

Anael Dominguez (Administration)

From: Jennifer Rivera (Administration)
Sent: Friday, January 16, 2026 3:31 PM
To: Sheila Humberstone
Cc: Katie G. Ahmed (Planning); Kaitlyn Elliott (Planning); Anael Dominguez (Administration)
Subject: RE: (A) 5557 & 5769 Conner road Special Use and (B) 5773 & 5769 Conner Road Variance to Section 7.7.3 Opposition to Rezoning/ Variance/ Request for Flowery Branch Winery into Agri-Event Venue

Your public comment was received and will be forwarded to the Board of Commissioners for their review.

Thank you.

Jennifer Rivera
Board of Commissioners Clerk
Hall County Government
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jrivera@hallcounty.org
www.hallcounty.org



From: Sheila Humberstone <sheilaghumberstone@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 16, 2026 12:35 PM
To: Jennifer Rivera (Administration) <jrivera@hallcounty.org>
Subject: (A) 5557 & 5769 Conner road Special Use and (B) 5773 & 5769 Conner Road Variance to Section 7.7.3 Opposition to Rezoning/ Variance/ Request for Flowery Branch Winery into Agri-Event Venue

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Sheila Humberstone
5916 Stuart Drive
Flowery Branch, GA 30542

January 16, 2025

Hall County Board of Commissioners
P.O. Drawer 1435
Gainesville, GA 30503

Subject: (A) 5557 & 5769 Conner road Special Use and (B) 5773 & 5769 Conner Road Variance to Section 7.7.3

Opposition to Rezoning/ Variance/ Request for Flowery Branch Winery into Agri-Event Venue

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing as a resident of Hall County who lives on Stuart Drive which connects to Conner Road to express my fervent concern and opposition to the proposed application of the Flowery Branch Winery property to allow it to operate as an agri-entertainment space. While I value local business development and agriculture-based entrepreneurship, this rezoning would negatively affect my neighborhood's character, safety, and quality of life.

I've owned my cottage since Labor Day weekend in 2011. While it only recently became my full time house, it has been my sanctuary since acquiring it. As opposed to Atlanta, I love the peace and quiet and governance, even if it means that my commute to downtown Atlanta is intense. I'm desperately afraid that the Flowery Branch Winery's proposal, if approved, will destroy all that I've come to love about my Hall County home.

The proposed permit and variance raises multiple issues, including significantly increased traffic and danger on an exceedingly narrow and already hazardous road. To be clear, the road granting access to the Applicant's property is too narrow now. Two cars have difficulty passing each other under current conditions. In fact, two full size cars cannot pass each other going in opposite directions without one car pulling into the rough. Notably, there are many areas of the road with ditches for shoulders and the shoulder is non-existent. For those of us that live here, we understand the danger of the road and many of us take the precautions accordingly. Visitors, however, may not be familiar with the conditions and are generally not as cautious as those of us who live nearby. An application that purports to add as many as 100 trips for an event is wildly dangerous for all of us and is irresponsible. Before you consider this application, I would urge you to not only drive the full length of Conner Road but to walk it as I do. Ask yourself if you would feel comfortable walking with your children or grandchildren. Only then will you truly understand the weight of the proposal before you.

Further, there is a personal care home next to the winery, and emergency vehicles are often seen going to and from that property. How would event related traffic impact that nursing center's ability to care for its vulnerable residents in the event of an emergency? Allowing numerous events on the Applicant's property will only exacerbate this problem and create an even more unsafe environment.

Finally, despite not being appropriately zoned to do so, and having full awareness of the prohibition to do so, the Applicant has hosted several events on-site in the past, including large festivals. These cars were parked in an unsafe manner and further impeded residents' ability to safely reach their homes. Granting the special use permit will only increase the hazards already faced by area residents.

The Board has ample grounds to deny the project for these reasons alone. It is unclear if the road's width currently meets standard safety requirements imposed by the International Fire Code as adopted by Hall County. At the very least, if the Applicant seeks to increase motor vehicle traffic along the existing, narrow, windy and hilly Conner Road, the Applicant should be required to widen and pave it—at the Applicant's cost.

Beyond these objective safety risks attached to a special use permit, the noise pollution from events and gatherings already occurring will surely worsen. We understand that the Applicant is not allowed to use amplified sound outdoors now, but again, that has not been our experience. I fear that granting a special use condition will remove any restrictions on the use of speakers on the property, and the surrounding neighbors like us will face decreased property values and a decreased quality of life.

Equally concerning is the change in land use that this permit and variance would enable. An event venue is fundamentally incompatible with the surrounding residential and rural environment. Granting these exceptions would set a troubling precedent that undermines existing zoning protections designed to preserve the tranquility and safety of our neighborhood.

I respectfully urge the Board to protect the interests of residents like me by denying the special use permit and variance request for the Flowery Branch Winery. Our community deserves thoughtful, responsible development that aligns with the area's zoning, safety, and public welfare standards.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued service to the residents of Hall County.

Sincerely,
Sheila



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