

**HALL COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
RECOMMENDATION REPORT**

Applicant Ridgeland Land Planning, Inc

Request Rezone from Agricultural Residential-III (AR-III) to Planned Residential Development (PRD)

Proposed Use Single family detached subdivision

Size 50.75± acres

Zoning AR-III

Location On the east side of Union Church Road approximately 166 feet from its intersection with Steeple Chase Lane; a.k.a. 4670 Union Church Road; Zoned AR-III; Tax Parcel 15043 000001.

Commission District One

Planning Commission Date May 2, 2022

Staff Recommendation **Denial**

Planning Commission Recommendation: Approval, with conditions

Vote: 5-0

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 100 total units in the development, equaling a density of 1.97 units per acre.*
3. The following statement regarding the potential impacts of agricultural operations in the area shall be made a part of any plat recorded on the property:
“Owners, occupants, and users of property shown on this plat are hereby informed of the impacts associated with normal farming practices which may take place on adjacent and nearby property including, but not limited to, noise, odors, dust, the operation of machinery of any kind, the storage and disposal of manure, and the application of fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides. Therefore, owners, occupants, and users of the property shown on this plat should be prepared to expect the effects of such practices.”

Applicant Proposal

The applicant is requesting to rezone a 50.75± acre tract from Agricultural-Residential-III (AR-III) to Planned Residential Development (PRD) for a 150 lot single-family subdivision. Access to the proposed development would be two entrances off Union Church Road. The concept plan shows an amenity site as you enter the development on the northern portion of the parcel. The road network is comprised of 3 internal cul-da-sac roads. The site also includes non-programed open space areas, and stormwater detention ponds. Two streams that feed into Deaton Creek begin on the property though there is no flood plain. The property will be served by sanitary sewer from Hall County and public water will be provided by the City of Gainesville. In addition to the narrative, the applicant submitted an entry monument concept which includes both stone and brick features, with the name of the subdivision in the middle.

Ridgeline Land Planning PRD – Single Family Detached Proposed	
SITE AREA	50.75 ACRES
PROPOSED UNITS	150
PROPOSED DENSITY	2.98 UNITS/ACRE
MIN. LOT SIZE	6,250 SQ. FT.
MINIMUM LOT WIDTH	50 FT.
MINIMUM LOT DEPTH	125 FT.
MIN. HEATED FLOOR AREA	2,000 SQ. FT. (1-STORY) 2,200 SQ. FT. (2-STORY)
FRONT SETBACK	20 FT. FROM R/W
SIDE SETBACK	5 FT.
REAR SETBACK	20 FT.
EXTERIOR BUFFER	50 FT.
MINIMUM OPEN SPACE	33.5% (17 ACRES)
AMENITIES	POOL, CABANA, PLAYGROUND, MAIL KIOSK

A traffic study prepared by Marc R. Acampora, PE, LLC and dated February 11, 2022 studied the intersections of Union Church Road at Winder Highway/SR 53, Union Church Road at Union Circle, and Union Church Road at Old Winder Highway/SR 211. In addition to the intersection counts, a 24-hour bi-directional count was collected on Union Church Road along the subject property frontage. All counts were collected on Tuesday, February 1, 2022. Area schools were in session on the day on which the counts were recorded.

The following are the findings and recommendations of this study:

1. The existing analysis reveals overall generally acceptable traffic operations, but one location that operates unacceptably. At Union Church Road at Union Circle, the eastbound stop sign

controlled approach incurs high delays in the a.m. peak. The volumes at this intersection call for the addition of a northbound left turn lane and an eastbound right turn lane or a change in control to a roundabout or a signal. This intersection is a good candidate for a roundabout and a single-lane roundabout would allow the intersection and all approaches to operate at LOS A. The identified lanes or change in control are system improvements that are needed whether or not the proposed subdivision is developed.

2. Traffic volume growth trends in this area have been generally positive and moderate and this is expected to continue into the future. A five year build-out horizon to 2027 was chosen for construction and sales of the homes. Market conditions will dictate this timeline.
3. No-build operations at the study intersections will be comparable to the existing, with the same one failing location. A roundabout at the Union Church Road / Union Circle intersection would allow the intersection and all approaches to operate at LOS A with no-build volumes.
4. The proposed subdivision will generate 108 new trips in the a.m. peak hour, 145 new trips in the p.m. peak hour, and 1,465 new 24-hour weekday trips.
5. The future condition will see operations comparable to the no-build condition. The recommendations identified for the existing and no-build conditions will continue to be appropriate in the future build condition. No offsite mitigation is necessitated by this project.
6. Hall County Code requires a northbound right turn lane and southbound left turn lane on Union Church Road at each project access.
7. It is recommended that one entering and one exiting lane be provided in both accesses. The exiting approaches should be controlled by side street stop sign and accompanying stop bar.
8. The project civil engineer should comply with applicable access design standards including sight distances, turn lane storage and taper lengths, turn radii, roadway widths, and grades.

History and Existing Land Uses

The subject property is 50.75± acre in size and zoned Agricultural-Residential-III (AR-III). The property is undeveloped. The majority of the property is wooded, and two streams are located on the southern portion of the site.

Surrounding properties to the north and south are zoned AR-III and are developed with low-density residential or agricultural uses. To the west across Union Church Road is Steeple Chase Estates, zoned PRD, and to the east is undeveloped agricultural land, zoned AR-III.

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	2,000	0.14
500 foot radius	1,823	2.73
0.5 mile radius	2,087	2.655
1 mile radius	2,322	2.41
2 mile radius	2,025	1.55

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 (2 dwellings per acre), 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 2.98 units per acre.

The request is inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Development Support and Constraints

Hall County Environmental Health

In an email dated April 7, 2022 Emily McGahee states “No Comment. Public sewer.”

Hall County Fire Services

The subject parcel is located approximately 2.2 miles from Hall County Fire Station 12, located at 4890 Winder Highway. There is a fire hydrant located in front of the property along Union Church Road.

Hall County Public Works and Utilities

In a memorandum dated April 14, 2022, Bill Nash, Interim Director of Public Works and Utilities, stated the following:

Engineering:

- The site may require a stormwater management report should the site plan indicate the proposed development meets stormwater thresholds for impervious surfaces and/or disturbed acreage. Show stream buffer and impervious setback from wretched vegetation not centerline of stream.
- Mail kiosk must meet Hall County standards.
- No parking allowed in right-of-way.
- Applicant is required to perform a historic and cultural evaluation before approval.

Traffic:

- Traffic impact study required prior to consideration (County Code 17.380.050 paragraph 4) additional comments/ recommendations may be necessary based on the study.
- Left and right (decel) turn lanes will be required (County Code 16.60.290).
- Recommend any proposed/required secondary access be gated, emergency access only.
- Proposed northern access does not appear to meet spacing requirements with Steeple Chase Lane, location may need to be modified.

Utilities:

All proposed developments requiring sanitary sewer shall be required to produce a preliminary

layout and description of the proposed sanitary sewer provisions in order to connect to the existing Hall County sanitary sewer system. All provisions for sanitary sewer construction must be approved by the Director of Public Works prior to submitting for a land disturbance permit to rezoning.

Hall County Tax Assessors

No comment provided.

Gainesville Water Resources

A letter from the City of Gainesville Water Resources confirms the availability of water service to the property with capacity to serve the 150 proposed lots. The confirmation of water availability is good for one year.

Georgia Department of Transportation

In an email dated April 13, 2022 Parker Niebauer, D1TO Traffic Operations Supervisor, provided the following comment: "Request trip gen, request counts for SR 53 @ Union Church Rd."

Zoning Analysis

- The proposed density of the development is 2.98 units per acre. The recommended density is 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 minimum lot area standards. The applicant is proposing a minimum lot size of 6,250 square feet.
 - §17.180.060.B.2.b - *Lot width*. Minimum lot width of 50 feet for detached single-family residences.
 - The request **meets** the minimum width 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 20 foot front yard setback, which **does not meet** the standard.
 - Minimum side yard setback from the property line of 5 feet
 - The applicant is proposing a 5 foot side setback, which **meets** the standard.
 - Minimum rear yard setback from the property line of 20 feet
 - The applicant is proposing a 20 foot rear yard setback, which **meets** 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 50 foot landscape buffer along the exterior boundaries; this **meets** 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 has include any information related to street trees. It **cannot be determined** if the standard is met.
 - §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 has include any information sidewalks. It **cannot be determined** if the standard is met.
 - §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 33.5% open space to remain within the development; this **meets** 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 not included any information related to the architectural standards for the development. It **cannot be determined** if the standard is met.
 - §17.180.060.B.9.b.i Garage doors shall be oriented towards the street. Garage doors shall be positioned between five and 20 feet behind the front wall plane of the residence, extending no more than 40 percent of the width of the residence.
 - The application does not indicate the orientation of garage doors in relation to the front wall plane of the residence or the percentage the garage would comprise of the front façade width of the residence. It **cannot be determined** if 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 **meets** 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 **meets** the standard.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends **denial** of the request but if the board see fit to recommend approval of the application, staff recommends the following conditions:

4. 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.
5. There shall be no more than 100 total units in the development, equaling a density of 1.97 units per acre.
6. The recommendations found within the traffic study shall be implemented as part of the development at the expense of the developer.

Excerpts from the minutes of the May 2, 2022 meeting

Applicant's Presentation:

David Webb, Principal Planner, presented a summary of the request.

Keith Bulouse, 4705 Hamilton Mill, Buford, presented the request. The applicant stated there is a high demand for housing. The applicant stated that they are willing to abide by conditions.

Public Forum:

Linda Mixon, 4853 Windwalker Drive, Flowery Branch, spoke in opposition. Concerns were congestion, home value, traffic, infrastructure, and environmental impact.

Jennifer Pulliam, 4620 Steeplechase Lane, Flowery Branch, spoke in opposition. Concerns were traffic and congestion.

Shaun Crane, 5018 Union Church Road, Flowery Branch, spoke in opposition. Concerns were site plans.

Planning Commission Comments:

Mr. Braswell questioned what the starting price for the homes will be. The applicant stated it would start at the low \$300's. Mr. Bell questioned if the homes were for rent or for sale. The applicant stated they were for sale. Mr. Braswell questioned if the development would use sewer. The applicant stated they would use sewer. Mr. Varner stated that there has been so much development on Union Church Road that it is too early to see if having over 100 units on the land would work for the area.

Motion: A motion to approve, with conditions was made by Mr. Bell and seconded by Ms. Pilcher. Vote: 5-0

Conditions:

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