

**PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION  
REZONE**

**CASE NUMBER PD-2004-002**

**Preliminary Planned Development**

**1140 Prince Avenue**

**January 8, 2004**

**I. THE REQUEST**

APPLICANT:..... Jordan Jones and Goulding, Inc.  
OWNER:..... Prince Nacoochee, LLC  
REQUEST:..... Rezoning from RM-2 (Mixed Density Residential);  
C-N (Commercial Neighborhood) & RS-15 (Single  
Family Residential) to C-N (PD) (Commercial  
Neighborhood Planned Development  
TYPE OF REQUEST:..... Type II  
LOCATION: ..... 1140 and 1160 Prince Avenue, 137 and 147  
Nacoochee Avenue  
COUNTY COMMISSION DISTRICTS: ..... 5 & 10  
SIZE OF THE PROPERTY:..... 3.063 Acres  
PRESENT USE/ZONING: ..... Apartments/RM-2; Offices/C-N; Undeveloped/RS-15  
PROPOSED USE OF PROPERTY ..... Professional, Offices, Parking  
TAX MAP NUMBER:..... 11-4-D3 – C012, C038, C039 & C044  
ADJACENT USE AND ZONING:..... (N) Single Family Subdivision/RS-15(Single Family  
Residential/Local Historic District); RM-1(Mixed  
Density Residential); RS-5/RTM-LTD (Single  
Family Residential Mixed Density Residential  
Limited)  
..... (E) Restaurant/C-N; Fraternity, Bank/C-O  
..... (S) Offices/C-O (Commercial Offices); Hospital/G  
(Government)  
..... (W) Undeveloped/RS-15; Drug store/C-N  
STAFF RECOMMENDATION:..... **RECEIVE WITH COMMENTS**

**II. PURPOSE AND AREAS OF REVIEW**

The applicant is requesting a C-N (PD) (Commercial Neighborhood Planned Development) to develop an office complex with first-floor retail uses and an adjoining parking structure. The project would be located on 4 existing lots totaling 3.063 acres. The C-N (Commercial Neighborhood) Planned Development designation is requested by the petitioner in order to request waivers or variances to select design criteria. The areas of review associated with this request are as follows:

1. Compatibility of uses and designs with surrounding areas.
2. Compatibility with Future Land Use.
3. Requested Waivers.

### **III. COMPATIBILITY WITH FUTURE LAND USE PLAN**

The 1999 Future Land Use Map, as amended in 2000, indicates that the subject property is designated as *Neighborhood Mixed Use* on the two lots fronting Prince Avenue and *Residential Mixed Use* on the two properties fronting Nacoochee Avenue. The definition of the *Neighborhood Mixed Use* Future Land Use designation is as follows:

#### ***Neighborhood Mixed Use***

This is the designation for lands within the neighborhood centers designated on the Growth Concept Map. It permits a broad variety of uses, including retail, services, and housing. These areas will serve a variety of needs for the residents of an area up to a one-mile radius. The uses will typically be neighborhood-scale retail stores, along with small businesses. They are intended to be the focus of their respective neighborhoods, and their design should include connections between uses, good pedestrian connections, and compatibility with public transit. Auto-oriented uses are not included in this designation. A density of up to .5 FAR for commercial uses and 15 units per acre of housing is permitted. Design standards would be required. Whenever possible, the adjacent corridor in this area should be of design type "Main Street."

The definition of the *Residential Mixed Use* Future Land Use designation is as follows:

#### ***Residential Mixed Use***

These are residential uses, 8 units per acre, that are intended to form a medium density residential neighborhood. Most of the units should be designed for individual ownership, in townhouse, duplex, or small lot detached single family housing types. Design standards would be required. Low intensity commercial uses such as offices or home work offices are permitted, but auto-oriented uses are not included in this designation.

The proposal to rezone the property to a C-N (Commercial Neighborhood) Planned Development is compatible with both the *Neighborhood Mixed Use* and *Residential Mixed Use* Future Land Use designations, according to the Compatibility Matrix in Table 9.4 of the Zoning Code. Therefore, the request is a Type II decision.

### **IV. EXISTING CONDITIONS/HISTORY**

The four tracts that comprise the subject site are located on the north side of Prince Avenue and west of Nacoochee Avenue. The combined acreage of the four tracts totals 3.06 acres. Currently the existing tracts at 1140 and 1160 Prince Avenue are developed with office space in converted residential structures and are zoned C-N (Commercial Neighborhood). The tract located at 137 Nacoochee Avenue is developed with an apartment complex known as the Prince Rondevalle Apartments and that property is zoned RM-2 (Mixed Density Residential). The remaining tract is

an undeveloped parcel located at 147 Nacoochee Avenue that is zoned RS-15 (Single Family Residential). The northwestern portion of the subject area is immediately adjacent to a low-lying area that exhibits considerable grade change and is mostly wooded with kudzu and hardwood trees.

The surrounding properties facing Prince Avenue have commercial uses. To the east is a fast-food restaurant, and across Nacoochee Avenue is a fraternity and a bank. To the South across Prince Avenue are offices and Athens Regional Medical Center. To the West are an existing drug store and an undeveloped area to the rear of that use.

The subject tract is not located with any identified environmental areas, as indicated on the Athens-County Environmental Areas Map. The subject tract is not located within any identified historic district, although the property immediately to the north of the subject properties facing Nacoochee Avenue is in the Boulevard Local Historic District.

## V. REVIEW OF THE PLAN

The applicant is requesting a Planned Development in order to develop a four-story, 86,890-square foot, multi-story office building with retail uses on the first floor and an adjoining parking structure. The C-N Planned Development designation is requested by the petitioner to accommodate the mix of development forms and uses, and to allow design flexibility in the arrangement of these forms and uses. The applicant has indicated that, if approved, the proposed development would be built over a two-year period.

As indicated on the Preliminary site plan and in the Preliminary Report, the development is proposed on an area comprised of four existing lots. The applicant will need to prepare and submit a recombination plat for the subject development area, which must be approved prior to permitting.

The proposed development would include 14,902 square feet of retail space, located primarily on the first floor of the structure with retail street frontage provided on Prince Avenue. The retail uses proposed would be limited to those uses permitted within the C-N zone. The development would also have 71,988 square feet of office space at the rear of the first floor and the upper levels of the building. The office uses would be predominantly medical offices, with some general office uses as well.

The parking requirements for the uses and square footage proposed call for 50 spaces for the retail square footage and 297 spaces for the office uses, totaling 347 spaces for the development as proposed. The applicant has proposed to provide 345 parking spaces in a two-level parking structure to be located at the rear of the development site adjoining the proposed retail/office structure. The parking structure would be accessed from both Nacoochee Avenue and from Prince Avenue. The applicant has provided elevations of the proposed parking structure. Two (2) additional parking spaces are shown along the two-way entry drive into the site that is aligned with King Avenue. Staff has concerns regarding the visual impact of the parking structure on the adjacent residential properties to the north. Staff recommends that the applicant revisit the design

86,890  
total sq. ft.

17%

83%

14.5%

and placement of the parking structure with regard to overall height, and provide greater allowance for adequate screening along the northern and eastern elevations of the structure. In addition, Staff requests that the applicant prepare scaled renderings of the parking structure as viewed from Hiawassee Avenue and Nacoochee Avenue. These renderings are requested in order to clearly illustrate the context in which this structure is to be located, and the renderings should include the adjacent existing structures in order to allow for a more thorough assessment of the visual impact on these properties from the proposed parking structure.

The applicant has provided traffic count estimates based on the intended uses proposed for the development. This preliminary analysis indicates that the proposed development would generate 1,753 trips per day. However, a full Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) is required for a development of this scale. The results of this TIA must be prepared prior to submittal of the Master Plan and Report.

The proposed Planned Development indicates a total of four points of access into or from the development: two (2) two-way access drives from Prince Avenue, one (1) service drive one-way exit onto Nacoochee Avenue, and one (1) two-way access to the parking structure from Nacoochee Avenue. The applicant must receive approval from Georgia DOT for the two access drives on Prince Avenue. With regard to the Prince Avenue access, Planning Staff recommends that the applicant have one single two-way access on Prince Avenue that aligns with the signalized intersection of Prince Avenue and King Avenue. Reducing the number of access drives onto Prince Avenue from two to one will alleviate potential conflicts with the existing driveways used by the two adjacent commercial uses. Planning Staff will comment further on the potential traffic impact on Nacoochee Avenue after the results of the TIA are made available.

The Preliminary plan shows a single underground storm water detention structure to be located within the footprint of the parking deck. The applicant indicates that the stormwater management facility will be inspected twice annually for proper operation and maintenance. The outfall for this structure or connection to existing stormwater facilities is not indicated. All intended methods of storm water management should be indicated on the site plan, and described in the report.

The applicant proposes to retain 20% of the subject property as pervious open space. This amount is less than the required 25% landscaped area for the C-N zone. The applicant has indicated that the development's condominium association would maintain this open space.

The architecture of the proposed retail/office building reflects post-modern elements that relate to the architecture of Athens Regional Medical Center and some of the adjacent commercial properties. Exterior materials include brick and cast-stone with a considerable amount of glazing on all elevations of the structure. A one-story covered arcade is proposed along the Prince Avenue frontage that would provide covered pedestrian access to the first-floor retail uses. Staff requests that the applicant prepare scaled renderings of the office/retail structure as viewed along Prince Avenue from the east and west, and a block view rendering of the property that includes the adjacent properties that are located within 400 feet of the subject property to the east and west. These renderings are being requested in order to clearly illustrate the context in which this structure is to be located, and the renderings should include the adjacent existing structures to

allow for a more thorough assessment of the visual impact on these properties from the proposed parking structure.

Street trees and large canopy trees are proposed to establish 35% tree canopy coverage on the site. Existing tree canopy on the site is limited to four (4) large old-growth trees at the northeast corner of the site (one of which is proposed to be removed to accommodate a driveway access into the parking structure), and a row of five (5) Bradford Pears that are located just off the subject property along the southwestern edge of the site. New plantings would be placed along the four proposed access drives and adjacent to the area where the office building and parking structure meet on the west side of the building. A 7-foot sidewalk is proposed adjacent to Nacoochee Avenue to allow for wider landscaped areas between the sidewalk and the east elevation of the parking structure.

Little information is provided regarding lighting for the development, other than the applicant's assertion that all lighting will be fully-shielded per Athens-Clarke County requirements. The applicant should provide a typical lighting detail for the proposed street, site, and structure lighting, and the locations of the lighting should be indicated on the site plan.

The applicant is requesting a series of waivers to provide design flexibility for the development as part of this request. These waivers include:

1. Increasing the professional office space permitted from 30,000 to 71,988 square feet.
2. Increasing the lot coverage from 75% to an 80% maximum.
3. Provide for covered outdoor areas within the front setback of the building.
4. Reduce the buffer requirement along the project's boundaries with the RS-15 properties from a 20-foot planted buffer to a 10-foot planted buffer without a privacy fence.
5. Allow limited planting along the Prince Avenue frontage due to existing conditions and overhead utility lines.

**Staff Comments for the Preliminary Planned Development:**

Staff has identified a series of issues that need to be addressed during the Planning Commission's review of the proposed development, and may require revision in the preparation of the Master Plan and Report. Below is an itemized list of Staff's initial comments for the applicant regarding the submittal:

1. Staff requests that the applicant prepare scaled renderings of the office/retail structure as viewed along Prince Avenue from the east and west, and a block view rendering of the property that includes the adjacent properties that are located within 400 feet of the subject property to the east and west. These renderings are being requested to clearly illustrate the context in which this structure is to be located, and the renderings should include the adjacent existing structures in order to allow for a more thorough assessment of the visual impact on these properties from the proposed parking structure.
2. A full Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) is required for a development of this scale. The results of this TIA must be prepared prior to submittal of the Master Plan and Report.
3. The applicant must receive approval from Georgia DOT for the two (2) access drives on Prince Avenue. With regard to the Prince Avenue access, Planning Staff recommends that the

applicant have one single two-way access on Prince Avenue that aligns with the signalized intersection of Prince Avenue and King Avenue.

4. Staff recommends that the applicant revisit the design and placement of the parking structure with regard to overall height, and allowance for adequate screening along the northern and eastern elevations of the structure. In addition, Staff requests that the applicant prepare scaled renderings of the parking structure as viewed from Hiawasse Avenue and Nacoochee Avenue. These renderings are being requested to clearly illustrate the context in which this structure is to be located, and the renderings should include the adjacent existing structures in order to allow for a more thorough assessment of the visual impact on these properties from the proposed parking structure.
5. The applicant will need to prepare and submit a recombination plat for the subject development area, which must be approved prior to permitting.
6. Water and sanitary sewer demand estimates are needed to complete a water and sewer evaluation.
7. The location and design of the stormwater facilities should be more clearly indicated in the Master Plan submittal. The outfall for this structure or connection to existing stormwater facilities is not indicated. All intended methods of storm water management should be indicated on the site plan, and described in the report.
8. The applicant should provide a typical lighting detail drawn at a smaller scale is requested for the proposed street, site, and structure lighting, and the locations of the lighting should be indicated on the site plan.

## **VI. POPULATION**

The proposed development is commercial in nature and will not result in an increase in residential population. However, the proposed commercial uses and the associated structures will have an impact on the adjacent single-family residential area with regard to traffic, light, and visual character of the area. The increase in the working population in the area as a result of this development has not been estimated at this time.

## **VII. ENVIRONMENT**

The subject tract is not located with any identified environmental areas, as indicated on the Athens-County Environmental Areas Map. The subject tract is not located within any identified historic district, although the property immediately to the north of the subject properties facing Nacoochee Avenue is in the Boulevard Local Historic District.

## **VIII. TRAFFIC, TRANSPORTATION, & TRANSIT**

A Traffic Impact Analysis will be needed for the proposed project due to the estimated 1,750 daily trips estimated to be generated by the project.

## **IX. GRADING AND DRAINAGE**

All Best Management Practices must be observed during construction, and all practices must be in place prior to construction and must remain until project completion. During construction, temporary erosion control devices such as siltation fencing and a stabilized construction exit must be utilized to aid in preventing soil erosion and water pollution.

A stormwater detention facility is shown in the footprint of the parking structure, but no outfall location is indicated for this facility. The location and design of the stormwater facilities should be more clearly indicated in the Master Plan submittal.

## **X. WATER AND SEWER AVAILABILITY**

Athens-Clarke County Public Utilities provides water and sanitary sewer to the subject properties. Available fire flow for the subject area is limited to 2,000 gallons per minute. Water and sanitary sewer demand estimates are needed to complete a water and sewer evaluation.

## **XI. FIRE PROTECTION**

The project would be required to install sprinkler systems to meet needed fire flow.

## **XII. PLANNING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION – Receive with Comments**

Staff recommends that, before the Preliminary Plan and Report for this project can move forward as a Master Plan and Report, a number of issues must be addressed. Staff's concerns regarding design, information needed, and waivers are noted below:

1. Staff requests that the applicant prepare scaled renderings of the office/retail structure as viewed along Prince Avenue from the east and west, and a block view rendering of the property that includes the adjacent properties that are located within 400 feet of the subject property to the east and west. These renderings are being requested to clearly illustrate the context in which this structure is to be located, and the renderings should include the adjacent existing structures in order to allow for a more thorough assessment of the visual impact on these properties from the proposed parking structure.
2. A full Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) is required for a development of this scale. The results of this TIA must be prepared prior to submittal of the Master Plan and Report.
3. The applicant must receive approval from Georgia DOT for the two (2) access drives on Prince Avenue. With regard to the Prince Avenue access, Planning Staff recommends that the applicant have one single two-way access on Prince Avenue that aligns with the signalized intersection of Prince Avenue and King Avenue.
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to be located, and the renderings should include the adjacent existing structures in order to allow for a more thorough assessment of the visual impact on these properties from the proposed parking structure.

5. The applicant will need to prepare and submit a recombination plat for the subject development area, which must be approved prior to permitting.
6. Water and sanitary sewer demand estimates are needed to complete a water and sewer evaluation.
7. The location and design of the stormwater facilities should be more clearly indicated in the Master Plan submittal. The outfall for this structure or connection to existing stormwater facilities is not indicated. All intended methods of storm water management should be indicated on the site plan, and described in the report.
8. The applicant should provide a typical lighting detail drawn at a smaller scale is requested for the proposed street, site, and structure lighting, and the locations of the lighting should be indicated on the site plan.

### **XIII. PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION -**

### **XIV. CURRENT STATUS**

This request will be reviewed and comments made by the Planning Commission on Thursday, January 8, 2004. The applicant may then submit revised plans as a Master Plan submittal to the Planning Department by the next zoning request deadline of January 30, 2004.

**REPORT FOR: Jordan Jones and Goulding, Inc for Prince Nacoochee, LLC**

Reviewed

Not Applicable

ZONING CRITERIA

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| X |   | 1. The proposed rezoning conforms to the future land use element of the comprehensive plan.   |
|   | X | 2. The proposed special use meets all objective criteria set forth for that use provided in the zoning ordinance and conforms to the purpose and intent of the comprehensive plan and all its elements. |
| X |   | 3. Public services, which include physical facilities and staff capacity, exist sufficient to service the proposed rezoning or special use.   |
| X |   | 4. Existing land use pattern surrounding the property in issue.   |
| X |   | 5. Possible creation of an isolated district unrelated to adjacent and nearby districts.  |
| X |   | 6. Population density pattern and possible increase or over-taxing of the load on public facilities including, but not limited to, schools, utilities, and streets.                                     |
| X |   | 7. The cost of the Unified Government and other governmental entities in providing, improving, increasing, or maintaining public utilities, schools, streets, and other public safety measures.         |
| X |   | 8. The possible impact on the environment, including but not limited to, drainage, soil erosion and sedimentation, flooding, air quality, and water quantity.   |
| X |   | 9. Whether the proposed zoning amendment will be a deterrent to the value or improvement of development of adjacent property in accordance with existing regulations.                                   |
| X |   | 10. The aesthetic effect of existing and future use of the property as it relates to the surrounding area.  |