Effingham County Georgia
Planning and Zoning Services

Staff Report

Author:	Kimberly Barlett, Senior Planner
Department:	Development Services
Subject:	2nd Reading- Zoning Map Amendment
Meeting Date:	October 6, 2026
Application:	CU-26-20

Existing Zoning:	AR-1 (Agricultural–Residential, 5 acres or more)
Map & Parcel:	296A-99
Parcel Size:	±0.36 acres
Applicant /Owner:	Joseph Kelton 1668 Central Ave Guyton, GA 31312

Commissioner District: First District

Location:	122 Third Street South Guyton, GA 31312

Existing Land Use and Zoning:

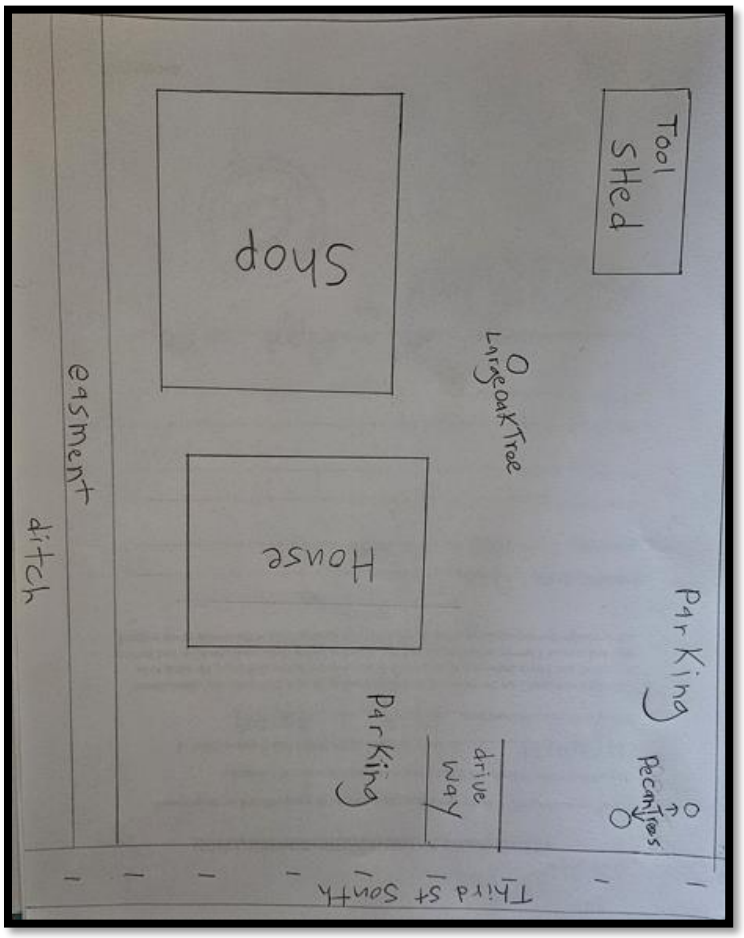
The subject parcel is located at **122 Third Street South** and contains one home and accessory structure as identified in the Effingham County Tax Assessor's database.

The subject parcel is a legal nonconforming lot of record. The parcel was created prior to the adoption of the current AR-1 zoning district standards, which require a minimum lot size of five (5) acres. The existing parcel contains approximately 0.36 acres.

Project Summary/Proposed Request:

The applicant requests **Conditional Use** approval to operate a **paint and body shop** focused on minor collision repairs and painting services. The business will be conducted in a 30 x 40 fully enclosed shop, capable of accommodating up to three vehicles. The structure will be used to store paint and related materials. The on-site residence is unoccupied and used for storage; it is not related to the proposed business.

- There will be no additional employees; the business will be owner operated.
- Services provided by appointment only.
- Up to three vehicles serviced at one time.
- Customer interaction is limited to vehicle drop-off and pick-up.
- Proposed signage: one (1) 2' x 3' sign located at the front of the property.
- Hours of operation: Monday through Saturday, 10:00 AM-7:00 PM



Automobile paint and body. A type of automotive repair service that specializes in painting, repairing, and restoring the body of vehicles. These services typically involve the cosmetic and structural restoration of a vehicle's exterior, including fixing dents, scratches, rust, and applying protective or aesthetic paint finishes.

Code Enforcement violation: There is an active case for an unlicensed business

Facts and Findings:

Site Characteristics

The subject parcel contains **0.36 acres** and includes one home and accessory structures. The parcel is rural in character and contains no known **wetlands, identified floodplains, or other environmental constraints** based on County GIS mapping.

Surrounding Development Pattern

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

The area surrounding the parcel consists primarily of rural residential homesteads and agricultural tracts and neighboring commercial properties.

Surrounding development includes:

- North of the property are rural residential homesteads (Pineora) (AR-1).
    - Automobile mechanic (B-3)
- West of the property are rural residential homesteads zoned (AR-1& AR-2).
- East of the property are rural residential homesteads (AR-1).
- South of the property are rural residential homesteads (AR-1 & AR-2)
- Southeast of the property Pineora Handi-House, Inc (B-2) & Ghas Station (B-2)



Zoning Context

The subject property is zoned AR-1**,** which permits certain low-intensity non-residential activities through the Conditional Use process. The applicant proposes to operate a business involving automobile paint & body work.

Pursuant to Effingham County Code of Ordinances **Section 4.1A – Permitted Use Table**, automobile paint & body requires a Conditional Use approval within the AR-1 district. Therefore, Conditional Use approval is required for the proposed activity.

Infrastructure and Services

The property is served by a **private well and septic system**.

Road Routes: Third Street South is a local Road with access from GA HWY 17 South, a Major Collector Road in Effingham County.

Traffic and Parking

Residents will not maintain personal vehicles on site. The only vehicles associated with the use would be the vehicles that are being serviced, which will be enclosed in the accessory structure. Trip generation and on-site parking demand are anticipated to be lower than a typical business because this is by appointment only.

Compatibility with the Surrounding Area

The proposed automobile paint and body shop may not be compatible with the surrounding agricultural-residential area due to the commercial and potentially intensive nature of the use. Typical operations—including vehicle traffic, mechanical activity, paint fumes, noise, lighting, and waste handling—could adversely affect nearby residences and the area's rural character. Compatibility would depend on appropriate conditions addressing hours of operation, buffers and screening, outdoor storage, lighting, and noise.

Intensity of Use

The proposed automobile paint and body shop represents an increase in the intensity of use compared with the surrounding agricultural-residential development. The business may generate additional customer traffic, noise, lighting, vehicle storage, mechanical activity, paint fumes, and the use and storage of potentially hazardous materials. These impacts are generally greater than those associated with residential and agricultural uses.

Comprehensive Plan:

The subject property is designated **Agricultural Residential** on the **Future Land Use Map (FLUM),** which generally supports agricultural activities and low-density residential development. However, the property is also located within a **Development Suburban Node**, where the Comprehensive Plan encourages the concentration of residential, commercial, and institutional uses to serve surrounding neighborhoods and accommodate future growth. The Development Suburban Node is intended to promote a mix of compatible land uses that support connectivity, community services, and opportunities for neighborhood-oriented commercial development. Given the property's proximity to a newly constructed elementary school, existing commercial uses, proposed commercial development, and recently developed single-family and multifamily residential neighborhoods, the requested rezoning is generally consistent with the planning objectives of the Development Suburban Node.

*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).*

*The **Development Suburban Node***

Areas designated for concentrated growth, development, and investment. It serves as a focal point for economic activity, infrastructure development, and urban expansion. Nodes are strategically chosen based on factors such as accessibility, connectivity, availability of services, and potential for sustainable growth to create vibrant and resilient communities. This area is subject to overlay node development standards.

• ***Suburban nodes*** *are areas that are developed with significant economic, social, or environmental impact. These nodes often service major commercial and industrial districts or places that attract large numbers of people and generate significant economic activity. High-impact nodes may require extensive infrastructure development and higher levels of resource use compared to rural nodes.*
(Effingham County 2020–2040 Joint Comprehensive Plan, p. 43).



Staff Summary

The proposed use request is not fully consistent with the Agricultural Residential designation on the Future Land Use Map, the subject property is located within a designated Development Suburban Node, where the Comprehensive Plan encourages a mix of residential, commercial, and institutional uses to serve the surrounding community.

Approved with the following stipulations:

1. There will be no additional employees; the business will be owner operated.
2. Services provided by appointment only.
3. Up to three vehicles serviced at one time, entirely within the shop.
4. Customer interaction is limited to vehicle drop-off and pick-up.
5. Proposed signage: one (1) 2’ x 3’ sign located at the front of the property.
6. Hours of operation: Monday through Saturday, 10:00 AM-7:00 PM