



REZONING

FILE: RZ25-05-03

Rezoning-C-2/R-4 to S-1

Property Information	
Tax Map/Parcel ID	Tax Map 024 portion of Parcel 057
Address/Location	off Ridge Road
Acreage (+/-)	10.62 +/- acre portion
Current Zoning	C-2 (General Commercial) & R-4 (Recreational Residential)
Current Use	Undeveloped
Request	Rezoning to S-1 (Special) for a proposed boat & RV storage facility
Commission District	District 3 (Carraway)
Recommendation	Disapproval

Summary and Recommendation

Owner Mary Godwin and applicant Jacob Glover request a rezoning from a split zoned C-2 (General Commercial) and R-4 (Recreational Residential) to S-1 (Special) for property located off Ridge Road, Tax map 024 portion of Parcel 057, 10.62 +/- acre portion, and currently split zoned C-2 (General Commercial) and R-4 (Recreational Residential). The applicant proposes a boat & RV storage facility and has included a narrative, conceptual plan, and exterior materials concepts.

The subject portion of property is located on the north side of the intersection of Ridge Road and Washington Road. Property to the north and east is zoned R-4, property to the south is zoned R-4 and R-A (Residential Agricultural), and property to the west is zoned C-2 and R-4. The portion of property zoned C-2 is approximately 2 acres with the remainder being zoned R-4.

The applicant requests the rezoning for a proposed boat & RV storage facility on a 10.62 +/- acre portion of the site. Per the provided conceptual plan and narrative, the site would include both fully enclosed, climate-controlled storage and covered storage. The plan shows approximately 52,500 square feet of enclosed storage, 21,000 square feet of covered storage, and approximately 65 additional stalls for RV's and boats and additional jet ski storage. Per the narrative and provided materials concept, these enclosed structures will be built with insulated metal panels to maintain internal climate control and finished in black or neutral tones to reduce visibility from nearby roads and properties. All buildings and covered parking areas will have a concrete foundation with interior drive aisles utilizing compacted crush material, as in gravel, for durability and drainage. The narrative also notes that lighting will utilize motion sensors to reduce light pollution, be downward facing to prevent spillover into adjacent properties, and will show that the lighting plan will meet a zero footcandle reading at the property line. Access to the site is proposed to be controlled by remote-access entry gates with access from two points on Ridge Road. In terms of landscaping and buffering, the concept plan shows the proposed 20-foot structural buffer along Washington Road and Ridge Road, as well as the proposed 50-foot undisturbed buffer to adjacent property to the north and east. A fence is also proposed within



REZONING

FILE: RZ25-05-03

Rezoning-C-2/R-4 to S-1

that buffer. Building setbacks are noted as 60 feet from Washington Road, 25 feet from Ridge Road, and 20 feet from adjacent property, but staff must note that the buffers will override the proposed 20 foot setback against the adjacent property. Lastly, the applicant notes that they have included an office space for a first responder substation within the facility, but no formal request has been made to local law enforcement, fire, or EMS.

The applicant has also provided commentary that the request should be approved because it reduces traffic impacts compared to the existing zoning, meets and exceeds all county setback and buffer requirements, maintains the natural aesthetics of the area, and strengthens public safety through controlled access, fencing, surveillance, and a proactive offer to provide space for a substation. The applicant also cites the location of the project in close proximity to the lake at the intersection of Ridge Road and Washington Road which is used to access nearby parks, campgrounds, and the lake.

Overall, the applicant has proposed a site design that addresses typical concerns for a storage project. County Code would require the same buffer along the street and would be a 40 foot buffer against the residential properties if the property was utilizing C-3 (Heavy Commercial) zoning. However, it wouldn't be undisturbed if this were zoned with a standard classification. Basically, any modern storage facility will be fully enclosed and gated, so there is no difference there. Lighting can be a concern and the applicant has addressed it in a manner that typically works. Lastly, the applicant has provided exterior concepts for the site, showing both building and site features with inspiration imagery. While no actual elevations have been provided, the site does appear to be in the Class A space that is referenced in the narrative.

Looking at existing boat storage in the surrounding area, it is either part of the Army Corps of Engineers property itself (see the boat storage and marina at the end of Old Lincolnton Road as an example), located in very close proximity to the lake (Little River Marine located at 4222 Old Lincolnton), or is located along a major corridor such as Washington Road with direct access to that corridor (see several in close proximity to this proposal). There are also several existing boat storage facilities in this area that have yet to fully built out (boat storage located at the intersection of Washington Road & Old Lincolnton Road for example) or have been started (see 6611 Washington Road as an example). However, while these sites may have been intended for boat storage, several are old enough that they do not have the corresponding conditional use that would be required today in order to allow them to be developed as currently zoned, so there would be a similar step to this request in order to continue with those developments. However, the intent is clear that there are several parcels that are vacant that are intended or were intended for development of a similar use.

Another factor to consider is that this property is on the edge of the Lake Neighborhood Character Area on the Vision 2035 Future Development Map. The Rural Character Area starts on the southern side of Ridge Road after you cross Washington Road from this property, but it also has a Rural Community Crossroads located approximately 760 feet to the north starting at 6564 Washington Road and going north along Washington Road. However, the Lake Neighborhood Area primarily comprises large-lot single family residential properties and is positioned near regional and state parks which offer direct access to camping, fishing, boating, and other activities associated with the lake. The intent of this Area is to create and preserve established low density residential patterns in the vicinity of the lake, maintain the natural landscape, and enhance the economic and tourism value associated with this natural resource. The primary future land uses include single family residential, passive recreation such as greenways and trails, parks and campgrounds, civic uses such as houses of worship, nature centers



REZONING

FILE: RZ25-05-03

Rezoning-C-2/R-4 to S-1

and preserves, and boating and lake tourism-related commercial uses that support the local neighborhood and tourism to include marinas and boat and RV storage as a special use only.

While the use is noted as a special use only within the Character Area, the current development pattern in the surrounding area is that boat and RV storage within this Area is located immediately adjacent to the lake (Little River Marine on Old Lincolnton Road) or is an older facility that existed well before this Character Area like the one located at 6444 Ridge Road. Boat and RV storage is primarily located within the Rural Community Crossroads to the north in this case. While there is the ability to extend a Crossroads within the Vision 2035 Comprehensive Plan, this Crossroads, as noted above, has not been developed out at this point, so staff does not see a rationale to bring it further south to encompass this site. Further, while the use is noted as a potential special use within the Area, staff is hesitant to recommend its approval on the periphery of the Character Area in a dissimilar manner to existing sites. Due to these factors, the request does not meet the intent of the Vision 2035 Future Development Map.

While the applicant does propose a plan that strives to mitigate the issues presented by a boat & RV storage facility, due to the reasoning outlined above, staff recommends **disapproval** of the request for a rezoning from a split zoned C-2 (General Commercial) and R-4 (Recreational Residential) to S-1 (Special) for property located off Ridge Road, Tax map 024 portion of Parcel 057, 10.62 +/- acre portion, and currently split zoned C-2 (General Commercial) and R-4 (Recreational Residential) for a proposed boat and RV storage facility.

Interdepartmental Review

A copy of this staff report, including a list of all recommended zoning conditions, is sent to the applicant and owner of the property in question prior to the public hearing.

Comments:

Broadband:

The Columbia County Community Broadband Utility (C3BU) has underground fiber optic cable within the designated utility easement. The relocation, burial, or movement of the broadband's fiber optic cable by property owners, developers, or subcontractors is strictly prohibited. Any activities pertaining to the positioning or lowering of the cable's conduit must be directly coordinated with C3BU. The developer assumes full responsibility for any expenses incurred in relation to the relocation of the cable or conduit, including any additional construction costs. Should the fiber optic cable or conduit sustain damage during construction activities such as ground grading or excavation caused by the property owner, developers, or subcontractors, they will be held accountable for the cost of necessary repairs and any subsequent loss of revenue.

Building Standards:

All new construction or renovation work must meet all applicable codes and amendments adopted by Columbia County, GA. These include but not limited to the International Building Code, International Fire Code, National Electrical Code, International Mechanical Code, International Fuel Gas Code,



REZONING

FILE: RZ25-05-03

Rezoning-C-2/R-4 to S-1

International Plumbing Code, Life Safety Code, Existing Building Code, Swimming Pool and Spa Code and Columbia County ordinances.

Board of Education:

No comments or conditions.

Environmental:

As per FEMA FIRM 13073C0040D, dated 09/19/2007, this property contains X Zone.

State Waters may be present on the property. There is an established 25-foot buffer from the edge of wretched vegetation along all state waters. Any disturbances to the 25-foot buffer must be approved by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division prior to such disturbance taking place.

Wetlands and Waters of the U.S. may be present on the property. If wetlands are present on the property, Columbia County strongly encourages that an Aquatic Resources Delineation Verification (ARDV) be procured from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for this project. If any disturbances to the wetlands or waters of the U.S. are proposed, Columbia County will require the Aquatic Resources Delineation Verification be accompanied by correspondence from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers stating permit coverage has been obtained or permit coverage is not needed.

Environmental Compliance:

No comments or conditions.

Fire Department:

Reviewed with no concerns.

Fire Marshal:

All new developments, new and existing buildings, structures, premises, and building rehabilitation must meet all applicable codes and amendments adopted by Columbia County, GA. These include but are not limited to the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Chapter 120-3-3, the International Fire Code, including Appendix D, the NFPA 101 Life Safety Code, and the GA Accessibility Code, 120-3-20. Special attention should be given to the required Fire Service Features, Fire Apparatus Access Roads, and ADA.

Health Department:

If there is to be a RV dump station or employee bathroom onsite, a level III soil report will be required.

Planning:

Conditions supplement but do not eliminate other code requirements which pertain to site development. No variances from Code have been expressed or implied. In case of conflicts, the more restrictive item shall prevail over the less restrictive item.

Stormwater Management:

1. The site improvements will disturb more than one acre, therefore the proper NPDES permit and associated fees must be submitted to the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) and Columbia County 14 days prior to land disturbance.



REZONING

FILE: RZ25-05-03

Rezoning-C-2/R-4 to S-1

2. Stormwater detention will be required unless site improvements result in no net increase in runoff.
3. Stormwater Quality will be required.

Pre-Construction:

No comments or conditions.

Traffic Engineering:

No comments or conditions.

Water & Sewer

County water is available to this parcel. County sewer is not available.

Criteria for Evaluation of Rezoning Proposal

1. **Whether the zoning proposal will permit a use that is suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property.**

The subject portion of property is located on the north side of the intersection of Ridge Road and Washington Road. Property to the north and east is zoned R-4, property to the south is zoned R-4 and R-A (Residential Agricultural), and property to the west is zoned C-2 and R-4. The portion of property zoned C-2 is approximately 2 acres with the remainder being zoned R-4. There are existing boat storage facilities located somewhat nearby, but as noted above, staff is not in favor of recommending approval of this case based on its location.

2. **Whether the zoning proposal will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent of nearby property.**

As noted, the applicant has addressed many of the common issues typically associated with a boat & RV storage facility with their concept plan. Due to these factors, it could be construed that the proposal will not adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent property. However, staff is recommending to disapprove the request based on the Vision 2035 Future Development Map.

3. **Whether the property to be affected by the zoning proposal cannot or should not be used as currently zoned.**

The property is currently split zoned which does present its own challenges with a combination of commercial and residential zoning on the property. Staff does typically advocate for a single zoning classification on a property or a subdivision of land where the uses are more clearly separated as well. However, this does not mean that the property should not be used as currently zoned, but it does make it more difficult than other properties in the area.

4. **Whether the zoning proposal will result in a use which will or could cause an excessive or burdensome use of public facilities or services, including but not limited to, existing streets and transportation facilities, water or sewer utilities, police or fire protection, or schools.**



REZONING

FILE: RZ25-05-03

Rezoning-C-2/R-4 to S-1

It is not anticipated that the proposed use will or could cause an excessive or burdensome use of existing streets or transportation facilities, water or sewer utilities, police or fire protection, or schools.

5. Whether the zoning proposal is compatible with the purpose and intent of the Vision 2035 Comprehensive Plan

The subject property is on the edge of the Lake Neighborhood Character Area on the Vision 2035 Future Development Map. The Rural Character Area starts on the southern side of Ridge Road after you cross Washington Road from this property, but it also has a Rural Community Crossroads located approximately 760 feet to the north starting at 6564 Washington Road and going north along Washington Road. However, the Lake Neighborhood Area primarily comprises large-lot single family residential properties and is positioned near regional and state parks which offer direct access to camping, fishing, boating, and other activities associated with the lake. The intent of this Area is to create and preserve established low density residential patterns in the vicinity of the lake, maintain the natural landscape, and enhance the economic and tourism value associated with this natural resource. The primary future land uses include single family residential, passive recreation such as greenways and trails, parks and campgrounds, civic uses such as houses of worship, nature centers and preserves, and boating and lake tourism-related commercial uses that support the local neighborhood and tourism to include marinas and boat and RV storage as a special use only.

While the use is noted as a special use only within the Character Area, the current development pattern in the surrounding area is that boat and RV storage within this Area is located immediately adjacent to the lake (Little River Marine on Old Lincolnton Road) or is a much older facility that existed well before this Character Area like the one located at 6444 Ridge Road. Boat and RV storage is primarily located within the Rural Community Crossroads to the north in this case. While there is the ability to extend a Crossroads within the Vision 2035 Comprehensive Plan, this Crossroads, as noted above, has not been developed out at this point, so staff does not see a rationale to bring it further south to encompass this site. Further, while the use is noted as a potential special use within the Area, staff is hesitant to recommend its approval on the periphery of the Character Area in a dissimilar manner to existing sites. Due to these factors, the request does not meet the intent of the Vision 2035 Future Development Map.

6. Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property which give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the zoning proposal.

See staff recommendation above. Staff is not aware of any existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property which give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the zoning proposal.

7. Whether the proposal reflects a reasonable balance between the promotion of health, safety, and welfare against the right to unrestricted use of property.

The proposal does not reflect a reasonable balance between the promotion of health, safety, and welfare against the right to unrestricted use of property.