner Michael
- **Motion carried by vote 4-0.**

### III. New Business

1. **RZ2021-05** – Consideration to rezone property located at 2695 N Cobb Pkwy from Highway General Business (HGB) to Urban Village Commercial (UVC) as submitted by United Consolidated Master, LLC. Said request to rezone property is for mixed-use development with commercial and residential uses. Property consists of 1.32 +/- acres and lying in Land Lot 166 and Tax Parcel 503.
  - Chairman Rhodes introduces case RZ2021-05 and turns over the floor to Mr. Albert Trevino.
  - Mr. Trevino thanks the Chairman and Planning Commissioners. He states the first agenda item this evening is for the rezoning of a property located at 2695 North Cobb Parkway. The applicant, United Consulting, is requesting to change the zoning

**The next scheduled meeting of the Kennesaw Planning Commission  
November 03, 2021 at 7:00pm**





City Hall  
2529 J O Stephenson Avenue  
Kennesaw, GA 30144

*Doug Rhodes – Chairman,  
Cindi Michael – Vice-Chair,  
Dan Harrison, Don Bergwall,  
Phillip Jackson, SaVaughn Irons  
Lacey Ragus*

designation from Highway General Business (HGB) to Urban Village Commercial (UVC) for the purpose of constructing a mixed-use three (3) story building. Their proposal calls for approximately one thousand three hundred and twenty five (1,325) square feet of commercial space which will be located on the first floor. Also on the first floor, the applicant is proposing two (2) one (1) bedroom apartment units in the rear of the building with each of these units consisting of approximately five hundred and eight (508) square feet of space. One (1) bedroom units are also being proposed on the 2<sup>nd</sup>- and-3<sup>rd</sup>-floors of this development, all being around five hundred (500) square feet each. Residents will be able to access the upper floor units via an outdoor stairwell which leads to a common hallway which will run through the middle of the building. A total of ten (10) one (1) bedroom apartment units are being proposed. This proposed development will not have its own curb cut off of Cobb Parkway. It will be accessible from the existing driveway located on the adjacent property, which is currently the Sonic Drive-In. Back in December of 2019, a stream buffer variance was approved for this particular piece of property. Per the site plan, shows a creek running through the southern corner of the property. The variance was approved to allow for development to encroach into the outermost twenty five (25) foot city stream buffer. Mr. Trevino states that, before staff presents their recommendation and basis for recommendation to the commission, they would like for the applicant to come up to the podium to present their project proposal and go over the details of their project request.

- Mr. David Versel approaches the podium. He thanks the Commission and introduces himself. He states that he is the consultant working with the owner on the project at hand. He states that this is a mixed use project. He then explains the site is a vacant site that fronts Cobb Pkwy, but has long had an access easement from the adjoining Sonic property. As was said, there was a prior proposal for this site that required stream buffer variance that was approved by the City Council back in 2019. At that time, the plan was to construct a two (2) story office building. It was designed to be a multi-tenant building. United Consulting, the property owner, which is a well-established engineering and geotechnical firm headquartered in Norcross, wants to establish a place of business in Kennesaw and Cobb County. They were going to take one of the office spaces and lease out the other spaces to other tenants. Obviously, with Covid and the impacts it has had on the world and market, the property owner came to the conclusion that there was not a sufficient market for other office uses on the site and began exploring other options for it. They spoke with Mr. Simmons and Mr. Trevino and other City Staff several months ago with this idea, and they've been working on the plan. They've gone through several versions of it. Essentially, the plan as it is has the same building footprint as what was proposed before, but it has a third story to it whereas previously there was only a second story and it also has residential units instead of being purely commercial. They have reviewed the staff report and they understand Staff will be recommending denial on two (2) basic grounds that Mr. Versel would like to address.
- Firstly, the Staff Report states that the intent was to construct a two (2) story office building on site. Now, to present a project of mixed use development with ground floor commercial with multi-family residential, it does not fit into the long range future land

**The next scheduled meeting of the Kennesaw Planning Commission  
November 03, 2021 at 7:00pm**





City Hall  
2529 J O Stephenson Avenue  
Kennesaw, GA 30144

*Doug Rhodes – Chairman,  
Cindi Michael – Vice-Chair,  
Dan Harrison, Don Bergwall,  
Phillip Jackson, SaVaughn Irons  
Lacey Ragus*

use goals and would establish incompatible uses next to one another. They would like to take issue with that. This recommendation seems to be saying that because this proposal is different than what was proposed before, therefore, it should be denied. Again, Covid changed the market, and it resulted in there being a dramatic decrease in office demand and a dramatic increase in rental demand. This has led to very high cost for rental units in and around Kennesaw. The bottom line is they don't see market support for the office use that was proposed two (2) years ago. Secondly, a purely commercial development that Staff is suggesting is clearly something that has never been supportable on the site because nothing's ever been built on the site. The Sonic has been there for some time. Obviously, most of the Cobb Pkwy corridor has been developed for one purpose or another. But this site is primarily wetlands. There is a stream on the site. Most of the land is not developable, and they needed a stream buffer variance a few years ago just to be able to develop this small building on the site. So, this is something that if required to be purely commercial, there really isn't any development potential for the site at all. Mr. Versel continues that on the City's Future Land Use Map the site is shown to be part of a Community Activity Center (CAC) which in the Comp Plan is defined as an area of commercial, office, and residential land uses. The CAC is by design a mixed-use area. It is an area that the City has already stated through its Comp Plan and Future Land Use Map as a place that the City would like to see mixed-use development including residential. The zoning that they are seeking, Urban Village Commercial (UVC), is purposed to provide locations for planned mixed-use development of low intensity, low scale commercial, office and residential uses. He believes that is very similar language to what's in the CAC designation in the Comp Plan. They believe the UVC zoning is consistent with the Comp Plan and the City's vision for the corridor. Lastly for this point, he states that the site is only five hundred (500) feet from the edge of the downtown district. It's just on the other side of Cobb Pkwy. Watts Drive is just on the other side of Cobb Pkwy which comes right into downtown. This truly is a potential gateway project that provides an attractive new building and sign of reinvestment on Cobb Pkwy in direct proximity of the downtown district.

- The second point in the Staff Report as to why Staff is recommending denial states the low apartment sizes fall short of the City's minimum apartment size within RM-8 and RM-12 multi-family zoning districts which Staff feels would set a precedent of tiny apartment unit sizes which does not fall in line with local and regional apartment unit size trends. Mr. Versel refers back to his point on affordable housing, he states that this market is facing a shortage of market-rate-missing-middle housing. The kind of housing that young professionals, teachers, fire fighters and the type of people communities rely upon need to be able to access their jobs. That is getting harder and harder to find in this area. New one (1) bedroom apartments in this part of the region are going for rents of fifteen hundred (1500) dollars or more for a quality one (1) bedroom unit in a safe, attractive community. What they're aiming to supply, because of the smaller unit sizes, are units that are priced significantly lower than that. These five hundred (500) square foot units would rent for around twelve hundred (1200) dollars a month. It might be a small unit but the rent is lower because the cost per square foot is in line with the rent for a larger one (1) bedroom unit. On that point, while the units might be small in terms

**The next scheduled meeting of the Kennesaw Planning Commission  
November 03, 2021 at 7:00pm**





City Hall  
2529 J O Stephenson Avenue  
Kennesaw, GA 30144

*Doug Rhodes – Chairman,  
Cindi Michael – Vice-Chair,  
Dan Harrison, Don Bergwall,  
Phillip Jackson, SaVaughn Irons  
Lacey Ragus*

of the floor plan, they seem larger. The units with all have nine (9) foot ceilings. There's a significant amount of windows in each unit. He utilizes visuals to show the Commission the floor plan and renderings. Each of the units will have four (4) large double windows in addition to the high ceilings. So, they will get natural light and they will feel much larger than the floor plan might indicate. Also, Staff is noting the unit size for Residential Multi-family (RM) districts. This is not the same as an RM district. This is a mixed-use district that is adjacent to the City's downtown. They think there is a fundamental difference between a RM area and a UVC area. The City's Code does not have standards for apartment unit sizes in the UVC zone, and he doesn't think it's necessarily fair to apply the standards from a different district to this district. Even within the RM district, units as far as four hundred and fifty (450) square feet are permitted if they're studio units. The six hundred (600) square foot minimum cited by Staff is for one (1) bedroom units. So, they're sort of unclear on the direction here. They're being told that the City wants to see one (1) bedroom units not studio units, but the one (1) bedroom units have to be a certain size. But if they were allowed to do the studio unit, they could be smaller. They are unclear as to why Staff is recommending only one (1) bedroom units and only six hundred (600) square feet. Another thing they want to point out is that Staff has suggested these are tiny apartments, and that they are more akin to hotel rooms than they are to apartment units. They would like to take exception to that. A typical hotel room in a Hampton Inn or Holiday Inn is about two hundred and fifty (250) to three hundred (300) square feet. This is double that size. It is clearly not a hotel room. It is a small one (1) bedroom apartment. It doesn't feel like a hotel room or look like a hotel room. In closing, the idea of tiny units is usually four hundred (400) square feet or less. He cites three (3) developments in Adair Park, Midtown and Fayetteville that are building or have built tiny apartments or tiny homes for similar or less square footage to the proposed development. The tiny homes in Fayetteville are renting for over three thousand (3000) dollars a month for a five hundred (500) square foot unit. He states that that is in no way anyone's idea of low end housing or a slum or hotel room. He thanks the Commission for the opportunity to speak, and encourages them to take a look at the site, the proposed project and the quality of the development.

- Chairman Rhodes acknowledges that CAC does include some residential aspects, but that the area in question is Highway General Business (HGB). He states it has been HGB since the sixties (60's), and that the only residential building is Sister Ann's Palm Reading besides established apartment buildings. He clarifies that when he says "established," he means large-scale, full sized apartment communities. And that many of those are further north and in Acworth. With that said, Chairman Rhodes states that he understands where the comment comes from along the lines of setting precedence. They have to consider, when they approve something, whether or not it will set them up for other small lot residential/commercial developments. He suggests that if they were in the downtown district, the development might fit in more readily because it's a mixed bag of commercial and residential. However, the area in question has Sonic and an extended stay hotel next door. He believes the applicant's statement of "attractive and safe" housing may not apply to this location.

**The next scheduled meeting of the Kennesaw Planning Commission  
November 03, 2021 at 7:00pm**





City Hall  
2529 J O Stephenson Avenue  
Kennesaw, GA 30144

*Doug Rhodes – Chairman,  
Cindi Michael – Vice-Chair,  
Dan Harrison, Don Bergwall,  
Phillip Jackson, SaVaughn Irons  
Lacey Ragus*

- Mr. Versel states that the idea of a CAC is what the City's Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map are showing for the area in question. Most of Cobb Pkwy is still shown as Highway Commercial (HC) in the Comp Plan. However, this particular area, the City has already designated as CAC in the future. Which is why they are requesting a rezoning for something they believe is compatible with the City's Future Land Use Plan.
- Commissioner Bergwall gets some clarification from the applicant as to the floorplan, and asks about handicapped accessibility.
- Mr. Versel explains that they are proposing two (2) units on the ground floor behind the commercial space for that purpose that would be Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant.
- Commissioner Bergwall asks if they can then get by with having the next two (2) floors not being handicapped accessible.
- Mr. Versel confirms, yes. Two (2) of the ten (10) units or twenty (20) percent would be ADA compliant.
- Commissioner Bergwall asks who will be managing the property.
- Mr. Versel states that the property owner would manage the building. The property owner has a lot of real estate and manages other locations and buildings.
- Chairman Rhodes recalls the previously presented and approved commercial development for this property. He states that the current proposal goes one hundred and eighty (180) degrees. He asks if it is about fifteen (15) percent commercial and the rest is residential instead of all commercial.
- Mr. Versel states it is more than fifteen (15) percent. It is close to twenty (20) percent. But yes. He states that, as he explained, it's due to the shift in the market. They did not see interest from other commercial businesses and office spaces at this location. He states office space has become harder and harder to fill.
- Commissioner Bergwall asks what the minimum lease period and other restrictions would be.
- Mr. Versel states that they would be at least one (1) year leases. These are not seen as short-term rentals, and not as hotel rooms. And asks Commissioner Bergwall to clarify "restrictions."
- Commissioner Bergwall asks if they could be student housing.
- Mr. Versel states they will follow the Equal Housing Laws, but they are not designed or marketed as student housing. However, a student could very well live there. Though, he states that many students prefer nine (9) month housing leases and these would be one (1) year.
- Commissioner Jackson states that, when he thinks of mixed-use, he doesn't think about a gas station and a Sonic and a handful of small apartments in the same area. He asks about the small business on the first floor.
- Mr. Versel states that it would be an office for United Consulting, the property owner.
- Commissioner Michael asks if the office will be manned five (5) days a week, all year long, or just manned occasionally when they have a project in the area.
- Mr. Versel states it will accommodate five (5) employees at any given time.
- Commissioner Michaels asks if it will be manned by five (5) employees, not just accommodate them.

**The next scheduled meeting of the Kennesaw Planning Commission  
November 03, 2021 at 7:00pm**





City Hall  
2529 J O Stephenson Avenue  
Kennesaw, GA 30144

*Doug Rhodes – Chairman,  
Cindi Michael – Vice-Chair,  
Dan Harrison, Don Bergwall,  
Phillip Jackson, SaVaughn Irons  
Lacey Ragus*

- Mr. Versel states the company does do a lot of field work. So, a lot of the employees aren't always in the office, but there will be at least one (1) person in the office.
- Chairman Rhodes thanks the applicant, and the applicant steps down.
- Mr. Simmons approaches the podium and states that he would like to offer some background on the City's long-term planning and how Staff came up with their analysis. He begins with the quality of life issue that is mentioned briefly in the Comp Plan. He states that when discussing mixed-use there are certain components that the City requires and expects. Certain quality of life issues, such as: how will the residents be enjoying the property, access, separation and planning of the site. This site was challenged, and, rightly so, a variance is required. He disagrees that there is not a need for office space. He states that the City is receiving office requests in different parts of the City. When people conduct business these days, they are having suites versus one (1) building with one (1) user. So, there are a lot of different demands for office use still active. The second concern they have is the Cobb Pkwy corridor. As it's laid out, it was not the City's intention to have multi-family right on Cobb Pkwy. In the long-term plan, all of the residential is usually set back off of Cobb Pkwy. Examples being Ellison Lakes or Old 41 Hwy. They are strategically placed based on the corridor. Cobb Pkwy has always been a CAC predominantly commercial redevelopment goal for the City, but they are trying to reduce any type of smaller residential units on Cobb Pkwy because of the incidents and problems they've had in the past. He thinks there is a proper area for mixed-use with residential and commercial together. But they cannot be compressed in a way that the quality of life for the residents is in question. He believes that this site is very compressed because of the flood plain and the challenges, and is not appropriate for ten (10) units. And, if approved, they are then circumventing the standards for minimum sizes for multi-family across the City. He states the applicant is correct. They did cite the RM-8 and RM-12. But they are also trying to be consistent with all the other zoning districts, like: CBD, RM-8 and RM-12. So, if you allow a five hundred (500) square foot site here with one (1) bedroom, there could be an argument that there will be further variances for the other zoning districts. And that's what they mean by setting a precedent. They are trying to set a baseline for multi-family in the City, and it has to start with where they are across the board. What do they see as multi-family? What is the minimum that would be allowable that brings value to the site and to the City? Are there places in Atlanta that have five hundred (500) or less square foot units? Yes. But Staff also provided to the Planning Commission a very long list of regional comparisons of what's being built. Small units are a very tiny percentage. Most are in the seven hundred (700) or eight hundred (800) unit range because of the value that it brings to the residents. The City did pass an ordinance regarding student housing. If there is student housing, they would have to meet those requirements. It would require much larger units and much larger site acreage. He isn't going to discuss the Fair Housing Act, but he does know the City had very clear vision of the corridor of Cobb Pkwy that goes to the City and it is not to encourage smaller multi-family units.
- Chairman Rhodes asks what the final disposition of Mayor and Council was regarding the previous commercial approval for the site.

**The next scheduled meeting of the Kennesaw Planning Commission  
November 03, 2021 at 7:00pm**





City Hall  
2529 J O Stephenson Avenue  
Kennesaw, GA 30144

*Doug Rhodes – Chairman,  
Cindi Michael – Vice-Chair,  
Dan Harrison, Don Bergwall,  
Phillip Jackson, SaVaughn Irons  
Lacey Ragus*

- Mr. Simmons states that when Mayor and Council saw the variance, it was a one hundred (100) percent commercial entity. And, with the amount of parking for that, there was no discussion about residence or residential parking or distance to amenities. There's one (1) way in and one (1) way out. It is shared by both commercial and the residential users and very little amenities because of the topography. So, when you add all those things up, it is City Staff's assessment that this does not bring value for the residents there in that location. Not only the size of the units, but the whole site itself does not lend itself to a healthy mixture of these uses in one (1) building with rear and side entry. That is the long and short term goal for Cobb Pkwy under the current Comp Plan. All of the approvals that have been made are very consistent. Up and down Cobb Pkwy, all of the new buildings and developments are per the City's goal and vision for Cobb Pkwy.
  - Chairman Rhodes opens the floor for public comment. Seeing as there are none, he closes the floor, and asks the Commission if there are any questions or comments from Commissioners. There are none. Chairman Rhodes calls for a motion.
  - **Motion to deny by Commissioner Jackson.**
  - **Seconded by Commissioner Michael.**
  - **Motion passes 4-0.**
2. **ZV2021-04** – Consideration for a variance located at 2570 N Cobb Pkwy as submitted by BlueTiger Properties, LLC. Said request is to reduce the rear yard setback within the Highway General Business (HGB) zoning district from 30-feet to 20-feet. Property consists of 2.67 +/- acres and lying in Land Lot 166 & 167 and Tax Parcel 73.
- Chairman Rhodes introduces case VZ2021-04 and turns over the floor to Mr. Albert Trevino.
  - Mr. Trevino thanks the Chairman. He states that the second agenda item of the evening is for a variance request for the property located at 2570 N Cobb Pkwy. The applicant, BlueTiger Properties, LLC, is seeking to vary from section 4.01.02 of the Unified Development Code, which states that the rear setback for the Highway General Business (HGB) zoning district is thirty (30) feet. The applicant is requesting to reduce this number from thirty (30) feet to twenty (20) feet. The intent of this project is to construct a 3-story climate controlled self-storage facility. He makes note for the record that the staff analysis refers to this facility as being 3-stories, but in fact it is 3-stories with a basement. So, just to clarify, this building will contain a total of 4-stories and approximately one hundred twenty three thousand and six hundred (123,600) square feet of space. The applicant has provided a rendering of what this facility will look like. It will be primarily constructed with a brick façade. This climate controlled facility does not plan to offer services or have spaces for any outside storage items such as boats, trucks and/or RV's. All storage will be contained within the temperature controlled building. Also a part of this project will be a separate detached retail commercial building that will contain approximately fourteen thousand (14,000) square feet of space. This is the

**The next scheduled meeting of the Kennesaw Planning Commission  
November 03, 2021 at 7:00pm**





City Hall  
2529 J O Stephenson Avenue  
Kennesaw, GA 30144

*Doug Rhodes – Chairman,  
Cindi Michael – Vice-Chair,  
Dan Harrison, Don Bergwall,  
Phillip Jackson, SaVaughn Irons  
Lacey Ragus*

former site of the Budgetel Extended Stay motel. The motel was sold in December 2019 and it was purchased by the Kennesaw Downtown Development Authority. The motel was eventually demolished in June 2020. The property currently sits vacant. Before staff presents their recommendation, they would like for the applicant to come up to the podium to go over their project request and project details.

- Mr. Mitchell Cooke approaches the podium, and gives the Commission a brief history of his time in Kennesaw as a long-time resident. He explains that they are very interested in the property, and what the City of Kennesaw has been doing. He states his group has experience in self-storage, retail and multi-family housing, among others. He explains that the property is interesting. It is an oddly shaped piece of property, and somewhat difficult to develop. The fronting on Cobb Pkwy is relatively easy. It is a classic commercial retail site albeit a little skinny. They came up with a plan to put the storage facility in the back, and deal with topographic issues. The property falls off as you go from Cobb Pkwy towards the rear near Keene St. They can easily come in there with a basement level, and also deal with an oddly shaped building. There is also a driveway separating the storage in the rear from the retail building in the front that will access off of Keene St. The challenge was getting enough parking on the site to support the retail. They don't need a lot of parking spaces for the storage facility. The retail is where they need parking. If you have fourteen thousand (14,000) square feet of retail, you need seventy (70) some odd parking spaces. So, the challenge was the small area of property behind NAPA Auto Parts, and getting enough area to get the parking in there. As they looked at it, they thought if they could take the building and move it further to the rear of the property, not have a driveway or entrance off the backside, then that would create enough parking in the front to support the retail.
- Chairman Rhodes refers to the provided site plan, and gets clarification on the rear of the property.
- Mr. Cooke states that he doesn't know what will happen with Keene St as it pertains to the rear of the property.
- Chairman Rhodes mentions that they will encounter a lot of new development near them.
- Mr. Cooke confirms and states that he has spoken with Mr. Simmons, Planning and Zoning Administrator, and they are willing to do whatever is needed along Keene St to make a curb sidewalk, trees, planters, street lights, etc. to fit in with the rest of the development on there. They are willing to meet whatever the City's standards will be for that street. For them, putting the building right on the setback, having landscaping and sidewalk, and no rear access was attractive. Which is why they would like to reduce the setback to twenty (20) feet, they can make everything work for the retail on the front and the driveway would come in off of the side. He continues that the facility will be a one

**The next scheduled meeting of the Kennesaw Planning Commission  
November 03, 2021 at 7:00pm**





City Hall  
2529 J O Stephenson Avenue  
Kennesaw, GA 30144

*Doug Rhodes – Chairman,  
Cindi Michael – Vice-Chair,  
Dan Harrison, Don Bergwall,  
Phillip Jackson, SaVaughn Irons  
Lacey Ragus*

hundred (100) percent climate controlled, indoor facility which is predominantly what they do. There is no outside storage on this facility. There are two entrances. There will be a lower level entrance with an automatic sliding glass door and keypad operated entry. Access is limited between six (6) a.m. and ten (10) p.m.

- Mr. Cooke and Chairman Rhodes clarify the orientation of the building and adjacent properties.
- Chairman Rhodes clarifies with Mr. Simmons that they are considering only the variance as applied to the setback and the hardship involved, not the property or what it looks like.
- Mr. Simmons states that he is correct. Behind the property, going up what was formerly Keene St, is a mixed-use development for the Central Business District (CBD) which is part of the redevelopment effort involving Core Properties. The Public Works Director, Ricky Stewart, has informed Mr. Simmons that a portion of Keene St has been abandoned past Napa Auto Parts. So, there is a lot of area that could be used for future improvements. But for what this company is buying, it is basically what is reflected in the site plan. The applicant is willing to make the beautification that will match what Core Properties' and the City's expectations are as you enter the CBD.
- Chairman Rhodes asks if the applicant will make the area look uniform.
- Mr. Simmons states yes, it will be uniform to the other investments around it. The applicant had already mentioned the topography and the number of stories. Like any other construction or site plan, there are a lot of different standards in play at the same time. There are the location of curb cuts, the minimum aisle widths that meet the Fire Marshal requirements, the minimum parking for retail (which will be much higher than for the climate control storage facility), etc.
- Chairman Rhodes voices a concern. He states that the Commission is struggling with a lot of applicants coming in, and they are putting more building on the property than the code allows. It's a monetary thing most of the time. So, they want to try to curb that or avoid it if possible.
- Mr. Simmons states that that is why they had extensive discussions with the applicant. The applicant reviewed the City's zoning ordinance, and wanted to minimize if possible any other variances and meet the site requirements. Which they did, except for this.
- Chairman Rhodes acknowledges that the rear of the property does drop off pretty heavily.
- Mr. Simmons confirms it does. He states that once the land is cleared, you can see what they are dealing with, and they have to design accordingly. This application is a combination of trying to meet a lot of different design qualifications and, at the same time, keep it viable.

**The next scheduled meeting of the Kennesaw Planning Commission  
November 03, 2021 at 7:00pm**





City Hall  
2529 J O Stephenson Avenue  
Kennesaw, GA 30144

*Doug Rhodes – Chairman,  
Cindi Michael – Vice-Chair,  
Dan Harrison, Don Bergwall,  
Phillip Jackson, SaVaughn Irons  
Lacey Ragus*

- Chairman Rhodes asks if they have done any coring or (inaudible) test.
- Mr. Cooke says that they have, and there is a small amount of rock in that area.
- Chairman Rhodes states that he only asks because they have had other developments return later and want to change a lot of things after they were already approved based on something they should have taken care of upfront.
- Mr. Cooke states they have already done their Phase I Environmental, and geotechnical borings on the property and everything is fine.
- Commissioner Jackson asks if the applicant will add sidewalk on the frontage of Cobb Pkwy due to high pedestrian traffic.
- Mr. Cooke says he can and would.
- Mr. Simmons reminds the Commission to keep in mind that that right away is Department of Transportation's (DOT). And it would need to meet the DOT's requirements and get their approval.
- Commissioner Bergwall asks about the future of Keene St.
- Mr. Ricky Stewart, Public Works Director, explains that the City has abandoned Keene St from just behind the property that NAPA sits on to its terminus at Burrell Ct. The intent was that, between Core property and Schoolhouse property, Keene St would be realigned. It would pull further north. So, technically that area of Keene St doesn't exist, and has been sold to developers.
- There is a discussion on the relevance of Keene St to the applicant's property, and the future on Keene St in general.
- Commissioner Bergwall states he is not keen on variances to get more on what is a known piece of property. The developer knows what they bought and the conditions, but then they need more to make their case viable. If the setback is supposed to be thirty (30) feet, and they grant twenty (20), he states the City should either change the code or there should be compliance and set a precedence for that.
- Mr. Simmons states that it is an oddly shaped lot. There are topographical issues in the rear. It's not just about setbacks here. When you're looking to develop a property, you're looking at what's required for stormwater, detention, parking requirements, aisle widths (dictated by the Fire Marshal). The reason that they have the variance application is because they can't meet all the design standards and build the way it's supposed to be built.

**The next scheduled meeting of the Kennesaw Planning Commission  
November 03, 2021 at 7:00pm**





City Hall  
2529 J O Stephenson Avenue  
Kennesaw, GA 30144

*Doug Rhodes – Chairman,  
Cindi Michael – Vice-Chair,  
Dan Harrison, Don Bergwall,  
Phillip Jackson, SaVaughn Irons  
Lacey Ragus*

- Commissioner Bergwall disagrees. He believes they can but the building would simply be smaller.
- Mr. Simmons explains the retail portion has parking involved due to the zoning. It will not all be the climate controlled facility. There will be two (2) users. So, they have to consider how much parking is required for one (1) user, and how much, by code, is required by the retail facility. Basically, they need twenty (20) feet, not thirty (30) feet to make everything fit onto this oddly shaped lot.
- Commissioner Bergwall states that they need it in order to have that size building.
- Mr. Simmons confirms.
- Commissioner Bergwall asks for clarification on what the elevation would be in the rear of the building near Keene St relative to how the property runs and how the building is going to sit. How high is the building along Keene St?
- Mr. Cooke explains that there is not a lot of grade change. The topography along that side of the property falls about two (2) or three (3) feet, not the six (6) or (8) feet like on the backside. Where the building really starts to rise is as you come forward toward Cobb Pkwy. The area in the front where the old motel was, and where the retail building will be, is up high at the elevation of Cobb Pkwy. The property falls off roughly ten (10) or eleven (11) feet when you get back to Keene St.
- Mr. Cooke uses the provided visuals to describe the elevations and topography of the site for the Commissioners.
- Chairman Rhodes asks if there will be a retaining wall or grade everything out.
- Mr. Cooke states there may be a small wall in the right corner to make the grade changes work properly because there isn't enough room to slope it off. There will be no retaining wall along Keene St. There will be landscaping and sidewalk right up to the building.
- After some more questions regarding Keene St and the developments behind the property, Mr. Simmons clarifies that the property has no bearing on what may happen to Keene St or with the adjacent development. This property is zoned Highway General Business (HGB). Staff looked at all the different types of uses that could go into HGB. The development authority believed it was proactive not to incur another extended stay motel on the property. Staff looked at builders that put in similar structures in Kennesaw. He then uses examples from the applicants track record, and states that they have no doubt the applicant will do a good job and over-landscape to compensate. So, when you add all those things up, Staff believes the variance, due to the location and the redevelopment and the issues, is justified to accommodate the parking, the layout and the usability of the lot.

**The next scheduled meeting of the Kennesaw Planning Commission  
November 03, 2021 at 7:00pm**





City Hall  
2529 J O Stephenson Avenue  
Kennesaw, GA 30144

*Doug Rhodes – Chairman,  
Cindi Michael – Vice-Chair,  
Dan Harrison, Don Bergwall,  
Phillip Jackson, SaVaughn Irons  
Lacey Ragus*

- Commissioner Bergwall asks if they will put in sidewalk along Keene St.
  - Mr. Simmons states yes. They will make it very pedestrian friendly to match whatever will happen north of the property.
  - The applicant states they would be happy to add sidewalks or other landscaping during or after the project is completed if necessary.
  - With no further comments, Chairman Rhodes calls for a motion.
  - **Motion to approve by Commissioner Jackson.**
  - **Seconded by Commissioner Bergwall.**
  - **Motion passes 4-0.**
3. **RZ2021-06/ZV2021-05** – Consideration to rezone property located at 2652 S Main Street from Light Industrial (LI) to Central Business District (CBD) as submitted by Bulldog Acquisitions, LLC. Said request to rezone property is for a mixture of uses including single-family townhomes, multi-family apartments and commercial. Consideration for concurrent variance requests include a reduction of the parking ratio per section 6.06.09 as well as a reduction of the minimum floor area for multi-family within the CBD zoning district. Property consists of 19.125 +/- acres and lying in Land Lot 167 & 168 and Tax Parcel 02.
- Chairman Rhodes introduces case RZ2021-06/ZV2021-05 and turns over the floor to Mr. Simmons.
  - Mr. Simmons approaches the podium to present. He states that, for the sake of being efficient, he will present the rezoning and variance together as they are attached, and then yield the floor to the applicant. The project intent is to rezone the property from Light Industrial (LI) to Central Business District (CBD). With that, the concept that's being presented is a mixed-use development with sixty five (65) for sale townhomes, three hundred and eighty five (385) multifamily apartment units, between ten thousand (10,000) to twenty five thousand (25,000) square feet of commercial and it includes a three (3) story parking deck. It's on the southern extension of the City's gateway park along Main St. In the Staff analysis, they've identified this area as industrial under the current Comp Plan. Also, they note, the City's long term plan is to bring the CBD down South Main St past Duncan towards McCollum because it is a gateway corridor. So, the concept of extending the CBD is something that Staff is supporting. The particular site plan will be walked through on the particular aspects of the design, including the three (3) variances that are requested: reduction of the parking ratio, reduce the average floor area of residential units, and, for the one (1) bedroom units in particular, reduce the minimum square footage from eight hundred and fifty (850) square feet to six hundred (600) square feet. One of the things Staff has encouraged the applicant to do with a

**The next scheduled meeting of the Kennesaw Planning Commission  
November 03, 2021 at 7:00pm**





City Hall  
2529 J O Stephenson Avenue  
Kennesaw, GA 30144

*Doug Rhodes – Chairman,  
Cindi Michael – Vice-Chair,  
Dan Harrison, Don Bergwall,  
Phillip Jackson, SaVaughn Irons  
Lacey Ragus*

mixed-use of this size was to have or get community input prior to the public hearings. They attempted to do so with one virtual meeting that was held September 30, 2021 from 7:00pm to 7:36pm.

- Chairman Rhodes asks if there was any citizen input.
- Mr. Simmons states yes there was. It is outlined in the Staff analysis. And another thing that Staff highly encouraged was some type of forum where it can get more in-person and have more residents participate. They did make arrangements for a second community meeting scheduled for October 14, 2021 in Council Chambers at 7:00pm which will be after this meeting. That is the challenge for Staff. Did we identify any other concerns or issues that would arise from this particular site plan? If it did go forward on this time frame, and other issues were raised, they would literally have four (4) days before it went to Mayor and Council to address that. So, on the current timeline there is a challenge. With that, Mr. Simmons holds on his recommendation and invited the applicant to present.
- Mr. Parks Huff approaches the podium and introduces himself. He expresses that he would like the Commission to have the hearing and then hold the case for thirty (30) days to allow them to have the additional public hearing. He explains they already held a meeting via Zoom and had some participation. They had nine (9) people that live on Duncan in Pine Hill that had some good questions that will require them to go back to their traffic engineer to evaluate some issues there. That's one (1) reason to table it. And secondly, to hold the second public participation meeting. This is an important piece of property. It is nineteen (19) acres on South Main Street. It is a gateway. So, they want to do it right and not rush it.
- Chairman Rhodes expresses his dislike of the current TUG property.
- Mr. Huff states that he understands that. He states that the property owner came to the City, and TUG is moving out. The property is underdeveloped, and the property owner was debating on the zoning of the property which sparked the current dialogue. He explains that the railroad track is the natural demarcation for the industrial to the south and transitioning as you go north. So, this is the natural gateway entrance. He then describes the site and adjoining/nearby properties. They would also like to see if the Post Office would be amenable to the applicant updating their landscaping as well as it is the adjoining property. They want to update the frontage so they can incorporate the frontage into a streetscape that will lead into the new development. They want to transform this area into a true gateway. He refers to the site plan, and states that mixed-use has many elements to it. It's not simply commercial and residential. This mixed-use has a gateway, linear park along the frontage of South Main Street. There's plenty of

**The next scheduled meeting of the Kennesaw Planning Commission  
November 03, 2021 at 7:00pm**





City Hall  
2529 J O Stephenson Avenue  
Kennesaw, GA 30144

*Doug Rhodes – Chairman,  
Cindi Michael – Vice-Chair,  
Dan Harrison, Don Bergwall,  
Phillip Jackson, SaVaughn Irons  
Lacey Ragus*

frontage and depth for features that will be pedestrian friendly and attractive, and hopefully they will be able to incorporate that into the frontage of the post office. They also have independent commercial building. He believes it is important to discuss the different types of commercial building in mixed-use, and this building is an independent commercial building. Not residential over commercial. The user for this is anticipated to be a restaurant or brewery, something very active. That is the idea for the front independent commercial. Then, as you move towards the rear of the building, you have surface parking for the commercial. Behind that, there is first floor commercial and residential above that is wrapped around the parking deck. They've been talking with the City about participating with the City as they would be creating additional parking that can be used by the public in general. Behind that will be the multi-family structure, and, to the north, there will be for sale, street-facing townhomes. Some will face the south to the retail and multi-family, and some will face Duncan Rd. There will be an entrance on Duncan Rd. One of the things that came out of the public participation meeting, was a discussion involving transportation and potentially putting a four (4) way stop there. Also, they would like to do sidewalks on their frontage and see if they can add sidewalks on Duncan Rd to tie everything together, the old and new neighborhoods. He states the residents seems amiable to the change in usage of the property, and getting rid of the LI. He then uses visuals to go into detail about the site and potential future uses for the retail components.

- Mr. Huff touches on the three (3) variances being requested. Firstly, the number of parking spaces per unit. He states that they are currently at 1.75 spaces per unit. The unit mix includes a lot of one (1) bedroom units. He explains they are very good at understanding what their parking needs are, and the 1.75 provides more parking than what they anticipate they need. Obviously, they'll never want to be under-parked. So, the 1.75 is based upon real data. He states the owe Mr. Simmons some additional information affirming how they come up with that 1.75 as sufficient parking. He requests they also keep in mind they have additional parking on the entire site in general.
- Next, Mr. Huff addresses the square footage variance. Staff has asked if the applicant can provide an affordable component. He acknowledges that "affordable" is a very relative term. Some of that is providing smaller units. So, that's part of it. They do have some small units, and he believes Staff may be uncomfortable with that. The applicant wants to sit down with Staff and discuss each of the downtown projects and see where they fit in with that. Another reason to postpone. But, he states that the urban multi-family lives differently than the suburban multi-family which impacts the amount of parking and the square footage. He states that, after looking at the census data, the number of one (1) bedroom households is really high. Overall, Cobb has a 2.5 per person household size. Thusly, he believes there is a lot of need for one (1) bedroom options. That is also

**The next scheduled meeting of the Kennesaw Planning Commission  
November 03, 2021 at 7:00pm**





City Hall  
2529 J O Stephenson Avenue  
Kennesaw, GA 30144

*Doug Rhodes – Chairman,  
Cindi Michael – Vice-Chair,  
Dan Harrison, Don Bergwall,  
Phillip Jackson, SaVaughn Irons  
Lacey Ragus*

something they owe Mr. Simmons some additional information on. Not only what will be their smallest size, but how many of those units there will be. He also mentions they have quite a bit of green space and amenity areas, but the City's downtown is an amenity. So, a tenant is not just living in your space, they have a whole complex, amenity area and downtown. It changes how you think about the size of your unit. He then asks his associate, Mr. Tyler Gaines to speak.

- Mr. Gaines utilizes visuals to describe the site plan and project. He explains that he has spoken with City Staff regarding the Comp Plan, and is hoping to help revitalize the area. He begins by describing the area and adjoining areas involving the frontage. When speaking to their site planners, they really wanted to take the same style and feel as similar parks nearby to create cohesiveness and encourage pedestrian paths including stop-overs or places of interest. The next component, is the retail component. They don't want to detract from the core of downtown. Some of the feedback they received, was lack of parking in some of the bigger use retail, and it has been problematic. Thusly, they think, based on the demand, the retail may be a larger two (2) story structure with potentially a rooftop terrace spilling out on to the park. But to provide a use, that if it is tough to get downtown, it would be larger and higher use with the parking. They are showing a decent amount of surface parking behind the retail structure. They try to hide the parking by putting it in decks or behind buildings, but it also makes it easier for the customer to go to the building. So, they have part in the surface parking lot and part in the deck. They also talked about over-parking the project to allow for excess parking for City events, the City as a whole and other retail areas. He provides visual examples. Next, he speaks on the office type commercial component with residential above. They expect this to be more like office space. Potentially, dentists, attorneys, accountants, real estate agents, etc. People that like the idea of having a sign, walk-in customers, and that type feel. They will go ahead and build those spaces out so they are move-in ready. Instead of leaving these shell space where someone has to come in and sign a five (5) year lease, bring their own architect and get their own permits, they'll build them out as an office. They're calling that a commercial use. More of your day-time user, and less busy in the evenings and the weekends which will hopefully help share parking with the retail up front. Next, he discusses the for sale townhomes. He cites the townhomes near Gateway Park as the size, feel and price point of what they're proposing. A similar size and scale as to what is in Kennesaw already. And then there is the multi-family components and pocket parks filling out the rest of the project. It will be a classic multi-family component similar to the Revival on Main, but bigger, better and grander. Features of which will be: hard-surface countertops, flooring throughout, the fitness center, resort-style swimming pools, the dog parks and washes, etc. With the exterior, they're trying to respect the historic feel of Kennesaw without replicating it in a cheesy way. They want a good balance.

**The next scheduled meeting of the Kennesaw Planning Commission  
November 03, 2021 at 7:00pm**





City Hall  
2529 J O Stephenson Avenue  
Kennesaw, GA 30144

*Doug Rhodes – Chairman,  
Cindi Michael – Vice-Chair,  
Dan Harrison, Don Bergwall,  
Phillip Jackson, SaVaughn Irons  
Lacey Ragus*

- Mr. Gaines discusses the community outreach they've done. Reiterating that they did have a virtual meeting with nearby residents. Many residents do not like the TUG use of the property, and feel disconnected with downtown. The main feedback was that many people like to run, walk and jog in that neighborhood and there are no sidewalks. On their property, they will install a curb, bring the road up to standards and install a sidewalk along their frontage. Though they would like to work with the City to install additional sidewalk area all the way down to Big Shanty as a response to this feedback. There was also a complaint about speeding, and they will get with their traffic engineer and the City to potentially find a solution, such as a four (4) way stop or some other solution. They are deferring for thirty (30) days in light of this new information. He continues by touching on the requested variances. He states they are requesting them to keep a design for the type of renter they are hoping to get, and provide a varied price point. He states they aren't going for a three (3) bedroom, garden type of demographic, but more one (1) bedrooms. He also states that when there is more like seventy (70) percent one (1) bedrooms as opposed to forty (40) percent, the parking ratio ends up being more like a 1.3 or 1.4 to a 1.7. More of an urban type walkable demographic as opposed to the family type demographic. He believes the code as it is written is more for a suburban walk-up type. They are dialogue with Mr. Simmons about it.
- Chairman Rhodes asks if this will be postponed.
- Mr. Huff confirms.
- Mr. Gaines states they have been in dialogue with Mr. Simmons, have seen the Staff report, and have met with the neighborhood. This was already on the books. So, they wanted to receive feedback, and when they return they can have Mr. Simmons input, the neighborhoods input and the Planning Commission's input as well.
- Chairman Rhodes states this will give them extra time to have dialogue with Staff and show them the math.
- Mr. Gaines says that they can go do it, and have it fit inside the code. However, they believe it would be inconsistent with their mission as a certain type of project.
- Mr. Rhodes says he has been doing this for twenty (20) years, and did not anticipate there being this many apartments in downtown. He states that lifestyles, etc. evolve over time. And he thinks the additional time they will get between meetings gives the applicant an opportunity regarding the information given.
- Mr. Gaines states that they are working on it and will come back.
- Chairman Rhodes asks what the format will be for the October 14, 2021 public meeting.
- Mr. Huff states it will be in-person in the Council Chambers.

**The next scheduled meeting of the Kennesaw Planning Commission  
November 03, 2021 at 7:00pm**





City Hall  
2529 J O Stephenson Avenue  
Kennesaw, GA 30144

*Doug Rhodes – Chairman,  
Cindi Michael – Vice-Chair,  
Dan Harrison, Don Bergwall,  
Phillip Jackson, SaVaughn Irons  
Lacey Ragus*

- Mr. Gaines states they have sent out over one hundred (100) notices, and posted a sign.
- Chairman Rhodes and Mr. Gaines have a brief exchange about variances, and creating understandability.
- Chairman Rhodes asks how many parking spaces are in the deck.
- Mr. Gaines states there are three hundred (300) spaces in the deck. If they do the parking ratio as currently proposed, it gets up to one hundred and thirty two (132) extra spaces. They were showing five hundred and forty two (542) total spaces. Around three hundred (300) were in that deck. If they use the code ratio, it jumps the number of parking up to six hundred and seventy four (674).
- Commissioner Jackson praises the sidewalk plan.
- Commissioner Bergwall is concerned with the intensity and magnitude of the project and its location due to the influence it may have to traffic in that area.
- Mr. Gaines stated they did do a traffic study. He continues by stating that they will have a limit on the amount of cosigners which may limit the number of students in the housing.
- Commissioner Bergwall asks if there is also a restriction on the number of unrelated people that can be in a given unit.
- Mr. Gaines states yes. No more than two unrelated people to a unit.
- Commissioner Michael states that current traffic studies are inaccurate and is concerned about the validity of the traffic study. Upon return, she would like the applicant to further justify why they're confident the traffic study is accurate given traffic has been below normal due to Covid. She is concerned how the influx of residences will affect traffic.
- Mr. Gaines believes that traffic studies have had to go back and pull pre-Covid information due to the irrelevancy of current traffic data.
- Chairman Rhodes opens the floor to public comment. Seeing as there is none. He closes the floor and calls for a motion to postpone this matter to be heard November 3, 2021 by Planning Commission and November 15, 2021 by Mayor and Council.
- **Motion to postpone until next meeting on November 03, 2021 as per request of the applicant by Commissioner Michael.**
- **Seconded by Commissioner Bergwall.**
- **Motion passes 4-0.**

#### IV. Planning and Zoning Staff Comments

**The next scheduled meeting of the Kennesaw Planning Commission  
November 03, 2021 at 7:00pm**





City Hall  
2529 J O Stephenson Avenue  
Kennesaw, GA 30144

*Doug Rhodes – Chairman,  
Cindi Michael – Vice-Chair,  
Dan Harrison, Don Bergwall,  
Phillip Jackson, SaVaughn Irons  
Lacey Ragus*

- None

**V. Adjourn**

- Adjourn 9:08pm.

DRAFT

**The next scheduled meeting of the Kennesaw Planning Commission  
November 03, 2021 at 7:00pm**

