

**HALL COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
RECOMMENDATION REPORT**

**Applicant** ..... C. Sam McGee

**Request** ..... Rezone from Agricultural-Residential-III (AR-III) to Light Industrial (I-I)

**Proposed Use** ..... Self-storage warehouse

**Size** ..... 34.28± acres

**Zoning** ..... AR-III

**Location** ..... On the west side of Spout Springs Road approximately 428 feet from its intersection with Litany Court; a.k.a. 7038 Spout Springs Road; Tax Parcel 15042 000016J.

**Commission District** ..... One

**County Commission Date** ..... April 8, 2021

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

**Planning Commission Recommendation – Approval, with conditions**  
**Vote: 4-1 (Ms. Pilcher opposed)**

**Conditions**

√	1. <i>The applicant shall submit renderings of the proposed decorative fencing and architectural materials to the Planning Director for approval prior to the issuance of any building permits.</i>
√	2. <i>The development shall occur as depicted in the site plan and renderings presented during the March 1, 2021 Planning Commission meeting, modified for compliance with current regulations at time of development permit application.</i>

√ **Applicant agrees with conditions.**

## **Applicant Proposal**

The applicant is seeking to rezone a 34.28± acre tract from Agricultural-Residential (AR-III) to Light Industrial (I-I) for a self-storage warehouse facility. The narrative states that the proposed development will feature 24-hour access with office hours from 8am to 5pm. The development will include climate-controlled units, non-climate-controlled units, and recreational vehicle (RV) and boat storage. The RV and boat storage is not specified whether this will be covered or uncovered.

The applicant is proposing the use of security lighting on poles and buildings as well as a free-standing monument sign and a wall sign on the building.

The site plan shows a total of 7 buildings associated with the business: a 17,460 square foot climate-controlled building located closest to Spout Springs Road, two 9,100 square foot dry storage buildings, an 8,050 square foot dry storage building, a 10,000 square foot boat and RV building, and a 7,000 square foot boat and RV Building. At the front of the property closest to Spout Springs Road, there is a proposed 2,000 square foot office building with parking.

The proposed development is contained within 5.56± acres of the subject property.

## **History and Existing Land Uses**

The subject property is zoned Agricultural-Residential-III (AR-III) and is developed with a 2,473 square foot single-family residence according to the Hall County property records. The property consists of three building lots per the submitted recorded plat: a 2.17 acre lot, a 15.60 acre lot and 16.61 acre lot. A plat has been submitted to the Planning Department to reconfigure the existing three lots into a 16.44 acre lot, 12.45 acre lot and 5.56 acre lot for the proposed business.

There are multiple creeks on the property, including Lollis Creek, which runs along the northern boundary. There is also a significant amount of designated flood plain, which limits the area available for development.

The subject property is located within Phase II of the Spout Springs Road road-widening project area. Plans for the project indicate that the property will be impacted and right-of-way will likely be acquired for the road widening. The applicant has been informed of this and has received the preliminary design plans.

The existing zoning of the property is original to the property.

## **Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designation**

The subject property is located within the "Residential" 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.

The subject parcel also falls within the Gateway Corridors Overlay District (GCOD) and is supplemental to the underlying zoning district classification. The GCOD governs non-residential property development standards, including signage.

The rezoning request is not consistent with the Hall County Comprehensive Plan.

### **Development Support and Constraints**

#### Hall County Environmental Health

An email dated January 13, 2021 from Emily McGahee, Inspector with Hall County Environmental Health, provided the following comments: Must meet all Environmental Health commercial septic system permitting requirements. Further determination will be made during the civil plan review process. A detailed business plan must be submitted to Hall County Environmental Health for review. Additional items, including, but not limited to: recorded plat, soil evaluation, and septic system installation/modification may be required after review of business plan.

#### Hall County Fire Services

The property is located approximately 1 mile from Hall County Fire Station #14, located at 7065 Dove Point Lane. The nearest fire hydrant is located in the right-of-way in front of the subject property along Spout Springs Road.

#### Hall County Public Works and Utilities

A memo dated January 19, 2021 from Srikanth Yamala, Director of Hall County Public Works and Utilities, provided the following comments:

##### Engineering

This property is located within the Spout Springs Road Widening Project Area, Phase II. Designated right-of-way must be donated to Hall County prior to any rezoning. This property has a parcel tag; no development will be allowed until the parcel tag is removed. Future flood zones must be shown on plans. The stream buffer must be shown on plans. Included is a drawing of right-of-way is to be donated along with the line of the future flood zone. The site plan submitted does not show the correct buffer zone area.

##### Traffic Engineering

All Hall County commercial driveway standards must be met.

##### Utilities

No comment

#### Hall County Tax Assessors

No comments provided.

### Gainesville Water Resources

According to the Hall County GIS map, public water is available to the property along Spout Springs Road from the city of Gainesville's Department of Water Resources.

### Georgia Department of Transportation

An email dated January 12, 2021 from Jonathan Peevy, P.E., Assistant District Traffic Engineer with the Georgia Department of Transportation, stated that the development will not require GDOT coordination.

In an email dated February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, additional comments were provided by Jason Dykes. He stated because this is not on a state route, it will not require coordination from GDOT; however, the applicant should be aware that they should superimpose the driveway plans on the widening plans to ensure there aren't any conflicts and the right-of-way can be addressed.

### Zoning Analysis

- The proposed use is within the "Residential" land use designation.
  - The proposed use **is not consistent** with the Hall County Comprehensive Plan.
- §17.160. Light Industrial District (I-I) includes wholesaling and warehousing as permitted uses.
  - The proposed use **is consistent** with the Official Code of Hall County.
- §17.260. Area and Setback Requirements state that the setbacks for I-I shall be as follows: 75 ft. from centerline of road or 50 ft. from property line, whichever is greater, 20 ft. from side property lines, and 20 ft. from rear property line.
  - The proposed development as shown on the site plan **is consistent** with the official code of Hall County.
- §17.250. Off-street Parking, Storage and Loading Requirements state that All off-street parking facilities shall be constructed of dust-free materials which will have a surface resistant to erosion, drained so as to prevent damage to abutting properties or public streets and periodically maintained by the owner, and such facilities shall be arranged for convenient access and safety to pedestrians and vehicles, as well as that no parking area shall be used for the sale, repair, dismantling or servicing of any vehicles, equipment, materials or supplies.
  - The proposed parking areas as shown on the site plan **are consistent** with the official code of Hall County.
- The GCOD provides guidelines for non-residential property development and requires:
  - A minimum transitional buffer of 50 feet where an industrial zoning district abuts residential or agricultural use.
    - The proposed narrative states that they **will** meet this GCOD standard though the site plan **does not show** the required buffer.
  - Shrubs shall be planted within ten feet of the foundation of the primary structure along each building facade at the rate of at least 20 shrubs per 100 linear feet of building facade except for sides or rear of building used for loading or service areas.
    - The site plan and narrative **do not** meet this GCOD standard.

- All outdoor storage shall be screened from view from public streets and adjacent property by a permanent opaque enclosure consisting of a minimum eight-foot high solid fence or wall.
  - It is unclear if there will be any outdoor storage, although the site plan specifies the parking areas for RVs and boats to be located at the rear of the development.
- All parking areas shall be paved with asphalt or concrete.
  - The applicant has not expressed any deviation from this standard. This **does** meet the GCOD standard.
- Outdoor lighting shall be provided on all public streets and parking lots.
  - The application states that lighting shall be provided; all lighting shall be non-spill.
- The use of a common palette of building materials should be maintained for all four sides of principal buildings to create a consistent and traditional architectural identity. For large commercial/retail buildings and multifamily buildings, variation in building materials, texture, and depth should be employed to provide design variation.
  - The applicant's narrative **does not** specify the building materials.
- Sign standards within the GCOD state that monument signs may be ground mounted, with one monument sign permitted on each lot.
  - The applicant has not indicated the location or design of the business signage but has stated that they intend to install both a free-standing sign and wall sign.
- GCOD sign standards state that internally illuminated signs, automatic changeable copy signs, and externally mounted neon signs are prohibited.

### **Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends **denial** of the applicant's request.

### **Excerpts from the minutes of the meeting of March 1, 2021**

#### **Applicant's Presentation:**

**Sarah McQuade, Planning Director**, presented a summary of the request.

**Sam McGee, 6969 Fellowship Lane, Flowery Branch**, presented the request. Mr. McGee stated that he had scaled down the amount of land that would be developed as well as agreeing to donate two and a half acres to the road widening project for Spout Springs Road. Mr. McGee stated that these buildings would be double stacked, climate controlled, and 12,000 square feet each. Ending with a total of 72,000 square feet for all 5 buildings. Mr. McGee stated that the proposed RV storage would be two, 17,000 square foot, 3-sided buildings. Mr. McGee showed renderings of the buildings they were using as an example. Mr. McGee also stated that the remainder of the property would become 2 lots, one 12 acres and the other being 16 acres and neither of them would be developed. Mr. McGee stated that he would use all the correct lighting and siding for these buildings. Mr. Braswell asked if this was in Gateway. Ms. McQuade stated that it was. Mr. Hunt asked if the siding would be a masonry product. Mr. McGee stated that it would be a stacked stone siding. Mr. McGee stated that there was a house on the property that would be torn down and showed

pictures of how close it is to neighboring properties. He stated that even in the winter, there was a good buffer and was over 280 feet from where the building would be. Mr. Braswell asked how many buildings there would be total. Mr. McGee stated that there would be six, including an office. Mr. Braswell asked what the plan for fencing and security would be. Mr. McGee stated that the property would be completely fenced with one gate and electronic locks. Mr. Hunt asked in the fence would be inside or outside the buffer. Mr. McGee stated that the fencing would be inside the buffers. Mr. Braswell stated that would like for there to be something other than chain link fencing across the front of the property. Mr. McGee stated that he would be using stone and metal materials for the fencing. Mr. Braswell asked if the elevation of the first building was lower than the road. Mr. McGee stated that he was not completely sure, but the elevation was lower than the road. Mr. Braswell asked if the roof would be metal. Mr. McGee stated that he would use a single slope metal roof. He also stated that they would be using concrete, rather than asphalt. Mr. Bell asked if Gateway Corridor would dictate what Mr. McGee could or could not do. Mr. Braswell stated that it does, however they have some leeway with this particular project developing less than 25% of the property. Ms. Pilcher stated that she had concern would the flood plain and not being sure if this was the best located from the proposed project. Mr. Braswell asked if the size of the pond would be determined during the plan review process. Ms. McQuade stated that it would be. Mr. Hunt asked if the type of fencing would need to be mentioned in a motion. Ms. McQuade stated that he would need to stipulate that in a motion due it not being regulated by Gateway standards.

**Public Forum:**

No one spoke in favor or opposition of the request.

**Planning Commission Comments:**

Mr. Braswell stated that Mr. McGee would need to provide the renderings shown during his presentation in order for them to be provided to the Board of Commissioners.

**Motion:        *Mr. Bell made a motion to recommend approval, with conditions for the request, with a second from Mr. Hunt and the motion passed by a 4-1 vote. (Ms. Pilcher opposed)***

*Conditions:*

- 1. The applicant shall submit renderings of the proposed decorative fencing and architectural materials to the Planning Director for approval prior to the issuance of any building permits.*
- 2. The development shall occur as depicted in the site plan and renderings presented during the March 1, 2021 Planning Commission meeting, modified for compliance with current regulations at time of development permit application.*