



Staff Report

Subject: 2nd Reading- Zoning Map Amendment
Author: Kimberly Barlett, Senior Planner
Application: CU-25-32
Department: Development Services
Meeting Date: March 3, 2026

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

Map & Parcel: 345-38

Parcel Size: 16.50 acres

Applicant: Mr. Joseph Zettler
894 Little McCall Road
Guyton, GA 31312

Owner(s): Mr. Joseph Powell Zettler
2410 S CO RD 1089
Midland, TX 79706

Location: 894 Little McCall Road
Guyton, Ga 31312

Existing Land Use and Zoning:

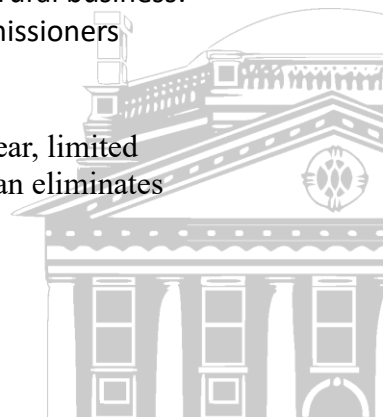
The parcel totals 16.50 acres. Located at 894 Little McCall Road. Currently, there is a site-built home on the property. The parcel is classified as AR-1 (Agricultural – Residential, 5 acres or more).

Properties to the north, east, and west are zoned AR-1 (Agricultural–Residential, 5 acres or more) and to the South R-1 (Single-Family Residential District) parcels.

The Proposed Request:

At the February 17, 2026, Board of Commissioners meeting, the request was approved with two added stipulations. The applicant has requested a conditional use for a rural business. This application was previously denied at the November 18, 2025, Board of Commissioners meeting.

JEMML Farms intends to operate under an agricultural use classification with a clear, limited scope that supports both sustainability and rural economic activity. This revised plan eliminates



grinding activities and instead focuses on passive wood utilization through firewood production and clean woodchip repurposing.

Accepted Materials

- Clean Logs (unsawed timber, trunks, or limbs suitable for firewood processing)
- Clean Wood Chips (from tree services or landscaping activities)
- No stumps, contaminated material

Activities on Site

- **Log Drop-Off & Firewood Processing:**
Logs will be cut and split into seasoned firewood using a log splitter. No wood grinding or industrial chipping on site. Firewood will be sold to local residents via on-site pickup or delivery.
- **Wood Chip Redistribution:**
Chips brought in by tree services will be stored in a designated area. Chips will be resold to landscapers, farms, or the general public. No on-site reprocessing is involved.

Equipment Used

- Tractor (for moving logs and chip piles)
- Log Splitter
- Standard Pickup Trucks (Class 1-5 delivery vehicles)
- No grinders, commercial sawmills, or high-decibel machinery will be used under this plan.

Traffic & Access

- Expected vehicle visits: 5 to 10 per day
- All deliveries and pickups will occur Monday-Saturday, 8 AM to 5

Noise and Environmental Impact

Firewood splitting and tractor use are limited to daylight hours. No heavy industrial noise associated with grinders or tub equipment. 300+ ft of wooded buffer surrounds operational areas, significantly reducing sound transmission.

Agricultural Classification Justification

Firewood production from logs is a recognized silvicultural/agricultural use under Georgia law. The operation involves forestry product handling without industrial manufacturing. GA Code § 1-3-3 defines agriculture to include:

"...the raising, harvesting, or processing of timber by or for the owner of the land..."

According to the Effingham County Article II- Noise Control, any noise with a sustained maximum decibel level of 80 or above, outside of an industrial zoning, shall be considered a

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violation of this article. The sound level limits by the receiving property for residential are 7:00 am-9:00 pm (60 dBA) and 9:00 pm- 7:00 am (50 dBA).

The applicant has constructed a fire plan in accordance with Effingham County Fire. A fire safety survey has been approved and inspected by the Fire Chief of Effingham County. The guidelines of Mulching facility operations are followed according to the standards of the Department of Natural Resources - Environmental Protection Division.

Comprehensive Plan:

The parcel falls within the Agricultural – Residential area on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). This prominent use of land within this area is for single-family and multifamily dwelling units organized into general categories of net densities. Residential zoning ensures that land is used appropriately for housing, considering factors like density, building types, and neighborhood character (Effingham County 2020-2040 Joint Comprehensive Plan, pg. 37).

Determination:

Staff has reviewed the application, and the application is complete with the following stipulations:

- 1. Any encroachment permit must be reviewed and obtained from Effingham County for access to Little McCall Road.**
- 2. The applicant shall obtain, and keep in good standing, an Effingham County Occupational Tax Certificate (business license).**
- 3. Hours of operation shall be limited to Monday through Saturday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, and no operations on Sundays.**
- 4. Shall not violate Article II- Noise Control Ordinance.**
- 5. Shall comply with Article II- Collection and Disposal.**
- 6. Shall comply with all State regulations from the Environmental Protection Division.**
- 7. No burning related to business activities.**
- 8. No chipping logs on site.**

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