

Rezone Application Report

997 S. Milledge Ave.

Date: November 27th, 2024

Project Name: 997 S Milledge Avenue

Project Address: 997 South Milledge Ave, Athens-Clarke County, Georgia

Introduction

The subject parcel is approximately 0.856-Ac and is located on South Milledge Avenue. The proposed redevelopment includes the renovation of the existing historic 1.5 story structure into five single-bedroom dwelling units and the construction of a row of 4 townhomes on the rear of the property. These are all intended to become condominiums.

The property is currently zoned commercial office (C-O). The south Milledge Avenue and 5-Point area offers a lot of opportunities for a walkable lifestyle which is suitable for individuals, couples or even families looking for condominium-style residential development in this desirable area of Athens.

The purpose of this rezone is to provide a more appropriate zoning to re-develop this existing parcel into a denser residential property, which would optimize the use of the parcel, while maintaining the character of the area.

The primary benefits to the city of Athens are listed below and further supported in this report:

- Nine new residential units, including five townhomes near the Five-Point area
- Significant 2x increase in Value Per Acre (see table below)

VALUE-PER-ACRE CONTRIBUTION

EXISTING	INFILL REDEVELOPMENT
ASSESSED VALUE OF EXISTING PROJECT	\$ 1,498,331
SITE ACREAGE	0.81
TOTAL VALUE-PER-ACRE (VPA)	\$ 1,849,791
ESTIMATED VALUE OF PROPOSED PROJECT	\$ 2,978,331
SITE ACREAGE	0.81
TOTAL VALUE-PER-ACRE (VPA)	\$ 3,676,952

Site Description and Current Use

The site is located on S. Milledge Ave, between the intersections of W. Rutherford and S. Lumpkin Street right across the intersection with Woodlawn Avenue. The property is surrounded by several fraternities (Chi Phi Fraternity directly north and Pi Kappa Phi and Beta Upsilon Chi on the west across South Milledge Avenue). An office building is located directly south and a single-family residence directly across South Milledge Avenue. Townhomes-style condominiums with 10 condominium units are located directly to the east (adjacent to the rear of the subject property) which is adjacent to an RM-2 zone multi-dwellings development along Lumpkin Street. The existing land use pattern in this vicinity along South Milledge Avenue is generally a mix of commercial, dormitories (fraternities/sororities) and larger single-family residential properties. These properties serve in most places as a buffer and transition between South Milledge Avenue and the single-family residential properties/neighborhoods.

The parcel is currently occupied by a historic 1.5 story structure with a rear parking lot. The existing topography slopes towards the North-Est corner of the property.

Zoning

Existing vs. Proposed Zoning

Existing zoning of this parcel is Commercial Office (C-O). The proposed zoning is Mixed Density Residential (RM-2). The proposed zoning offers a higher residential density which would allow a more optimized use of the site and transition between Milledge Avenue and townhomes and residential properties located to the rear, while maintain a use, density and architecture that is in keeping with the area.

Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use Map currently has the subject parcel (as well as most properties along South Milledge in this vicinity) as a Mixed Density Residential use. The proposed RM-2 use would be consistent and support the Future Land Use map.

Proposed Development

Architecture

The intent is to renovate and divide the interior space of the existing historic house along South Milledge Avenue into 5-single bedroom dwelling units while preserving its historic architecture. No exterior changes are intended, except for restoration purposes and code-related items, such as accessibility and life safety.

The four new townhomes are proposed to be constructed on the rear of the property in an area where the terrain is lower than in the location of the existing house. The new structure will incorporate architectural features that are in character and scale with the area and existing historic houses, such as porches, hipped roofs with dormers, double hung windows and siding. These units are intended to be designed to allow accessibility to the units and within the units with an internal elevator.

The subject property is located in the Milledge Avenue Local Historic District and any changes or improvements will be subject to the Historic Preservation Committee's approval. An HPC Concept review of the proposed concept design was conducted on 11/20/24 and was well received. A formal package to HPC will be prepared and submitted.

Vehicular Access and Traffic Impact Analysis

The project does not generate more than 1,000 daily trips or 100 peak hour trips, therefore a Traffic Impact Study (TIS) is not required.

Trip generation estimates for the project are based on the rates and equations published in the 10th edition of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation report. Estimated existing and proposed trip generations have been tabulated for comparison. The existing trip generation is based on ITE Land Uses: 710 – General Office Building. The proposed trip generation is based on the following ITE Land Use: 230 – Residential Condo/Townhome.

The difference in proposed trip generation between the existing and proposed land use is shown in Table 1 below. Small, incremental, infill development as proposed has virtually no change in existing traffic patterns or loading.

Table 1 – Proposed Trip Generation

ITE Vehicle Trip Generation Rates											
	Description/ITE Code	Units	Rate Weekday Daily Traffic	PM Peak Period Rate	%PM In	%PM Out	Expected Units (independent variable)	Calculated Daily Trips	PM Peak Trips - Total	PM In	PM Out
Existing	General Office Building 710	KSF2	9.74	1.42	18%	82%	3.6	35	5	1	4
Proposed	Resd. Condo/Townhouse 230	DU	5.81	0.52	0.67	0.33	8.0	46	4	3	1

Utilities and Services

A water and sewer evaluation letter has been submitted to Athens-Clarke County Public Utilities Department for review. The proposed water and sewer demand are as follows:

Water = 1,920 GPD

Sewer = 1,920 GPD

There is an existing public water and sewer main along Milledge Avenue. The project proposes creating a new 6-in sewer connection for the townhomes and utilizing one of the existing water taps to install a new water service line to the townhomes.

Lighting

The site lighting will meet A-CC lighting ordinances and a photometric study will be provided for review during Plans Review.

Stormwater Management and Water Quality

The applicant has met with A-CC Transportation and public works and held a Stormwater Concept Meeting. The proposed project would manage stormwater runoff by a combination of pervious parking and walkways. This would retrofit the existing site, which has no stormwater management, with water quality infiltration and provide runoff attenuation via additional conveyance and detention facilities as shown on the plan.

Landscaping and Buffering

The Tree Management Plan is included with the submittal. Existing trees are conserved to the greatest extent practicable, exceeding the required conserved and planted canopies.

Environmental Impacts

No wetlands or state water exist on site and the project proposes new water quality and stormwater management facilities.

Trash Disposal and Recycling

The project currently utilizes a shared dumpster with the adjoining property accessed via a deeded easement. This easement and dumpster location would continue to be used, but the enclosure would be brought to current standards. Both trash/recycling areas are accessible by pick-up services.

Fire Access

The new parking lot and access radii have been sized to allow for a fire truck to enter the site and turn around per IFC Section D103.1 standards. Existing fire hydrants are located near the project entrance. The proposed townhome heights do not exceed the proposed zoning.

Approval Criteria for a Zoning Action

1. The Future Land Use Map shows Mixed Density Residential for this parcel and most properties along South Milledge Avenue. RM-2 zone falls under Mixed Density Residential. Therefore, the proposed zoning is compatible with the Future Land Use.
2. The proposed use meets all objective criteria set forth that the uses in the zoning ordinance and conforms to the intents of the Comprehensive Plan by placing uses in appropriate context for their surroundings, with buffers and transitions as appropriate.
3. The proposed use will not adversely affect the balance of land uses in Athens-Clarke County. Most of the land uses in this area are residential (apartments, townhomes, dormitories and single-family homes).
4. Public services, which include physical facilities and staff capacity, exist sufficient to service the proposal. This has been confirmed via a water and sewer evaluation with Athens-Clarke County (ACC) Public Utilities Department, included herein; a pre-storm meeting with ACC Transportation and Public Works Department; and with a traffic impact analysis and coordination with ACC Transportation and Public Works Department. The project proposes improvements to sewer and storm on site.
5. The property is surrounded by several fraternities (Chi Phi Fraternity directly north and Pi Kappa Phi and Beta Upsilon Chi on the west across South Milledge Avenue). An office building is located directly south and a single-family residence directly across South Milledge Avenue. Townhomes-style condominiums with 10 condominium units are located directly to the east (adjacent to the rear of the subject property) which is adjacent to an RM-2 zone multi-dwellings development along Lumpkin Street. The existing land use pattern in this vicinity along South Milledge Avenue is generally a mix of commercial, dormitories (fraternities/sororities) and larger single-family homes. These properties serve in most places as a buffer and transition between South Milledge Avenue and the single-family residential properties/neighborhoods.
6. No isolated districts will result from the proposed use.
7. Proposed use should not disproportionately or irregularly increase population density or cause over-taxing of public facilities. While existing traffic congestion is present at peak hours the traffic projected to be generated by the project does not cause new or significantly increased congestion beyond what is already present.
8. No significant or disproportionate costs are anticipated of the Unified Government and other governmental entities beyond typical expenses that are offset via development fees and impact fees. This proposed development will require improvements to existing sanitary sewer infrastructure within the property, at the cost of the developer.
9. No environmental areas exist on site. Proposed use will satisfy all ACC stormwater and water quality requirements.
10. Proposed zoning action will not be a deterrent but rather have a positive impact on the adjacent properties and continue the re-development and improvement efforts that have or are currently taking place on many properties along South Milledge Avenue.
11. In its current zoning, the property would not be able to be developed as proposed for the following reasons:
 - a. Current C-O zone requires first floor commercial for multi-family development. This requirement is appropriate for certain areas in Athens such as downtown but is generally not in character with South Milledge Avenue. Ground floor residential would be more appropriate in scale and use with the historic and future land uses.

- b. C-O zone limits the residential density to 16 units per acre whereas RM-2 allows 24 units per acre. RM-2 allows for optimal use of the land, while keeping the development in character and scale with the surrounding areas.
- 12. The aesthetics and scale of the existing and proposed structures will require HPC approval and will be in character with the current surrounding properties.
- 13. There are no existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property that are known or considered at this time by the project application.