

**HALL COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
RECOMMENDATION REPORT**

Applicant..... CTX Funding SPE, LLC

Request..... Vary the architectural standards of the Gateway Corridor Overlay for construction of a distribution warehouse.

Proposed Use..... Warehouse/distribution facility

Size 10.08± acres

Zoning Light Industrial (I-I)

Location On the east side of Cornelia Highway approximately 746 feet from its intersection with Yonah Post Road; a.k.a. 5965 Cornelia Highway; Tax Parcel 09005 000009

Commission District..... Three

Planning Commission Date November 15, 2021

Staff Recommendation..... **Denial**

Planning Commission Recommendation – Approval, with conditions
Vote: 5-0

Conditions:

1. *The development shall conform substantially with the proposed narrative and site plan, modified as necessary for compliance with current development standards at time of application.*
2. *Elevations depicting the proposed building shall be submitted to the Planning department for approval of the director during the Development Review process. No building permit shall be issued for the development without the approval of said elevations.*
3. *Applicant shall have a 50 foot planted buffer along the front and eastern property lines.*
4. *Applicant shall either cover or shield a flat metal roof with parapets; or a factory-finished metal with standing seams roof is permissible.*
5. *Applicant shall have a brick or masonry water table up to 36 inches above the concrete foundation. The balance of the building shall be finished with a stucco or masonry material above the water table on both sides of the building with the roll up doors and the end facing Highway 365 (eastern, western, and southern lot lines).*

Applicant Proposal

The applicant is requesting a variance in the Gateway Corridors Overlay District (GCOD) architectural standards in order to construct a 100 foot deep by 305 foot wide metal warehouse building. The building will include 46 roll-up doors and the applicant has requested to use metal instead of masonry materials for the building side. The submitted narrative states that metal can be easily replaced or repaired if a truck were to cause damage to the building. The submitted narrative describes the property as heavily wooded, not visible from the road, and the buildings site as not open to the public. No renderings of the proposed building were submitted with the application.

History and Existing Land Uses

The subject property consists of 10.01± acres and is zoned Light Industrial (I-I). The property is undeveloped and mostly wooded. All adjacent properties are zoned AR-IV, and developed with single family residences or mobile homes.

The subject property also falls within the Gateway Corridors Overlay District (GCOD), which is supplemental to the underlying zoning district classification. The GCOD governs non-residential property development standards.

Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designation

The subject property is located within the "Rural" future land-use category. This category is characterized by agricultural and very low-density single-family residential uses. Residential subdivision design should set aside a high percentage of open space. The development pattern includes larger areas of undeveloped or cultivated land with large distances between buildings and deep setbacks from two-lane roads. Natural features include extensive tree cover and open space areas due to limited development, as well as waterways that include the Chattahoochee River, the Cedar Creek Reservoir, and streams.

The proposed use is inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The current corridor has primarily developed with large agricultural tracts in close proximity to the subject parcel. There has been recent non-residential and non-agricultural development along this corridor to the north and south, though no rezoning requests have been approved on adjacent parcels.

Development Support and Constraints

Hall County Environmental Health

In an email dated November 3, 2021 Emily McGahee stated that the development "Must meet all Environmental Health commercial septic system permitting requirements. Further determination will be made during the civil plan review process. A detailed business plan must be submitted to Hall County Environmental Health for review. Additional items, including, but not limited to: recorded plat, soil evaluation, and septic system installation may be required after review of business plan."

Hall County Fire Services

The subject property is located approximately 6.0 miles from Hall County Fire Station #6, located at 4515 Cornelia Highway.

Hall County Public Works and Utilities

In a memorandum dated November 5, 2021 Srikanth Yamala, Director of Public Works and Utilities, provided the following comments:

Engineering:

Show stream buffers. The site may require a stormwater management report should the site plan indicate the proposed development meet stormwater threshold for impervious surfaces and/or disturbed acreage.

Traffic:

No comment

Utilities:

No comment

Hall County Tax Assessors

No comments provided

Gainesville Water Resources

According to Hall County GIS, there no access to public water. This site will need to be served by private well.

Georgia Department of Transportation

In an email dated November 2, 2021, Parker Niebauer, a Traffic Operations Supervisor with GDOT, stated that this project will require GDOT coordination.

Zoning Analysis

- The proposed use for light manufacturing and warehouse/distribution facilities is inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan designation of a mixed-use corridor.
 - The current zoning permits this use by right. This request is for relief from the architectural standards of the Gateway Corridors Overlay District (GCOD).
- Per §17.180.090.B.2 of the Official Code of Hall County “The development controls for the district shall be detailed (lot coverage, setbacks, building heights, lot sizes, etc.). If standards are not specifically proposed, then the applicable standards in the light industrial (I-I) district, together with the screening and buffer requirements, shall apply.”
- The GCOD provides guidelines for non-residential property development. The guidelines apply to both permitted uses and development standards.
 - Within the GCOD, the following uses are prohibited: adult entertainment, junk yards, and billboard signs.
 - Uses subject to the approval of the Hall County Board of Commissioners include: self-storage warehouses, vehicle sales lots (new or used), automobile repair and maintenance, commercial outdoor recreation, car wash, and outdoor storage
- Per, §17.420.070.A, Appeals and modifications – Procedures for appeals:
 1. It is the intent of the board of commissioners that all development shall conform to the standards and procedures set forth in this chapter. In the event that the intent of this chapter can be achieved with minor deviations that do not substantially impair the

purpose or intent of this chapter, the Hall County Planning Director has the authority to modify the specific provisions to allow for such minor deviations.

2. If substantial modifications or changes are necessary, any person, firm, group or organization may apply for relief from the requirements set forth in this chapter to the Hall County Planning Commission, unless otherwise specified in this chapter.
 3. Appeals from requirements set forth in this chapter can be heard by the planning commission as provided in Chapter 17.360 of the Hall County Zoning Regulations.
- Per §17.420.050.D.2.a, a ten-foot wide landscape strip is required along each street frontage, continuous along the frontage except for perpendicular crossings for driveways and utilities.
 - The submitted site plan does not contain this information; this **does not meet** the standard.
 - Per §17.420.050.D.4.d, all outdoor storage shall be screened from view from public streets and adjacent property by a permanent opaque enclosure consisting of a minimum eight-foot high solid fence or wall.
 - The submitted site plan and narrative do not contain this information; it is **unable to be determined** if this condition is met.
 - Per §17.420.050.C.2.C, the transitional buffers where an industrial zoning district abuts property zoned for residential or agricultural use shall be no less than 50 feet and shall be placed along the inside property line of the non-residential property.
 - The submitted site plan does not contain this information; this **does not meet** the standard.
 - Per §17.420.050.D.3, if a loading or service area is located within 50 feet of a side or rear lot line abutting residentially zoned property, then the loading or service area shall be surrounded by either a six foot height masonry screening wall, or a six foot height solid wooden fence placed on the inside of the required landscaped buffer.
 - The submitted site plan does not contain this information; this **does not meet** the standard.
 - Per §17.420.050.E.2, all parking areas shall be paved with asphalt or concrete (or other pervious materials approved by the director).
 - The narrative does not specify the material which the parking area will be nor does the site plan show the proposed parking area; it is **unable to be determined** if this condition is met.
 - Per §17.420.050.E.4.A, each parking area over 50 spaces shall include landscaped islands within the parking area equivalent to not less than five to ten percent with planning director discretion of the total paved area of the parking lot.
 - The submitted site plan does not contain this information; this **does not meet** the standard.
 - Building materials for all four sides of a new building are restricted to the following: brick, stone, and glass or glass block. Up to 50% of the surface area of each side may be stucco, and up to 50% of the surface area of each side of a principal building may be split-face block/concrete masonry unit. *Concrete block, painted concrete block, tilt-up and pre-cast concrete are not allowed.*
 - The applicant is requesting the following variances from this standard:
 - Allow exterior walls of the building to be metal or other material not to include brick or masonry.

- Per §17.420.050.H.3, roof materials for pitched roofs shall be limited to architectural grade composition shingles, natural slate, natural terra cotta, natural wood shake, or factory finished metal with standing seams.
 - No proposed elevations were submitted; it is **unable to be determined** if this condition is met.
- Per §17.420.050.4.b, rooftop mechanical equipment, including HVAC and utility equipment shall be screened from adjacent streets, sidewalks, residential, public and institutional uses. Screening shall consist of parapet walls or an opaque enclosure around the equipment that is constructed of one of the materials used on the primary facade of the principal structure.
 - No site plan was submitted; it is **unable to be determined** if this condition is met.
- Per §17.420.050.F.1 outdoor lighting shall be provided on all public streets and parking lots.
 - No site plan was submitted; it is **unable to be determined** if this condition is met.
- Per §17.420.050.F.4.a/b, internally illuminated signs, automatic changeable copy signs, and externally mounted neon signs are prohibited. Signs may be illuminated with external lighting fixtures provided that fixtures are directed downward and away from streets and adjacent property and public streets. All lighting shall have recessed luminaries, or be semi-cutoff luminary fixtures.
 - No site or signage plan was submitted; it is **unable to be determined** if this condition is met.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends **denial** of the applicant’s request. However, if the board sees fit to approve, staff recommends that the following conditions shall apply:

6. The development shall conform substantially with the proposed narrative, modified as necessary for compliance with current development standards at time of application.
7. Elevations depicting the proposed building shall be submitted to the Planning department for approval of the director during the Development Review process. No building permit shall be issued for the development without the approval of said elevations.

Excerpts from the minutes of the meeting of November 15, 2021

Applicant’s Presentation:

Sarah McQuade, Planning Director, presented a summary of the request.

Jeff Henson, PO Box 72, Good Hope, presented the request. Discussed building materials along roll-up doors and vegetated buffer.

Public Forum:

No one spoke in favor or opposition to the request.

Planning Commission Comments:

Discussion of the use of building materials related to loading docks and roofing, such as metal panels, concrete stone, stucco and metal.

Motion: Mr. Hunt made a motion to approve, with conditions for the request, with a second from Mr. Varner and the motion passed by a 5-0 vote.

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