



Staff Report

Subject: 2nd Reading – Zoning Map Amendment
Author: Jennifer Rose, Planner I
Department: Development Services
Application: RZN-25-56
Meeting Date: February 17, 2026

Proposed Zoning: R-5 (Single-Family Traditional Neighborhood)

Existing Zoning: AR-1 (Agricultural – Residential, 5 acres or more)

Map & Parcel: 413-8

Parcel Size: 135 out of 146.06 acres

Proposed Use: Residential Development

Applicant: GW Investments/Gary Wiggin
660 E. 39th Street
Savannah, GA 31401

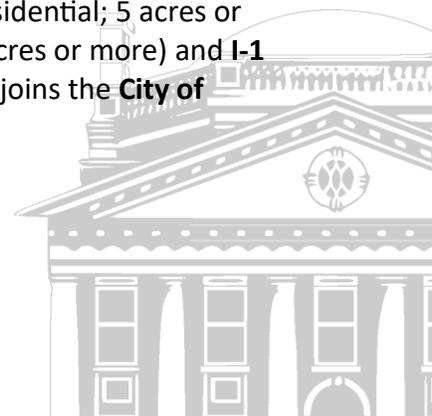
Owner(s): Joyce Johnson
100 Catalina Road
Tybee Island, GA 31328

Location: McCall Road

Existing Land Use and Zoning:

The subject property is located along **McCall Road**, south of the **Timbergate** subdivision. The County Tax Assessor records indicate the parcel is currently **vacant**. Proposed ingress and egress will be provided from **McCall Road**.

The subject property is currently zoned **AR-1** (Agricultural–Residential; 5 acres or more). Adjacent properties to the **north and south** are also zoned **AR-1** (Agricultural–Residential; 5 acres or more), while properties to the **west** are zoned **AR-1** (Agricultural–Residential; 5 acres or more) and **I-1** (Industrial) Oglethorpe Power Corporation. The property boundary to the **east** adjoins the **City of Rincon**.



The **National Wetlands Inventory** indicates the presence of wetlands throughout portions of the property. Additionally, the majority of the parcel is “currently shown as” being located within **Flood Zone AE** and **Flood Zone X (0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard)**.

Plain-Language Explanation:

- **Flood Zone AE** is an area that has a **high risk of flooding**, meaning there is a **1% annual chance flood** (often referred to as the “100-year floodplain”). Properties in this zone are subject to floodplain regulations, and flood insurance is typically required for structures.
- **Flood Zone X (0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard)** is considered a **moderate to low flood risk area**. This zone represents areas outside the primary floodplain but still subject to flooding during more extreme events (sometimes referred to as the “500-year floodplain”). Flood insurance is not typically required in this zone but may still be recommended.

The Proposed Development:

The applicant requests to rezone approximately **±135 acres** of the **146.06-acre** tract to **R-5** (Single-Family Traditional Neighborhood) to develop a residential subdivision consisting of **single-family detached homes and townhomes**. Pursuant to the **R-5** district standards, up to **twenty-five percent (25%)** of the total dwelling units may be developed to **R-2** (Multifamily Residential) standards, which allow for duplexes or townhomes. In addition, the **R-5** zoning district requires that a minimum of **twenty-five percent (25%) of the net site area** be designated as **usable open space**.

For purposes of this requirement, **usable open space** is defined as open space areas accessible to residents, **excluding wetlands and required buffers**. Refers to outdoor areas within or directly serving a residential development that are intentionally designed and maintained for the use and enjoyment of residents. These spaces provide opportunities for recreation, relaxation, socializing, or passive enjoyment of the outdoors.

For purposes of this requirement, **net site area** is defined as the total acreage **minus wetlands, minus inaccessible uplands, and minus required zoning and roadway buffers**.

The following uses are also allowed within the R-5 (Single-Family Traditional Neighborhood) zoning district: Single-Family (fee simple), Single-Family Detached, One Additional Single-Family detached dwelling, Disaster Emergency Housing, Home Occupations, Non-Conforming Uses, Parks, Openspace & Trails, Fire and Rescue, Police, Emergency Management Agency, Emergency Medical Services, E-911, and Places of Worship.

Planning and Zoning Services

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



Planning Board Recommendation:

At the January 13, 2026, Planning Board meeting, Mr. Neal Kessler motioned for denial, Ms. Lyndsay Smith seconded the motion, and it carried 3-1 with Chairman Jake Patrick opposing. The discussion of the Planning Board centered around concerns about density, traffic flow, schools, wetlands and possible flooding.

Comprehensive Plan:

The subject property is designated **Agricultural–Residential** on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). This land use category is intended to accommodate **single-family and multifamily residential development** organized by general net-density ranges. Residential zoning within this designation is intended to ensure land is used appropriately for housing, considering factors such as **density, building type, and neighborhood character** (Effingham County 2020–2040 Joint Comprehensive Plan, p. 37).

Determination:

Staff has reviewed the application and finds it complete, subject to the following conditions:

1. A Preliminary Plat must be approved by the Board of Commissioners.
2. All site development shall comply with the applicable standards and requirements of the R-5 zoning district.

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