

MEMORANDUM

To: Dunwoody Mayor and City Council

From: Howard J. Koontz, AICP

Date: March 12, 2012

Subject: Starbucks at Ravinia waiver to development standards

The applicant of the proposed Starbucks coffee shop, to be located at the intersection of Ashford Dunwoody Road and Ravinia Parkway, has submitted an application for a land disturbance permit. During the course of this review, staff has identified the need for a 25 foot right-of-way dedication along the east side of Ashford Dunwoody Road to the city per §16-488(b) of the city code. The applicant has indicated to the city that these improvements, based upon site constraints are not readily achieved on the site, and that the required right of way widening has already been affected as a function of the original Ravinia zoning approved in 1983. Therefore, they have requested that the requirement for the additional right of way be waived by the Mayor and City Council, pursuant to \$16-488(e).

Code section 16-488(b), which requires the applicant to dedicate and improve additional right of way reads, in part:

- (b) Where a proposed subdivision or project requiring a land development permit has frontage on an existing public street, right-of-way shall be dedicated along that frontage so as to meet the standards of that street's classification in the city thoroughfare plan. The right-of-way shall be improved wherever required as further provided in this section. For existing streets on which a proposed subdivision or project requiring a land development permit has frontage, the applicant shall:
 - (1) Dedicate a minimum of 50 percent of the required right-of-way width as measured from the centerline of the existing street right-of-way;
 - (2) Install all required sidewalks, street trees, streetlights, and place utilities according to the standards in section 16-487; and
 - (3) Provide a minimum of 50 percent of the roadway pavement required in section 16-487 and install it to the right-of-way centerline.

Code section 16-488(e), which empowers the Mayor and City Council to waive these development requirements, reads, in part:

- (e) The city council, after considering all related factors, may authorize deviations from this section as follows:
 - (1) Right-of-way dedication may be waived or modified if:
 - a. Existing use of property is not to be substantially changed as a result of proposed development or construction;



- b. Existing government construction plans for the roadway indicate lesser right-of-way would be required for dedication; or
- The adjoining frontage is developed and the predominant existing rightof-way meets city standards.
- (2) Road improvements may be waived or modified if:
 - a. Existing use of property not to be substantially changed (i.e., traffic generation and ingress/egress would remain the same);
 - Governmental construction plans for the road indicate a pavement width less than city standards (only the planned pavement width shall be required);
 - c. No more than five percent of average daily traffic generation would occur between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., on weekdays;
 - d. The existing road meets current county standards; or
 - e. Widening would create a hazard to traffic, pedestrians, or bicyclists along the thoroughfare.

Staff recommends approval of the applicant's request to waive the right-of-way dedication and associated road improvements as there is no plan in place for using 10 of the 25 feet of the required dedication for the right-of-way, and the linkages between the dedication are already improved without the road cross-section that includes the additional right-of-way. Also, the balance of the 25 feet (15 feet) would be used for a future utility corridor. However, the utilities are already in place and installed as a function of the original Ravinia zoning, completed some 29 years ago. To relocate the utilities now would be a considerable burden without an substantive gain. Finally, the existing construction to the south of the intended site is the parking garage entrance to- and the receiving and deliveries entrance for the Crowne Plaza hotel. There is a 30-foot change in elevation separating the Ashford Dunwoody Road right of way and the entry drive of the Crowne Plaza garage, which is held in place by a retaining wall. Further vehicular access along northbound Ashford Dunwoody Road from the south would be greatly constrained by this significant grade change, lending credibility to the idea that the required additional right of way on the part of Starbucks would constitute an unnecessary hardship on the development of the site.





