

**AUGUSTA-RICHMOND COUNTY, GEORGIA
PLANNING COMMISSION
REZONING STAFF REPORT**

Case Number: Z-23-19

Hearing Date: Monday, May 1, 2023

Prepared By: Lois Schmidt, Planner 1

Applicant: Celina Lofton

Property Owner: Blake Dornfeld & Olivia Golden

Address of Property: 2836 Tobacco Road, Hephzibah GA 30815

Tax Parcel #: 129-0-739-00-0

Present Zoning: A (Agriculture)

Commission District: 4 (A. Mason)

Super District: 9 (F. Scott)

Fort Gordon or Neighboring Jurisdiction Notification Required: N/A

Request	Proposed Use / Activity	Ordinance Section
Rezone A (Agriculture) to B-2 (General Business)	Establish a Group Personal Care Home	Section 22-1

1. Summary of Request:

The subject property is a 2.7-acre tract located at 2836 Tobacco Road that contains a 5,976 sq. ft. residential structure constructed in 1976. The applicant proposes to utilize the property as a staff operated Group Personal Care Home serving 14 residents.

Based on the floor plan submitted by the petitioner the structure contains a total of nine (9) bedrooms and four (4) bathrooms. Each floor contains a living room and kitchen. There is a handicap ramp on the rear of the property and a fenced outdoor area. The size of the rooms meets the required square footage established in the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance.

A preliminary inspection was done by Code Enforcement officials on 4/17/2023 and the home was found to be clean and in excellent condition. The home had the necessary safety features

and passed inspection. A current Fire Dept. inspection will be needed if the petition is approved but there is a hardwired alarm system according to the applicant.

2. Zoning History:

The property received a Special Exception in 1989 (Z-89-63) to establish a Family Personal Care Home per Section 26-1-(h) of the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance which allowed up to 6 residents/clients. Youngs Personal Care Home held a business license for many years, but the property was sold and the personal care home ceased to operate. There is no record of any further zoning approvals to expand the home from the original 6 residents/clients. But it is apparent it was expanded at some time based on the Code Enforcement inspection and applicant statements.

3. Comprehensive Plan Consistency:

According to the 2018 Comprehensive Plan, the property is located within the South Augusta Character Area. South Augusta is characterized by a suburban pattern of residential development. Commercial development is characterized by shopping centers, small strip centers, professional offices and individual commercial establishments arranged in a linear pattern along the major streets and highways and clustered near interstate highway interchanges. Newer light industrial uses tend to be located on arterial and collector roads near the Bobby Jones Expressway.

Findings:

1. The subject property is a 2.7-acre tract located at 2836 Tobacco Road that contains a 5,976 sq. ft. residential structure constructed in 1976.
2. A common driveway serves the subject property and two other properties to the south where it becomes Hoods Lane.
3. The structure contains a total of nine (9) bedrooms and four (4) bathrooms. There is a handicap ramp on the rear of the property and a fenced outdoor area.
4. The applicant is requesting to serve 14 residents/clients in the staff operated home.
5. The property received a Special Exception in 1989 (Z-89-63) to establish a Family Personal Care Home for up to 6 residents/clients. A license was maintained for many years, but the home is currently closed. There is no record of any further zoning approvals to expand the home from the original 6 residents/clients.
6. Code Enforcement Inspection inspected on 4/17/2023 and found the home to be clean and in excellent condition and large enough per square footage requirements to accommodate 14 residents.
7. The surrounding area contains B-2 zoning along Tobacco Road to the north and east consisting of a mix of business uses, townhomes and vacant property. Agriculture and single-family residential zoning and uses are located to the south. There is B-1 (Neighborhood Business) and R-1E (One-family Residential) zoning to the west. The

- R-1E zoning was approved in 2022 (Z-22-07) for the purpose of developing 65 townhomes. The development plan is currently under review.
8. The home is served by public water and a septic system. The Richmond County Health Dept. inspected the property on March 27, 2023 and deemed the system adequate to serve 12 residents and staff.
 9. Tobacco Road is classified as a major arterial road per the Georgia Dept. of Transportation Functional Classification Map. The proposal will have minimal traffic impact.
 10. The property has an adequate driveway but limited designated parking. Parking improvements may be required for guests and staff. The number of staff is determined by the level of care required for each resident.
 11. There are no floodplains or wetlands on the property.
 12. Any medical care would require driving 10+ miles into Augusta. Fire Station #20 is located at 2820 Old Hwy. 1 approximately 1.7 miles from the subject.
 13. Crime statistics indicate minimal criminal activity in this area. The house has a hardwired alarm system.
 14. If approved the petitioner must obtain a local business license as well as any required Georgia Department of Community Health license and maintain all for the duration of the business use at the subject address.
 15. There are no semi-institutional uses within 1,200 feet of the subject property and no commercial nursing homes nearby.

Recommendation: The Planning Commission recommends **Approval** of the rezoning request with the following conditions:

1. Any change in use, or expansion of, the Group Personal Care Home must return to the Planning Commission for further review and approval.
2. The home shall be staffed on a 7-day, 24-hour basis.
3. The home shall be limited to 12 residents/clients with staff coming in shifts per the Augusta Health Dept. findings on the capacity of the existing septic system. Any live-in staff will be counted towards the maximum occupancy.
4. No detached residential space shall be added to the property; all residents/clients must live in the existing home.
5. A directional sign with the address clearly labeled with reflective lettering will be placed at the entrance to the common driveway at Tobacco Road and at the entrance to the subject property to assist emergency personnel.
6. Additional paved parking shall be provided as required per Section 28-F-B-4. Grass parking is not permitted.
7. The applicant must receive and maintain a City of Augusta business license and any required license with the State of Georgia. Proof of compliance with the minimum requirements of Chapter 111.8-62.01 of the O.C.G.A must be provided, and the applicant must provide annual fire department inspection reports.
8. If wheelchair bound persons reside in the residence all 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design requirements must be met, including but not limited to:

All doorways must be at least 3 feet wide.

- At least one bathroom that permits a wheelchair dependent person to use all bathroom facilities unimpeded.

Note: The information included in this staff report represents the best available information at the time it is written, which is generally two weeks prior to the Planning Commission hearing at which the zoning petition is to be heard. 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 after the staff report is written and staff reserves the right to make an oral recommendation at the hearing based on all the information available at that time.

Lofton Personal Care Home

PO Box 576
Evans GA 30809
Office# 706-432-9202
Direct#762-227-9393
Loftonpch@att.net

March 20, 2033

Dear Planning and Zoning Department,

Letter of Intent:

We are requesting rezoning at 2836 Tobacco Road Hephzibah GA 30815 for congregate living for a Personal Care Home with an occupancy of 14 residents and 2 staff per shift. Our facility will provide 24hr care for seniors and or disabled individuals that need assistance with daily living activities such as meal preparations, cleaning, laundry, companionship, medication management and much more.

Sincerely,

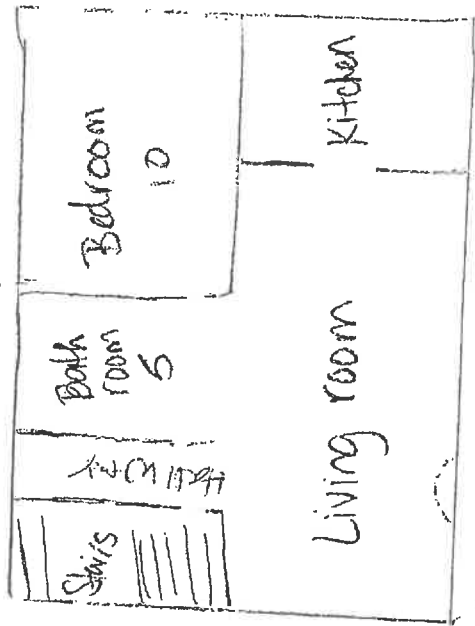


Celina Lofton Owner

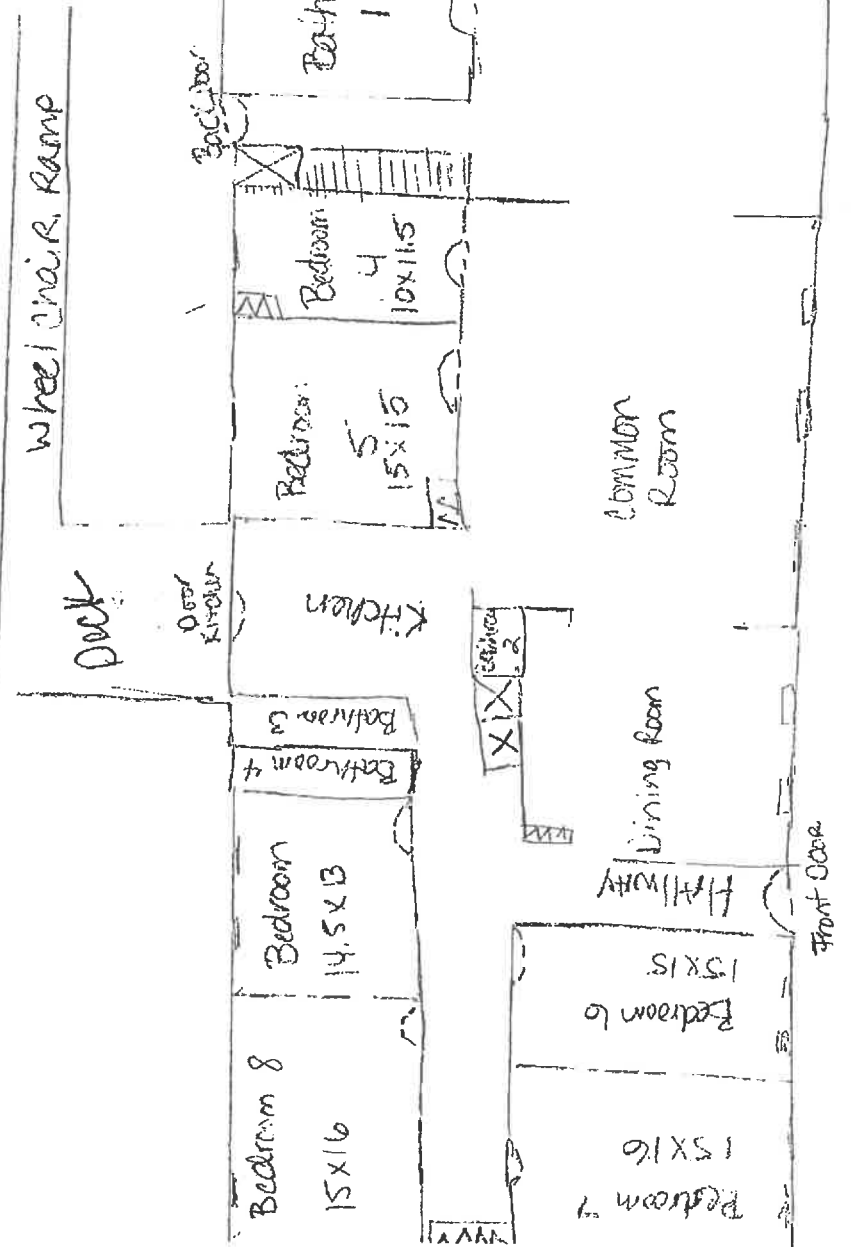
Previously a pch - no current license



2nd Floor



Wheel Chair Ramp



AUGUSTA PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
PERSONAL CARE HOME INFORMATION SHEET

The following information will help the Augusta Planning Commission evaluate your request to establish a personal care home. It will be reviewed, along with other information collected by the staff or presented by the public, in formulating a recommendation regarding your request.

You must answer the following questions truthfully, to the best of your knowledge. Untrue or purposefully deceitful answers will be noted in evaluating the request.

1. Applicant's Name Celina Lofton
2. Property Owner's Name _____
3. Address / Phone # 2836 Tobacco Rd. Hephzibah GA 30815
4. To the best of your knowledge are there any other family day care homes, personal care homes, or transitional homes within 1200 feet of the proposed location? Yes or No NO
5. If #4 is yes then what is the address. N/A
6. Is the proposed location in a subdivision? Yes or No NO
7. If #6 is yes, what is the name of the subdivision? N/A
8. If #6 is yes to the best of you knowledge are there covenants in effect that preclude conducting businesses within the subdivision, or specifically address personal care homes? Yes or No N/A
9. Would the street(s) that the property is located on be classified as major or minor streets? Yes or No Yes, Minor
10. To your knowledge have there been any traffic accidents near this location? Yes or No NO
11. Is there traffic congestion at or near this location? Yes or No NO
12. Will this home be owner operated or staff operated Staff operated
13. If owner operated will owner live in home Yes or No N/A
- ✓ 14. Are you aware this Special Exception will limit the home to a maximum of six clients. Yes or No Requesting Congregate home
15. If owner operated how many family members of the owner or operator would live in or would be kept in the home if approval were granted? N/A
16. Do you or any family member living at this address have any criminal convictions? Yes or No N/A
If Yes what was the offense N/A
17. If any staff is to be hired for this facility will proper criminal history background checks be conducted? Yes or No Yes
18. To the best of your knowledge has anyone recently been arrested for a criminal act at this location or an adjoining residence? Yes or No NO
19. If the answer to #17 is yes, please explain. N/A
20. To the best of your knowledge are there any environmental problems at or near this location such as contaminated air, groundwater, or surface water? Yes or No NO

21. If #20 is yes, please explain. N/A
22. Are there any of the following near this location; (circle them) factories, junkyards, or similar land acres? NO
23. Are the adjoining lots small or large? For the purpose of this Information Sheet a small lot is smaller than 7500 square feet (75 X 100)? N/A
24. Is the proposed location a small or large lot using the criteria in #22? N/A
25. How many square feet in area is the house? 3900
26. How many bathrooms? 5
27. How many bedrooms? 10
28. Is the condition of the home good (fair or poor)? (Circle one)
29. Is there adequate outside area for the residents? (Yes or No)
30. If #29 is yes, is it behind the home? (Yes or No)
31. Will the outside area be screened from view from adjoining residences by shrubs, a wooden fence, or a masonry wall? (Yes or No)
32. Describe how additional parking would be accommodated on the property.
The existing circle driveway will be used
33. Would provision of additional parking require use of the front yard area? Yes or (No)
34. Could persons visiting the clients pull forward into the street, or would they have to back into the street? Pull forward or Back into Pull Forward
35. Will any of the clients/patients be currently incarcerated or otherwise involved with the criminal justice system. NO
36. Is there public sewerage, or is sewerage provided by septic tanks? Septic tank
37. A sign would not be permitted, is that OK? Yes or No Requesting Bd Zoning
38. The personal care home, if approved must be located in the home, not in an accessory structure. Is that OK? (Yes or No)
39. If approved there can be no exterior modification of the residence to accommodate the personal care home except those necessary to comply with the American for Disabilities Act. Is that OK? (Yes or No)
40. Have you been in contact with the Neighborhood Association/adjacent neighbors about your plans? Yes or No N/A - NO
41. Have you been in contact with the State Department of Human Resources Personal Care Home Division to begin the licensing process. Yes or No YES
42. Please be aware that all application fees are non-refundable.
43. Approvals or business licenses may be revoked if the Planning & Development Dept. or any other City Dept. finds just cause.

Celine Raptor
Signature of Applicant

3.22.2023
Date

2836 Tobacco Road

GROUP HOME (proposal)

Map/parcel 129-0-739-00-0

Currently zoned A (Agriculture)

2.7 Acres Class R-4 Residential Small Tracts

Applicant: **CELINA LOFTON 762-227-9393 / mscelinalofton@gmail.com**

****This parcel was previously a Group Home ****

**** Ms. Lofton is currently operating a Group Home at another location and is applying for this location so she can expand and provide services for more persons needing care.**

This parcel addressed 2836 Tobacco Rd is located on a 2.7 acre lot.

The existing structure here has the following attributes for the proposed use:

- 10 bedrooms
- 5 bathrooms
- Foyer
- A common room for watching television, playing games, reading, etc. and there is already a piano in this room
- Dining room
- 2 kitchens (1 main kitchen downstairs and a small kitchen upstairs at the bedroom suite)
- There is already a handicap ramp at the rear exit to the back lot
- There is an existing patio deck at the rear exit
- It is noted that all Hard-wired, illuminated EXIT signs, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers and other FIRE equipment is in place here from the previous operating Group Home

The bedrooms here are equipped to service possibly a **total of fourteen(14) persons if the suite is to be utilized as a room for a "couple" needing their services).**

The rooms as outlined is listed here:

- Rooms # 1, 2,3 and 4 – will sleep 1(one) person per room with bedroom #4 having a private bath in the room = **(4 persons)**
- Rooms# 5,6,7 and 8 – will sleep 2 persons per room / it is noted that **Room #7 is being worked on at this time of inspection = (8 persons)**
- Room #9 will remain vacant and will possibly be used as a **"Prayer-Quiet Room"** or a place to do the persons hair)
- Room #10 which is the **upstairs suite** may possibly be used as residing quarter for a **"married couple" needing assistance** of a Group Home environment OR if not, it will be used as **an on-site office for the staff.**
** (If a couple is to be here – this will be the other @2 persons)

4+8+2= 14 persons total occupants not to include staff.

There were no noted violations at this time of Initial Inspection except the cosmetic work being completed for Room #7



Anita Williams

Code Enforcement Officer Senior



Date

Group Home

PCH Check List

PCH name - Lofton Senior Living *was Lofton PCH
Applicant / contact info. - Celina Lofton 1-762-227-9393
Property address- 2836 Tobacco Road
Hephzibah, GA 30815

Mobility devices-

- ☐ Residents using any mobile devices
- ☐ Handrails and grab bars
- ☒ Front yard ramps with landscape buffer
- ☒ Wheel chair 60 x 60 turning radius

Bedrooms-

- ☒ 100 Sq. ft. per person

Bathrooms-

- ☐ 1 bathing or showering facility- per 6 person
- ☒ 2 bathing or 2 showering facility- per 6 to 12 person
- ☐ 1 lavatory and 1 toilet- per 4 person
- ☐ 2 lavatory and 2 toilet- per 5-8 person

Dining area able to accommodate all persons at same meal sitting--

- ☒ 3 to 5 person 80 sq. ft.
- ☐ 6 person 100 sq. ft.

Living area-

- ☐ 3-5 persons 120 sq. ft.
- ☒ 6 person 150 sq. ft.

Fenced and accessible outdoor area

- ☒ Fence good repair and outdoor area is available

Parking spaces-

- ☐ 2 residents/ 3 spaces
- ☐ 3 residents/ 3 spaces
- ☐ 4 residents/ 4 spaces
- ☐ 5 residents/ 4 spaces
- ☒ 6 residents/ 4 spaces

Exterior property areas

- ☐ Sanitation
- ☐ Overgrowth
- ☐ Sidewalks
- ☐ Weeds

All maintained

- ☐ Accessory structure none at this time

Swimming pools

- ☐ Gate: self-closing and self-latching
- ☐ Barrier at least 48 inches

N/A

Exterior structure

- * ☐ Premise identification need to upgrade at the entrance
- ☒ Roof
- ☒ Walls
- ☒ Exterior Walls and fascia
- ☒ Stairs, decks, porches, balconies
- ☒ Handrails and guards
- ☐ Basement hatchways secured

Interior Structure

- ☒ Walls
- ☒ Ceilings
- ☒ Doors
- ☒ Windows openable
- ☒ Floor covering impervious to water and clean
- ☒ Toilet (Flush properly, no leaks, secured to floor)
- ☒ Lavatory (Leaks, hot water, broken fixtures, drains properly)
- ☒ Kitchen sink (Leaks, hot water, broken fixtures, drains properly)
- ☒ Bathtub/ shower (Leaks, hot water, broken fixtures, drains properly)
- ☒ Receptacle/GFIC and switch covers (broken or missing)
- ☒ Expose wiring or old equipment no longer in use needs to be abated
- ☒ Panel box (clearance, all openings are filled)
- ☒ Heating facility
- ☒ Smoke detectors / fire prevention equipment/means of egress

all in good conditions

Zoning

- ☐ Meets all zoning requirements

currently zoned A (Agriculture)
class R-4

Additional comments

- This location of 2836 Tobacco Rd was previously operating as a Group Home.
- Applicant, Ms. Layton, is currently operating a Group Home elsewhere and is applying to start a Group Home here to provide services for more persons needing care

Approved _____ Not approved _____

Follow-up required

N/A


Inspector Anita Williams Phone 406-312-5178
Code Enforcement

Planning Commission
Z-23-19
May 1, 2023

2836 Tobacco Road

Aerial

Legend

 Parcel of Interest



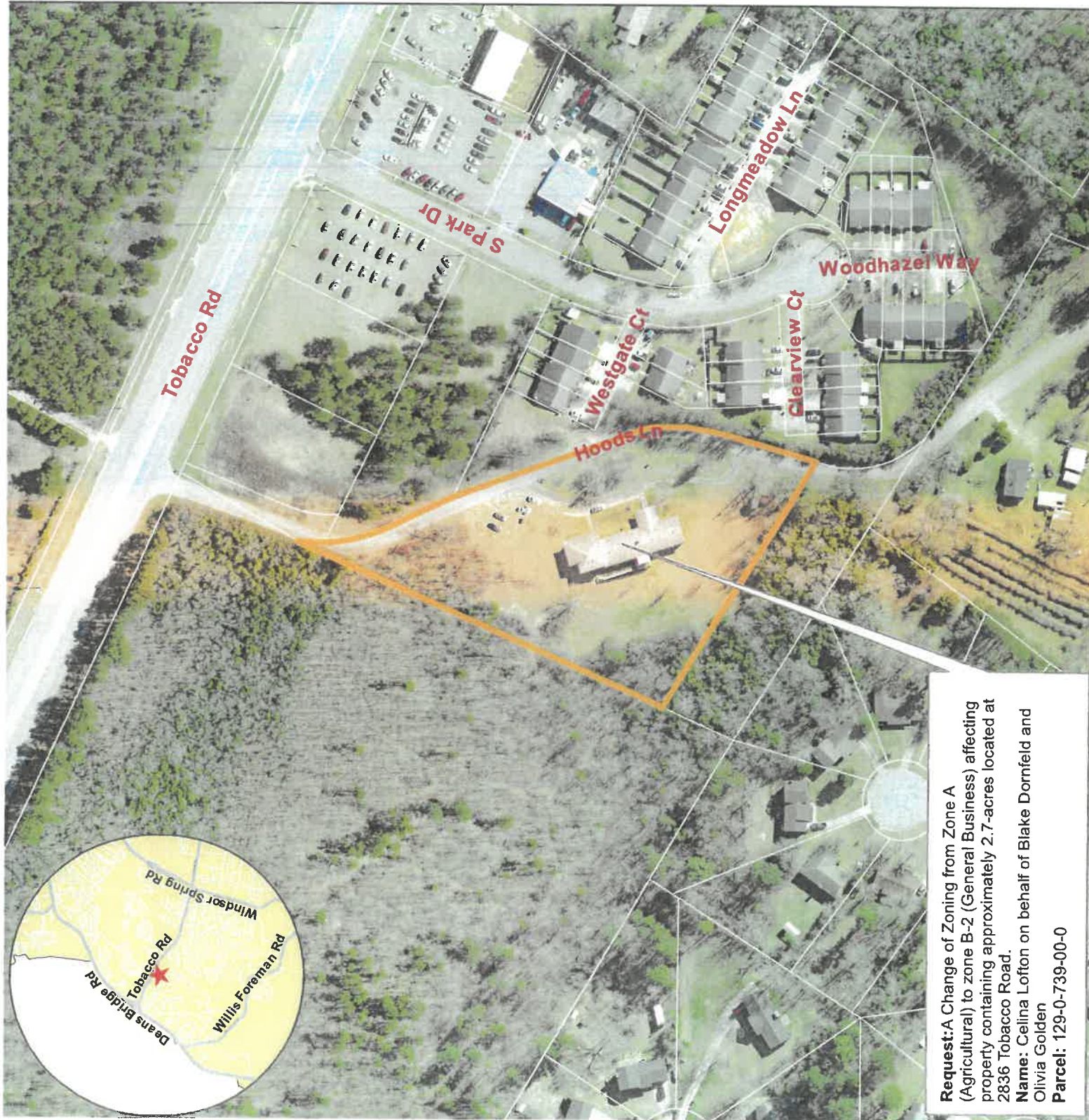
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4/11/2023 bb21255

Augusta, GA Disclaimer

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0 200 Feet



Request: A Change of Zoning from Zone A (Agricultural) to zone B-2 (General Business) affecting property containing approximately 2.7-acres located at 2836 Tobacco Road.
Name: Celina Lofton on behalf of Blake Dornfeld and Olivia Golden
Parcel: 129-0-739-00-0

Planning Commission
Z-23-19
May 1, 2023

2836 Tobacco Road

Current Zoning

Legend

Parcel of Interest

Zoning Classification

A: Agriculture

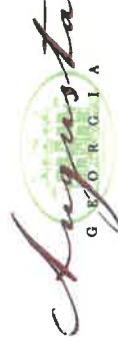
B-1: Neighborhood
Business

B-2: General Business

R-1: One Family
Residential

R-1C: One Family
Residential

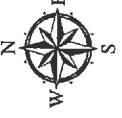
R-1E: One Family
Residential



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Planning Commission
Z-23-19
May 1, 2023

2836 Tobacco Road

Future Zoning

Legend

Parcel of Interest

Zoning Classification

A: Agriculture

B-1: Neighborhood
Business

B-2: General Business

R-1: One Family
Residential

R-1C: One Family
Residential

R-1E: One Family
Residential



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