

**AUGUSTA-RICHMOND COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

Case Number: SE-23-09

Hearing Date: Monday, December 4, 2023

Applicant: Brian Byler

Property Owner: David A. Duffie

Address of Property: 3805, 3807, and 3819 Wrightsboro Road, Augusta, Georgia 30909

Tax Parcel #: 040-0-110-00-0, 040-0-109-00-0, 039-0-019-00-0

Present Zoning: R-3B (Multiple-family Residential)

Commission District: 3 (Catherine Smith McKnight) **Super District:** 10 (Wayne Guilfoyle)

Fort Eisenhower (Gordon) Notification Required: No

Request	Proposed Use / Activity	Applicable Text
Special Exception to establish a Private Recreational Facility	Baseball/softball practice facility	Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, Section 26-1(i)

Summary of Request:

This request pertains to three properties totaling 10.57 acres, located on the north end of Wrightsboro Road just west of Flowing Wells Road. The applicant is seeking a special exception to permit the establishment of a baseball and softball training facility, which most closely aligns with the classification of “privately owned and operated recreational facility” in the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance. The proposed facility would feature a 15,000 square foot building, two youth fields, a parking area, drainfield, and detention pond.

Comprehensive Plan Consistency:

The subject property is located within the Belair character area. Recommended development patterns for Belair, per the 2023 update to Augusta’s Comprehensive Plan, include the reduction of reliance on automobiles “by using sidewalks [and] bike lanes... to connect residential neighborhoods to activity centers”. The subject property, being accessible via sidewalks and bicycle lanes, aligns with this recommendation.

Special Exception Criteria:

The proposed use, as noted previously, aligns with Section 26-1(i) of the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, which allows for the following to be permitted via special exception:

*“Club (private or public), lodge (nonprofit), golf course, country club, tennis facilities, **privately owned and operated recreational facility**, swimming pool, fishing lake, or similar recreational use subject to the following criteria:”*

These criteria are evaluated thusly:

- (1) The minimum size tract for a golf course or country club shall be fifty (50) acres. *Not applicable.*
- (2) A tract to be developed as a golf course or country club shall have at least one hundred (100) feet of frontage on a public or private road. *Not applicable.*
- (3) Structures except fences and walls shall be set back at least fifty (50) feet from property lines separating the property from contiguous properties zoned or developed for residential use. *The concept plan as presented with the application would satisfy this requirement.*
- (4) Lighting shall be designed so that adjacent properties are not adversely affected. *The letter of intent states that “none of [the lighting for the ballfields] will be facing or intruding upon any residential area as this site is secluded from any residences”.*
- (5) Outdoor activities shall cease at 11:00 P.M. *As the letter notes that the facilities will be used for girls’ fastpitch softball and 8U-12U youth baseball, it is unlikely that any activities will be carried out beyond 11:00pm; however, at the Commission’s discretion this can be reiterated as a condition of the special exception.*
- (6) Lounges, clubhouses, and similar facilities shall be designed and operated for use by members and their guests, or patrons who are using the club or recreational facility. Lounges, clubhouses and similar facilities shall be located at least one hundred (100) feet from contiguous properties zoned or developed for residential use. *Not applicable.*
- (7) *Deleted.*
- (8) A plan illustrating compliance with the above requirements shall be submitted to the Staff of the Augusta Planning and Development Department before the proposal is placed on the agenda. The Planning Commission shall determine that all of the foregoing requirements have been satisfied, and further, that the benefits of the proposed club, privately owned and operated recreational facility, swimming pool, fishing lake, or similar recreational use are greater than any possible depreciating effects and damages to the neighboring properties. *Materials submitted by the applicant satisfy the first part of this criterion. While the Commission is ultimately charged with the balancing test prescribed herein, staff would note that based on the proposed use and concept plan presented with this application, they do not see potential depreciating effects to neighboring properties.*

In addition, Section 26-1 notes that this use, along with other uses listed in subsections (a) through (v), “may be permitted in any Zone where such uses are deemed essential or desirable to the public convenience or welfare and are in harmony with the various elements or objectives of the Master Plan/Planning Document in effect.” Staff is of the view that this use would be desirable, and further that it is in harmony with the Comprehensive Plan, as noted previously.

Section 26-1 further declares that “all applications... shall be accompanied by a preliminary development plan that shows the location of all buildings associated with the proposed use and the number of stories contained in each building. The... plan must also show the location of all curb cuts, driving lanes, parking areas, and the location of all walls, fences and screen plantings that exist or are planned.” The presented concept plan satisfies these requirements.

Findings:

1. Rezoning application Z-22-47 rezoned the property to R-3B (Multiple-family Residential). Prior to the rezoning, 3805, 3807, and most of 3819 Wrightsboro Road were in the A (Agricultural) zone; a portion of 3819 was in the B-2 (General Business) zone. This was to allow for a proposed townhome-style apartment community of 84 units. The Planning Commission made a unanimous recommendation to approve this rezoning at the meeting held on September 7, 2022. Final approval was granted unanimously by the Augusta Commission via consent agenda at their meeting on September 20, 2022.
2. The property appears to have access to municipal water lines, but not to sanitary sewer lines.
3. The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) classifies this segment of Wrightsboro Road as a principal arterial route; nearby Flowing Wells Road is considered a major collector route.
4. Augusta Transit does not directly serve the subject property.
5. According to the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) available on the Augusta-Richmond County GIS Maps, land encompassing just below three acres of 10.57 total acres are within an AE flood zone; this denotes a 100-year floodplain. This portion runs along the northeastern boundary of the property.
6. Per municipal GIS data, a portion of the property in slight excess of one acre is classified as wetlands. This mostly overlaps with the portion of the property within the floodplain.
7. The proposed site improvements do not encroach on either wetlands or floodplain.
8. Site topography slopes from around 374 feet above sea level in the southwest corner, down to 340 feet along the northeastern property line.
9. The property adjoins the following zones: A, R-1E, R-MH, and B-2.
10. At time of writing, staff have not received inquiries pertaining to the application as it was advertised pursuant to the Zoning Procedures Law.

Recommendation: The Planning Commission recommends **Approval** of the special exception, contingent upon the following conditions:

1. The approved special exception shall only permit a use which substantially conforms to the proposed use associated with the application (i.e. a baseball/softball training facility). It shall not be construed as approval for all use categories listed in Section 26-1(i) of the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance. Any substantial change in the proposed use shall require a new special exception request.
2. The applicant acknowledges Section 26-2 of the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, which stipulates the following:
 - a. The use permitted via Special Exception must be initiated within six (6) months of final approval by the Augusta Commission. If it is not initiated, the Special Exception shall no longer be deemed valid, and a new application must be submitted.

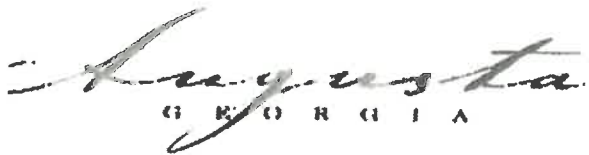
- b. Initiation of a use is established either by the issuance of a valid business license by the Augusta Planning and Development Department, or by other reasonable proof of the establishment of vested rights.
 - c. If the use is initiated within the six-month timeframe but later ceases operations for a length of time exceeding one year, the Special Exception shall no longer be deemed valid.
- 3. Approval of this rezoning request does not constitute approval of the concept site plan submitted with the rezoning application. The proposed development shall obtain site plan approval in compliance with the Site Plan Regulations of Augusta, Georgia prior to construction commencing on the properties.
- 4. The three properties shall be combined as one parcel and recorded in the Clerk of Superior Courts office prior to submittal for site plan approval.
- 5. A wetlands determination shall be performed on the properties. If wetlands are found to exist, any encroachment into the wetlands will need to be permitted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
- 6. The development of the properties shall comply with all development standards and regulations set forth by the City of Augusta-Richmond County, Georgia, as amended, at time of development, including but not limited to the Stormwater Management Manual and the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance.

Note: This staff report includes the information available approximately two weeks prior to the Planning Commission hearing. It represents an evaluation of the facts presented by the applicant, research done by the staff, and consideration of the relevant factors in the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance of Augusta, Georgia. New facts may emerge, and staff reserves the right to make a verbal recommendation at the hearing based on all the information available at that time.

Platinum Sports/Complete Game

3819 Wrightsboro Rd Project

Platinum Sports LLC, DBA Complete Game, is excited to announce our potential expansion project located at 3819(Includes 3805,3807 also) Wrightsboro Rd Augusta GA 30909. Our plan is to construct a 15,000 sqft Metal Building to relocate our current baseball/softball training facility. This will consist of Approx 10,000 sqft of open training space, 2000 sqft of Office/Reception Area, and 3000 sqft of office/warehouse space to be rented to Integrity Medical(A Partner Company). We will also be constructing 2-Turf Fastpitch Softball/Youth Baseball Fields directly adjacent to the building. The fields will not be full sized baseball fields, but will instead have fences that are approx. 220' and be used for Girls Fastpitch Softball as well as 8U-12U Youth Baseball. Our teams will use these on a regular basis for practice and we will also have Tournament style events a couple weekends per month. The estimated daily traffic for this location would be about 25-50 vehicles. The Weekend traffic during events would be estimated to be 50-75 vehicles at a time with vehicles rotating in and out as events are taking place. This would be a gradual rotation with probably not more than a couple cars per minute going in and out of the entrance. We will have lights on these fields, but because they are not full size fields, they will not be as tall as traditional baseball field lighting. Furthermore, none of these lights will be facing or intruding upon any residential area as this site is secluded from any residences. There is currently several other similar sporting facilities within a mile of this location including EDS Sports Facility, Augusta Soccer Park, Wedges and Woods Driving Range, an Elementary School, a Church, several warehouse buildings, and an RV Park. We feel this small complex would fit nicely with all that has already been constructed around it. In addition to what we would be able to do at this facility, Complete Game also currently hosts several other events throughout the year in Richmond County and the surrounding area. We work with the Augusta Sports Council and many local schools with these events and look forward to expanding our relationship and bringing a great experience that will benefit Richmond County and all businesses in the surrounding area.



ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

Hameed Malik, PE, Ph. D., Director
John Ussery, PE, Assistant Director of Traffic

PRELIMINARY TRAFFIC IMPACT WORKSHEET

Address of property: 3819 WRIGHTSBORO RD

Tax Parcel Number: 039-0-019-00-0

Type of Development (Circle One): Commercial or Industrial or Residential or Other

Any new public roadways? (Circle One): Yes or No

Proposed Development Less Than 20 Lots (Circle One): Yes or No; If "Yes", contact Traffic Engineering at 706-821-1850 and ask to speak to the Traffic Operations Manager or Assistant Director prior to completing worksheet.

Existing streets adjacent to property: 1) Wrightsboro Rd 3) _____
2) _____ 4) _____

Volume on each existing street (AADT): 1) 11,100 3) _____
2) _____ 4) _____

Level of Service (LOS) on each street: 1) A 3) _____
2) _____ 4) _____

Land Use Type / Code (ITE Trip Generation): Batting Cages / (433)

Basis for Calculation (sq ft, # units, etc.): Cages

Trips Generated by Proposed Development: 100 TTPD

Adjusted street volumes based on trips generated:

1) 11,200 3) _____
2) _____ 4) _____

Projected Level of Service (LOS) on each street based on trips generated:

1) A 3) _____
2) _____ 4) _____

* If there are more than 4 streets affected by proposed zone change and development, include on separate sheet of paper or use a second form.

** Utilize the website <https://gdottrafficdata.drakewell.com/publicmultinodemap.asp> for current volume data.

***Utilize the website <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policyinformation/pubs/pl18003/chap00.cfm> for LOS calculations/tables.

**** Use current edition of the ITE Trip Generation Manuals.

Official Use Only

Does this Rezoning Application require a full Traffic Impact Study/Analysis (TIS/TIA): Y or (N)

Date of Review: 11-13-23

Signature of Traffic Engineer or Designee: John Ussery

Print Name: John Ussery

Title: Assistant Director




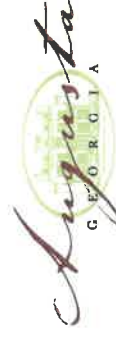
Planning Commission
SE-23-09
December 4, 2023

Multiple addresses
on Wrightsboro Road

Aerial

Legend

 Subject Property



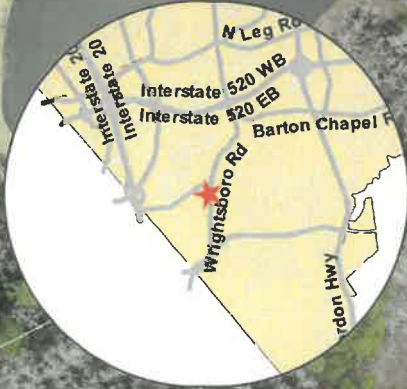
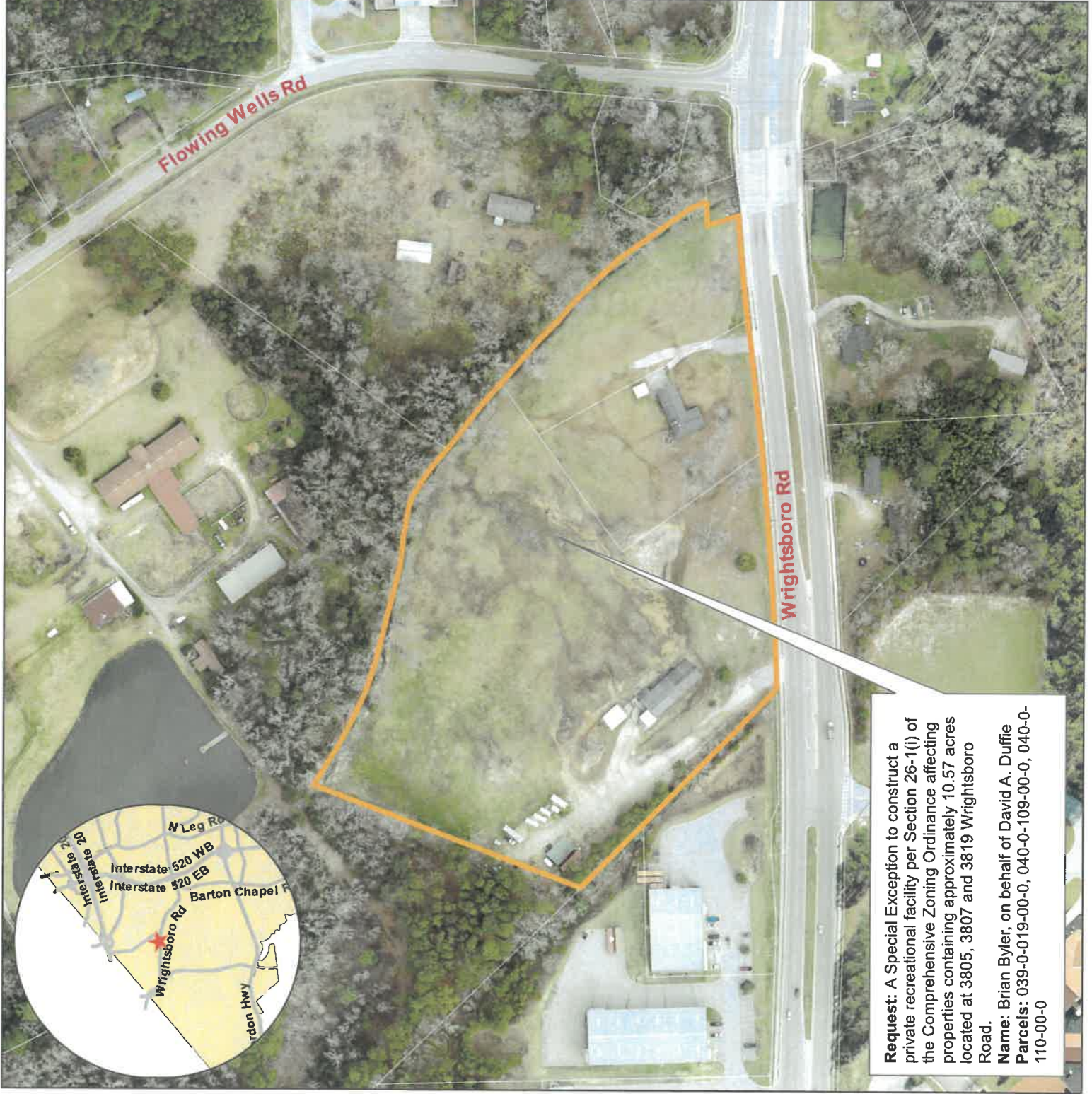
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Augusta, GA Disclaimer

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0 200 Feet




Request: A Special Exception to construct a private recreational facility per Section 26-1(i) of the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance affecting properties containing approximately 10.57 acres located at 3805, 3807 and 3819 Wrightsboro Road.
Name: Brian Byler, on behalf of David A. Duffie
Parcels: 039-0-019-00-0, 040-0-109-00-0, 040-0-110-00-0

Planning Commission
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Multiple addresses
on Wrightsboro Road


Current Zoning

Legend

 Subject Property

Zoning Classification

 A: Agriculture

 B-2: General Business

 R-1E: One Family
Residential

 R-3B: Multiple-Family
Residential

 R-MH: Manufactured Home
Residential



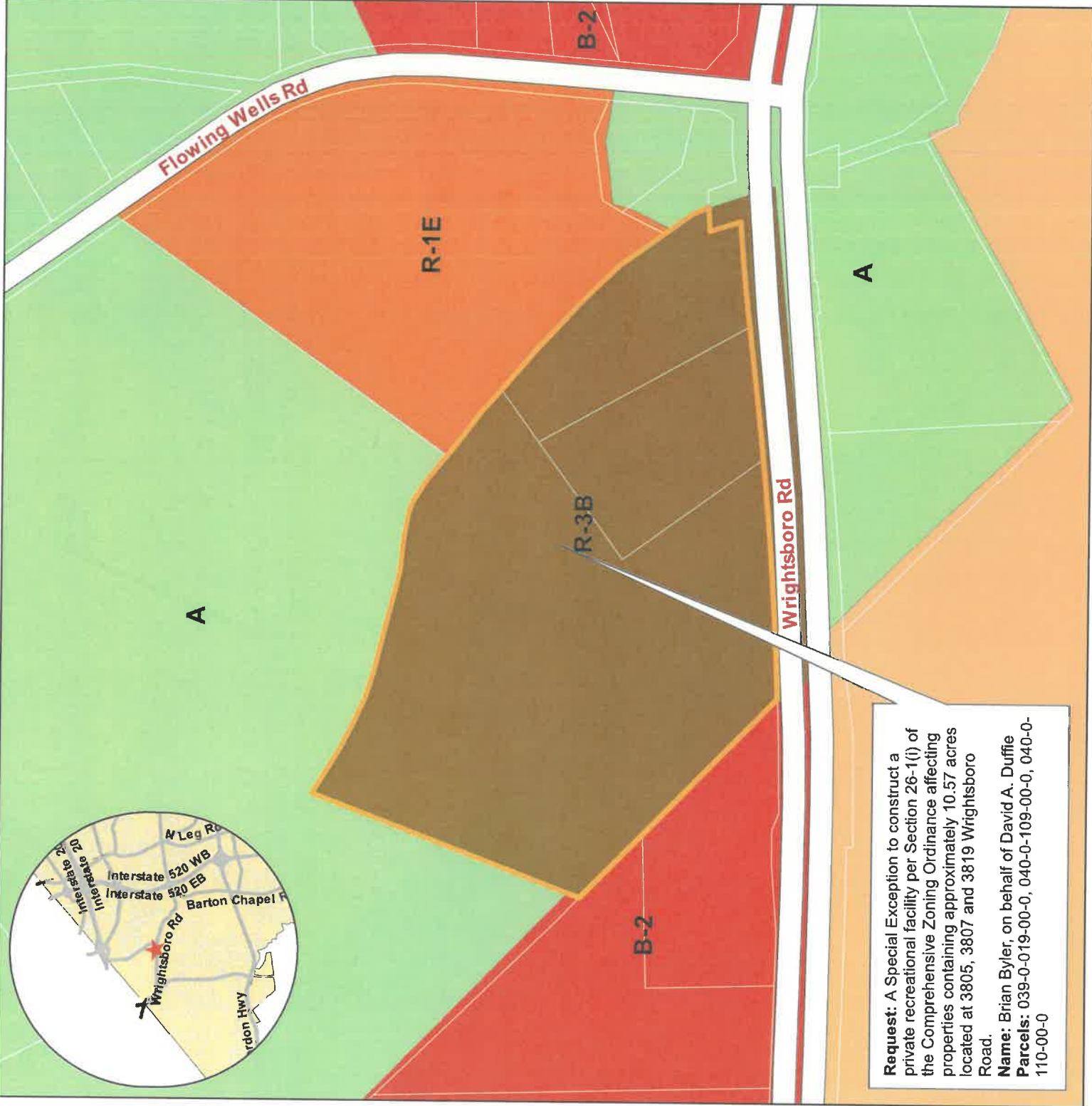
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