Effingham County Georgia
Planning and Zoning Services

Staff Report

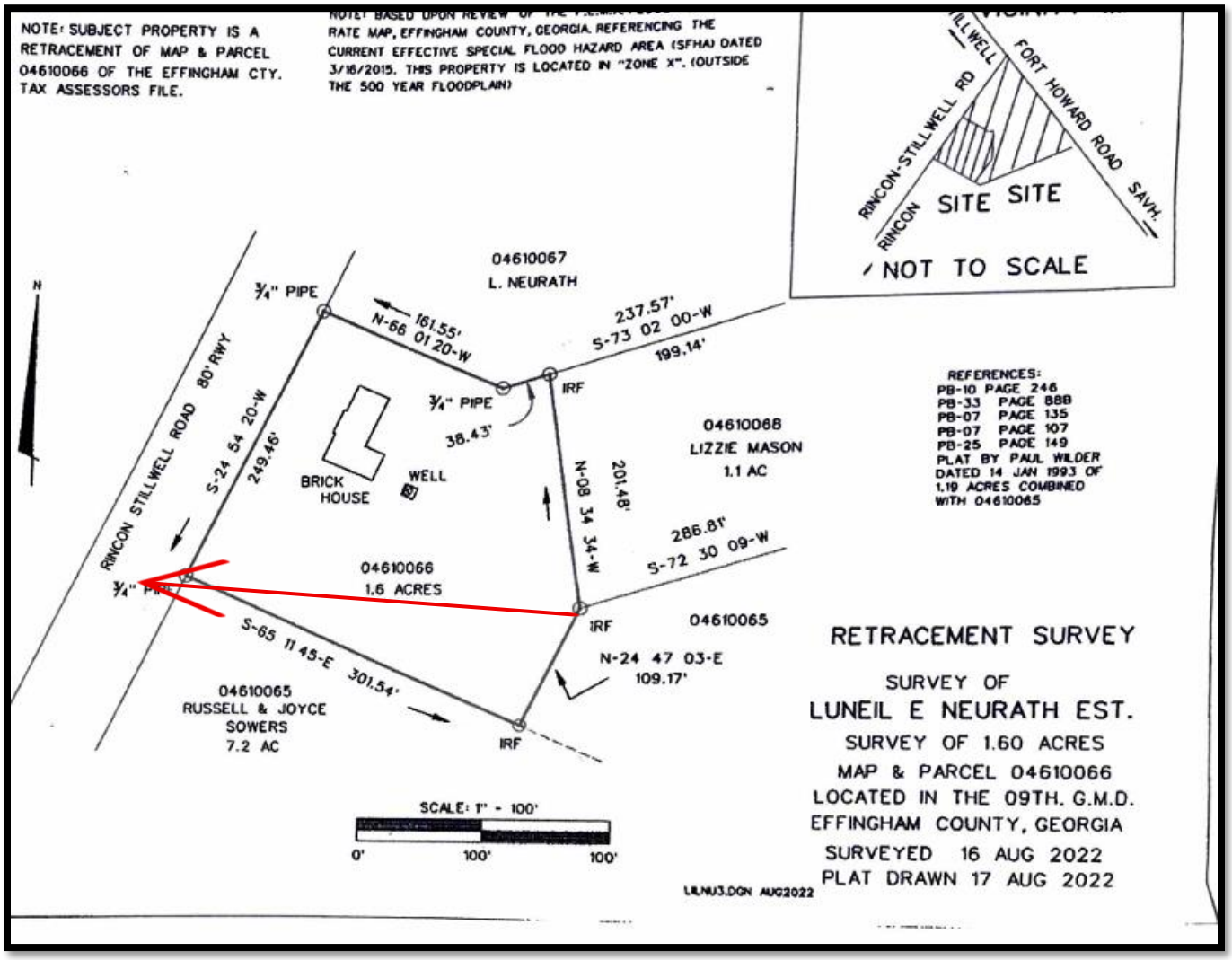
Subject:	Rezoning
Author:	Kimberly Barlett, Senior Planner
Department:	Development Services
Application:	RZN-26-47
Meeting Date:	October 13, 2026
Existing Zoning:	**AR-2 (Agricultural Residential; 1 acre or more)**
Proposed Zoning:	**AR-1 (Agricultural Residential; 5 acres or more)**
Map & Parcel(s):	461-66
Total Acreage Affected	± 0.60 out of 1.60 acres
Location:	2393 Rincon-Stillwell Road
Commissioner District:	Fifth District
Proposed Use:	Residential Subdivision
Applicant/Owner:	Joyce Sowers 2333 Rincon- Stillwell Road Rincon, GA 31326

Rezoning Summary:

Item	Description
Request	Rezone ± 0.60 acres from **AR-2 to AR-1**
Proposed Use	**Residential Subdivision**
Existing Use	Residential
Future Land Use	**Agricultural Residential**
Utilities	Private well & septic system
Access	Rincon- Stillwell Road

Project Summary:

The applicant is requesting to **rezone** approximately ±0.60 acres from AR-2 (Agricultural Residential-2) to **AR-1 (Agricultural Residential-1).** The purpose of the request is to allow the applicant to subdivide approximately 0.60 acres from the existing parcel and combine it with the adjoining 7.20-acre parcel. The proposed rezoning and property line adjustment are intended to reconfigure the existing parcels and will not create an additional residential lot.



Zoning History

The subject property is currently zoned **AR-2 (Agricultural Residential).** The Board of Commissioners approved a rezoning from AR-1 to AR-2 at the August 31, 1989, meeting.



Existing Site Condition

The subject property consists of approximately ±**1.60 acres** and has direct frontage and access from **Rincon- Stillwell Road**. The property currently has an existing stick-built home.

County GIS mapping indicates no **wetlands and no known mapped FEMA flood hazard area.**

Planning and Zoning Services
804 South Laurel St., Springfield, Georgia 31329
(912) 754-2128
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Surrounding Use and Zoning Pattern

Surrounding Neighborhood
• North: AR-2 (Agricultural–Residential, 1 acre or more) & AR-1 (Agricultural–Residential, 5 acres or more)
• South: AR-2 (Agricultural–Residential, 1 acre or more) & AR-1 (Agricultural–Residential, 5 acres or more)
• West: AR-1 (Agricultural–Residential, 5 acres or more)
• East: AR-1 (Agricultural–Residential, 5 acres or more) & AR-2 (Agricultural–Residential, 1 acre or more)

The area surrounding the subject property is predominantly rural in character and consists primarily of large agricultural tracts, rural residential homesteads, and scattered smaller residential parcels. The surrounding development pattern reflects a mix of agricultural uses and low-density residential development that is consistent with the area's existing rural character.

North

- Agricultural- residential homesteads (AR-1& AR-2& R-1)
- Large tracts zoned (AR-1)

East

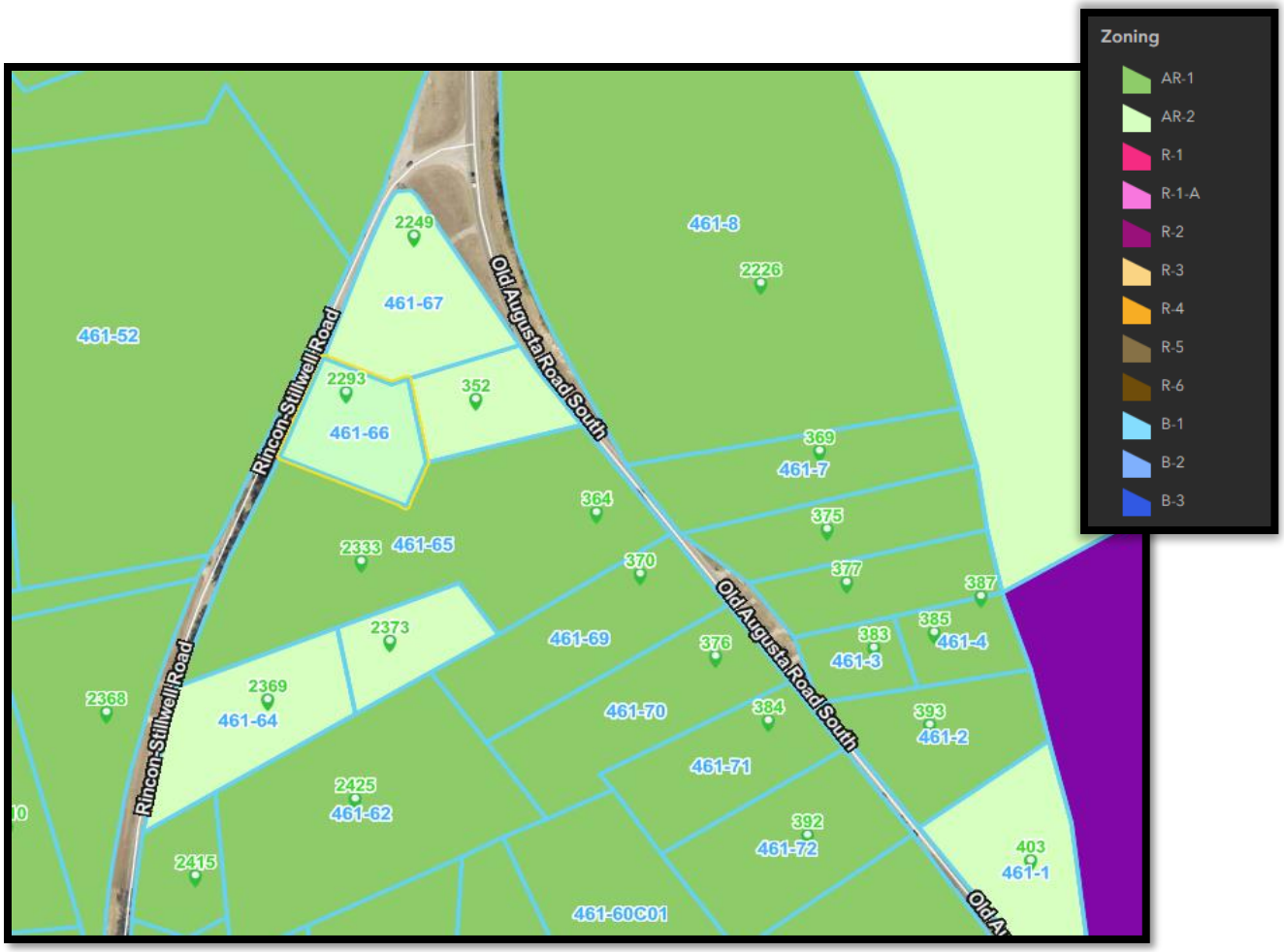
- Agricultural -residential homesteads (AR-1 & AR-2)
- Georgia Pacific (I-1)
- Large tracts zoned (AR-1)

South

- Agricultural-residential homesteads (AR-1& AR-2)
- Large tracts zoned (AR-1)

West

- Agricultural-residential homesteads (AR-1)
- Large tracts zoned (AR-1)



Zoning Development Standards for AR-1

Minimum lot area A maximum of two residential units are permitted per lot. These may consist of two principal dwellings, or one principal dwelling, and one accessory dwelling unit (ADU)	5 acres 2 units
Minimum lot road frontage	100 feet
Minimum lot width at building line	150 feet
Minimum front yard setback	50 feet
Minimum rear yard setback	50 feet
Minimum side yard (interior) setback	25 feet
Minimum side yard (street/road easement) setback	50 feet

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Zoning Classification

Agricultural Residential 1 (AR-1) *is designed to preserve the county's rural character while protecting natural resources and supporting both active and passive recreational uses. This district emphasizes land conservation and resource protection, minimal pedestrian activity, ample open space, and a high degree of separation between structures.*

Intensity of Use

The proposed rezoning from AR-2 (Agricultural Residential-2) to **AR-1 (Agricultural Residential-1)** represents a reduction in the intensity of land use by increasing the minimum lot size requirement. The purpose of the request is to combine the existing ±0.60-acre parcel with the adjoining ±7.20-acre parcel, creating a single parcel. The resulting parcel is more consistent with the surrounding development pattern and the minimum lot size requirements of the AR-1 zoning district. The request reduces the potential development intensity of the property while maintaining its agricultural and rural residential character.

Infrastructure

The property is served by **a private well and septic system, consistent with the** surrounding development.

Roadway Classification: Rincon-Stillwell Road is classified as a minor collector within Effingham County.

Public Health, Safety, and Welfare

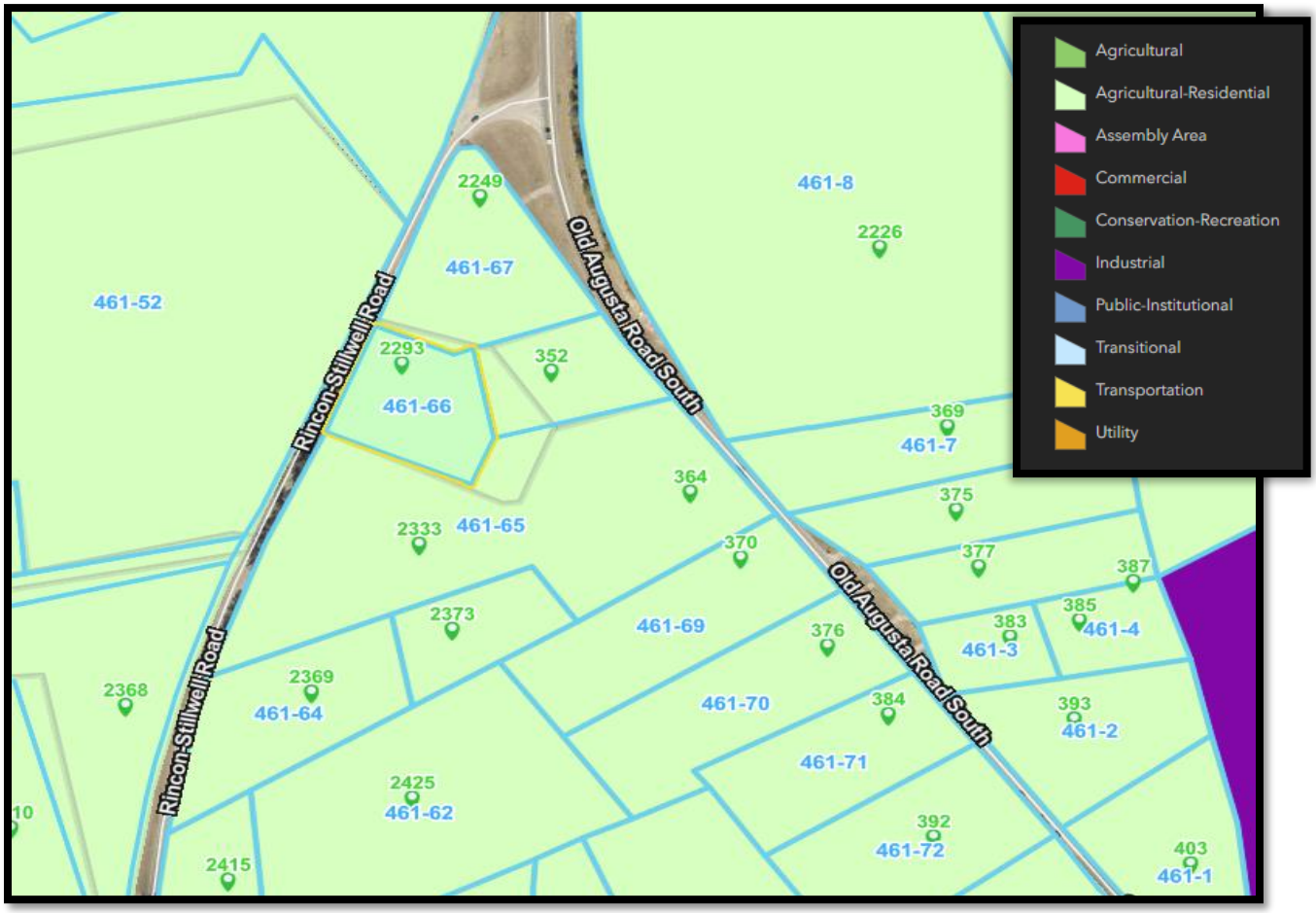
The proposed rezoning from AR-2 (Agricultural Residential-2) to **AR-1 (Agricultural Residential-1)** is not anticipated to adversely affect the public health, safety, or welfare. The request is intended to combine two existing parcels and does not increase residential density or permit additional development beyond what is currently allowed. In fact, the rezoning reduces the development potential of the property by applying the larger minimum lot size requirements of the AR-1 zoning district. The proposed lot combination is compatible with the surrounding rural development pattern and is not expected to create adverse impacts on public infrastructure, utilities, traffic, or public services. As such, the request promotes the orderly development of the property while protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the surrounding community

Consistency with Comprehensive Plan

The subject property is designated **Agricultural Residential** on the **Future Land Use Map (FLUM).** This designation supports agricultural activities, rural residential development, and low-density housing while preserving the County's rural character. The requested rezoning from AR-1 (Agricultural Residential) to AR-2 (Agricultural Residential) is generally consistent with the Agricultural Residential

land use designation, as both zoning districts accommodate low-density residential development. The proposed rezoning remains compatible with the Comprehensive Plan's intent by supporting rural residential growth while maintaining the area's agricultural-residential character.

*The parcel is designated **Agricultural–Residential** on the **Future Land Use Map (FLUM)**. This category supports single-family and multifamily residential uses arranged within general net-density ranges. The intent is to ensure residential development patterns that are compatible with surrounding densities, building types, and established neighborhood character (Effingham County 2020–2040 Joint Comprehensive Plan, p. 37).*



Staff Summary

Staff finds that the requested rezoning is compatible with the surrounding land use pattern and consistent with the intent of the AR-1 (Agricultural Residential) zoning district. The request is consistent with the Agricultural Residential designation of the Future Land Use Map and supports the Comprehensive Plan's goal of accommodating low-density rural residential development while preserving the character of the surrounding area.