

**HALL COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
RECOMMENDATION REPORT**

Applicant Rabun Gap Holdings

Request Rezone from Planned Commercial Farm District (PCFD) to Planned Residential Development (PRD)

Proposed Use 95 unit subdivision

Size 20.67± acres

Zoning PCFD

Location On the west side of Spout Springs Road approximately 100 feet from its intersection with Lancaster Crossing; a.k.a. 6804 Spout Springs Road; Tax Parcel 15042 000018

Commission District One

Planning Commission Date November 1, 2021

Staff Recommendation..... **Denial**

Planning Commission Recommendation – Denial
Vote: 3-1

Braswell – nay
Bell – aye
Pilcher – aye
Varner – aye
Hunt - absent

Applicant Proposal

The applicant is requesting to rezone a tract measuring approximately 20.67± acres from Planned Commercial Farm District (PCFD) to Planned Residential Development (PRD) for a 95 unit single-family subdivision. Access to the proposed development would be off Spout Springs Road. The concept plan shows an amenity site with clubhouse and pool, community mail kiosk, and a connection to sanitary sewer. Sidewalks line both sides of the streets, and each unit is provided with two (2) on-street parking spaces. The development would also feature walking trails and open spaces for recreation. Homes would be rental units and consist of three different floor plans of various sizes:

Floor Plan	Heated Floor Area	Quantity Within Development
1-bedroom/1 bath	720 square feet	30 homes
2-bedroom/2 bath	1,080 square feet	45 homes

3-bedroom/2 bath	1,200 square feet	20 homes
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The table below provides the applicant's proposed development standards:

Rabun Gap Holdings PRD – Single Family Detached Proposed	
SITE AREA	20.67 ACRES
PROPOSED UNITS	95
PROPOSED DENSITY	4.6 UNITS/ACRE
FRONT SETBACK	15 FT. FROM R/W
SIDE SETBACK	15 FT.
REAR SETBACK	20 FT.
EXTERIOR BUFFER	25 FT.
MINIMUM OPEN SPACE	30% (6.2 ACRES)
SIDEWALKS	5 FT.
AMENITIES	POOL, CLUBHOUSE, WALKING TRAILS
MIN. HEATED FLOOR AREA	720 SQ. FT. (1-BEDROOM)
	1,080 SQ. FT. (2-BEDROOM)
	1,200 SQ. FT. (3-BEDROOM)

The applicant proposes textured fiber cement, horizontal lap siding and smooth fiber cement board-and-batten siding. Windows will be vinyl and double-hung. Architectural shingles will be used on roofs, and fascia, soffits, and trim shall be fiber cement.

The front of each cottage will be landscaped, similarly to the renderings submitted with the application. The community entrance at Spout Springs Road will be landscaped also, and street trees will be planted throughout the development along the sidewalks.

The application states that all signage shall meet the standards of the Official Code of Hall County, including a maximum height of 6 feet above street grade and a maximum sign area of 32 square feet.

Street lighting for the development shall be in accordance with the county code.

The applicant intends to access public water available to the site from the City of Gainesville Water Resources Department, and will construct stormwater detention facilities consistent with the county and state requirements. Sewer is available in the area across Spout Springs Road as well as at the rear of the property, where the developer is working with the adjacent property owner to secure a sewer easement. If necessary, the developer will construct a lift station in order to provide sewer.

A minimum 25 foot transitional buffer will be maintained along the exterior boundaries of the development.

A traffic study prepared by NV5 Engineers and Consultants, Inc. dated August 4, 2021 provides analysis of the following intersections:

1. Spout Springs Road and Union Circle
2. Spout Springs Road and Williams Road
3. Spout Springs Road and SR 347 (Friendship Road)
4. Spout Springs Road and Site Driveway

The study concludes that the subject intersections are satisfactory in the Existing and No-Build conditions, although conditions are expected to worsen in the No-Build scenario due to anticipated growth in the area. The additional projected trips from the residential development do not significantly affect the studied intersections. The report recommends that the proposed site driveway warrants a right-turn deceleration lane from Spouts Springs Road.

History and Existing Land Uses

The subject property measures approximately 20.67± acres and is zoned Planned Commercial Farm District (PCFD). The property is wooded and developed with several small single-family residences constructed in the 1920's and '30's as well as several outbuildings. A stream crosses north to south along the rear of the tract.

The subject property is bordered to the west and south by Lancaster, a 187-lot subdivision which was approved by the Board of Commissioners on October 13, 2016. To the north are several developed and undeveloped Agricultural-Residential-III (AR-III) tracts, as well as the open area of Cambridge, a 130-lot subdivision approved by the Board of Commissioners on February 25, 2016. Both Cambridge and Lancaster are zoned PRD. The property across Spout Springs Road was recently approved for rezoning to a 393-unit mixed use development on September 23, 2021.

A heated floor analysis of the area surrounding the subject property provided the following information:

<i>Property</i>	<i>Heated Area (square feet)</i>	<i>Average Lot Size (acre)</i>
Proposed Development	1,500	
500 foot radius	2,747	1.227
0.5 mile radius	2,123	1.302
1 mile radius	2,354	0.918
2 mile radius	2,412	1.495

Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designation

The subject area falls within the "Residential" future land use designation. Residential areas are characterized by moderate-density residential development and neighborhoods. Street networks are defined by curvilinear streets and green space is largely provided on individual lots but neighborhood open space and/or park amenities may also be provided. Pedestrian connectivity is moderate, where sidewalks may be internal to a neighborhood, but may not currently connect nearby parks and schools.

Future development is intended to be detached, single-family homes at moderate densities, with opportunities for variations in housing size and types through the Planned Development District zoning classification. New development should provide opportunities for open space/greenspace, including shared areas for the benefit of residents and ample tree cover.

The proposed density of the new development is 4.6 units per acre.

The request is inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan, as the recommendation of a maximum of two (2) units per acre is exceeded.

Development Support and Constraints

Hall County Environmental Health

In an email dated October 18, 2021 Emily McGahee states “Public sewer. Any abandoned well shall be properly closed as per Water Well Standards Act. Any abandoned septic tank shall be pumped by a State certified pumper/hauler and crushed/filled.”

Hall County Fire Services

The subject parcel is located approximately 1.6 miles from Hall County Fire Station #14, located at 7065 Dove Point Lane. There is a fire hydrant located in front of the property on Union Church Road.

Hall County Public Works and Utilities

In a memorandum dated October 20, 2021, Srikanth Yamala, Director of Public Works and Utilities, stated the following:

Engineering:

Hall County will not maintain roads or storm in this subdivision.

Traffic:

The provided traffic impact study was reviewed and found to be accurate. Access design and development layout may be affected by phase two of the Spout Springs Road widening project. Applicant should coordinate with Hall County Engineering to determine potential road project impacts to the development. Developer to coordinate with Hall County widening of Spout Springs Road.

Utilities:

Hall County Sewer. Need availability letter/flow calculations.

Hall County Tax Assessors

No comment

Gainesville Water Resources

Public water is available to the site from the City of Gainesville Water Resources Department.

Georgia Department of Transportation

In an email dated October 15, 2021, Parker Niebauer states that “the project will require GDOT coordination since GDOT has an active project near this location.”

Zoning Analysis

- The request is inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

- The proposed density of the development is 4.6 units per acre. The recommended density is two (2) units per acre for property served by public sewer systems within a Planned Residential Development zoning district.
- A PRD allows for more flexibility in the design and development of the property. This provides for a mixture of housing types and encourages maximum use of natural features, through proper site planning measures. The development should conform to the existing character and development pattern of the surrounding area.
 - §17.180.060.B.2.a – *Lot area*. Minimum lot area standards of 8,000 square feet for lots served by sanitary sewer.
 - The request **does not meet** the standards. There is no intention to subdivide the residences into individual lots, as the intention is for this to be a rental community.
 - §17.180.060.B.2.b - *Lot width*. Minimum lot width of 50 feet for detached single-family residences.
 - The request **does not** provide minimum lot area standards.
 - §17.180.060.B.2.c – *Setbacks* The PRD district requires the following standards for detached single-family residences:
 - Minimum front yard setback from the property line of 25 feet
 - The applicant is proposing a 15 foot front yard setback; this **does not meet** the standard.
 - Minimum side yard setback from the property line of 15 feet
 - The applicant is proposing a 10 foot building separation; this **does meet** the standard.
 - Minimum rear yard setback from the property line of 20 feet
 - The applicant is proposing a 20 foot rear yard setback; this **does meet** the standard.
 - §17.180.060.B.5 – *Buffers*: A minimum 50 foot planted buffer shall be established along the perimeter of all property boundaries adjacent to residential and/or non-residential zoning districts to ensure that the planned residential development is appropriately screened.
 - The applicant is proposing a 25 foot landscape buffer along the exterior boundaries; this **does not meet** the standard.
 - §17.180.060.B.6 *Landscape requirements* requires that all requirements §17.280, Tree Protection, shall be met, and in addition, a minimum of 2 trees per lot shall be provided or preserved in the front, side, or rear yard. Trees that are provided or preserved to meet the two trees per lot may not be counted toward the overall development's tree density unit requirements.
 - The applicant is proposing street trees throughout the development; it is **unclear** whether this meets the standard.
 - §17.180.060.B.7.b requires that all PRDs construct sidewalks on both sides of the streets that are a minimum of five feet wide.
 - The applicant is proposing 5 foot sidewalks on both sides of the street; this **does meet** the standard.
 - §17.180.060.B.8 requires that there shall be a minimum of at least thirty percent (30%) of the gross tract area provided in open space.
 - The applicant is proposing a minimum of 30% open space to remain within the development; this **does meet** the standard.

- §17.180.060.B.9.a provides architectural standards for all planned residential developments. Alternatively, detailed architectural design guidelines and standards can be submitted by the applicant to include garage types and placement, elevations of all sides, building materials, etc. All facades of all residences, including single-family, two-family, and/or multi-family, and any non-residential buildings shall be finished with brick, stone, stucco, wood siding, wood shakes, or fiber cement type siding. The front facades shall incorporate changes in building material, texture, and/or color. Vinyl siding on all residential and non-residential buildings shall be prohibited.
 - The applicant has indicated that all façades of homes shall be fiber cement siding; this **does meet** the standard.
- §17.180.060.B.11 relates to the United States Postal Service (USPS) policy that all new subdivisions and new phases of existing subdivisions are required to provide *Cluster mailbox unit (CBU)* for regular mail service delivery. A CBU is a structure or shelter housing multiple mailbox units to serve each residential dwelling of the development for the express purpose of regular mail delivery provided by the USPS.
 - The application includes a mail kiosk within the proposed development; this **does meet** the standard.
- §17.380.050 requires any application proposing the development of 100 or more residential dwelling units to submit a traffic impact study as part of an application.
 - A traffic study was submitted with the application; this **does meet** the standard.
- With the road widening of Spout Springs Road, access design and development layout may be affected. Applicant should coordinate with Hall County Engineering to determine potential road project impacts to the development.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends **denial** of the applicant's request. However, if the board sees fit to approve the request, staff recommends the following conditions:

1. The development shall generally occur as depicted on the site plan and described in the project narrative, modified for compliance with Hall County regulations, including §17.180.060 Planned Residential Development (PRD) standards. Any deviations found within the narrative or site plan are not approved.
2. There shall be no more than 95 total units in the development.
3. All costs associated with any required right-of-way improvements shall be the Developer's responsibility.
4. The development shall be served by public sewer. All costs associated with connecting to sewer shall be the Developer's responsibility.
5. All conditions of zoning shall be made part of any plats created for the property.

Excerpts from January 4, 2022 Planning Commission minutes:

1. **Previously tabled application of Rabun Gap Holdings to rezone from Planned Commercial Farm District (PCFD) to Planned Residential Development (PRD) on a on a 20.67± acre tract located on the west side of Spout Springs Road approximately 100**

feet from its intersection with Lancaster Crossing; a.k.a. 6804 Spout Springs Road; Zoned PCFD. Tax Parcel 15042 000018. Proposed Use: 95 unit single family residential development. Commission District 1.

Motion: *A motion was made by Mr. Bell and seconded by Ms. Pilcher to remove item from table. Vote: 4-0*

Background Information:

The applicant is requesting to rezone a tract measuring approximately 20.67± acres from Planned Commercial Farm District (PCFD) to Planned Residential Development (PRD) for a 95 unit single-family subdivision. Access to the proposed development would be off Spout Springs Road. The concept plan shows an amenity site with clubhouse and pool, community mail kiosk, and a connection to sanitary sewer. Sidewalks line both sides of the streets, and each unit is provided with two (2) on-street parking spaces. The development would also feature walking trails and open spaces for recreation. Homes would be rental units and consist of three different floor plans of various sizes.

Applicant's Presentation:

Beth Garmon, Principal Planner, presented a summary of the request.

Wes Robinson, 200 E. E. Butler Parkway, Gainesville, presented the request. Stated the applicant wishes to use property for rental property. Stated there would be only one owner of the subdivision, which will maintain all of the homes. The units have been reduced from 95 to 75. All parking will now be in front of the individual homes. Drivers will not see the development from Spout Springs Road. Applicant presented an updated site plan and renderings. Stated there is demand for rental properties in Hall County and this subdivision meets this demand. The applicant's preference is to not gate the property, but is flexible if the board sees fit. Stated there would be a mixture of the previously submitted elevations.

Public Forum

There were no comments in favor or opposition.

Planning Commission Comments

Mr. Braswell questioned if the applicant had given any thought about gating the community and if all maintenance would be done by owner. Questioned the elevations previously submitted would be used. Mr. Bell stated that the development seemed like a great product, but out of place. Ms. Pilcher agreed.

Motion: *A motion to deny was made by Mr. Bell and was seconded by Ms. Pilcher. Vote: 3-1*

Braswell – nay

Bell – aye

Pilcher – aye

Varner – aye



Hall County Government

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Memorandum

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INTERIM DIRECTOR
Marty Nix

To: Hall County Planning Commission
From: Beth Garmon, Principal Planner
Date: December 27, 2021
Subject: Rezoning Application of Rabun Gap Holdings

The application of Rabun Gap Holdings was previously tabled by the Planning Commission at the meeting held on December 20, 2021. At the time, the applicant indicated that they were working to address concerns from the commission.

Since that time, the site plan has been updated to reflect the following changes:

- Reduce unit count – 95 unit to 70 units
- Reduce density – 4.6 units/acre to 3.45 units/acre
- Remove cottages from along Spout Springs Road entrance – they will not be visible from the road
- Eliminate street parking and add individual parking (2 spaces) for each cottage
- Added back patio (8' x 8') to each cottage
- Increased percentage of open space – from 30% to 37%
- Increased front yard setback on cottages – from 15' to 20'
- Added 50' planted buffer – to all appropriate boundary lines
- Added stormwater management facility location on site plan
- Cottage C example floor plan includes all setbacks for each unit and dimensions for elements in front of each unit.
- New floor plan allocation: 15 - 1BR/1BTH cottages; 35 - 2BR/2BTH cottages & 20 - 3BR/2BTH cottages (size of floor plans has not changed)

Please find the updated site plan attached.