

I have received a copy of Beltline SAP application #BL-14-19 for 1390 Northside Drive. Here are my comments on this application:

1. The proposed development is consistent with the plan that was vetted by NPU-D and NPU-C when the property was rezoned to its current MR-4C designation. It therefore represents something that has been overwhelmingly endorsed by the community.

2. The project would benefit from the incorporation of either or both of the two nonconforming properties in its Northwest and Northeast corners, a dilapidated single-family home and an adult-entertainment nightclub. Neither of these is currently an asset to the community.

Both would benefit from proactive rezoning similar to what has been done in other subareas of the Beltline. My understanding is that this is not planned until 2015, which is likely to be too late to be useful for this project. To the extent that it is possible to do so, the proactive rezoning process should be accelerated in the vicinity of the Waterworks rather than delayed to coincide with the rest of subarea 8, as the subarea boundaries are ultimately fairly arbitrary and irrelevant to the process.

3. The site plan shows sheltered on-street parking along the south side of Hoke Street, which seems like a good idea, but makes no reference to the installation of a new sidewalk along the south side of this street. Such a sidewalk would be an asset for both the development and the surrounding community. As the adjoining property on the south side of Hoke is owned by the city of Atlanta, it would be unlikely to receive a new sidewalk unless one is installed in conjunction with this project.

4. The name "West Midtown" is a terrible idea. It is much too close to the name "Midtown West", which is a well known slum in NPU-D. Also, it perpetuates an outdated trend of trying to associate our area (Berkeley Park or in a larger context the West Wide) with others such as Midtown and Buckhead, rather than building the sense of place that should define it as being both separate and desirable. We do not like to think of ourselves as being almost somewhere else. Toward this end, it should also be noted that the Berkeley Park Neighborhood Association has installed neighborhood identification signs and street furniture throughout the area to enhance the sense of place.

This development should include street furniture that matches the other installations. This was a comment that was ignored in a prior SAP review for the auto-parts store at the corner of Holmes and Howell Mill, so it should be stated more emphatically now than it was then. This project may also offer an opportunity for a neighborhood identification sign at the corner of Hoke and Northside Drive or in its southwest corner next to Reservoir Drive. The project might also benefit from a name that includes the words "Berkeley" or "Waterworks". I believe that the name West-town is now available as well.

5. Pedestrian connections northward along Northside drive are needed in this area. One of the conditions that NPU-D attached to the rezoning of this site was that impact fees be directed toward those connections and, in particular, to the connection of the sidewalk that currently terminates under the CSX railroad (AKA Atlanta

Beltline) bridge on the west side of Northside drive a few hundred yards to the north of this project. The need for that connection should be reiterated in the SAP review.

6. The architectural features and details of this project are important. It may be the first project to be redeveloped in a manner consistent with the CDP FLUM changes made during the 2004 Northside Drive Corridor Study, and thus may set the tone for the surrounding area as it is redeveloped. This site is on high ground in a gateway location to the west side of the city and it adjoins a future park space that may have regional significance. These things should be considered in the selection of building materials, facade, theme, etc. The proposed roof-top green space and deck seem like a very good step toward addressing these things, although it is difficult to tell from the elevation drawings how visible this will be from street level. It is unfortunate that this feature seems to be limited to the east end of the project overlooking midtown rather than at both the east and the west ends of the project in order to also provide a view over the reservoir and surrounding green space.