



REZONING

March 3, 2005

FILE: RZ 05-03-01

R-A to S-1 for a Radio Station
and Outdoor Storage

Property Information	
Tax ID	Tax Map 039 Parcel 048B
Location/address	2278 Wortham Lane
Parcel Size	7.78 acres
Current Zoning	R-A (residential agriculture)
Existing Land Use	Single family residential and radio station
Future Land Use	Rural Residential
Request	S-1 (special district for a radio station and outdoor storage)
Commission District	District 4 (Anderson)
Recommendation	

Summary and Recommendation

Mr. Baronowski and Augusta Radio Fellowship request the rezoning of 7.78 acres located at 2278 Wortham Lane, from R-A to S-1 for a radio station and outdoor storage of cell tower equipment.

The property currently is used as a single family residence, radio station and outdoor storage. There is no record of county action approving the radio and storage operations at this location, and as the property is currently zoned the use of the property for the radio and storage activities is not permitted. Building permits were issued for a large barn in April of 2000 prior to property ownership by Mr. Baronowski. In October of 2004, another permit was granted for this property listed under the ownership of Augusta Radio Fellowship, but as an addition to a single-family home. The applicant is requesting to expand the current structures; in order to do so the property must be brought into zoning compliance. Staff is of the opinion that the only zoning district that can fit into this area and can accommodate the businesses currently being operated is the S-1 zoning district.

The applicant intends to continue operating two businesses from the property - Augusta Radio Fellowship and Georgia Carolina Tower Company. The Radio Station currently operates in 1,080 square feet of building space and is seeking to expand to 2,520 square feet. The applicant's narrative statement is attached. As you can see from that statement the applicant states that permission was given previously by the county for the radio station to operate at this location. Staff's investigation indicates permits were granted in the past; however, those permits did not specify that the buildings being constructed were for a radio station or a business of any kind.

The station currently employs 4 full-time workers. From conversations with the petitioner staff understood that the building expansions were being sought to allow the staff to grow to 6 employees.



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The petitioner does not mention in the narrative statement any intent to increase the staff levels in the foreseeable future. No live broadcasts are aired from this location.

The Georgia Carolina Tower Company operates about 40 towers in the area, none of which are located in Columbia County. The outdoor storage requested is to accommodate spare dishes, light-bulbs, cable and other supplies and materials for repair of existing towers. When a request for repair is made, contract workers pick up needed materials stored on the property. The applicant is not asking to build a tower on this property.

This property gains its access through Grimaud Place Subdivision and through an easement crossing the neighboring property. Past the subdivision this drive is gravel and is currently used by the property owner, the applicant's property, and two other pieces of property. The applicant's property also has access from Old Louisville Road, but this drive is not passable for most trucks bound for the radio station and storage facility. The applicant is requesting to continue using the gravel drive.

Although typical commercial zones require paved parking and prohibit outdoor storage except with a conditional use, the S-1 zone allows for some flexibility with these requirements. Given the rural location of the property and its proximity to the Heggie's Rock Preserve, staff is not recommending that parking be paved. However, engineering staff requests that the applicant prove that no net increase in stormwater runoff is produced to eliminate the need for on-site detention.

Interdepartmental Review

Water and Sewer: No county sewer available.

Construction and Maintenance: Access must be approved by the Engineering Department.

Health Department: A well and septic system are acceptable for the proposed use. Expansion may not encroach on the existing septic system.

Greenspace Program: This property is located in the Floodplain Greenway targeted areas. This property is 1.75 miles south of the Heggie's Rock Preserve. Area within the FEMA Floodplain should be protected, perhaps placed in a conservation easement.

Sheriff: No Comments.

Engineering: Portions of this property may lie within the 100-year flood plain. All "A" zone property must be studied by an appropriate methodology to determine a Base Floor Elevation. A site plan must be submitted to and approved by the County Engineer. All proposed improvements must conform to current county standards. Storm water detention will be required unless site improvements result in no net increase in runoff. If the property contains wetlands, a Jurisdictional Determination must be submitted to and approved by the United States Army Corp of Engineers. If site improvements disturb more than one acre, the proper National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit and associated fees must be submitted to the Georgia Environmental Protection Department and Columbia County 14 days prior to land disturbance.



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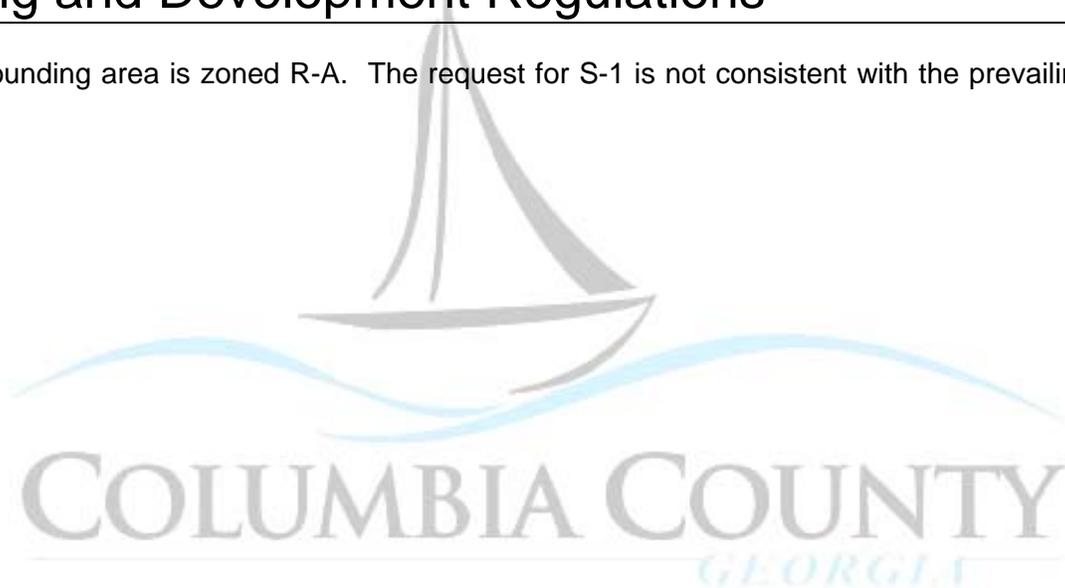
Planning: Should the planning commission decide to legitimate the commercial operations already in place through approval of the S-1 zoning, conditions may be placed on the S-1 zoning to limit the size of improvements for the commercial uses and the number of employees to be housed within these improvements.

Growth Management Plan

The 2000 Columbia County Growth Management Plan designates the property for rural residential use. The request is not consistent with the future land use policy.

Zoning and Development Regulations

The surrounding area is zoned R-A. The request for S-1 is not consistent with the prevailing zoning pattern.





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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 not 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 could 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 not consistent with future land use policy of rural residential use.</p>
<p>Whether there are substantial reasons why the property cannot or should not be used as currently zoned.</p>	<p>The property could 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>Approval of the S-1 zoning would legitimate the business currently operating at this location, and could place conditions on size and operating procedures.</p>