

Anael Dominguez (Administration)

From: Jennifer Rivera (Administration)
Sent: Friday, January 16, 2026 12:25 PM
To: sherrysmallwood
Cc: Katie G. Ahmed (Planning); Kaitlyn Elliott (Planning); Anael Dominguez (Administration)
Subject: RE: 5773 & 5769 Conner Road | Special Use, Opposition to Rezoning 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
Tel: 770-297-2684
jrivera@hallcounty.org
www.hallcounty.org



From: sherrysmallwood [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 15, 2026 8:35 PM
To: Jennifer Rivera (Administration) <jrivera@hallcounty.org>
Subject: 5773 & 5769 Conner Road | Special Use, Opposition to Rezoning Request for Flowery Branch Winery into Agri-Event Venue

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Hi Jennifer, I'd like to submit this letter as a public comment for the upcoming Hall County Board of Commissioners meeting regarding our opposition of the subject rezoning request. If you have any questions, or need additional information, please feel free to contact me. Thank you in advance!

Rodney and Sherry Smallwood
5858 Conner Road
Flowery Branch, GA 30542

[REDACTED] January 15, 2026

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

Dear Commissioners,

We are writing as lifelong residents of Hall County who live at 5858 Conner Road in Flowery Branch to express our concern and opposition to the proposed application of the Flowery Branch Winery property to allow it to operate as an agri-event space.

We value local business development, agriculture-based entrepreneurship, and property ownership rights. However, we have significant concerns with the Applicant expanding his property usage from a winery with a tasting room to an events venue.

If approved, this rezoning would negatively affect our neighborhood's safety and quality of life because it will bring increased traffic, noise, and late-night activity to an area that should be peaceful and residential. Therefore, we respectfully ask you to consider the following in making a decision on the Applicant's request:

- It is our understanding that a similar request by the Applicant was considered by the Hall County Planning Commission in March 2017, and the Commission recommended denying approval of the request. The concerns that were raised at that time in opposition to the Applicant's request still exist - specifically regarding increased traffic on an already hazardous and dangerous road.
- Conner Road was not designed to handle heavy volumes of event traffic, raising safety concerns for pedestrians and local drivers. We urge you to both drive and walk the length of Conner Road to experience for yourselves the safety concerns that residents and local drivers experience everyday. Frequent local drivers currently include residents of Conner Road, Stuart Drive, and Roselight Lane; emergency vehicles as well as visitors to a senior care center that is located on Conner Road; service vehicles such as landscapers and delivery vehicles; school buses; and Hall County Government vehicles that travel back and forth throughout the day to a county water facility that is located on Conner Road.
- Conner Road is a very narrow and dangerous road with multiple blind hills and curves. We suspect that the road's width currently does not meet standard safety requirements. Two cars have difficulty passing each other, usually requiring them both to need to drive partially into the grass on each side of the road and pretty much have to come to a slow yield to let the other one drive by - especially if either or both of them are a large vehicle such as a SUV or truck. It is not uncommon for vehicles to be driven in the middle of the road since the road is so narrow and the edges of both sides of the road have dips, uneven surfaces, and crumbling edges. Several serious accidents have barely been avoided because of people driving in the middle of the road and then meeting another vehicle at the top of a blind hill or inside of a blind curve, and sometimes even parked vehicles that are partially on the side of the road and partially within the road since there is not a shoulder.
- Allowing numerous events on the Applicant's property will only exacerbate these problems and create an even more unsafe environment because of the additional

vehicles that will be on Conner Road. Since the winery has opened, we have noticed an increase of vehicles on all of Conner Road beyond the part that goes to and from the winery, as well as the attached streets of Stuart Drive and Roselight Lane, due to the winery patrons either missing the turn for the winery, turning the wrong way as they leave the winery, or just being curious and want to check out what else is on this country road. The road is currently very dangerous to drivers and especially pedestrians; however, additional traffic from an events venue will significantly increase the danger.

- We are very concerned that if this rezoning is approved, it could set a problematic precedent for other residents in our neighborhood to have their property rezoned for other non-agricultural commercial uses and the road cannot safely accommodate additional traffic flow.
- There are already dedicated event venues in Hall County better suited and zoned for such uses for which the Applicant is requesting. Expanding the number of commercial event spaces in residential and agricultural areas is unnecessary and inconsistent with responsible land-use planning.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Commission to protect the interests of residents by denying the rezoning special use permit and variance request for the Flowery Branch Winery. Please consider the lasting impacts on nearby residents, the environment, and community safety before making a decision that would permanently change the nature of this area.

We will likely not be able to attend or speak at the Hall County Board of Commissioner's Meeting in which this request is being discussed. Therefore, we authorize our neighbor Sheila Humberstone to speak on our behalf.

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

Sincerely,

Rodney and Sherry Smallwood