

**SPECIAL USE APPROVAL  
OCONEE COUNTY, GEORGIA**

**TITLE**

A Resolution granting Special Use Approval, as provided by the Unified Development Code of Oconee County, Georgia, pursuant to Article 12, Division I et seq.

**ENACTMENT CLAUSE**

Pursuant to the authority conferred by the Constitution and Laws of the State of Georgia and after consideration of an application for special use approval submitted by Smith Planning Group, on June 20, 2022 requesting Special Use Approval on a ±37.8 acre tract of land located at 1640 New High Shoals Road and 1590 New High Shoals Road, Oconee County, Georgia, (tax parcel no. B-06-040C and B-06-040A), on property owned by Westminster Christian Academy, the Board of Commissioners of Oconee County does hereby grant following:

**SECTION 1.** A Resolution granting Special Use Approval for the property described above and on the attached Exhibit A is hereby granted for private school use in AG zoning.

Said Special Use Approval is subject to the following conditions as set forth in "Exhibit A" attached hereto.

**SECTION 2.** Severability. It is intended that the provisions of this Resolution be severable and should any portion be held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect any other portion of the Resolution.

**SECTION 3.** Repeal of Conflicting Resolutions or Ordinances. All Resolutions or Ordinances and parts or sections of Resolutions or Ordinances in conflict with this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

**SECTION 4.** Effective Date. This Resolution shall take effect this date.

Said Special Use Approval application was submitted to the Oconee County Planning Commission and a Public Hearing was duly held by same on October 17, 2022, and a Public Hearing was held by the Oconee County Board of Commissioners at its regular meeting on November 1, 2022.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED, this 1<sup>st</sup> day of November, 2022.

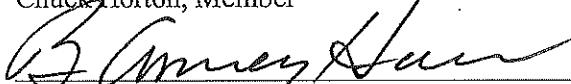
**OCONEE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

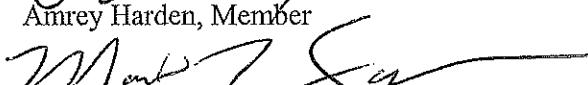
BY:

  
John Daniell, Chairman

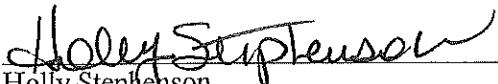
  
Mark Thomas, Member

  
Chuck Horton, Member

  
Amrey Harden, Member

  
Mark Saxon, Member

ATTEST:

  
Holly Stephenson  
Clerk, Board of Commissioners

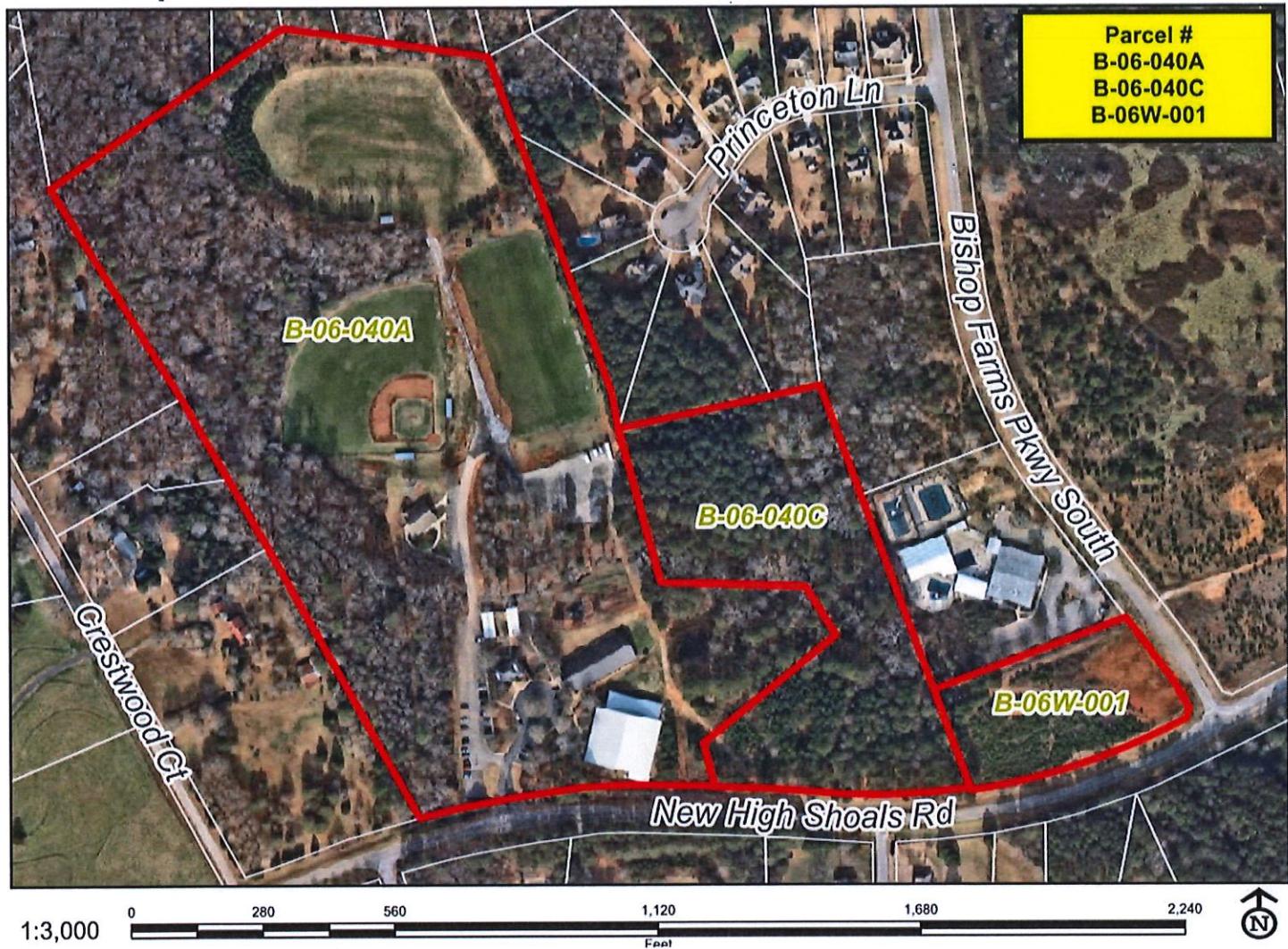
**CONDITIONS**

1. Development design and structures shall meet or exceed the standards indicated on the concept plan, narrative, representative architectural sketches, and other documents submitted with the zoning application and attached hereto. This condition shall not construe approval of any standard that is not in conformity with the Unified Development Code.
2. The owner, all at owner's expense, shall construct the improvements required by the County for public water and public waste water services for subject property and shall convey same to the County, free of all liens. Said improvements shall include all on-site improvements and such off-site improvements as are required by the County to provide service to subject property.
3. At its expense, Owner shall make all right of way improvements and shall dedicate all rights of way which are required by the County after the County's review of Owner's development plans pursuant to the County's ordinances and regulations. All such improvements shall be shown on the preliminary site plan and site development plans for the project and no development permit shall be issued until Owner has agreed to such improvements and dedication.
4. Site lighting shall be fully oriented towards the interior of the site so as not to impose glare or objectionable light levels onto adjacent public roads and the neighboring residential properties. Light levels shall be less than one foot candles at all property lines.
5. The use of central loudspeakers and public address systems shall be prohibited outside of normal daytime hours of operation of the school.
6. No outdoor recreation or entertainment operation shall be allowed between the hours of 11:00 PM and 8:00 AM.
7. No dumpster or trash receptacle shall be emptied between 7:00 PM and 7:00 AM. Dumpsters and trash receptacles shall be located where they are not visible from adjacent properties and shall be adequately screened from view from all streets.
8. A 25 foot wide screening buffer shall be constructed between any proposed parking area or athletic field which adjoins a residential use. Said buffer shall be a mix of evergreen trees and shrubs with a minimum height of 6 feet at the time of planting.
9. A school zone shall be established on New High Shoals Road using flashing school beacons. The flashing school beacons shall be installed in accordance with Oconee County standards at the owner's expense. Ownership and maintenance responsibility of the school beacons shall be conveyed to Oconee County along with any other improvements within the right-of-way.

EXHIBIT "A" TO SPECIAL USE APPROVAL #P22-0154  
Page 2 of 19

TAX MAP

Special Use # P22-0154 - Westminster Christian Academy, Inc.



**EXHIBIT "A" TO SPECIAL USE APPROVAL #P22-0154**  
Page 3 of 19

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

**PROPERTY OF WESTMINSTER CHRISTIAN ACADEMY, INC.**

Legal Description to Accompany Conditional Use Application to Oconee County

All that tract or parcel of land containing 43.418 acres, more or less, situated, lying in the 221st G.M. District, Oconee County, Georgia, and being more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at a point along the northern Right-of-Way of New High Shoals Road, which is the point of beginning,

Thence North 29 degrees 55 minutes 54 seconds West 633.89 feet to a point,  
Thence North 29 degrees 55 minutes 54 seconds West 365.23 feet to a point,  
Thence North 29 degrees 55 minutes 54 seconds West 524.96 feet to a point,  
Thence North 09 degrees 57 minutes 29 seconds West 18.32 feet to a point,  
Thence North 55 degrees 48 minutes 17 seconds East 418.22 feet to a point,  
Thence North 55 degrees 43 minutes 59 seconds East 179.83 feet to a point,  
Thence South 82 degrees 16 minutes 58 seconds East 119.59 feet to a point,  
Thence South 82 degrees 16 minutes 57 seconds East 107.58 feet to a point,  
Thence South 82 degrees 17 minutes 11 seconds East 107.56 feet to a point,  
Thence South 82 degrees 19 minutes 29 seconds East 108.28 feet to a point,  
Thence South 20 degrees 06 minutes 10 seconds East 755.43 feet to a point,  
Thence South 10 degrees 28 minutes 22 seconds East 77.97 feet to a point,  
Thence North 78 degrees 03 minutes 57 seconds East 438.62 feet to a point,  
Thence South 20 degrees 30 minutes 03 seconds East 248.97 feet to a point,  
Thence South 20 degrees 29 minutes 59 seconds East 439.27 feet to a point,  
Thence North 69 degrees 30 minutes 01 seconds East 435.42 feet to a point,  
Thence South 37 degrees 04 minutes 35 seconds East 134.65 feet to a point,  
Thence along a curve with a chord of South 30 degrees 48 minutes 40 seconds East 100.40 feet, an arc length of 100.60 feet, and a radius of 460.00 feet to a point,  
Thence South 19 degrees 28 minutes 36 seconds West 21.71 feet to a point,  
Thence South 62 degrees 32 minutes 34 seconds West 15.55 feet to a point,  
Thence along a curve with a chord of South 71 degrees 59 minutes 44 seconds West 462.86 feet, an arc length of 464.97 feet, and a radius of 1409.12 feet to a point,  
Thence along a curve with a chord of South 86 degrees 40 minutes 55 seconds West 253.54 feet, an arc length of 253.88 feet, and a radius of 1409.12 feet to a point,  
Thence North 88 degrees 16 minutes 49 seconds West 353.65 feet to a point,  
Thence North 87 degrees 16 minutes 03 seconds West 0.18 feet to a point,  
Thence North 87 degrees 16 minutes 03 seconds West 45.16 feet to a point,  
Thence along a curve with a chord of North 83 degrees 28 minutes 20 seconds East 544.76 feet, an arc length of 546.75 feet, and a radius of 1850.00 feet to a point,  
Which is the point of beginning.

## **NARRATIVE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Westminster Christian Academy (WCA), a Christian college-preparatory institution, partners with Christian families in the spiritual nurture and academic training of students. WCA strives to develop students who are Christian thinkers, hold a biblical worldview, have acquired the knowledge and skills to master advanced studies, possess the tools necessary to become lifelong learners, and ultimately, use their gifts in service to God as they participate in the restoration of society and culture.

In 1989, WCA held its first class in a rented space at Faith Presbyterian Church in Watkinsville, GA. That class consisted of one teacher and a combined student body of 12 first-, second-, and third-grade students. A new grade level was added each subsequent year until the school had a complete PK-12 program.

In the fall of 1998, the school purchased 30 acres of land in Oconee County and completed the first phase of development at its present New High Shoals Road location. In 2012, WCA purchased an additional 10 acres of land to further develop for its expanding student body. After an approved SUP plan in 2017 to incorporate the added 10 acres and develop a new master plan, WCA has been working to raise funds for the proposed campus expansion and infrastructure. In 2020 - 2021, plans were prepared and sent to bid, but due to rapid inflation, costs were over 50% the estimated fee.

The immediate need is classroom space. During COVID, the student population was growing while social distancing was challenging. WCA has added modular classrooms to help, but that is unsustainable. After evaluation, it became evident that to grow sustainably and excellently, the master plan needed to be revisited to minimize initial infrastructure costs and maximize solving the immediate need for classrooms as well as peak hour traffic and internal circulation.

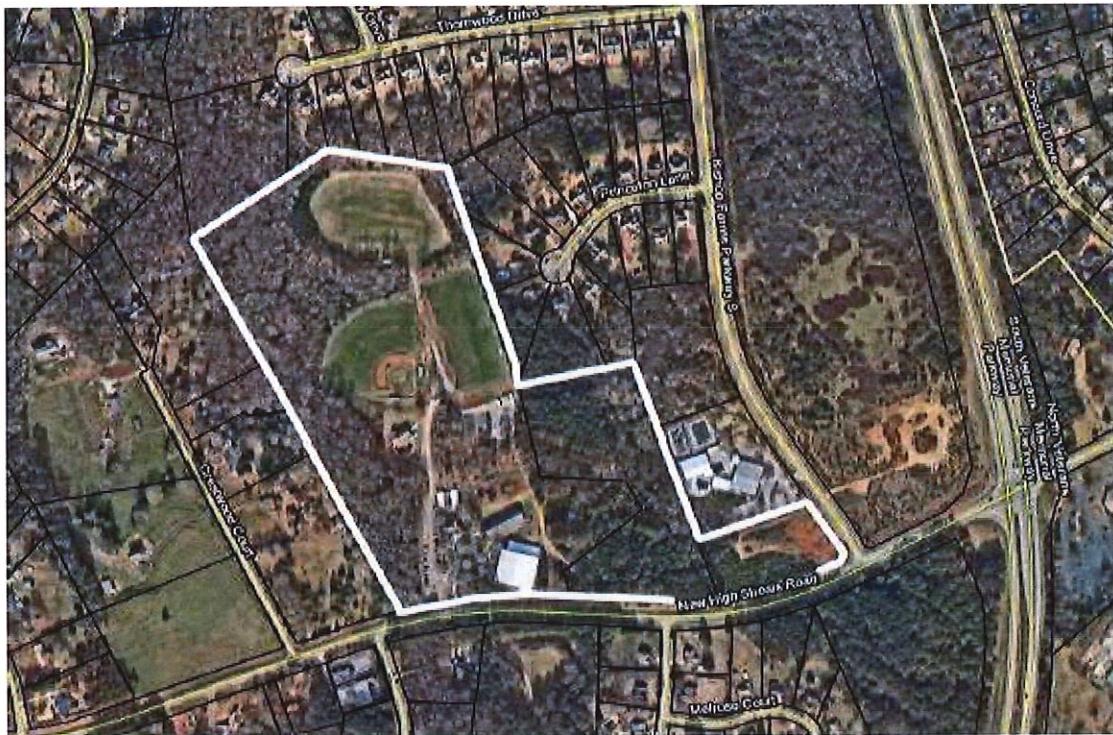
The proposed solution was found in the purchase of the vacant adjacent lot at the northwest corner of S Bishop Farms Parkway and New High Shoals Road. The result was the flexibility to add buildings along New High Shoals Road that gravity sewer into the existing lift station, tie in to the existing 10" water line on along the southern boundary of the campus, minimize the road improvement costs while providing enhanced circulation, delay the need for installing a private lift station, preserve more existing tree canopy, and greatly reduce utility and stormwater management costs.

A Special Use Permit Master Plan was approved in 2017. To update the WCA master plan with Oconee County, a Special Use Permit (SUP) for the AG property and 2 rezone applications are being submitted concurrently. The SUP would allow private school in the reconfigured AG zoning and rezoning portions of the AG, R-1, and B-1 parcels to O-I-P (with a future replat) would assure the 5-acre minimum parcel size for private school is met.

### **SITE DESCRIPTION**

The existing 43.42-acre campus (with the recently acquired 2.68-acre tract at the corner of Bishop Farms Parkway and New High Shoals Road), has approximately 1,650 linear feet of street frontage along New High Shoals Road, less than a half-mile west of the New High Shoals Road and US-441 / Veterans Memorial Parkway intersection. The existing campus consists of an arrangement of three (3) buildings (administrative, classroom, and a combined gymnasium / classroom) oriented around the student loading and unloading zone roundabout. One additional building, an athletic field house / classroom, exists towards the back of the site, adjacent to the baseball, soccer, and practice fields. The total building area is approximately 35,000 sf. with 23 classrooms. The existing access to WCA's campus is from New High Shoals Road, leading to the student loading / unloading zone roundabout as well as access to a +/- 100 space parking lot. Vehicular circulation continues through the site, crossing a stream and terminating at a gravel parking lot that functions as overflow parking for athletic events.

**NARRATIVE**



Approximately 12 acres (40%) of the site has remained undisturbed. The vegetation of the undisturbed open space is composed of large, mature hardwoods and pines. The area contains a stream that bisects the 42.43-acre site before merging with a creek that meanders along the western property line. Another perennial stream with a narrow channel runs approximately 300 linear feet along the northern half of the site, between the existing baseball field and practice field, before feeding the larger creek on the western property line.

**ZONING**

To meet future growth needs, Westminster Christian Academy plans to utilize and expand across their three contiguous properties, including a recently purchased 2.68-acre parcel (#B06W001) at the northwest corner of S Bishop Farms Pkwy and New High Shoals Road.

The existing zoning classifications for the three contiguous parcels are AG (Special Use), R-1, and B-1. To better align with the goals of the campus and the adjacent property zoning, as well as simplify the campus zoning, companion rezone applications and an SUP application are being submitted concurrently. The first of the rezone applications requests to rezone the entirety of the B-1 parcel and portions of the R-1 and AG (Special Use) parcels to O-I-P. This better aligns with the zoning of the surrounding property and associated land uses.

The second rezone application requests to rezone the remaining portion of the R-1 parcel to AG (Special Use), as this is majority of the existing campus and is generally adjacent to residential properties. Only the AG (Special Use)-zoned land will be included with the Special Use Plan application, as private school is a use-by-right in O-I-P zoning. The three parcels will ultimately be replatted and reduced to two total parcels, to align with the new boundaries of the rezone applications.

**EXHIBIT "A" TO SPECIAL USE APPROVAL #P22-0154**  
Page 6 of 19

**NARRATIVE**

The proposed zoning boundary areas are as follows:

- O-I-P: +/-5.6 acres
- AG: +/-37.8 acres (**Special Use Permit Application**)

The total area included in the proposed zoning is 43.42 acres.

Properties adjacent to the site are zoned as follows:

North: R-1

West: AG

South: R-1, AG (across New High Shoals Road)

East: R-1, B-1 and O-I-P



**DETAILS OF PROPOSED USE**

Westminster Christian Academy, as illustrated on the accompanying Special Use Concept Plan and described in other supporting documents, proposes to expand their campus in the newly acquired 2.68-acre site and revise the Special Use Permit on the existing 40-acre campus to combine the layout and circulation of the existing and proposed campus. The proposed campus expansion will bring with it a new campus center, a secondary entrance off Bishop Farms Parkway, and a new centrally located drop-off and pick-up location. The proposed plan includes a variety of structures and common uses for an academic campus, such as multi-purpose administration/classroom buildings, parking, a student activity center, a 6-lane track and sports field, and open spaces for recreational and social opportunities. The entirety of the proposed development (including all structures) will be owned, operated, and maintained by WCA.

## **NARRATIVE**

### **BUILDING PROGRAM, COST DATA, AND SEQUENCE OF CONSTRUCTION**

The new buildings are proposed to be constructed over time per school growth needs and as funding becomes available. Initial construction is expected to begin in the next 12-18 months. The following is a brief description of the various buildings and uses proposed:

- New Lower School: +/- 20,000 sf
- Student Activity Center (administration, library, cafeteria, assembly hall): +/-30,000 sf
- Future Gymnasium: +/-20,000 sf
- Additional Flex Classroom Space: +/- 5,000 sf
- Concession / restroom buildings to support the recreation facilities: +/-3,000 sf

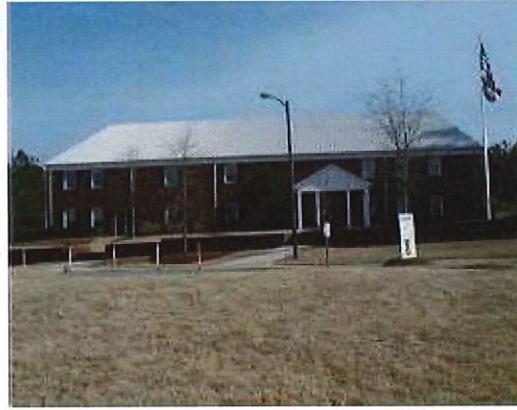
### **ESTIMATED VALUE OF THE PROJECT AT COMPLETION**

\$20,000,000.00

### **ARCHITECTURE / THEME OF PROJECT**

The existing campus architecture is a traditional style with red brick walls, highlighted with white column porches at building entries. The administrative and classroom buildings are ranch-style with pitched shingled roofs, overhanging eaves, and equally spaced multi-paned windows and doors. The largest building, the gymnasium and classroom building, is a two-story structure with a brick and metal exterior and gable roof.

Existing Buildings:



The proposed architecture for the campus expansion matches the traditional style, incorporating architectural elements of the existing buildings. The proposed architecture style will incorporate brick and siding detailing, tapered columns, single dormers, low-pitched gabled metal roofs, and earth-tone colors.

Outdoor recreational facilities to be provided on campus include but may not be limited to sidewalks and walking trails, pedestrian bridges, a track and field, outdoor amphitheater, and other outdoor education components. The site is proposed to be aesthetically landscaped with provisions for numerous sitting and gathering areas and a variety of both edible and ornamental gardens. The existing stream bisecting the campus will become a prominent landscape amenity that is preserved and enhanced with a proposed focal pedestrian bridge linking movement throughout campus.

## **NARRATIVE**

### **TEMPORARY CLASSROOM BUILDINGS**

To provide ample classroom space, three (3) temporary modular classroom units exist on site. The modular units are located near the existing administration building.

This Special Use Application requests two (2) additional temporary modular classroom units. These additional modulars will be placed within the existing campus, in a location with flat grades, proximity to existing pedestrian walkways, and that meet setback requirements. Approval of the additional units would allow for a total of five (5) temporary modular classrooms.

Upon obtaining a certificate of occupancy for a new classroom building, all modular classroom units will be removed from the WCA site.

### **ACCESS AND TRAFFIC**

Currently WCA has one entrance accessed from New High Shoals Road. The driveway is equipped with a 215-foot deceleration lane with a 65-foot taper. Drop off and pickup occurs at an interior motor court 200-feet from the main entrance. While the stacking was adequate when constructed, specifically for pick-up, the school's growth has simply outgrown the existing stacking so that during the 2:15-2:45 pickup window, cars occasionally stack along the New High Shoals Road deceleration lane.

The proposed plan resolves this drop-off and pick-up issue, a common challenge for schools, with a few significant changes. First, the primary drop-off and pick-up location will be relocated central to the site with ample internal stacking and naturally adjacent to the proposed lower school building with whom it serves most. The existing drop-off and pick-up location will be secondary used mainly during and after school hours but limited during the peak times. Secondly, with the addition of the tract at the corner of New High and Bishop Farms Parkway, a second entrance will provide an additional ingress / egress option the disperse the traffic from stacking during peak hours. To mitigate peak time traffic from bottlenecking along S Bishop Farms Parkway, this intersection will be improved with a left turn lane on to New High Shoals Road as well as a lefturn lane into the WCA campus.

Illustrated below is the proposed circulation plan for peak pick-up time. Although the circulation may evolve over time to best manage traffic, all peak time stacking will be internal to the WCA campus. According to the South Carolina Department of Transportation recommendations for school on-site stacking, approximately 900-1200 linear feet of stacking should be provided on-site for schools with 200-600 students. Illustrated below is 1400 linear feet. The existing school drop off location has approximately 500 linear feet of stacking.



**EXHIBIT "A" TO SPECIAL USE APPROVAL #P22-0154**  
Page 9 of 19

**NARRATIVE**

In summary, the proposed plan provides much needed peak traffic improvements and eliminates the current stacking within the New High Shoals Road deceleration lane. In addition, with the build-out of Bishop Farms Parkway and the option to add a 3rd entrance via the access easement through 1971 Bishop Farms Parkway, future connectivity will further improve circulation.

Traffic generated by the proposed development is illustrated on the following Table. Note that, for the purposes of the Special-Use submittal, the table represents traffic generated at full build-out of the campus, which is anticipated to occur incrementally over the course of many years.

**TRIP GENERATION (Based on ITE Trip Generator Manual, 10th Ed.)**

Proposed Use: Private School K-12

Land Use Code: 536

Total Projected Student Body: 500

New High Shoals Road: 45 mph

New High Shoals Road (Two-Way 2016): 3,680

**EXISTING TRIP GENERATION BASED ON CURRENT ENROLLMENT**

<b>Description/ITE Code</b>	<b>Units Type</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>ADT 2-WAY</b>	<b>PEAK AM</b>			<b>PEAK PM</b>		
				<b>AM Hour</b>	<b>AM In</b>	<b>AM Out</b>	<b>PM Hour</b>	<b>PM In</b>	<b>PM Out</b>
Private School K-12 (536)	Students	350.0	868	284	173	111	60	26	34
<b>TOTAL TRIPS:</b>			<b>868</b>	<b>284</b>			<b>60</b>		

**PROJECTED TRIP GENERATION BASED ON ANTICIPATED FUTURE ENROLLMENT**

<b>Description/ITE Code</b>	<b>Units Type</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>ADT 2-WAY</b>	<b>PEAK AM</b>			<b>PEAK PM</b>		
				<b>AM Hour</b>	<b>AM In</b>	<b>AM Out</b>	<b>PM Hour</b>	<b>PM In</b>	<b>PM Out</b>
Private School K-12 (536)	Students	500.0	1,240	405	247	158	85	37	48
<b>TOTAL TRIPS:</b>			<b>1,240</b>	<b>405</b>			<b>85</b>		

*Note: Current student enrollment size is approximately 375 students. The projected total student body is 500 students.*

## **NARRATIVE**

### **PARKING**

All streets within the development will remain private, with WCA responsible for maintenance, up-keep, and repairs. Parking will be provided in various lots throughout the campus, and adjacent to primary and ancillary buildings. Parking spaces beyond the minimum requirement are anticipated to accommodate special occasions like graduation and sporting events.

### **UTILITY SERVICES**

The subject site is currently served by OCPUD water service and septic drain field systems for sewer. The proposed expansion will require domestic water, fire protection, and sanitary sewer. There is an existing 10" water main in New High Shoals Road and an 8" water main in S Bishop Farms Parkway that is available for water service.

The estimated water and sewer demand for the full build-out of the campus is shown below:

Water = 11,600 GPD

Water Maximum Day Demand = 12.1 GPM

Water Peak Hour Demand = 30.2 GPM

Existing Septic = 4,640 GPD

Sewer = 6,960 GPD

Sewer Peak Hour Flow = 19.3 GPM

The existing buildings are served by on-site septic. The proposed lower school classroom buildings, future gymnasium and student activity center will be connected to Oconee sanitary sewer service via a new pump station or new gravity system. A Water and Sewer Availability Letter has been submitted to OCPUD for review.

Solid Waste will be collected onsite and disposed of by a private licensed contract service provider. Dry utility services will continue to be coordinated with the individual service providers.

### **STORMWATER DRAINAGE**

There is an existing 30' drainage easement and storm sewer line along portions of the western of the southern boundary lines of parcel B06W001. The storm sewer line originates at an existing stormwater management easement and facility, located in the southwest corner of parcel B06W002. The storm sewer line then crosses New High Shoals Road and empties from a culvert on the south side of the road. Survey work is currently being conducted to verify the location. Linework will be shown as part of the Phase 1 civil construction documents package.

Stormwater management shall comply with all local, state, and federal regulations in effect at time of construction plan approval. Throughout the site, stormwater shall be collected in swales or in drains and pipes and directed to proposed stormwater detention and water quality treatment basins. The site topography directs runoff into one primary basin. Stormwater management facilities are proposed in this basin to treat water quality and mitigate increased runoff peak flows prior to releasing to downstream properties. All maintenance shall be the responsibility of the owner, Westminster Christian Academy.

### **IMPACT TO SCHOOL SYSTEM**

Expansion of Westminster Christian Academy will enhance the school system, providing more choices for citizens of Oconee County and surrounding counties.

**NARRATIVE**

**BUFFERS**

Buffers will be installed around the exterior boundary of the project and will be, at a minimum, in accordance with Section 808 of the Oconee County Unified Development Code. As much as practical, existing vegetation shall remain within these buffers. Evergreen plant material and/or a combination of fencing and berthing shall be installed, up to a 6' height, to provide adequate screening from adjacent residential properties.

State Waters and Conservation Corridor Buffers will be preserved and will only be penetrated as required for access, utility construction, and stormwater management. See the Rezone and Special Use Concept Plan for specific information concerning buffer types and locations.

**CONDITIONS**

The concurrent rezone and Special Use Plan applications do not propose amendments to the Conditions of the past Special Use Approvals #7300 & #7351, except for a revision to the condition associated with Road Improvements. The 2017 SUP plan proposed a second entrance along New High Shoals Road. A second entrance along New High Shoals Road is no longer proposed therefore the condition is no longer applicable. A new condition is being presented to address the proposed S Bishop Farms Parkway Improvements:

1. *The developer shall construct improvements at the project entrance including a left turn lane along S Bishop Farms Parkway and New High Shoals Road as depicted on the concept plan, in accordance with the Unified development Code, and as required by the Public Works Department.*

**#7300**

1. *The development shall be connected to the Oconee County water and sewer systems at the developer's expense in a manner approved by the Oconee County Utility Department and the Oconee County Public Works Department. No building permits shall be issued for any proposed buildings without approvals from the Oconee County Utility Department.*
2. *Development structures shall meet or exceed the architectural standards as indicated on the concept plan, narrative, representative architectural sketches and other documents submitted with the zoning application and attached hereto, paying special attention to the materials and design elements shown in the representative photos.*
3. *Site lighting shall be fully oriented towards the interior of the site so as not to impose glare or objectionable light levels onto adjacent public roads and the neighboring residential properties. Light levels shall be zero foot-candles at all property lines adjacent to residential uses. This shall be shown conclusively at the construction plan approval stage.*
4. *The developer shall construct improvements at the project entrance including a left turn lane with a taper and a deceleration lane along New High Shoals Road as depicted on the concept plan, in accordance with the Unified development Code, and as required by the Public Works Department.*
5. *At a minimum, developer shall comply with storm water management regulations in effect at the time of construction plan approval.*
6. *The conservation corridors shown on the 2030 Future Development Map shall be shown on all plans and plats in accordance with UDC Section 908.*
7. *The total building square footage shall not exceed 125,774 sq. ft.*
8. *No outdoor recreation or entertainment operation shall be allowed between the hours of 11:00 PM and 8:00 AM.*
9. *No dumpster or trash receptacle shall be emptied between 7:00 PM and 7:00 AM. Dumpsters and trash receptacles shall be located where they are not visible from adjacent properties and shall be adequately screened from view from all streets.*
10. *All proposed new planted buffer material shall be planted before any new buildings or facilities are constructed on the site.*

**EXHIBIT "A" TO SPECIAL USE APPROVAL #P22-0154**

Page 12 of 19

**NARRATIVE**

11. *A buffer shall be constructed between any proposed parking area or athletic field which adjoins a residential use, to a height of at least six (6) feet total, that is capable of reaching 80 feet in height. Said buffer shall be constructed at least one year prior to the lighting of athletic facilities and parking areas. Additionally, said buffer shall be exclusive of and in addition to the 50 ft. access and utility easement present on the recorded plat for parcel no. B 06 040C (Plat Book 34, Page 61).*
12. *A school zone shall be established on New High Shoals Road using flashing school beacons. The flashing school beacons shall be solar powered and installed in accordance Oconee County standards at the owner's expense. Ownership and maintenance responsibility of the school beacons shall be conveyed to Oconee County along with any other improvements within the right-of-way.*

**#7351**

1. *Prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy for any proposed permanent classroom building, the temporary modular classroom units shall be removed from the subject property.*

**EXHIBIT "A" TO SPECIAL USE APPROVAL #P22-0154**  
Page 13 of 19

**ARCHITECTURAL RENDERINGS**

**Existing Buildings:**



*Existing Elementary School Classroom Building*



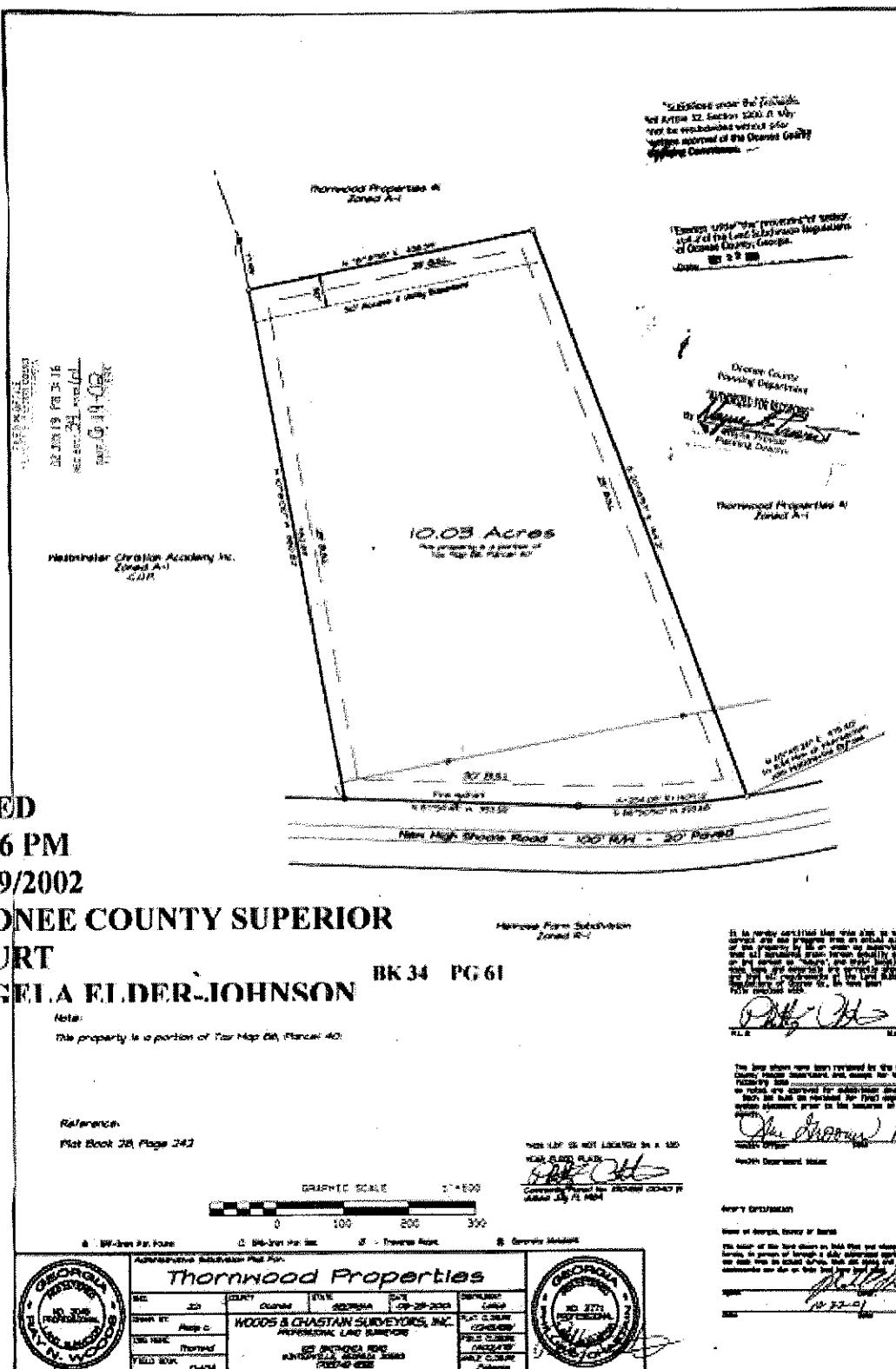
*Existing Gymnasium and Classroom Building*

**EXHIBIT "A" TO SPECIAL USE APPROVAL #P22-0154**  
Page 14 of 19

PLAT

**EXHIBIT "A" TO SPECIAL USE APPROVAL #P22-0154**  
Page 15 of 19

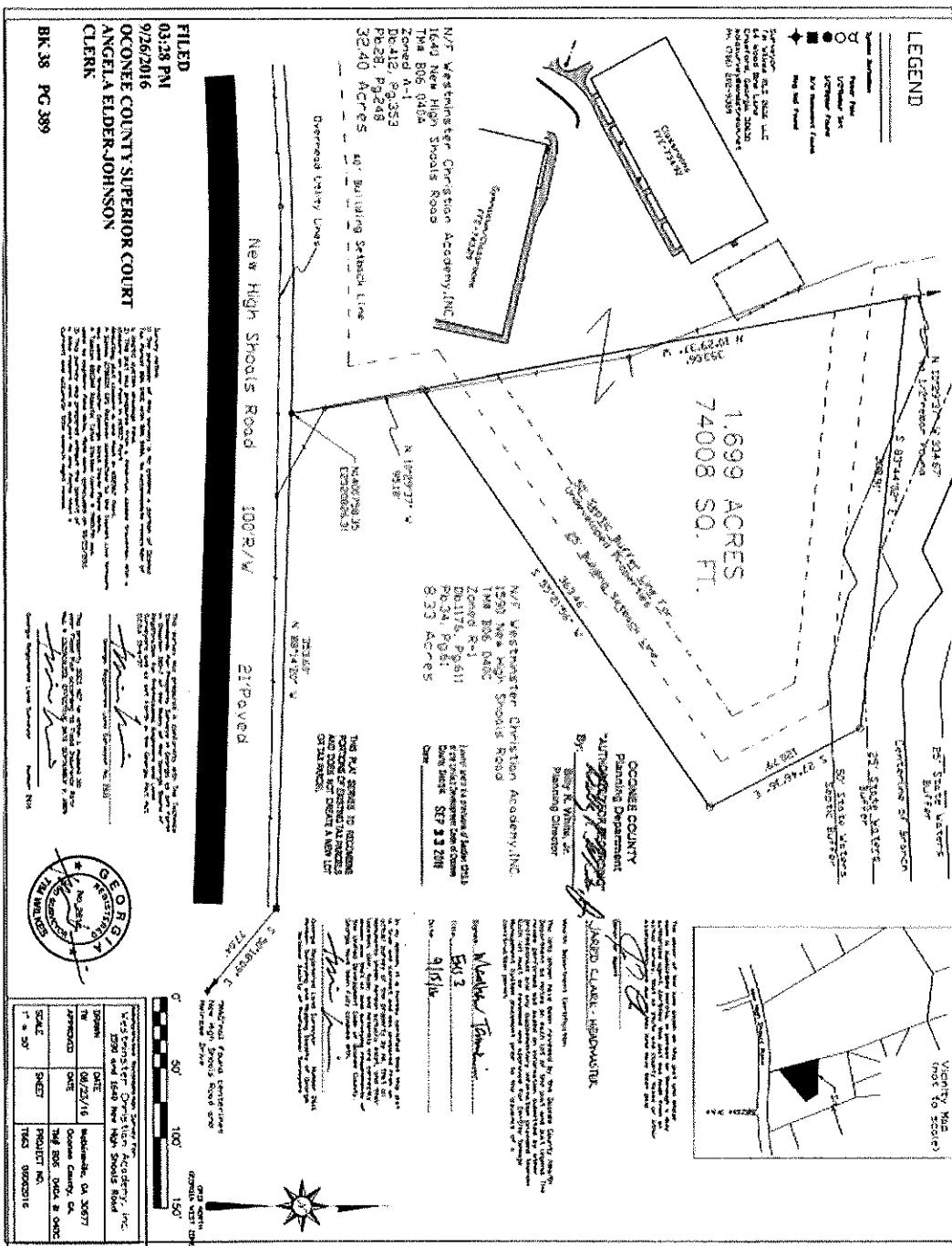
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**EXHIBIT "A" TO SPECIAL USE APPROVAL #P22-0154**

Page 16 of 19

PLAT



**EXHIBIT "A" TO SPECIAL USE APPROVAL #P22-0154**

Page 17 of 19

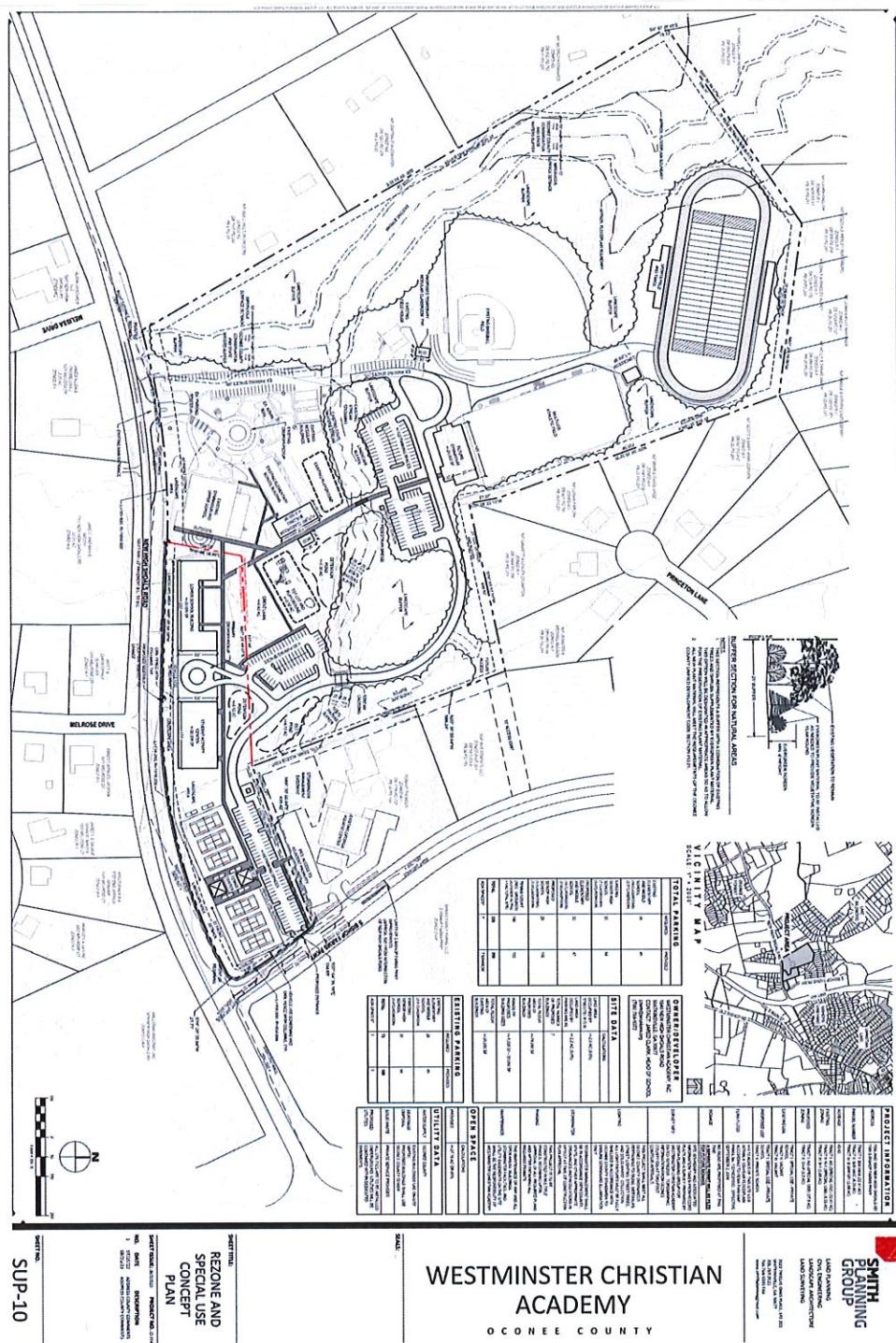
PLAT

## CONCEPT PLAN

SUP-00

EXHIBIT "A" TO SPECIAL USE APPROVAL #P22-0154  
Page 19 of 19

## CONCEPT PLAN





**Planning and Code Enforcement Department  
Oconee County, Georgia  
STAFF REPORT**

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**SPECIAL USE CASE NO. P22-0154**

**DATE:** October 5, 2022

**STAFF REPORT BY:** Guy Herring (Director of Planning and Code Enforcement)

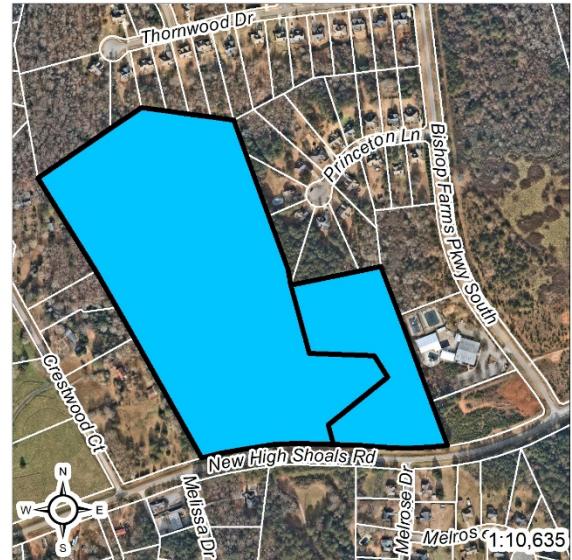
**APPLICANT NAME:** Smith Planning Group

**PROPERTY OWNER:** Westminster Christian Academy

**LOCATION:** 1640 New High Shoals Road, 1590 New High Shoals Road;  
B-06-040C, B-06-040A

**PARCEL SIZE:** ±37.8 acres

**EXISTING ZONING:** AG (Agricultural District) and R-1 (Single Family Residential District)



**2040 CHARACTER AREAS MAP:** Suburban Neighborhood / Community Village

**EXISTING LAND USE:** School campus

**SPECIAL USE REQUESTED:** Expansion of private school campus

**REQUEST SUMMARY:** The applicant is requesting a special use permit for a private school use in AG zoning, which is an allowed principal use with special use approval.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends conditional approval of this request.

**DATE OF SCHEDULED HEARINGS**

**PLANNING COMMISSION:** October 17, 2022

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:** November 1, 2022

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Application
- Narrative
- Zoning Impact Analysis
- Plat of Survey
- Concept Plan
- Letter of Sewer & Water Availability
- Rezoning Exhibit
- Traffic Study

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION & FINDINGS OF FACT**

### **HISTORY**

- The school buildings were constructed on parcel B-06-040A in 1988, 1990, 2019, and 2021.
- Parcel B-06-040C was purchased in 2013 for expansion area.
- In 2017, a SUP was approved to incorporate the B-06-040C parcel and develop a new master plan.
- A SUP for the AG property and 2 rezoning applications for the B-06-040C and B-06W-001 parcels are being submitted concurrently.

### **SURROUNDING LAND USE AND ZONING**

	<b>EXISTING LAND USES</b>	<b>EXISTING ZONING</b>
<b>NORTH</b>	Single-family residential	R-1 (Single-Family Residential District)
<b>SOUTH</b>	Single-family residential	R-1 (Single-Family Residential District)
<b>EAST</b>	Single-family residential, commercial	R-1 (Single-Family Residential District), OIP (Office Institutional Professional District), and B-1 (General Business District)
<b>WEST</b>	Single-family residential	AG (Agricultural District)

### **PROPOSED PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

- The applicant is requesting a special use permit to allow for a private school use in AG zoning. The proposed use includes expanding the campus in the new 2.68 acres of the site and revising the SUP on the existing campus to add a new campus center, secondary entrance off Bishop Farms Parkway, and a new centrally located drop-off and pick-up location.
  - The proposed plan includes many structures and uses for the academic campus including:
    - Multi-purpose administration/classroom buildings
    - Two temporary modular classroom buildings
    - Parking
    - Student activity center
    - 6-lane track and sports field
    - Recreational spaces for recreational and social opportunities
- Construction would occur over time per school growth needs and as funding is available. Construction is expected to begin within the next 12-18 months.
- The projected project valuation is \$20 million.

### **PUBLIC FACILITIES**

#### **Water:**

- The project is proposed to utilize County water services.
- The Water Resources Department has indicated in a letter dated 07/21/2022 that potable water is available at this location.

#### **Sewer:**

- The project is proposed to utilize County sewer services.
- The Water Resources Department has indicated in a letter dated 07/21/2022 that wastewater treatment capacity in the requested 8,007 gpd amount is available for the project at the Calls Creek Treatment Facility.

#### **Roads:**

- The existing entrance on New High Shoals Road would continue to provide access to the campus.
- The proposed plan will move the drop-off and pick-up location further away from New High Shoals Road.
- A second entrance is proposed to S Bishop Farms Parkway to provide additional ingress/egress.

### **TRAFFIC PROJECTIONS**

- At full build out, 1,240 ADT (average daily trips) are estimated with 405 AM peak hours and 85 PM peak hours (ITE Trip Generation Manual, 10th Edition). The new projected ADT is higher than the previous ADT estimated for the site, which was 868 ADT.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL**

- There are existing state waters located along the western side of the site. The site plan shows the required buffers and impervious setbacks with no proposed development within the buffers. The narrative notes that existing vegetation will be maintained in the buffers.

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## **COMMENTS FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES**

### **Oconee County Water Resources Department:**

- No comments

### **Oconee County Public Works Department:**

- No comments

### **Oconee County Fire Department:**

- No comments

### **Transportation Consultant**

- At its expense, Owner shall make all right of way improvements and shall dedicate all rights of way which are required by the County after the County's review of Owner's development plans pursuant to the County's ordinances and regulations. All such improvements shall be shown on the preliminary site plan and site development plans for the project and no development permit shall be issued until Owner has agreed to such improvements and dedication.

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## **STAFF ANALYSIS**

THE ANALYSIS OF THE APPLICATION IS MADE BASED UPON THE “STANDARDS FOR SPECIAL USE CONSIDERATION” AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 1207.02 OF THE OCONEE COUNTY UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE.

**A. Will the proposed special use be consistent with the stated purpose of the zoning district in which it will be located?**

The purpose of the AG zoning district is to “preserve prime agricultural areas, allow mini farm estates where appropriate, and discourage the subdivision of land into suburban development which requires significant increases in public services such as schools, fire protection, transportation improvements or waste disposal” (Unified Development Code Sec. 205.01). Staff holds that the requested expansion of the Westminster campus, while not directly consistent with the stated purpose of the proposed zoning district, is a use that is allowed in AG zoning with Special Use approval, as requested by the applicant.

**B. Is the proposed special use compatible with the goals, objectives, purpose, and intent of the Comprehensive Plan?**

The subject property lies within the Suburban Neighborhood / Community Village Character Area as shown on the 2040 Character Areas Map. The 2018 Comprehensive Plan describes this mixed-use Character Area as containing “mixed-use developments that integrate and link together a compatible assortment of higher-intensity commercial (such as larger-scaled shopping centers, professional offices, and services), residential, and recreational uses through a comprehensive circulation system” (2018 Comprehensive Plan, p. 46). The Comprehensive Plan supports enhancing the community and services with higher density and institutional uses as a secondary land use in this Character Area (2018 Comprehensive Plan, p. 46). Staff holds that the proposed special use for the school expansion is in conformity with the Future Development Map and the goals and objectives of the Oconee County Comprehensive Plan.

**C. Will the establishment of the special use impede the normal and orderly development of surrounding property for uses predominate in the area?**

Nearby lots are predominantly zoned R-1 and AG, with a few B-1 and OIP lots. Primary land uses in the area are a mixture of residential and commercial uses. The proposed school campus expansion should not impede the normal and orderly development of surrounding property due to the site plan's proposed location for the drop-off and pick-up area.

**D. Is the location and character of the proposed special use consistent with a desirable pattern of development for the locality in general?**

Based on the Character Area designation of Suburban Neighborhood / Community Village (see above), a desirable pattern of development for the area would be a mixed-use environment that allows the local community to live, work, and play in the nearby vicinity. Furthermore, the subject property's location along New High Shoals Road is suitable for commercial and institutional uses. Expansion of the school campus would maintain consistency with this vision of development for the general area.

**E. Is or will the type of street providing access to the use be adequate to serve the proposed special use?**

Traffic increases are expected for the campus expansion, with 372 additional ADT over the previously approved site configuration. The existing entrance on New High Shoals Road would continue to provide access to the campus. The proposed plan will move the drop-off and pick-up location further away from New High Shoals Road to reduce impacts to New High Shoals Road. The concept plan includes a second entrance to S Bishop Farms Parkway to provide additional ingress/egress.

**F. Is or will access into and out of the property be adequate to provide for traffic and pedestrian safety, the anticipated volume of traffic flow, and access by emergency vehicles?**

While increased traffic generation is anticipated, the concept plan addresses this through moving the drop-off and pick-up area as well as proposing a second entrance at S Bishop Farms Parkway. Existing access to the school campus along with the proposed conditions should be adequate to provide for traffic/pedestrian safety, the anticipated volume of traffic, and access by emergency vehicles.

**G. Are or will public facilities such as schools, water or sewer utilities, and police or fire protection be adequate to serve the special use?**

The Water Resources department has indicated that water and sewer is available with the requested capacity amount. The impacts to police and fire protection services should be minimal for this expansion project. Staff holds that public facilities should be adequate to serve this special use.

**H. Are or will refuse, service, parking and loading areas on the property be located or screened to protect other properties in the area from such adverse effects as noise, light, glare, and odor?**

Yes, the newly acquired acreage and the existing site will be subject to Article 8 requirements for landscape strips along the property's new road frontage as well as landscape buffers adjacent to all neighboring AG and R-1 properties. This should provide adequate screening to protect adjacent properties in the area from any adverse impacts.

**I. Will the hours and manner of operation of the special use have no adverse effects on other properties in the area?**

The hours and manner of operation of the proposed special use modification should not be significantly different from the hours and manner of operation for the existing school and should not adversely impact nearby properties.

**J. Will the height, size, or location of the buildings or other structures on the property be compatible with the height, size or location of buildings or other structures on neighboring properties?**

Yes, the dimensions and style of the proposed buildings are similar to the existing school buildings and should not be detrimental to adjacent single-family residential development or commercial buildings.

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## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION & CONDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

**Based on Board of Commissioners policies, decision-making criteria, and standards outlined in the development codes of Oconee County, staff recommends approval of the present special use request. Staff recommends it be subject to the following conditions to be fulfilled by the developer/owner at his/her expense:**

1. Development design and structures shall meet or exceed the standards indicated on the concept plan, narrative, representative architectural sketches, and other documents submitted with the zoning application

and attached hereto. This condition shall not construe approval of any standard that is not in conformity with the Unified Development Code.

2. The owner, all at owner's expense, shall construct the improvements required by the County for public water and public waste water services for subject property and shall convey same to the County, free of all liens. Said improvements shall include all on-site improvements and such off-site improvements as are required by the County to provide service to subject property.
3. At its expense, Owner shall make all right of way improvements and shall dedicate all rights of way which are required by the County after the County's review of Owner's development plans pursuant to the County's ordinances and regulations. All such improvements shall be shown on the preliminary site plan and site development plans for the project and no development permit shall be issued until Owner has agreed to such improvements and dedication.
4. Site lighting shall be fully oriented towards the interior of the site so as not to impose glare or objectionable light levels onto adjacent public roads and the neighboring residential properties. Light levels shall be less than one foot candles at all property lines.
5. The use of central loudspeakers and public address systems shall be prohibited outside of normal daytime hours of operation of the school.
6. No outdoor recreation or entertainment operation shall be allowed between the hours of 11:00 PM and 8:00 AM.
7. No dumpster or trash receptacle shall be emptied between 7:00 PM and 7:00 AM. Dumpsters and trash receptacles shall be located where they are not visible from adjacent properties and shall be adequately screened from view from all streets.
8. A 25 foot wide screening buffer shall be constructed between any proposed parking area or athletic field which adjoins a residential use. Said buffer shall be a mix of evergreen trees and shrubs with a minimum height of 6 feet at the time of planting.
9. A school zone shall be established on New High Shoals Road using flashing school beacons. The flashing school beacons shall be installed in accordance with Oconee County standards at the owner's expense. Ownership and maintenance responsibility of the school beacons shall be conveyed to Oconee County along with any other improvements within the right-of-way.