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May 7, 2025

VIA EMAIL AND US MAIL

Travis Morgan
Town of Pineville
Planning Director
PO Box 249
Pineville, NC 28134
tmorgan@pinevillenc.gov

Re: *Request for Administrative Interpretation*

Dear Mr. Morgan:

This firm represents Parkway Crossing Partners LLC and Parkway Medical Development Co LLC (the “Parkway Owners”), the owners of the parcels of real property located in the Town of Pineville (the “Town”) with the Parcel ID Nos. 22110174, 22110166, and 22111295 (the “Undeveloped Parkway Property”) which are a part of the larger development project generally referred to as Parkway Crossing (the “Project”). In accordance with Section 1.6.4., 2.1.4.(C), and 2.3.5.(A) of the Town’s Zoning Ordinance and N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160D-403(b), the purpose of this letter is to provide notice that the Parkway Owners seek an administrative interpretation which certifies that the Parkway Owners need not further extend Carolina Place Parkway to receive certificates of occupancy for development on the Undeveloped Parkway Property.

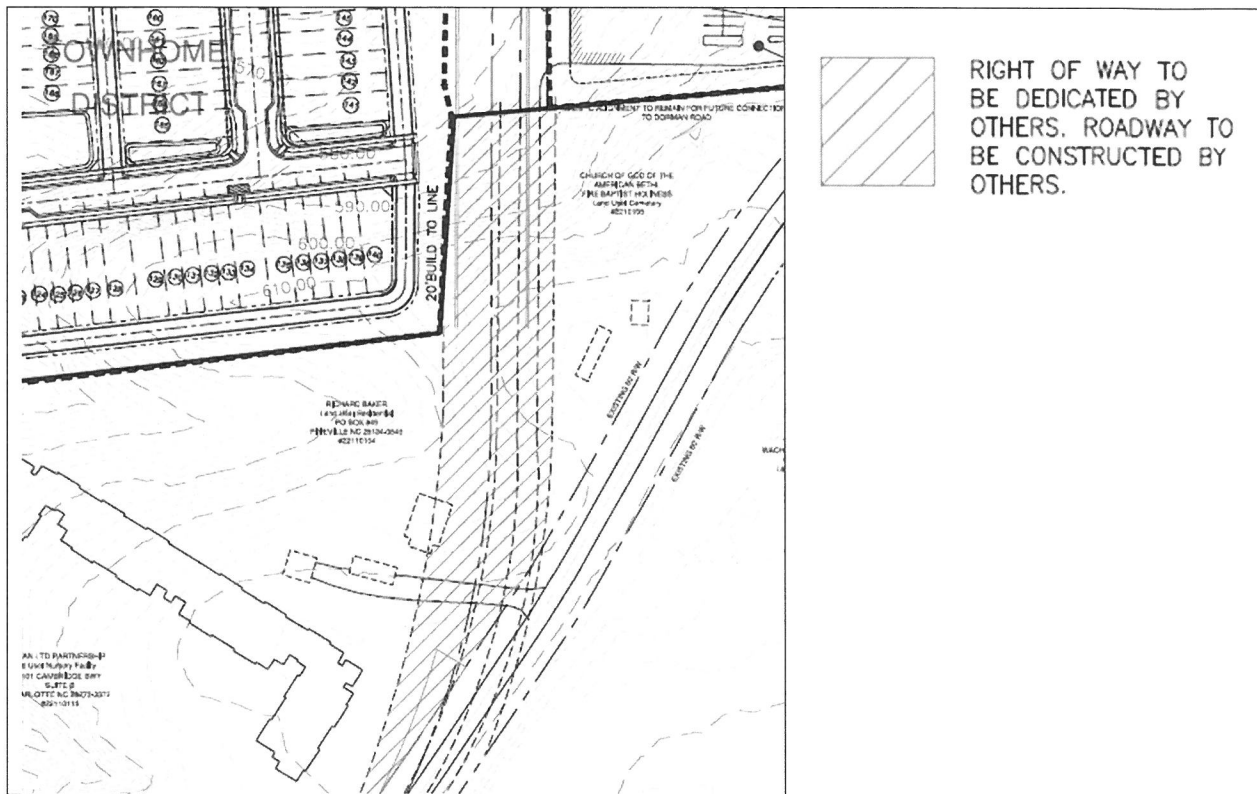
Background Facts

The Undeveloped Parkway Property is part of a larger assemblage that was rezoned from R-12 to a Business Planned Conditional District (B-PCD) in or around June 2004. The approval of that rezoning included the contemporaneous approval of the schematic site plan attached as Exhibit A (the “Site Plan”).

Under the Town’s Zoning Ordinance, the Site Plan controls the development of the land within the conditional district. *See* Zoning Ordinance § 2.6.1 (“Plans shall be binding upon approval of the owner/authorized applicant and Town Council following a public hearing and standard legislative zoning approval process. Conditional approved plans shall thereafter apply to the property regardless of changes in ownership.”). Certificates of occupancy cannot be issued unless the land is developed in conformity with the approved Site Plan. *See* Zoning Ordinance § 2.6.11.

Among other things, Sheet 1 of the Site Plan provided for (i) the dedication and construction of a new section of Carolina Place Parkway extending south of Sam Meeks Road, (ii)

the dedication and construction of a new public road (now known as Muskerry Drive) which connects that newly constructed section of Carolina Place Parkway to Dorman Road, and (iii) the abandonment of a segment of Sam Meeks Road following the establishment of the new aforementioned road segments. Sheet 1 of the Site Plan also indicated a planned future extension of Carolina Place Parkway further to the south through and beyond property owned by Bethlehem Fire Baptized Holiness Church of God of the Americas (the “Church Property”), which property was not part of the rezoning application. The Site Plan’s legend uses cross-hatching across this planned road extension through and beyond the Church Property (the “Future Off-Site Road Extension”) to indicate that it was to be “dedicated by others” and “constructed by others.” For ease of review, we have expanded and excerpted below the key which indicates that the Future Off-Site Road Extension would be dedicated and constructed by others.



The road work for the Project required by the Site Plan was completed in or around 2010 along with the construction of residential areas of the project and a medical office building in the area of the project referred to as the Village Center District. For comparison purposes, attached as Exhibit B is an aerial photograph of the property before it was rezoned and developed, and attached as Exhibit C is an aerial photograph of the property following the completion of the road work and the construction of the residential units and medical office building. Attached as Exhibit D is a March 30, 2010 letter from Richard Odynski, Assistant District Engineer for the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), confirming the completion of the required road improvements to the satisfaction of NCDOT.

The Undeveloped Parkway Property is vacant, and the Parkway Owners are considering options for moving forward with the development of those sites. To remove any uncertainty, the Parkway Owners request that you issue an administrative interpretation which confirms that (i) all

required roadwork for the Project has been completed, and (ii) certificates of occupancy to be issued for development on the Undeveloped Parkway Property are not conditioned on the completion of the Future Off-Site Road Extension.

Legal Standard

Conditional use zoning is a “rezoning decision [that] is made concurrent with the approval of a site plan.” *Summers v. City of Charlotte*, 149 N.C. App. 509, 516, 562 S.E.2d 18, 24 (2002). “This combined procedure” is “entirely a legislative act.” *Id.* In other words, a conditional use zoning approval is a “specialized form of municipal ordinance” that is subject to the “rules of construction for municipal ordinances.” *Westminster Homes, Inc. v. Town of Cary Zoning Bd. of Adjustment*, 354 N.C. 298, 303, 554 S.E.2d 634, 638 (2001).

When interpreting a municipal ordinance, the “basic rule” is to “ascertain and effectuate the intention of the municipal legislative body,” and the “best indication of the municipal legislative body’s intent is the language of the [ordinance], the spirit of the act and what the act seeks to accomplish.” *Darbo v. Old Keller Farm Prop. Owners’ Ass’n*, 174 N.C. App. 591, 594, 621 S.E.2d 281, 284 (2005). “Where the language of a[n] [ordinance] is clear and unambiguous, there is no room for judicial construction, and the courts must give [the ordinance] its plain and definite meaning, and are without power to interpolate, or superimpose, provisions and limitations not contained therein.” *Durham Green Flea Mkt. v. City of Durham*, 910 S.E.2d 365, 368 (N.C. Ct. App. 2024) (alterations in original) (quoting *Liberty Mut. Ins. Co. v. Pennington*, 356 N.C. 571, 575, 573 S.E.2d 118 (2002)).

However, if the language of an ordinance is ambiguous, the well-founded principles of statutory construction apply to ascertain the legislative intent. *Fehrenbacher v. City of Durham*, 239 N.C. App. 141, 150, 768 S.E.2d 186, 193 (2015). Under these principles, all provisions of an ordinance must be considered “as a whole” and “construed together.” *George v. Town of Edenton*, 294 N.C. 679, 684, 242 S.E.2d 877, 880 (1978). The “words and phrases” of the ordinance “may not be interpreted out of context, but must be interpreted as a composite whole so as to harmonize with other statutory provisions and effectuate legislative intent, while avoiding absurd or illogical interpretations.” *Fort v. Cty. of Cumberland*, 218 N.C. App. 401, 407, 721 S.E.2d 350, 355 (2012) (internal citation and quotation marks omitted). Where two “provisions conflict, one of which is specific or ‘particular’ and the other ‘general,’ the more specific [provision] controls in resolving any apparent conflict. *Furr v. Noland*, 103 N.C. App. 279, 281, 404 S.E.2d 885, 886 (1991) (quoting *North Carolina ex rel. Utilities Commission v. Union Elec. Membership Corp.*, 3 N.C. App. 309, 314, 164 S.E.2d 889, 892 (1968)).

Further, as the North Carolina Supreme Court has explained, “[t]he fundamental right to property is as old as our state.” *Kirby v. N.C. DOT*, 368 N.C. 847, 852-53, 786 S.E.2d 919, 923-24 (2016) (citing N.C. Const. of 1776, Declaration of Rights § XII; *Bayard v. Singleton*, 1 N.C. (Mart.) 5, 9, 3 N.C. 42, 1 Martin 48 (1787); 2 William Blackstone, Commentaries (“The third absolute right, inherent in every [man], is that of property: which consists in the free use, enjoyment, and disposal of all his acquisitions, without any control or diminution, save only by the laws of the land.”)). In light of this fundamental right, “[p]ublic policy has long favored the ‘free and unrestricted use and enjoyment of land.’” *Id.* (citing *J.T. Hobby & Son, Inc. v. Family Homes of Wake Cty., Inc.*, 302 N.C. 64, 71, 274 S.E.2d 174, 179 (1981); N.C.G.S. § 47B-1(1) (2015) (“Land . . . should be made freely alienable and marketable so far as is practicable.”)).

Accordingly, “governmental restrictions on the use of land are *construed strictly in favor of the free use of real property.*” *Morris Communs. Corp. v. City of Bessemer*, 365 N.C. 152, 157, 712 S.E.2d 868, 871 (2011) (emphasis added) (citing *Westminster Homes, Inc. v. Town of Cary Zoning Bd. of Adjust.*, 354 N.C. 298, 304, 308, 554 S.E.2d 634, 638, 640-41 (2001); *Yancey v. Heafner*, 268 N.C. 263, 266, 150 S.E.2d 440, 443 (1966) (“Zoning regulations are in derogation of common law rights and they cannot be construed to include or exclude by implication that which is not clearly their express terms.”); *In re W. P. Rose Builders’ Supply Co.*, 202 N.C. 496, 500, 163 S.E. 462, 464 (1932) (“Zoning ordinances are in derogation of the right of private property, and where exemptions appear in favor of the property owner, they should be liberally construed in favor of such owner.”); *Price v. Edwards*, 178 N.C. 493, 500, 101 S.E. 33, 37 (1919) (providing examples of statutes that derogate from common law, including those “which impose restrictions upon the control, management, use, or alienation of private property”)).

The Plain and Unambiguous Language of the Site Plan Reveals that the Site Plan does not Require Construction of the Future Off-Site Road Extension as a Condition of Further Development

In this matter, the Site Plan legend plainly and unambiguously shows that if the Future Off-Site Road Extension is to be constructed, it will be “dedicated by others” and “constructed by others.” The phrase “by others” plainly and unambiguously demonstrates that the construction of the Future Off-Site Road Extension has no bearing on the Parkway Owners’ ability to develop the Undeveloped Parkway Properties.

The Rules of Statutory Construction Reveal that the Site Plan does not Require Construction of the Future Off-Site Road Extension as a Condition of Further Development

Even assuming the language of the Site Plan is ambiguous, which the Parkway Owners deny, the Site Plan, construed as a whole, still does not require the Completion of the Future Off-Site Road Extension as a condition of developing the Undeveloped Parkway Properties.

Section (5)(c) of the Notes provides as follows:

c. THE PARTIAL EXTENSION OF CAROLINA PLACE PARKWAY AND COMPLETE CONNECTION OF THE EXTENSION TO DORMAN ROAD SHALL BE CONSTRUCTED AS A PART OF THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT. DEVELOPMENT MAY PROCEED WITHOUT THE COMPLETION OF THE EXTENSION, HOWEVER THERE SHALL NOT BE MORE THAN FIFTY (50%) PERCENT OF THE DEVELOPMENT WITH CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPANCY WITHOUT THE APPROVAL BY THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION OF THE DESIGN SOLUTION OF THE EXTENSION OF CAROLINA PLACE PARKWAY. THE REMAINING FIFTY PERCENT (50%) OF THE DEVELOPMENT SHALL NOT RECEIVE CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPANCY UNTIL THE EXTENSION OF CAROLINA PLACE PARKWAY IS BUILT AND ACCEPTED BY THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION. FIFTY PERCENT (50%) SHALL BE DETERMINED AS FOLLOWS:

1. THE COMPLETE VILLAGE DISTRICT AND SEVENTY FIVE (75) RESIDENTIAL UNITS.
2. UP TO FIFTY PERCENT OF THE COMMERCIAL VILLAGE DISTRICT AND ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FIVE (125) RESIDENTIAL UNITS.
3. THE COMPLETE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AND NO COMMERCIAL DISTRICT.

e. APPROVALS FOR ALIGNMENT AND ENGINEERING DESIGN SHALL GO THROUGH THE APPROPRIATE GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES.

Given the circumstances, the only reasonable interpretation of Section (5)(c) is that the phrases

“extension of Carolina Place Parkway” refers only to the section of that road extension located within the project (which already has been constructed), and “complete connection of the extension to Dorman Road” refers to the unnamed road segment shown on the Site Plan that connects Carolina Place Parkway to Dorman Road (which already has been constructed and is now known as Muskerrey Drive).

For the following reasons, the note cannot reasonably be interpreted to limit the number of certificates of occupancy that may be issued until the completion of the Future Off-Site Road Extension.

First, all provision of the Site Plan must be construed “strictly in favor of the free use of real property.” *Morris Communs. Corp.*, 365 N.C. at 157, 712 S.E.2d at 871. The strict construction of Section (5)(c) demonstrates that the provision only conditions the issuance of certificates of occupancy on the completion of those portions of the *on site* streets that already have been constructed. Any other interpretation of Section (5)(c) would fail to properly construe the relevant language in favor of the property owner.

Second, all provisions of the Site Plan must be construed together, and the Site Plan legend clearly provides that the Future Off-Site Road Extension would be “constructed by others.” *See George*, 294 N.C. at 684, 242 S.E.2d at 880 (ordinance provisions must be considered “as a whole” and “construed together.”). As such, Section (5)(c) must be read to mean that, since the Future Off-Site Road Extension will be “constructed by others,” the issuance of certificates of occupancy to the Parkway Owners are only conditioned on the completion of those portions of the *on site* streets that already have been constructed. To read Section (5)(c) otherwise would facially violate the principles of statutory construction by failing to harmonize Section (5)(c) with the Site Plan’s legend.

Third, the Site Plan legend’s explicit statement that the Future Off-Site Road Extension must be “constructed by others” is more specific than Section (5)(c)’s general condition. As such, the principles of statutory construction mandate that the legend’s more specific language “controls in resolving any apparent conflict.” *Furr*, 103 N.C. App. at 281, 404 S.E.2d at 886. As such, Section (5)(c) only conditions the issuance of certificates of occupancy to the Parkway Owners on the completion of those portions of the *on site* streets that already have been constructed.

Fourth, the Town already has issued more than 50% of the certificates of occupancy for the Project (half the Village District and greater than 125 residential units), showing that Section (5)(c) previously has been construed by the Town consistently with the request being made now by the Parkway Owners.

Fifth, construing Section (5)(c) so as to condition the issuance of certificates of occupancy on the *developer’s* construction of off-site improvements would render section (5)(c) an unlawful exercise of the Town’s authority. *See Schooldev E., LLC v. Town of Wake Forest*, 386 N.C. 775, 787, 909 S.E.2d 181, 191 (2024) (“[M]unicipalities lack statutory authority to compel developers to build streets or roads outside their respective subdivisions. (citing *Buckland v. Haw River*, 141 N.C. App. 460, 463, 541 S.E.2d 497 (2000) (holding that the subdivision enabling statute “does not empower municipalities to require a developer to build streets or highways *outside* its subdivision”))).

Sixth, construing Section (5)(c) so as to condition the issuance of certificates of occupancy on a neighbor's construction of off-site improvements would render section (5)(c) an unlawful delegation of permitting authority. See *Eubank v. City of Richmond*, 226 U.S. 137, 143-44 (1912); *High Rock Lake Partners, LLC v. N.C. Dep't of Transp.*, 366 N.C. 315, 321, 735 S.E.2d 300, 304-305 (2012) (recognizing the "due process rights that protect property owners from state delegations of power that give neighbors the authority to regulate the way another person uses his or her property") (citing *Wash. ex rel. Seattle Title Trust Co. v. Roberge*, 278 U.S. 116, 122 (1928); *Eubank*, 226 U.S. at 143-44); and *Wilcher v. Sharpe*, 236 N.C. 308, 311-12, 72 S.E.2d 662, 665 (1952) ("Where the effectiveness of an ordinance determining the use of property for a lawful purpose is conditioned upon the assent or permission of private persons, . . . it must be held invalid, as it involves the delegation of legislative power to private individuals.").

Seventh, it would be absurd and illogical for the Town to interpret section (5)(c) as conditioning the issuance of certificates of occupancy on the construction of off-site improvements because such an interpretation would presume the Town intended to act unlawfully and unconstitutionally. See *Fort*, 218 N.C. App. at 407, 721 S.E.2d at 355 (explaining that ordinances must be interpreted to "avoid[] absurd or illogical interpretations"); *Wynn v. Frederick*, 385 N.C. 576, 594, 895 S.E.2d 371, 385 (2023) ("In reading statutes, this Court presumes that the legislature acts with awareness of the law."); *Smith v. Keator*, 285 N.C. 530, 534, 206 S.E.2d 203, 206 (1974) ("Where a statute or ordinance is susceptible to two interpretations—one constitutional and one unconstitutional—the Court should adopt the interpretation resulting in a finding of constitutionality."). In light of the Sixth and Seventh points stated above, the only way to interpret Section (5)(c) as conditioning the issuance of certificates of occupancy on the construction of off-site improvements would be to presume that the Town intended to act unconstitutionally and without awareness of the law. Since such an interpretation would directly violate the principles of statutory construction, the Town must avoid it.

Conclusion

For the reasons described above, the Parkway Owners respectfully request that you issue an administrative interpretation within the next thirty (30) days which confirms (i) that the roadwork for the project allowed by the Site Plan has been completed, and (ii) that certificates of occupancy for development on the Undeveloped Parkway Property are not conditioned on the completion of the Future Off-Site Road Extension.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, or if you would like to schedule a pre-application meeting under Section 2.3.5.(C) of the Zoning Ordinance, we trust that you will let us know at your earliest convenience.

Very Truly Yours,



Jeffrey L. Roether

Enclosures

cc: William J. Brian, Jr., Esq.
Hunter Winstead, Esq.

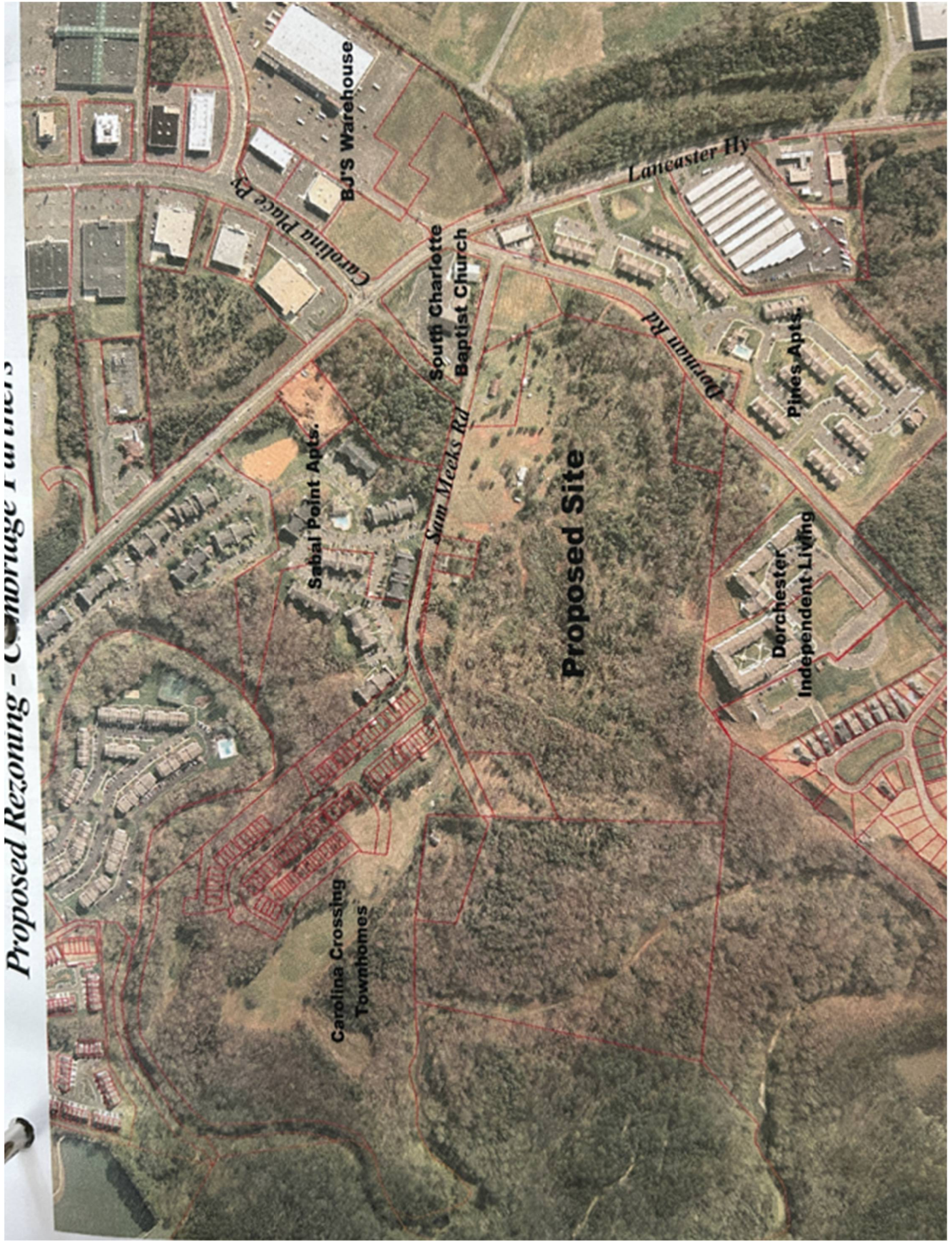
EXHIBIT

A

EXHIBIT

B

Proposed Rezoning - Conduage Farmers



EXHIBIT

C



EXHIBIT

D



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE
GOVERNOR

EUGENE A. CONTI, JR.
SECRETARY

March 30, 2010

Division 10
District 2

Angela Marshall
New Forum
2127 Ayrsley Town Blvd, Suite 201
Charlotte, NC 28273

Dear Mrs. Marshall,

The associated road improvements for the Parkway Crossing project have been inspected. The project included improvements to the intersections of Dorman Rd and Muskertry Dr, Carolina Place Pkwy and Lancaster Hwy, Dorman Rd and Lancaster Hwy, Dorman Rd and Sam Meeks Rd, and Sam Meeks Rd and Carolina Place Pkwy. The project has been completed and no deficiencies were found.

If you have any questions about this please contact me at 704-596-6900.

Sincerely,

Richard Odynski, EI
Assistant District Engineer