



## MEMORANDUM

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TO: Planning Commissioners

FROM: Dan Frazier, AICP, Principal Planner

RE: Cornerstone Church Campus Zoning Map Amendment (ZONE—02-24-018921) Planning Commission Workshop (UDO Section 3.2.2.F)

DATE: February 28, 2024

CC: Kevin Icard, AICP, Director of Growth Management

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**INTRODUCTION:** On February 2, 2024, Nathan Sturre of Sturre Engineering (the "Applicant"), on behalf of the property owners Cornerstone Church of Bluffton and Lalie Ann Mole, submitted an application (ZONE-02-24-018921) requesting approval of an Amendment to the Town of Bluffton Official Zoning Map (Attachments 1 and 2). The two subject parcels total +/- 43.31 acres and are identified by Beaufort County Tax Map Numbers R610 036 000 0014 0000 (11 Grassey Lane) and R610 036 000 014B 0000 (21 Lake Lane). The parcels are contiguous and located south of May River Road approximately 600 feet east of Stardust Lane.

The Applicant is requesting an amendment to the Official Zoning Map for the Town of Bluffton to rezone the two (2) parcels from Planned Unit Development (PUD) to a mix of Agricultural (AG) and Rural Mixed Use (RMU) zoning designations. The subject properties are currently zoned Planned Unit Development (PUD) and regulated by the Mindstream Academy Planned Unit Development.

More specifically, the Applicant proposes to rezone the southern portion of Parcel R610 036 000 0014 0000 (11 Grassey Lane) to the AG zone district. Due to the proximity of the northern portion of 11 Grassey Lane to the May River Road (SC 46) corridor, the Applicant proposes to subdivide this +/- 7.0 acres into its own parcel zoned RMU. The Applicant also proposes to rezone the 2.1-acre Parcel R610 036 000 014B 0000 (21 Lake Lane) to the AG zone district (Attachment 3). The application includes a Use Comparison Table that provides a comparison of uses allowed under the currently zoned Mindstream PUD and the proposed zone districts (Attachment 4).

**BACKGROUND:** Initially approved by Beaufort County and developed in accordance with Beaufort County's Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance (ZDSO), the properties contains approximately 98,000 square feet of existing buildings, which include an equestrian center, dormitory building, maintenance facility, multiple

classrooms, and several accessory structures. In addition to these buildings, a 7.87-acre pond, several pasture areas, outdoor gathering spaces, and numerous significant trees are located throughout the site.

On July 20, 2010, Bluffton Town Council approved the Annexation Petition, Tulfinney PUD Zoning Map Amendment, and associated Initial Master Plan with the following conditions:

- Phase 1 can operate under the current business structure using the existing structure up to 32 occupants;
- Phase 2 (future development) land use and density program will be determined upon a Planning Commission meeting and a Neighborhood meeting prior to Town Council approval.

On April 12, 2011, after having held the required meetings, Town Council approved the now renamed Mindstream Academy PUD Zoning Map Amendment and Initial Master Plan as presented. The approved master plan included a Future Development Plan Exhibit (Attachment 5).

**PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP:** Unified Development Ordinance Section 3.2.2.F states that the first step in the Zoning Map Amendment review process is to hold a Planning Commission Workshop for the request.

“Planning Commission Workshops are intended to be the first official presentation of a proposed project to provide the public with information and a forum to initially review the application and identify applicable application review criteria. Meetings are encouraged as opportunities for informal, non-binding communication between the Applicant and neighboring property owners who may be affected by the application.”

Following this Planning Commission Workshop, the application will return to the Planning Commission for a Public Hearing (tentative March 27, 2024) and to provide a recommendation to Town Council. Town Council will hear the request twice, with the second reading being the Public Hearing for the Zoning Map Amendment (see Attachment 8 - *Tentative Schedule*).

When reviewing the Zoning Map Amendment, Planning Commission should be considering the following criteria in the Unified Development Ordinance, as it relates to the Amendment to the Future Land Use Map and the Zoning Map, respectively.

### **Unified Development Ordinance Section 3.4.3 Application Review Criteria – Zoning Map Amendment**

The Planning Commission and Town Council shall consider the following criteria in assessing an application for Zoning Map Amendment:

- A. Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan or, if conditions have changed since the Comprehensive Plan was adopted, consistency with the overall intent of the Comprehensive Plan, recent development trends and the general character of the area.
- B. Capability of the site’s physical, geological, hydrological and other

- environmental features to support the breadth and intensity of uses that could be developed in the proposed zoning district.
- C. Compatibility of all the potential uses allowed in the proposed zoning district with surrounding uses and zoning districts in terms of suitability of location, impacts on the environment, noise, density, nature of use, traffic impacts, aesthetics, ability to develop adjacent properties under existing zoning, and potential influence on property values.
  - D. Capacity of public infrastructure and services to sufficiently accommodate all potential uses allowed in the proposed district without compromising the public health, safety and welfare of the Town of Bluffton.
  - E. Public need for the potential uses permitted in the requested zoning district.
  - F. Compliance with applicable requirements in the Applications Manual.

The narrative submitted with the Applicant's Zoning Map Amendment application includes a section that describes compliance with the above referenced UDO Section 3.4 Review Criteria (Attachment 6).

#### **REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:**

**Blueprint Bluffton Comprehensive Plan- Future Land Use Map** – The Future Land Use Map contained within the Town of Bluffton's Comprehensive Plan identifies nine future land use categories that provide generalized recommendations as to where and how development should occur. The descriptions that accompany these categories prescribe the general character and types of development that are most appropriate in each category. Future Land Use Categories are not zoning districts; rather, zoning districts are a tool used to implement the land use component of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Future Land Use Map designates the future land use category of *Residential Estate* for the subject properties (Attachment 7). The *Residential Estate* category is intended to maintain existing rural character, decrease environmental impacts and reduce traffic volumes. The placement of this category is intended to provide a logical step-down in development intensity from active centers and corridors to the undisturbed natural environment along the community's waterways.

**NEXT STEPS:** Once comments are received from the Planning Commission Workshop, the Application will be reviewed at the March 27, 2024, Planning Commission meeting. The Application for a Zoning Map Amendment requires a Public Hearing by the Planning Commission prior to forwarding a recommendation to Town Council for two readings (Attachment 8 – Tentative Schedule).

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Application
2. Zoning Map
3. Proposed Zoning
4. Use Comparison Table
5. Mindstream PUD
6. UDO Section 3.4 Compliance
7. Future Land Use Map
8. Tentative Meeting Schedule