



Staff Report

Subject: Conditional Use (First District)
Author: Kimberly Barlett
Department: Development Services
Application: CU-25-31
Meeting Date: January 20, 2026

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

Map & Parcel: 373-29

Parcel Size: 5.00 acres

Applicant: William Utter
3332 Blue Jay Road
Guyton, GA 31312

Owner(s): William Utter
3332 Blue Jay Road
Guyton, GA 31312

Location: 3332 Blue Jay Road Guyton, Ga 31312

Existing Land Use and Zoning:

The parcel totals 5.00 acres. Located on Blue Jay Road, just west of Midland Road. Currently, there is a single-family home on the property. Properties to the north, east, and west are also zoned AR-1 (Agricultural – Residential, 5 acres or more), and to the South, zoned AR-2 (Agricultural – Residential, 1 acre or more).

Ingress and egress for this property are from Blue Jay Road.

The Proposed Request:

The applicant has requested approval of a Conditional Use Permit for agritourism to operate an existing farm winery, known as Butterducks Winery. The winery is celebrating 20 years of winemaking in the county and offers tours, wine tastings, gift baskets, and special events. The current hours of operation are Friday and Saturday from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Sunday from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Per the Effingham County Code of Ordinances, permitted agritourism activities include wine tastings and tours. County staff met with the applicant during a Technical Review Committee meeting on

December 15, 2025. During this meeting, staff and the applicant discussed the agritourism ordinance requirements, the Conditional Use Permit process, and the requirement for the appropriate county business license.

The following uses are allowed within the Agritourism Business ordinance: On-farm sales, Pick your own, Agricultural crafts/ gift sales, Fee fishing/ hunting, Wildlife viewing and photography, Equine-related activities. Wagon rides, School tours, Garden/ Nursery tours, Farm Technical Demonstrations and sales (canning, weaving, soap-making, etc.), Winery tastings or tours, Corn mazes, Haunted attractions, Small, private zoological attractions or sanctuaries, Christmas tree farms.

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. The applicant shall obtain, and keep in good standing, an Effingham County Occupational Tax Certificate (business license).

