



REZONING

March 17, 2005

FILE: RZ 05-03-04

R-2 to P-1

Property Information	
Tax ID	Tax Map 072A Parcel 018
Location/address	4419 Hereford Farm Road
Parcel Size	0.5 acre
Current Zoning	R-2 (single-family residential)
Existing Land Use	Single-family home site
Future Land Use	Medium Density Residential
Request	P-1 (professional district)
Commission District	District 3 (Ford)
Recommendation	Disapproval

Summary and Recommendation

Mr. and Mrs. Vaught request the rezoning of 0.5 acre located at 4419 Hereford Farm Road, from R-2 (single-family residential) to P-1 (professional district). Adjacent properties are zoned R-2 and PUD for an office development and assisted living facility.

Mr. Vaught's insurance office is currently located on Washington Road across from the Publix shopping center. The Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT) is in the process of buying Right of Way for the re-alignment of Riverwatch Parkway, which will eventually connect to Towne Centre Drive and Hereford Farm Road. Mr. Vaught's current office will be acquired and destroyed during the Riverwatch Parkway project. In order to minimize the disruption the DOT project will have on his business, he is requesting the rezoning of this property to move his office to this location and far enough in advance to re-establish his customer base.

The 2000 Columbia County Growth Management Plan (GMP) designates the property for medium density residential use. The request for professional office is not consistent with the adopted Future Land Use map. The current Growth Management Plan is under review by a consultant with the guidance of a citizen steering committee. The new plan will include an updated Future Land Use map that will reflect recent development trends. Although much of the existing future land use map may change, there is no reliable way to predict if the land use policy for this area will change to a designation supporting office zoning. While staff believes that the request may have some logical basis, it is premature to speculate whether this property should be office. The rezoning of this property to office use could have a preemptive effect on future land use in the area.

All rezoning requests are required to consider six criteria including whether the proposal is supported by new or changing conditions not anticipated by the GMP or reflected in existing zoning on the property or surrounding properties. Such unanticipated conditions include the re-alignment of



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Riverwatch Parkway with Hereford Farm Road. This connection could result in higher traffic counts on Hereford Farm Road, thereby resulting in an increase in development demand along this corridor. Another unanticipated condition was the rezoning of the property across Hereford Farm Road from R-2 to PUD for a large office park development. That property had a future land use of medium density residential as well.

Staff recommends disapproval of this request.

Interdepartmental Review

Water and Sewer: County water is available on a 14" line on the east side of Lawrence Drive. County sewer is available on an 8" line on the center line of Lawrence Drive. This project will not affect the capacity of existing infrastructure. Plans must be approved by the Columbia County Water & Sewer Department.

Construction and Maintenance: No comment

Health Department: Property has access to County water and sewer.

Greenspace Program: This property is not located in County targeted areas.

Sheriff: There have been traffic accidents in the area in the past 12 months. Vehicular traffic will increase and additional patrols will be needed for traffic enforcement and crime prevention. A deceleration lane into the project is recommended.

Engineering: The property is located in the Betty's Branch drainage basin. Post-development discharge must be less than pre-development conditions through the 50-year storm. On-site detention is required. A site plan must be approved by the County Engineer. If the property contains wetlands, a Jurisdictional Determination must be 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. A deceleration lane, dimensioned for the 45 mph speed limit, will be required unless a formal waiver is requested. A waiver will be granted only if documentation is provided showing less than 50 vehicles per day enter the business or the cost of the lane is greater than 20% of the total project cost.

Planning: A side buffer of 10 feet rather than 5 feet against the neighbor on Lawrence Drive should be provided. Parking should be located along Hereford Farm road, and all parking should have a 30" continuous evergreen hedge to screen the parked cars from the road. The owner should plan the parking arrangement having entrances on both Hereford Farm Road and Lawrence Drive. Long range future development along Hereford Farm Road may eventually warrant a traffic signal at Lawrence Drive across from the future office development.

Growth Management Plan

The 2000 Columbia County Growth Management Plan designates the property for medium density residential use. The request is not consistent with the adopted Future Land Use map. The current Growth Management Plan is under review by a consultant with the guidance of a citizen steering committee. The new plan will include an updated Future Land Use map that will reflect recent development trends. Although much of the existing future land use map may change, there is no



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reliable way to predict how much it will change and where land uses will be located until the updated plan has been adopted. The consultant is under contract to have the updated plan complete by October, at which time it will be adopted by the Board of Commissioners and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

Zoning and Development Regulations

The surrounding area is zoned R-2 and PUD for an office park development. The request for P-1 is consistent with the County policy of allowing the entrances of established neighborhoods to be zoned for office and professional use.

Should the Planning Commission recommend the rezoning to P-1, staff believes that parking should be provided in the front only. Staff recommends a 30" continuous evergreen hedge along all parking frontage to visually screen parked cars. An enhanced side buffer of 10 feet against residential neighbors on Lawrence Drive would provide additional screening.

The office development across Hereford Farm Road will have the main drive entering directly across from Lawrence Drive. Long Range future developments along Hereford Farm, as well as the eventual re-alignment of Riverwatch Parkway with Towne Centre Drive and Hereford Farm Road, may eventually warrant a traffic signal at Lawrence Drive. The owner of this property should plan the parking arrangement to allow for driveway cuts on both Hereford Farm Road and Lawrence Drive. The County engineer requires that a formal deceleration lane waiver be supplied if the owner does not wish to install a deceleration lane. However, the sheriff's department has requested a deceleration lane as well. Should a deceleration lane be warranted, it may best serve vehicles if it is provided onto Lawrence Drive.

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Criteria for Evaluation of Rezoning Request

Criteria Points	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 zoning across Hereford Farm Road but not with zoning on the same side of the road as the property.</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 use of nearby 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 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 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>Recent rezoning across the street to a large office development has added similar development pressures along Hereford Farm Road.</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>