

Memorandum

To: City of Dacula Mayor and City Council

From: Hayes Taylor, City Planner

Date: February 1, 2024 (*Amended*)

Subject: Variance Case: 2023-CD-VAR-05

Existing Zoning: C-2 (General Business District)

Applicant: SW West Dacula LLC c/o LJA Engineering
4525 S. Lee Street
Buford, Georgia 30518
470-202-9321

Owner: Hyun Park
2748 Bonar Hall Path
Duluth, Georgia 30518
470-202-9321

Location: 5th District, Land Lot 308, Parcel 092, 093 & 094A

Existing Land Use and Zoning:

The 1.86 (+/-) acre subject property includes 2474, 2484, and 2524 Winder Highway and is zoned C-2 (General Business District). The site is currently vacant and abuts commercial properties to the east and west along Winder Highway. Residential properties are located adjacent to the south and across Church Street.

Variance Request and Summary:

The proposed concept plan shows a 10,640 sq. ft Dollar General retail store. The proposed structure will consist principally of natural colored brick with varying architectural accents, an externally lit sign, step-down parapets along the roofline, and windows and awnings on the front elevation. The concept plan shows two access points (Winder Hwy and Church St) with the required number of parking spaces. Application materials indicate that all delivery trucks will access the site from Winder Hwy and only personal vehicles will be permitted to utilize the Church St entrance. Staff notes the 30-foot utility easement required by Georgia Department of Transportation limits the developable area of the site.

The proposed commercial development abuts residential property zoned R-1200 Single-Family Residential District and thus requires a 75-foot buffer along the rear property line of parcel 5302A 093 (Article XI, Section 1105). In light of the restricted development area, the applicant requests to encroach on the rear 15-foot setback requirement by ~~5~~ 10-feet, while maintaining the 75-foot residential buffer.

Considering the above, staff supports the request as the proposed development would be within an existing commercial corridor and the variance is not expected to introduce any adverse impacts. As such, the Department recommends that the requested variance be approved with conditions.

Recommendation:

Based upon the variance application, the request to encroach **5 10**-feet into the rear setback requirement for a commercial structure is recommended for approval with the following conditions.

Concept Plan and Land Use

1. The property shall be developed in accordance with the conceptual site plan prepared by LJA Engineering – submitted on November 17, 2023. Any discrepancies between the subject concept plan and the approved zoning conditions/City Ordinances shall not be interpreted as an administrative variance. Development plans must adhere to the approved zoning conditions for the site and City Ordinances.

Any substantial deviation from the approved conceptual plan and/or remaining conditions of zoning shall be resubmitted to the City Council for consideration. The City Administrator shall determine what constitutes substantial deviation.

2. Natural vegetation shall remain on the property until the issuance of a land disturbance permit.

Architectural Design

3. The proposed elevation, building materials, and colors shall be approved by the City prior to building permit issuance. The facades and elevations shall be built in accordance with Exhibit A. Any substantial deviation from the approved conceptual plan and/or remaining conditions of zoning shall be resubmitted to the City Council for consideration. The City Administrator shall determine what constitutes substantial deviation.
4. The developer shall provide a decorative, commercial-quality bicycle rack that complements the building design.
5. No outdoor storage shall be permitted.

Landscape and Parking

6. A retaining wall and guard rail beautification plan is required and shall be submitted to the City for approval. The beautification plan may include but is not limited to landscape improvements, a public-private agreement for public art, a tiered wall design with accents or planters, a vertical garden wall design, and/or natural materials façade, such as brick or stone.
7. A parking lot landscape plan is required and shall be submitted to the City for approval. At a minimum, the landscape plan shall include a monument sign location, bike rack location, and should ensure that each parking island/strip will have a minimum of two (2)

ornamental shade trees. Parking islands/strips may include stormwater management/bioretenion infrastructure and foliage. All parking area trees shall be a minimum of 2-inch dbh caliper.

Parking area trees should be of or a combination of the following species:

1. Willow Oak
 2. Overcup Oak
 3. Nuttall Oak
 4. Sweetbay Magnolia
 5. Lacebark Elm
 6. Japanese Zelkova
 7. Red Maple
 8. Halesia Carolina
 9. Eastern Redbud
8. Gravel is prohibited. Permeable pavement alternatives must be reviewed and approved by the City prior to development permit issuance.
 9. Stormwater maintenance areas may include lower maintenance grass alternatives such as Blue Star Creeper, Corsican Mint, Micro-Clover, or Fescue as approved by the City Administrator.
 10. The 75-foot residential landscape buffer along the rear property line shall include **a supplementary** landscape strip with a row of Sweetbay Magnolia, East Palatka Holly, American Smoketree or Sassafras trees 15-foot on center **as determined by the Planning and Development department.**
 11. Yards outside of the stormwater maintenance area shall be sodded.
 12. Parking lot and security lighting shall be directed in towards the property to minimize the adverse impact on neighboring properties.
 13. All trash dumpsters shall be screened by an enclosure using the same exterior building material as the adjacent occupied buildings. Pickup shall be limited to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Dumpster enclosures shall remain closed, locked, and in good repair at all times.

Transportation and Infrastructure

14. A standard deceleration lane with a 100-foot taper and 40-foot right-of-way from the centerline shall be required, reviewed, and approved by the Georgia Department of Transportation prior to the issuance of a development permit. The developer shall be limited to one curb cut on Winder Hwy. Before the issuance of a development permit, a sight distance certification shall be provided. Minimum separation from a driveway, public road, or side street shall be provided as specified by the Georgia Department of Transportation.
15. At the Church Street entrance, a pedestrian walkway to the store and a 3-foot by 8-foot

pedestrian pad with amenities such as benches, planters, and trash containers will be installed. All such required amenities shall be decorative, commercial-quality fixtures. The placement of any of these amenities shall be reviewed and approved by the City of Dacula.

16. The developer shall be responsible for the relocation of public or private utilities and stormwater infrastructure.
17. Fencing around the stormwater pond is required, must be closed, locked, and in good repair at all times. A galvanized chain link is prohibited.
18. A sign prohibiting truck access at the Church Street access point shall be required.

Signage and Advertising

19. No tents, canopies, temporary banners, streamers, or roping decorated with flags, tinsel, or other similar material shall be displayed, hung, or strung on the site without appropriate permit(s). No decorative balloons or hot-air balloons shall be displayed on the site.
20. Human sign spinners and/or twirlers shall be prohibited.
21. One ground sign shall be permitted. The ground sign shall be monument-type only with indirect lighting. Ground sign shall be limited to a single monument-type sign with a brick or stacked stone base of at least 2 feet in height. Neon or self-illuminating ground signs shall be prohibited.
22. The wall sign shall be lit with indirect lighting.
23. Oversized signs or billboards shall not be permitted.
24. Blinking, exposed neon, portable, inflatable, and temporary signage shall be prohibited.

Variance

25. **Variance to encroach 10-feet into the rear setback for principal building is approved.**