



SMYRNA DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ZONING
22 S. Main Street
Smyrna, Delaware
302-389-2332

Major Site Plan Staff Report

Prepared By: Jeremy J. Rothwell – Senior Planner

Date prepared: July 14, 2020

Planning Commission Date: July 22, 2020

Public Hearing Notices: Advertising Dates
July 5, 2020 (Delaware State News)
July 7, 2020 (Town Hall)

Posted on Subject Property
July 7, 2020

Mailed to Property Owner & Abutting Property Owners
July 7, 2020

Project Number: 20-095

Owner's Name: Smyrna Smiles, LLC c/o Rose Valletto

Site Location: 51 Huntfield Drive, Smyrna, DE 19977

Applicant's Name: Clifton L. Bakhsh, Jr. Inc. c/o Matthew Brickley, P.E.

Agent's Name: Clifton L. Bakhsh, Jr. Inc. c/o Matthew Brickley, P.E.

Tax Map Number: 1-17-02802-01-3300-00001

Parcel Size: 2.63 acres (114,618 sq. ft.)

- Existing Zoning:** HC – Highway Commercial
- Requested Action:** *Major Site Plan* - The applicant proposes to construct a two-story medical office building totaling 18,580 sq. ft. GFA on an existing vacant parcel.
- Zoning & Project History:** **February 18, 2003** – The Smyrna Town Council adopts the 2002 Smyrna Comprehensive Plan. The parcel is identified under the ‘Other Commercial’ land use designation as shown on the Growth Area Future Land Use Map (Figure 8) of said Comp Plan.
- April 19, 2004** – The Smyrna Town Council annexes this parcel then part of the much larger 12.9-acre property.
- November 10, 2005** – The Smyrna Town Council approved and records the 29-lot Huntfield Subdivision (Plot Book 81, Page 26). The subject parcel is identified as a ‘Residual Commercial Lot.’ The approximately 50,839 sq. ft. stormwater management pond is subsequently constructed on the southern half of the before-mentioned commercial parcel.
- September 28, 2006** – The Town of Smyrna approves and records a Major Site Plan to construct a one-story 10,597 sq. ft. medical office building on the before-mentioned vacant commercial parcel. This building was never constructed, and the site plan approval subsequently expired.
- February 4, 2013** – The Smyrna Town Council adopts the 2012 Smyrna Comprehensive Plan. The before-mentioned parcel is identified as ‘Commercial’ land use designation as shown on the Future Land Use Map (Figure 3) of said Comp Plan.
- June 12, 2020** – Staff provides pre-application review comments for the construction of a proposed two-story 18,580 sq. ft. medical office building.
- June 24, 2020** – The applicant submits Major Site Plan application.

Compliance with the Comprehensive Plan

As shown on Map F 3 Future Land Use, the before-mentioned parcel is designated as ‘Commercial.’

As detailed in Chapter 3 – Development Plan (Page 34-35) of the 2012 Comprehensive Plan:

Commercial Use

Areas located predominately along U.S. Route 13 and Glenwood Avenue (Route 300) are designated for a commercial use, alongside, between, and extending outwardly from existing commercial areas along the highway and arterial streets. This plan recommends that new commercial areas be developed in coordinated groupings or clusters of commercial buildings with common access from the highway and/or arterial streets, preferably feeding parking areas from the side or rear to limit the number of curb cuts and thereby reduce traffic safety hazards. In parts of this land use area are existing residential structures, which should be allowed to convert to commercial uses under design guidelines which would buffer adjacent residential uses from parking and loading uses while preserving the residential character of the buildings and the site as a transition from the highway into adjacent residential subdivisions.

Commercial uses should be managed in a manner consistent with the Town's desire to improve the appearance, functionality, and safety of Routes 13, as described in the transportation system portion of the plan. Design standards (especially addressing signage, lighting, traffic flow and pedestrian safety) for these areas will be included in new provisions in the zoning ordinance. These design standards will support downtown redevelopment as well as economic redevelopment throughout the Town by providing an inviting gateway leading to Smyrna's historic downtown and surrounding commercial areas.

Compliance with the Smyrna Zoning Ordinance

Section 5.10G– HC Highway Commercial Bulk Standards

	Required	Proposed
Minimum Lot Size	None	2.63 Acres
Minimum Lot Width	None	300 ft.
Minimum Lot Depth	None	380 ft.
Front Yard Setback (U.S. Route 13)	30 ft.	121.4 ft.
Front Yard Setback (Huntfield Dr.)	0 ft. (Commercial)	80.8 ft.
Front Yard Setback (Caterfield Dr.)	0 ft. (Commercial)	78.5 ft.
Side Yard Setback	20 ft.	161.5 ft.
Lot Coverage	80%	49%
Building Height	45 ft.	40 ft.
Parking Setback	10 ft.	43 ft.

The proposed project is in compliance with all of the bulk requirements of the HC – Highway Commercial Zoning District.

Sidewalks and Multi-Modal Connectivity

In accordance with the *Smyrna Town Code Appendix B – Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance §5.02(a)*, sidewalks at least 4 ft. in width are required to be

constructed along all street frontages for all subdivision plans and commercial site plans. As set forth in *Section 5.02(d)* of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, the Planning Commission and Town Council may also require pedestrian ways (a minimum of 5 ft. in width for pedestrians and 8 ft. in width if designed as a combined pedestrian/bikeway) internally within the project to connect open spaces, schools, and other buildings. An existing 4 ft.-wide concrete sidewalk already exists along U.S. Route 13, and along a portion of Huntfield Drive. The applicant has proposed to continue a 4 ft.-wide concrete sidewalk along the rest of Huntfield Drive and Caterfield Drive. At the request of staff, the applicant has provided a marked crosswalk and curb ramps across the driveway throat into the site off Huntfield Drive. In addition, the applicant has also provided marked crosswalks across the internal access drive directly in front of the building.

Compliance with Landscaping & Street Buffering Requirements

In accordance with the *Smyrna Town Code Appendix A – Zoning §5.10G(6)*, a planted vegetative buffer is required when a non-residential use abuts a residentially-zoned parcel. Given the presence of the three adjacent residences to the south (zoned AC – Agricultural Conservation under Kent County), the applicant shall be required to provide a 20 ft.-wide landscaped planted buffer along this face of the property. The applicant has noted on page 2 of the site plan a 20 ft.-wide landscape buffer, but at the date of the writing of this staff report, a separate landscape plan has not yet been provided. Staff recommended 2-3 continuous staggered rows of evergreen or arborvitae type trees along the southern property line to comply with this section of the Code.

As set forth in the *Smyrna Town Code Appendix B – Subdivision & Land Development Section 5.17(c)*, the applicant is required to plant one (1) tree per 3,000 sq. ft. of lot area at least 2” in caliper. With a lot area of 2.63 acres (114,618 sq. ft.), a minimum of 38 trees shall be planted. As of the date of this staff report, the applicant has not provided a separate landscape plan (although it will be provided prior to the Planning Commission meeting). Staff recommends that street trees be planted along U.S. Route 13, Huntfield Drive, and Caterfield Drive every 40 ft. as set forth in *Section 74-51(a)* of the Town Code.

As set forth in the *Smyrna Town Code Appendix A – Zoning §6.13(a)*, dumpsters shall be appropriately located, and “appropriately screened to improve the appearance of the area.” The applicant has proposed a 6’-high masonry wall and dumpster enclosure of the dumpster and concrete pad along Caterfield Drive, and is thus in compliance with this section of the Code.

Compliance with Parking Requirements

Town of Smyrna Code Appendix A – Zoning §6.1A(9) Required Parking Spaces by Use
(k) Offices, four spaces per 1,000 sq. ft. of gross floor area

Required (18,850 sq. ft. of office space) – 74 parking spaces (including 2 ADA space)
 Provided – 83 vehicular parking spaces (including 4 ADA spaces)

The applicant has proposed 9' x 20' parking spaces on the site. The before-mentioned section of the ordinance does not mandate a minimum size for parking spaces, however AASHTO recommends a minimum size of 9' x 18' for pull in (perpendicular) parking spaces.

As set forth in *Section 6.1A(8)(a)* of the Zoning Ordinance, parking stalls are limited to 15 consecutive spaces. The applicant has provided a maximum of 15 vehicular parking spaces in a row and is thus in compliance with this section of the Code.

As set forth in *Section 6.1A(7)* of the Zoning Ordinance, a minimum of one bicycle rack (with 5 spaces) shall be provided in every parking lot containing 20 or more spaces. The applicant is thus required to provide at least one (1) bicycle rack but has not provided any. The applicant shall be required to provide at least one bicycle rack or else obtain a variance from the Board of Adjustment.

Compliance with Loading Space Requirements

Town of Smyrna Zoning Ordinance Section 6.1B(1) – Off-street Loading Requirements
(j) Offices: one (1) off-street loading space for 10,000 sq. ft. to 25,000 sq. ft. and one (1) additional loading space for every additional 25,000 sq. ft. or fraction thereof.

Loading Spaces Required (18,850 sq. ft. GFA) – 1
 Loading Spaces Provided – 1

Compliance with Signage Requirements

As set forth in the *Smyrna Town Code Appendix – A Zoning §6.15*, the applicant is permitted 3 sq. ft. of wall sign area for every linear feet of building frontage for a maximum of 150 sq. ft. The applicant has not yet proposed any wall signage.

As set forth in the *Smyrna Town Code Appendix A – Zoning §6.15*, the applicant is permitted one ground sign up to 200 sq. ft. in size, and up to 25 feet in height. The applicant has proposed one future ground sign up to 200 sq. ft. in size at the NE corner of the property near the intersection of Huntfield Drive and U.S. Route 13.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the proposed two-story medical office building totaling 18,850 sq. ft. as shown on the before-mentioned site plan, but subject to the following condition:

- 1.) The applicant shall provide at least one (1) bicycle rack (of at least five spaces) on the site.
- 2.) The applicant shall provide at least 88 trees at least 2" in caliper on site.

Attachments A – Huntfield Commercial Major Site Plan
B – Photos of Vacant Site

Attachment B – Photos of Vacant Site

