



REZONING

January 6, 2005

FILE: RZ 05-01-01

R-1 to R-2 RCO

Property Information	
Tax ID	50+/- acres of Tax Map 065 Parcel 009D
Location/address	In Williamsburg Subdivision, north side of Hardy McManus Road, across from the intersection of Halali Farm Road
Parcel Size	50 +/- acres
Current Zoning	R-1 (single-family residential)
Existing Land Use	Undeveloped
Future Land Use	Medium Density Residential
Request	R-2 RCO (single-family residential with a residential cluster overlay)
Commission District	District 3 (Ford)
Recommendation	Approve

Summary and Recommendation

Regis Development Co., Inc requests the rezoning of 50 +/- acres, a portion of parcel 065 009D located in Williamsburg subdivision on the north side of Hardy McManus Road across from the intersection of Halali Farm Road, from R-1 to R-2 RCO. The request is consistent with the 2000 Columbia County Growth Management Plan for medium-density residential and with the prevailing zoning pattern in this area.

This application consists of two requests for zoning that should be considered individually. The first part of the request is to step up in zoning from R-1 to R-2. This results in a smaller lot typically with narrower lot widths and depths. This request is consistent with surrounding zoning patterns.

The second request is to add the Residential Cluster Overlay (RCO) on top of the R-2 zone. The intent of the RCO is to protect environmentally sensitive lands and promote better neighborhood design. The RCO accomplishes this by allowing for smaller, narrower lots clustered together. This application protects environmentally sensitive riparian draws by preserving the land as open space. This second request meets the RCO intent.

The Planning Commission should also consider the design implications of the Residential Cluster Overlay. This 50-acre parcel is surrounded by Somerset at Williamsburg on the northeast and the remainder of Williamsburg on the southwest. The property on the northeast is zoned R-2 and has the average lot size of 75 feet wide and 140 feet deep. The property on the southwest is zoned R-1 RCO but has developed with larger lots of 120 feet wide and 300 feet deep. Whereas the R-2 RCO could allow for lots as narrow as 60 feet, the narrowest lot this applicant has requested is 70 feet.

Staff recommends approval of this request with all interdepartmental comments.



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Interdepartmental Review

Health Department: County water and sewer.

Water and Sewer: A 10-inch water line is available along Hardy McManus Road. Sanitary sewer service is available along a 12-inch line along Euchee Creek. The project should not affect capacity of existing water infrastructure in the area.

Sheriff: Additional patrols will be needed for increased traffic and crime prevention.

Board of Education: New construction throughout Columbia County has and will continue to bring families into areas of our school system that are currently overcrowded. When overcrowded conditions occur in any one of our schools there is a possibility that students will be housed in portable classrooms. With the influx of new subdivisions being built around our schools, the problem with traffic congestion and road access during school morning and afternoon hours as students are being dropped off or picked up will continue to increase.

Construction and Maintenance: This project is within the William Few Parkway extension traffic-shed. No alignment established at this time.

Greenspace Program: The property lies within the "floodplain greenways" area for the county greenspace program. It is recommend that the applicant place a conservation easement over the proposed greenspace to be granted to a private land trust or government agency to ensure perpetual preservation of the open space.

Engineering: Property is in the Euchee Creek Drainage basin. Post-development rates shall be at or below pre-development rates. All floodplain regulations will be in effect. Any wetlands on the property are under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. A jurisdictional determination must be submitted to and approved by the Corps prior to plan approval. On-site detention may be required. Site plans must be submitted to and approved by the County Engineer

Planning: A street stub-out from Somerset at Williamsburg is shown on adjacent developing properties. Staff recommends the connection of the northern cul-de-sac with this street stub. This request meets the intent of the RCO. Open space must be platted separately and deeded to a home owner's association, a certified land trust organization, or a government agency.

Growth Management Plan

The 2000 Columbia County Growth Management Plan designates the property for medium-density residential use. The request is consistent with the future land use policy.

Medium density residential is defined by the GMP as ranging in densities around 4 to 6 units per acre. Typically these densities are accomplished with single-family lots between 7,500 and 10,000 square feet. The average lot size in the entire development is 15,900 square feet with an overall density of 1.51 units per acre; and the average lot size on this 50-acre parcel is 10,500 square feet



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with a gross density of 1.54 units per acre. This is a net density of 4.15 units per acre, fulfilling the GMP designation for medium density residential use.

Zoning and Development Regulations

Zoning categories step up gradually in density. The perception of density in suburban developments results mostly from the width of lots versus the depth of lots. The applicant's request includes two steps up in zoning. The planning commission must consider both zoning steps in this request.

The first request is to step up from R-1 to R-2. The surrounding developments are zoned R-2 RCO, R-1 RCO, R-2, PUD and S-1 for a church. The first step of the request for R-2 is consistent with the prevailing zoning pattern.

The second zoning step up is to add the Residential Cluster Overlay (RCO) on top of the R-2 zone. The intent of the RCO is to protect open space, environmentally sensitive land, and to promote better neighborhood design. This plan uses the RCO to protect environmentally sensitive riparian corridors. The RCO protects these lands by allowing smaller lots clustered together. Whereas the R-2 RCO could allow for a lot as narrow as 60 feet, the narrowest lot in the applicant's design is for a 70 foot wide lot.

The average lot widths of this section are similar to the R-2 section on the northeast of this parcel; the average lot depth is about 20 feet shallower. The lot widths for the section of the subdivision southwest of this parcel are considerably larger at 120 feet wide. However, these lots incorporate steep slopes and environmentally sensitive areas in the private property boundaries whereas the layout for the requested zoning protects these lands by incorporating them into the open space buffer between these two sections.

The protection of these environmentally sensitive lands meets the RCO intent and is also a goal of the Columbia County Greenspace Program. Property near this subdivision has been purchased by the County to incorporate it into the Floodplain Greenway as shown in the Growth Management Plan. Access to this Greenway through the open space parcels shown on the RCO plan would be an asset to this community. The developer may wish to contact the County Greenspace Coordinator to discuss the tax advantages and development protections afforded with conservation easements over these open space parcels. The RCO code mandates that these open space parcels must be deeded to a home owner's association, a certified land trust organization or a government agency.



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Criteria for Evaluation of Rezoning Request

Criteria Point	Comment
<p>Whether the zoning proposal will permit a use that is suitable in view of the zoning and development of adjacent and nearby property.</p>	<p>The request is consistent with surrounding zoning and use patterns.</p>
<p>Whether the zoning proposal will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property.</p>	<p>The request would not adversely affect the nearby neighborhood or properties.</p>
<p>Whether the zoning proposal is compatible with the purpose and intent of the GMP.</p>	<p>The request is consistent with future land use policy of medium-density residential.</p>
<p>Whether there are substantial reasons why the property cannot or should not be used as currently zoned.</p>	<p>The property can be used as it is currently zoned.</p>
<p>Whether the proposal could cause excessive or burdensome use of public facilities or services.</p>	<p>The request should not cause excessive burdens on the existing infrastructure.</p>
<p>Proposal is supported by new or changing conditions not anticipated by the GMP or reflected in existing zoning on the property or surrounding properties.</p>	<p>There are no new or changing conditions.</p>
<p>Proposal reflects a reasonable balance between the promotion of Health, Safety, and Welfare against the right to unrestricted use of property.</p>	<p>This request meets this balance test.</p>