



**Staff Report**

Subject: 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading – Zoning Map Amendment  
 Author: Jennifer Rose, Planner I  
 Department: Development Services  
 Application: RZN-25-55  
 Meeting Date: March 17, 2026

Proposed Zoning: B-3 (Major Commercial)

Existing Zoning: R-1 (Single-Family Residential)

Map & Parcel: 446-7  
 Parcel Size: 8.37 acres  
 Location: Mill Pond Road  
 Commissioner Kieffer: Fifth District

Proposed Use: Permitted uses in B-3

Applicant: Ashley Kessler  
 100 Mingledorff Court  
 Springfield, GA 31329

Owner(s): Salvador Figueroa  
 415 Flint Drive  
 Rincon, GA 31326

**Rezoning Summary:**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Applicant Request</b>	Rezone 8.37 acres from R-1 (Single-Family Residential) to B-3 (Major Commercial)
<b>Location</b>	Mill Pond Road
<b>Proposed Use</b>	Accessory structure (pole barn) for storage of contractor equipment and personal recreational vehicles.
<b>Future Land Use Map</b>	Agricultural–Residential
<b>Planning Board Recommendation</b>	Approval with conditions
<b>Staff Recommendation</b>	Denial



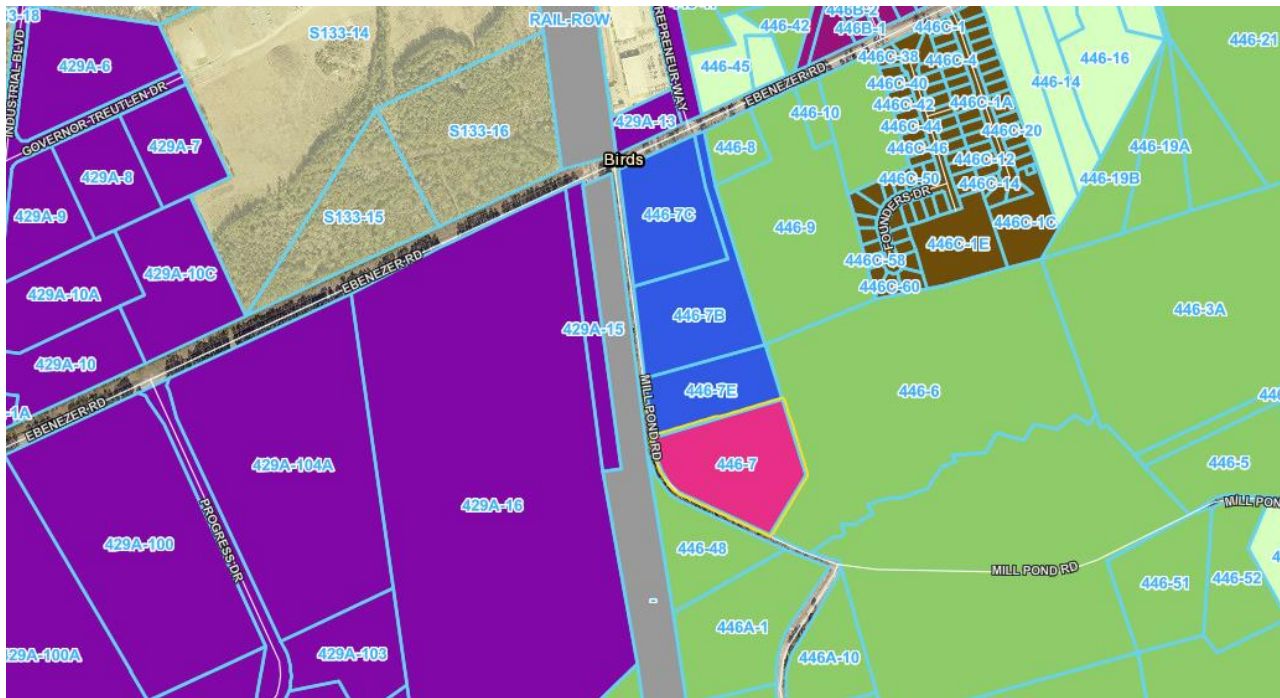
## Existing Land Use and Zoning:

The subject parcel is located along **Mill Pond Road**, just northwest of Chase Drive, and consists of approximately **8.37 acres**. The property is currently **vacant and heavily wooded**, as confirmed through the Effingham County Tax Assessor's database. Access to the property is provided from **Mill Pond Road**, a local roadway serving primarily rural residential and agricultural properties.

## Surrounding Development Pattern:

This zoning pattern reflects a transition area, where commercial zoning has been established to the north while agricultural-residential land uses remain predominant to the south and east. The railroad corridor and industrially zoned properties to the west further contribute to the mixed development pattern present in the area.

- **North:** B-3 (Major Commercial)
- **South:** AR-1 (Agricultural-Residential; 5 acres or more)
- **East:** AR-1 (Agricultural-Residential; 5 acres or more)
- **West:** Railroad corridor and industrially zoned properties



This zoning pattern reflects an area where commercial zoning has been established to the north, while agricultural-residential uses remain predominant to the south and east.

---

## Planning and Zoning Services

804 South Laurel St., Springfield, Georgia 31329  
(912) 754-2128  
effinghamcounty.org



## The Proposed Development Request:

The applicant is requesting to rezone approximately 8.37 acres from **R-1** (Single-Family Residential) to **B-3** (Major Commercial). The purpose of the request is to allow for the construction of a pole barn intended for the storage of work-related equipment, including an excavator and skid steer, as well as personal recreational vehicles.

## Facts and Findings:

### Site Characteristics

The subject parcel consists of approximately 8.37 acres and is currently a vacant tract located along Mill Pond Road. Access to the property is provided from Mill Pond Road.

The site is predominantly wooded. According to the **National Wetland Inventory** (NWI), wetlands are present along the northern portion of the parcel, extending into the northeastern corner of the property. Any development of the property will be required to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations regarding wetland protection and permitting.

### Zoning Context

The applicant is requesting to rezone the subject parcel from R-1 (Single-Family Residential) to B-3 (Major Commercial).

The three parcels located directly north of the subject property are currently zoned B-3 (Major Commercial). Approval of the requested rezoning would extend the existing B-3 zoning district in a contiguous manner.

On October 6, 2025, the applicant met with County staff during a Technical Review Committee (TRC) meeting. During this meeting, staff discussed **AR-1** and **B-3** district standards, access considerations, buffer and greenspace requirements, and the rezoning process.

### Infrastructure and Services

Access to the property is currently provided via Mill Pond Road.

Development under B-3 zoning district will be required to comply with all applicable zoning standards and development regulations.

### Greenspace Requirement

- Minimum 15% greenspace is required.

---

## Planning and Zoning Services

804 South Laurel St., Springfield, Georgia 31329  
(912) 754-2128  
effinghamcounty.org

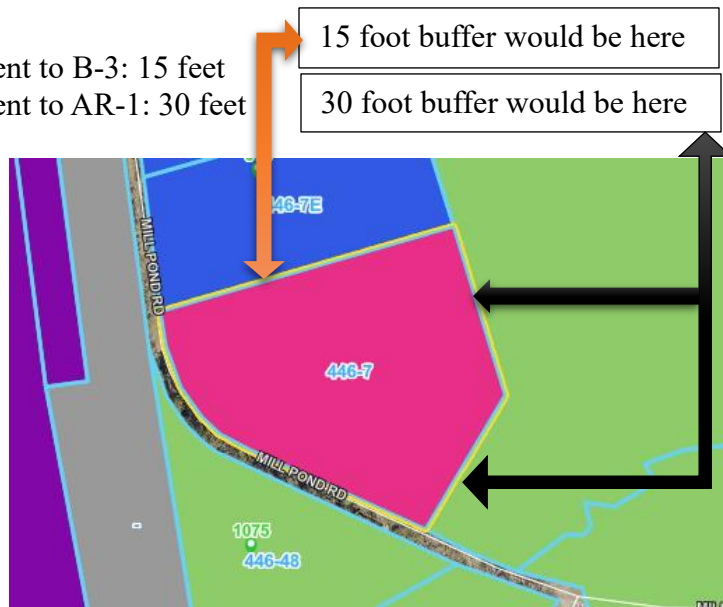


# Buffer Requirements

## Per Effingham County Code of Ordinances - Article III, Section 3.4 Buffers

Proposed Zoning													
	AR-1	AR-2	R-1	R-3	R-4	R-5	R-6	B-1	B-2	B-3	MXD	LI	HI
AR-1	15 ft	15 ft	15 ft	30 ft	15 ft	15 ft	15 ft	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	20 ft	150 ft	300 ft
AR-2	15 ft	15 ft	15 ft	30 ft	15 ft	15 ft	15 ft	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	20 ft	150 ft	300 ft
R-1	30 ft	30 ft	15 ft	30 ft	15 ft	15 ft	15 ft	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	20 ft	300 ft	300 ft
R-3	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	15 ft	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	20 ft	20 ft	20 ft	15 ft	150 ft	300 ft
R-4	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	15 ft	15 ft	15 ft	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	20 ft	300 ft	300 ft
R-5	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	15 ft	15 ft	15 ft	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	20 ft	300 ft	300 ft
R-6	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	15 ft	15 ft	15 ft	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	20 ft	300 ft	300 ft
B-1	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	20 ft	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	15 ft	15 ft	15 ft	15 ft	50 ft	150 ft
B-2	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	20 ft	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	15 ft	15 ft	15 ft	15 ft	50 ft	150 ft
B-3	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	20 ft	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	15 ft	15 ft	15 ft	15 ft	50 ft	150 ft
MXD	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	15 ft	20 ft	20 ft	20 ft	15 ft	15 ft	15 ft	10 ft	150 ft	300 ft
LI	150 ft	150 ft	300 ft	150 ft	300 ft	300 ft	300 ft	50 ft	50 ft	50 ft	50 ft	50 ft	50 ft
HI	300 ft	300 ft	300 ft	300 ft	300 ft	300 ft	300 ft	150 ft	150 ft	150 ft	150 ft	25 ft	25 ft

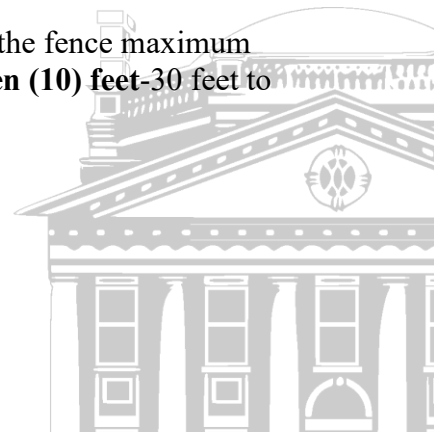
- B-3 adjacent to B-3: 15 feet
- B-3 adjacent to AR-1: 30 feet



If a **privacy fence** is used, the material needs approval by Development Services, the fence maximum height is seven (7) feet in height, **then the adjacent buffer may be reduced by ten (10) feet-30 feet** to 20 feet for residential required buffers only.

### Planning and Zoning Services

804 South Laurel St., Springfield, Georgia 31329  
 (912) 754-2128  
 effinghamcounty.org

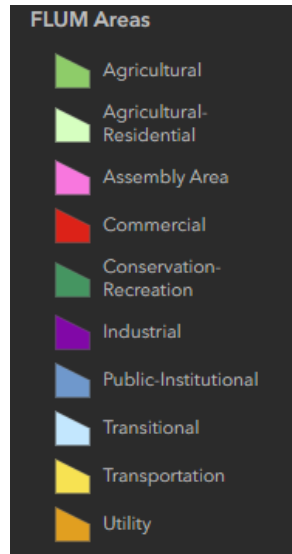
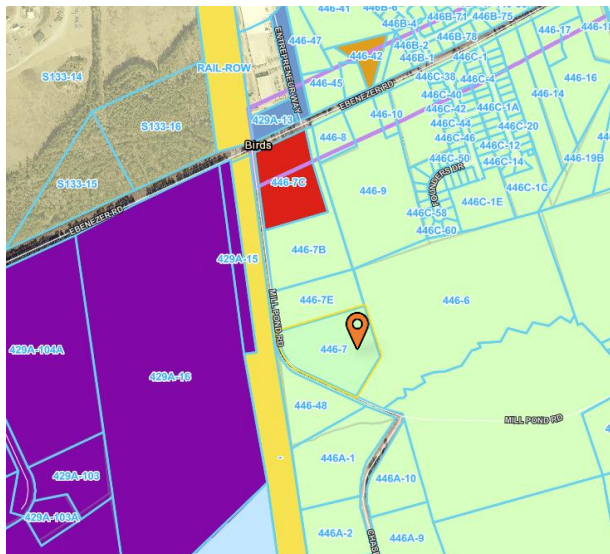


Additional buffering, landscaping, and site development standards will be reviewed during the site plan review and permitting process, where applicable.

The following uses are **allowed** within the B-3 (Major Commercial) zoning district: Housing Services, Automobile Sales and Services (except wrecked vehicle import/export and junkyards), Heavy Consumer Goods or Sales Services, Durable Consumer Goods Sales or Services, Consumer Goods, Grocery, Food, Beverage, Dairy, etc., Health and Personal Care, Finance and Insurance, Real Estate Services (except property management services and rental housing – related), Rental and Leasing – Non-Residential, Professional Services, Administration Services, Services to Buildings and Dwellings, Food Services, Personal Services, Pet and Animal Sales or Services, Flex Space with Retail Front, Enclosed/Mini Storage/Self-Storage, Road, Ground Passenger, and Transit Transportation, Publishing, Telecommunications and Broadcasting, Information Services and Data Processing Industries, Water, Steam, Air Conditioner Supply, Theater, Dance, or Music Establishment, Sports Team or Club, Museums and Other Special Purpose Recreational Institutions, Amusement, Sports, or Recreation Establishment, Natural and Other Recreational Parks, Educational Services, Public Administration, Judicial Functions, Other Government Functions, Public Safety (Gov’t Owned), Health and Human Services, Social Assistance, Welfare and Charitable Services, Religious Institutions, Final Care Services, Associations, Nonprofit, Organizations, etc., Building, Developing, and General Contracting, Machinery Road, Special Trade Contractor, Heavy Construction Contractor, Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Support Functions for Agriculture.

### Comprehensive Plan Consistency

The subject parcel is designated **Agricultural-Residential** on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) within the Effingham County 2020-2040 Joint Comprehensive Plan.

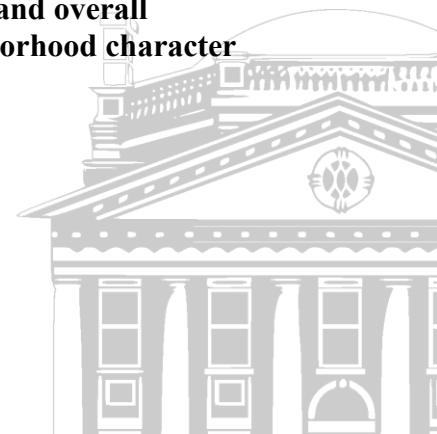


The primary land use within the Agricultural-Residential category consists of **single-family and multifamily residential development organized into general categories of net densities**. Residential zoning within this designation is intended to ensure land is used appropriately for housing while considering factors such as **density, building types, and overall neighborhood character**.

(Effingham County 2020-2040 Joint Comprehensive Plan, pg. 37).

## Planning and Zoning Services

804 South Laurel St., Springfield, Georgia 31329  
(912) 754-2128  
effinghamcounty.org



Additionally, the **National Wetlands Inventory** indicates the presence of wetlands along the **northern portion of the parcel**, extending into the **northeastern corner of the property**. Any future development of the site must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local wetland regulations during the site development and permitting process. Rezoning the property to B-3 (Major Commercial) would introduce a zoning district that allows a wide range of commercial uses that may not be compatible with the Agricultural-Residential land use designation identified for the area.

## Staff Analysis and Recommendation

Staff evaluated the rezoning request based on the Effingham County Zoning Ordinance, surrounding land use patterns, infrastructure considerations, and the policies of the Effingham County 2020–2040 Joint Comprehensive Plan.

The subject parcel is designated Agricultural–Residential on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). This land use category is intended to support primarily low-density residential development and agricultural uses, with development patterns characterized by larger lot sizes and rural residential character. The applicant’s request to rezone the property **from R-1 (Single-Family Residential) to B-3 (Major Commercial)** would introduce a zoning district that permits a broad range of commercial and contractor-related uses that are not consistent with the Agricultural–Residential future land use designation for the area.

While parcels located directly north of the subject property are currently zoned B-3 (Major Commercial), the surrounding development pattern to the south and east remains predominantly agricultural and rural residential in character. Rezoning the property to B-3 would extend a commercial zoning district into an area identified by the Comprehensive Plan for residential and agricultural uses.

At the February 10, 2026 Planning Board meeting, the Planning Board recommended approval of the rezoning request with conditions, including a requirement that a legal easement from Ebenezer Road be established within one year of approval and that commercial or heavy truck traffic be prohibited from accessing the site via Mill Pond Road. However, during the March 3, 2026 Board of Commissioners meeting, the County Attorney advised that the County should not require the establishment of a legal easement from Ebenezer Road as a condition of rezoning.

Without the ability to implement the proposed access condition, concerns remain regarding potential commercial traffic impacts on Mill Pond Road, which primarily serves rural residential properties.

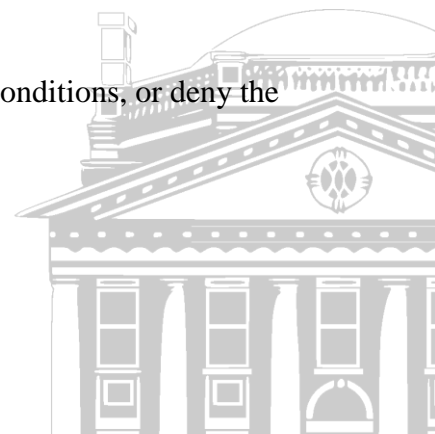
Based on the inconsistency with the Future Land Use Map and the limitations associated with addressing access and traffic impacts through enforceable conditions, staff cannot recommend approval of the rezoning request as presented.

The Board of Commissioners may approve the request, approve the request with conditions, or deny the request.

---

## Planning and Zoning Services

804 South Laurel St., Springfield, Georgia 31329  
(912) 754-2128  
effinghamcounty.org



## **Conditions (If Approved):**

If the Board of Commissioners elects to approve the rezoning request, staff recommends the following conditions:

**1. Encroachment Permit Required**

Any new access or improvements connecting to Mill Pond Road shall require an encroachment permit from Effingham County prior to construction.

**2. Prohibition of Commercial or Heavy Truck Traffic from Mill Pond Road**

Commercial or heavy truck traffic associated with the site shall not utilize Mill Pond Road for access.

---

## **Planning and Zoning Services**

804 South Laurel St., Springfield, Georgia 31329  
(912) 754-2128  
effinghamcounty.org

