

# CASE SUMMARY

APPLICATION TYPE: SPECIAL USE



File Number: 4-C-24-SU                      Related File Number:  
Application Filed: 2/27/2024              Date of Revision:  
Applicant: J SCOTT BUSBY

## PROPERTY INFORMATION

General Location: North side of Keowee Ave, west side of Kenesaw Ave  
Other Parcel Info.:  
Tax ID Number: 122 A B 026                      Jurisdiction: City  
Size of Tract: 3.92 acres  
Accessibility: Access is via Keowee Avenue, a local street with a 30-ft-pavement width within a 36-ft to 100-ft right-of-way. Access is also via Kenesaw Avenue, a local street with a 40-ft pavement width within a 62-ft right-of-way.

## GENERAL LAND USE INFORMATION

Existing Land Use: Public/Quasi Public Land  
Surrounding Land Use:  
Proposed Use: Place of worship expansion                      Density:  
Sector Plan: West City                      Sector Plan Designation: CI (Civic and Institutional)  
Growth Policy Plan: N/A (Within City Limits)  
Neighborhood Context: This area of the Kingston Pike-Sequoyah Hills neighborhood has a mix of single-family dwellings and apartment communities. There is a small commercial and office node on the other side of the Keowee Avenue and Kenesaw Avenue intersection.

## ADDRESS/RIGHT-OF-WAY INFORMATION (where applicable)

Street: 3700 KEOWEE AVE  
Location:  
Proposed Street Name:  
Department-Utility Report:  
Reason:

## ZONING INFORMATION (where applicable)

Current Zoning: RN-1 (Single-Family Residential Neighborhood)  
Former Zoning:  
Requested Zoning:  
Previous Requests:  
Extension of Zone:  
History of Zoning: None noted

## PLAN INFORMATION (where applicable)

Current Plan Category: CI (Civic and Institutional)

Requested Plan Category:

**SUBDIVISION INFORMATION (where applicable)**

Subdivision Name:

No. of Lots Proposed: No. of Lots Approved: 0

Variances Requested:

S/D Name Change:

**OTHER INFORMATION (where applicable)**

Other Bus./Ord. Amend.:

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION AND DISPOSITION**

Planner In Charge: Jessie Hillman

Staff Recomm. (Abbr.): Approve the request for an expansion of a place of worship, subject to two conditions.

Staff Recomm. (Full): 1) Meeting all applicable requirements of the City of Knoxville Zoning Ordinance.  
2) Meeting all applicable requirements of the City of Knoxville Engineering Department.

With the conditions noted, this request meets the criteria to approve a Special Use for a place of worship.

Comments:

This proposal is for a minor expansion of a place of worship, Sequoyah Hills Presbyterian Church, in the RN-1 (Single-Family Residential Neighborhood) zoning district. The additions include a 1,080-sq ft fellowship hall, a 2,370-sq ft community space with a glass-front connecting hall, new and modified roofing and dormers, a sidewalk expansion and two new ADA accessible ramps. The development does not add seats to the main assembly room of the church, which would impact off-street parking requirements. Landscaping that needs to be removed for the expansion, including several small trees and shrubs, will be relocated to other areas of the campus.

On March 19, 2024, the City Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) approved a variance request by the applicant allowing the church to exceed its 40% maximum impervious coverage limit in the RN-1 district to 68%. The applicant described how the church consists of multiple buildings developed between 1948 and 1999. The church's current impervious lot coverage since 1999 is 65%, and the proposed development increases this coverage by 3%. In the BZA request, the applicant described the need for the renovations in the following way (see Exhibit B). "There is currently not an accessible path to connect one end of the buildings to the other without having to go outside through the parking lot. The best feasible way to connect these buildings is to construct an addition on the south side of the existing sanctuary. This addition will provide accessible access across the main level as well as providing elevator access to all levels. The addition is primarily glass to allow natural light into the space and preserve the view of the existing building facade and stained-glass windows, and it is not farther out than the surrounding wings. There will also be a small addition to expand a community room." The basis for the BZA's approval of the variance was that the de minimis increase in impervious coverage was tied to development that improved ADA accessibility around the church.

STANDARDS FOR EVALUATING A SPECIAL USE (ARTICLE 16.2.F.2)

1) THE USE IS CONSISTENT WITH ADOPTED PLANS AND POLICIES, INCLUDING THE GENERAL PLAN AND THE ONE-YEAR PLAN.

A. The proposed minor expansion to a long-established place of worship is consistent with the General Plan's development policy 4.6 to provide support for the development of neighborhood and community organizations.

B. This development request is supported by the One Year Plan's location criteria for cultural facilities. It states that churches should be located throughout the community in close proximity to major residential areas, and that sites should afford safe and convenient access to both local and through traffic. The church is part of the Kingston Pike-Sequoyah Hills neighborhood and is located next to a small community commercial node.

2) THE USE IS IN HARMONY WITH THE GENERAL PURPOSE AND INTENT OF THIS ZONING CODE.

A. The RN-1 zoning district is intended to accommodate traditional single-family residential neighborhoods, and limited nonresidential uses that are compatible with the character of the district. The subject property has functioned as a church campus since at least 1948, and is a part of the

neighborhood character.

B. The proposed development improves the church's ADA accessibility, which is consistent with Article 1.2.A on the intent of the zoning code to promote public health, safety and welfare.

3) THE USE IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD WHERE IT IS PROPOSED, AND WITH THE SIZE AND LOCATION OF BUILDINGS IN THE VICINITY.

A. The fellowship hall and community space expansions to the church are designed to complement the existing building, and are compatible with the surrounding built environment.

4) THE USE WILL NOT SIGNIFICANTLY INJURE THE VALUE OF ADJACENT PROPERTY OR BY NOISE, LIGHTS, FUMES, ODORS, VIBRATION, TRAFFIC, CONGESTION, OR OTHER IMPACTS DETRACT FROM THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENT.

A. There are no adverse impacts anticipated to occur from the proposed expansion. Most of the development pertains to enclosed building additions that would not cause an environmental nuisance to surrounding properties.

B. Landscaping that will be impacted by the building additions will be relocated to other areas of the campus to maintain the benefits of this vegetation.

5) THE USE IS NOT OF A NATURE OR SO LOCATED AS TO DRAW SUBSTANTIAL ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC THROUGH RESIDENTIAL STREETS.

1. The development does not add seats to the main assembly room. The building additions should not significantly increase traffic to and from the site in this residential area.

6) THE NATURE OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE SURROUNDING AREA IS NOT SUCH AS TO POSE A POTENTIAL HAZARD TO THE PROPOSED USE OR TO CREATE AN UNDESIRABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE PROPOSED USE.

1. There are no aspects of the subject property, such as adjacent land uses or physical aspects of the lot, that should pose a risk to the proposed expansion.

**Action:** Approved with Conditions

**Meeting Date:** 4/11/2024

**Details of Action:**

**Summary of Action:** Approve the request for an expansion of a place of worship, subject to two conditions.

**Date of Approval:** 4/11/2024

**Date of Denial:**

**Postponements:**

**Date of Withdrawal:**

**Withdrawn prior to publication?:**  **Action Appealed?:**

## LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND DISPOSITION

**Legislative Body:**

**Date of Legislative Action:**

**Date of Legislative Action, Second Reading:**

**Ordinance Number:**

**Other Ordinance Number References:**

**Disposition of Case:**

**Disposition of Case, Second Reading:**

**If "Other":**

**If "Other":**

**Amendments:**

**Amendments:**

**Date of Legislative Appeal:**

**Effective Date of Ordinance:**