



SANDY SPRINGS

GEORGIA

PLANNING COMMISSION

Reed Haggard, Chair
Andy Porter, Vice Chair
Robin Conklin
Elizabeth Kelly
Dave Nickles
Andrea Settles
Karen Trylovich

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

Regular Meeting

6:00 p.m.

The Planning Commission meeting will be held in the Studio Theatre at Sandy Springs City Hall
(1 Galambos Way, Sandy Springs, GA 30328).

Live-stream: www.SandySpringsGA.gov/Stream

Public Comment: <http://spr.gs/publiccomment>

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call and General Announcements

III. Approval of Meeting Agenda

- A. May 22, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting Agenda
(Presented by Samantha Brown, Planning and Zoning Clerk)

IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- A. December 20, 2023 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
(Presented by Samantha Brown, Planning and Zoning Clerk)

V. Cases

- A. **2024-0001 TA24-0001-** Request for Planning Commission
Recommendation for an Ordinance to Amend the
Development Code to allow for green retaining walls.
(Presented by Matthew Anspach, Senior Planner)

Individuals with disabilities who require certain accommodations in order to allow them to observe and/or participate in a public meeting, or who have questions regarding the accessibility of the meeting or facilities should contact the City Clerk at 770-730-5600 promptly for assistance. The City will make reasonable accommodations for those persons.



SANDY SPRINGS

GEORGIA

VI. Ongoing Business

VII. New Business

A. Election for Chair and Vice Chair

VIII. Adjournment

Individuals with disabilities who require certain accommodations in order to allow them to observe and/or participate in a public meeting, or who have questions regarding the accessibility of the meeting or facilities should contact the City Clerk at 770-730-5600 promptly for assistance. The City will make reasonable accommodations for those persons.

Planning Commission

May 22, 2024



SANDY SPRINGS™
GEORGIA

TA24-0001

Green (Faced) Retaining Walls

Purpose & Goal of Policy

- The Text Amendment will not significantly impact the natural environment, including air, water, noise, stormwater management, wildlife and vegetation- but would impact in a small manner the natural environment, positively.
- The Text Amendment will not significantly impact existing conforming development patterns, standards or zoning regulations.
- The Text Amendment conforms with the Comprehensive Plan, planning practices, local, state, federal laws and stated purpose of Development Code

Text Amendment

Sec. 9.4.3.A.3. -

3. Materials

- a. **Material and Finish** All retaining walls must be finished with stucco, brick, or stone. No beveled modular block, plain unfinished concrete masonry units, or other similar materials are allowed.

Retaining walls may utilize alternative facing elements such as evergreen vegetation as approved by the Director. The wall must be located only in side or rear yards and be planted with native, non-invasive evergreen planting material. The plant growth must be at a minimum 50% of the wall's face prior to closeout of the permit, and maintained throughout all seasons.

Retaining walls which meet the description of Garden Walls below in Sec. 9.4.3.B.3. may also use cross ties, landscape timbers, or similar as a wall, material finish.

Recommendation

- Staff recommends **approval** of **TA24-0001**.



SANDY SPRINGS™
GEORGIA



SANDY SPRINGS

GEORGIA

P&Z STAFF REPORT

Planning Commission Meeting, May 22, 2024

Case: **TA24-0001 – Sec. 9.4.3.A.3. Materials (Retaining Wall)**
Staff Contact: Matthew Anspach (manspach@sandyspringsga.gov)
Report Date: May 9, 2024

PURPOSE

An Ordinance to amend Development Code Section 9.4.3.A.3. Materials (Retaining Walls).

RECOMMENDATION

Department of Community Development

Staff recommends **Approval** of **Text Amendment** TA24-0001.

PROCESS

Planning Commission Hearing:
May 22, 2024

Mayor and City Council Hearing:
June 18, 2024

Sec. 9.4.3.A.3. Materials

3. Materials

- a. **Material and Finish** All retaining walls must be finished with stucco, brick, or stone. No beveled modular block, plain unfinished concrete masonry units, or other similar materials are allowed.

Retaining walls may utilize alternative facing elements such as evergreen vegetation as approved by the Director. The wall must be located only in side or rear yards and be planted with native, non-invasive evergreen planting material. The plant growth must be at a minimum 50% of the wall's face prior to closeout of the permit, and maintained throughout all seasons.

Retaining walls which meet the description of Garden Walls below in Sec. 9.4.3.B.3. may also use cross ties, landscape timbers, or similar as a wall, material finish.

BACKGROUND

This text amendment proposal is minor in nature in that it only involves proposing an alternative acceptable material finish (non-invasive evergreen vegetation) for retaining walls. Generically referred to as a 'green wall', behind the vegetation, sound structural ground retention techniques are employed and required, often in the arrangement of welded wire form construction.

ANALYSIS

Staff believes that allowing evergreen vegetation as an option for retaining wall finish material is a sound option, particularly with the guardrails proposed, including that the vegetation must be noninvasive and only used in side and rear yards.

The wall construction requirements behind the material are not affected in any way by this proposal. The amendment only seeks to allow for additional aesthetic design options when considering options for retaining wall development.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends **Approval** of **Text Amendment** TA24-0001, An Ordinance to amend Development Code Section 9.4.3.A.3. Materials.