



# REZONING

January 20, 2005

FILE: RZ 05-01-02

R-3 to C-2

<b>Property Information</b>	
<b>Tax ID</b>	Tax Map 072H Parcel 091
<b>Location/address</b>	<b>Intersection of Washington Road and Fieldstone Way, north quadrant</b>
<b>Parcel Size</b>	2.8 acres
<b>Current Zoning</b>	R-3 (single-family residential)
<b>Existing Land Use</b>	Undeveloped
<b>Proposed Land Use</b>	Commercial
<b>Request</b>	C-2 (general commercial)
<b>Commission District</b>	District 1 (Brown)
<b>Recommendation</b>	Approve

## Summary and Recommendation

Vernon Smith is requesting rezoning of the 2.8 acre parcel from R-3 to C-2 on behalf of the property owner. The property is adjacent to another parcel already zoned C-2 that is at the intersection of Fieldstone Way and Washington Road. The parcel's only access is its 91 feet of frontage along Fieldstone Way.

Staff is recommending approval of this rezoning request so long as the parcel is combined by plat with the adjoining C-2 parcel at the intersection. Staff believes the property line that currently divides the two pieces of property is drawn in a manner that greatly reduces the utility of either parcel. The usefulness of the parcel in question is further encumbered by considerable floodplain crossing the property.

To the north of the property are several lots within Chimney Hill Subdivision. The parcel in question is separated from the subdivision by a rather significant stream course and floodplain area. While the floodplain reduces the utility of the parcel for any sort of development, commercial or otherwise, it does increase the ability to protect the adjoining subdivision lots by maintaining an untouched natural buffer between the two uses. Staff would further recommend that the floodplain area on the rear of the parcel should be left in its natural state.

The property currently is zoned R-3 for single family residential purposes. Staff does not believe the property is situated such that it would be used for single family purposes, given the property's close proximity to the parcel already zoned C-2, given the irregular property line between the two parcels, and given the amount of the parcel (over 50 percent) that is within floodplain area. Staff believes combining the two parcels into one for development purposes would greatly improve the ability to effectively use the corner property for commercial purposes, and at the same time would avoid encroachment into wetlands and floodplains that could protect the adjoining residential areas.



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Land uses on the other quadrants of the intersection are the Wal-Mart property zoned C-2, a strip commercial center currently under construction within PUD zoning, and a pool and spa commercial use within PUD zoning.

The property is within the Evans Town Center Overlay district and would have to conform to the design requirements of the overlay district.

This rezoning is not predicated on a specific site plan as a PUD rezoning would be. However, the petitioner has indicated the concept of development that likely would occur on the property if the rezoning were granted. Commercial development would take place on the two parcels after consolidation. A commercial building would likely be more than 150 feet from the nearest residential property line and land disturbance for parking would be at least 100 feet from the property line. Thus, development likely would leave at least a 100 foot wide undisturbed buffer along the northern property line adjacent to Chimney Hill Subdivision.

Access would be requested from both Washington Road and Fieldstone Way. Staff would suggest that the Fieldstone Way access should be located with proper separation from the Washington Road intersection and well outside of the view of the residential lots within Chimney Hill subdivision. Staff would suggest that the landscaping and buffering along Fieldstone Way should be upgraded to create a year around opaque natural buffer from the side street.

Likely there will be some concern or opposition expressed from the adjoining residential area. If there were not C-2 zoning on part of this quadrant of the intersection, staff would support the position of introducing no additional commercial zoning along Washington Road in this immediate vicinity. However the existing C-2 zoning establishes a strong case for commercial development in this immediate area, as does commercial development in the other three quadrants. Therefore, staff approaches this request from the point of view of establishing a better footprint for commercial development by "squaring up" the most developable, portion of the site that would be most visible to the arterial and farthest removed from the adjoining residential development.

## Interdepartmental Review

**Water and Sewer:** A water line is available along the east side of Fieldstone Way. Sanitary sewer service is available along the drainage basin on the north side of the property and along the west side of the property running up to Washington Road. The project should not affect capacity of existing water infrastructure in the area.

**Construction and Maintenance:** Plans are underway for widening Washington Road including a raised median. Access to Washington Road must be reviewed by the County Engineering Department and the Georgia Department of Transportation. Improvement to Fieldstone Way may be required if access is sought from this county road; county engineer's approval for access to Fieldstone Way will be required.

**Health Department:** County water and sewer are available.



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**Sheriff's Office:** As the project develops and construction begins, additional patrols will be needed for increased vehicular traffic and crime prevention. A deceleration lane into the project is recommended.

**Greenspace Program:** The property is adjacent to other properties recently acquired for greenspace purposes. Donation of additional land along the wetlands on the north side of the property would provide for a walking trail and public access to the greenspace tract to the west. The owner of the property has offered to donate land to create this walking trail.

**Engineering:** Property is in the Betty's Branch drainage basin. Post-development rates shall be at or below pre-development rates. On-site detention is required. Site plans must be submitted to and approved by the County Engineer

**Planning:** The property is within the Evans Town Center overlay district and must meet the design criteria of that overlay district. Additional screening may be required adjacent to Chimney Hill subdivision and Fieldstone Way. Trees that remain on the portion of the property that may be donated for open space may be counted toward the caliper inches required for the site.

## Growth Management Plan

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The 2000 Columbia County Growth Management Plan designates the property for medium density residential use. This designation is more reflective of the existing zoning than the likely future development of the property.

## Zoning and Development Regulations

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The surrounding area is zoned R-2, R-3, C-2 and PUD. The request for C-2 is consistent with the adjacent zoning pattern, particularly since C-2 zoning would "square up" the site for better site plan design.

The site is within the Evans Town Center overlay district and must conform to the buffering and design regulations of that district. The required planted and structural buffers required by the zoning ordinance (section 90-139) must be installed on the north side adjoining Chimney Hill subdivision. Additional screening along Fieldstone Way may be required.



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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 area in question already is an area of transition from residential to arterial commercial zoning. The rezoning would move that transition point and would improve the interface of the two land uses.</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. Commercial development already is allowed on an adjacent C-2 property, and this rezoning likely will improve the design of commercial development so that it can be more compatible with adjoining residential land uses</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 commercial use.</p>
<p>Whether there are substantial reasons why the property cannot or should not be used as currently zoned.</p>	<p>The property cannot be used effectively as it is currently zoned. Its potential use depends upon its being combined with the adjoining property which is currently zoned C-2.</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>