

**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 Pittman & Greer Engineering on January 11, 2024 requesting Special Use Approval on a ±10.02 acre tract of land located on 1820 Rays Church Road, Oconee County, Georgia, tax parcel no. A-05-013D, on property owned by Fellowship Baptist Church, 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 expansion of the existing neighborhood-scale church to a community-scale church.

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Resolutions or Ordinances and parts or sections of Resolutions or Ordinances in conflict with this Ordinance are hereby repealed.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 March 18, 2024, and a Public Hearing was held by the Oconee County Board of Commissioners at its regular meeting on April 2, 2024.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED, this 2nd day of April, 2024.

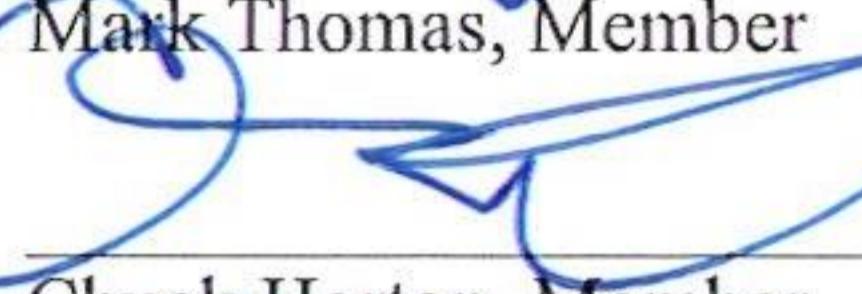
OCONEE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BY: 

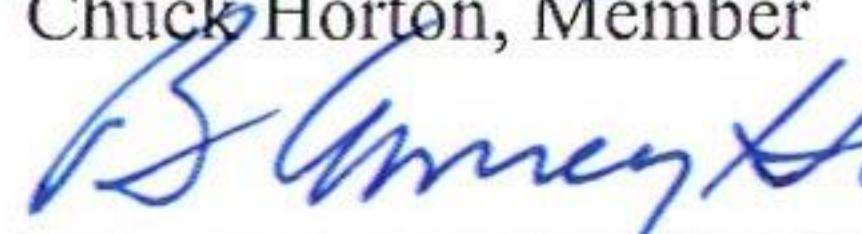
John Damell, Chairman



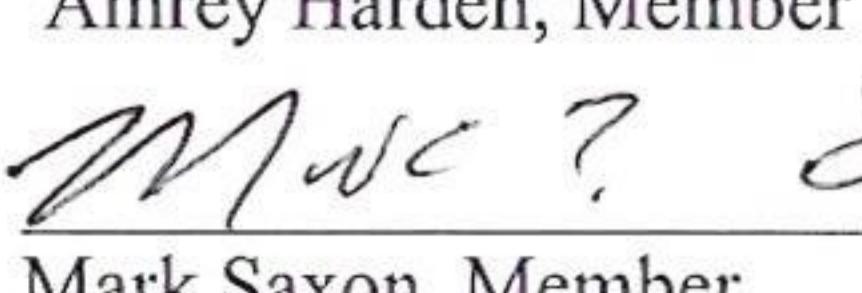
Mark Thomas, Member



Chuck Horton, Member



Amrey Harden, Member



Mark Saxon, Member

ATTEST:



Holly Stephenson
Clerk, Board of Commissioners

EXHIBIT "A" TO SPECIAL USE APPROVAL #P24-0008

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CONDITIONS

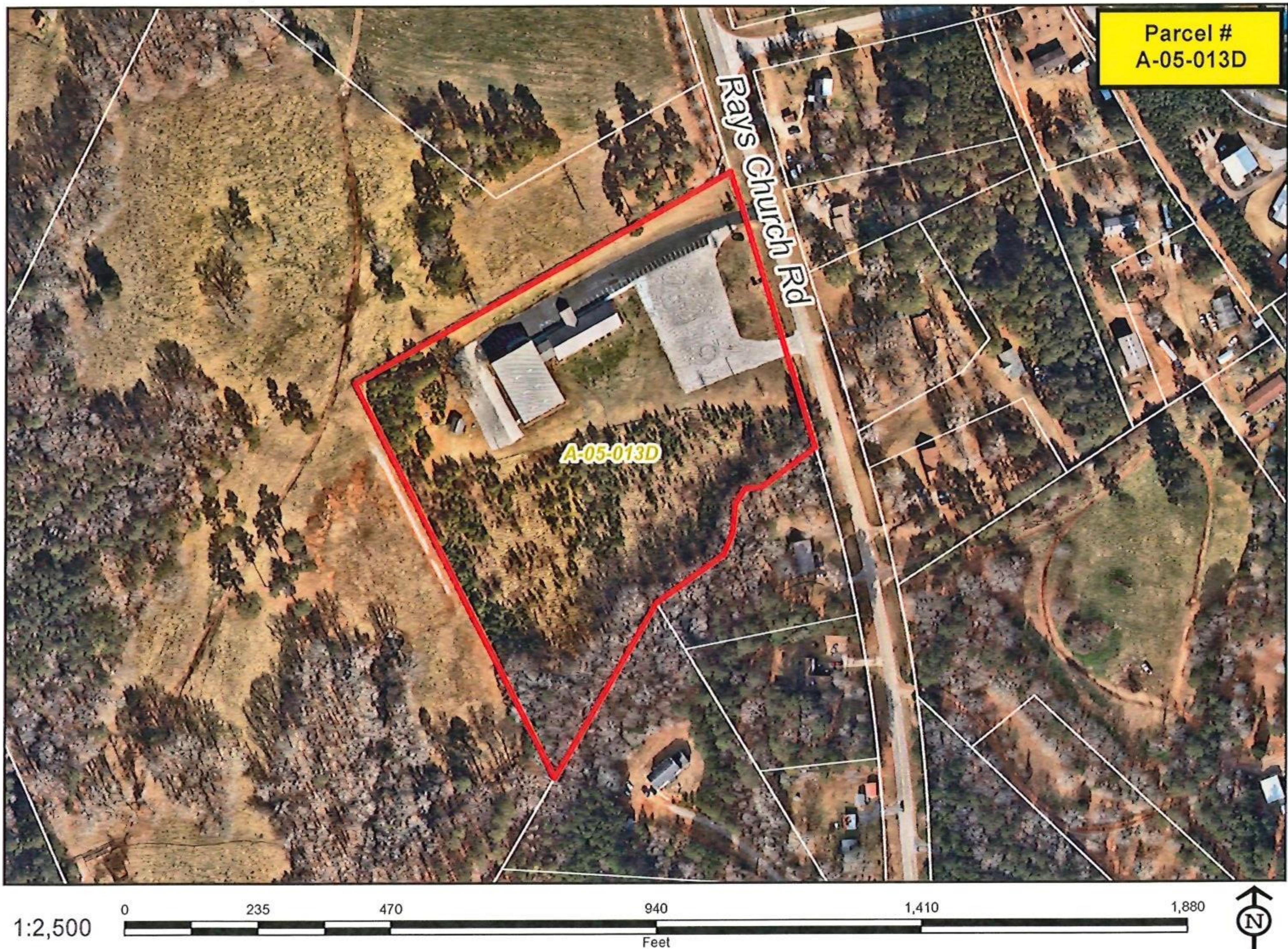
1. Development design and structures shall meet or exceed the standards indicated on the concept plan, narrative, representative architectural sketches, and other documents submitted with the zoning application and attached hereto. This condition shall not construe approval of any standard that is not in conformity with the Unified Development Code.
2. The owner at their own expense shall construct the improvements required by the County for public water and public waste services for the subject property and shall convey the 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. All new or renovated buildings shall meet the requirements of UDC Sec. 306 *Standards for Non-Residential Uses*, including, but not limited to, the architectural requirement that building façades shall have an exterior material consisting of the following: brick or brick face, natural or manufactured stone or artificial stone panels, stucco, EIFS (e.g., dryvit™), glass, wood siding, or fiber cement lap siding with metal accent materials not to exceed 20% of each building face.
5. The amount of EIFS used is not to exceed 20% of each building face.

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TAX MAP

Special Use # P24-0008 - Fellowship Baptist Church



LEGAL DESCRIPTION

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

All that tract, or parcel of land, lying and being in Oconee County, Georgia, G.M.D. 239, containing 10.016 acres, more or less, and being more particularly described as:

Beginning at the centerline intersection of Maxey Road and Ray's Church Road; thence South 07 degrees 01 minutes 13 seconds East, 210.61 feet to a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch RBF, being the TRUE POINT OF BEGINNING; thence continuing along the 80 foot right-of-way of Ray's Church Road South 17 degrees 19 minutes 14 seconds East, 296.10 feet to a point; thence continuing along said right-of-way 212.48 feet along an arc of a curve to the right, said curve having a radius of 38150.66 feet, a chord bearing of South 17 degrees 04 minutes 58 seconds East, and a chord distance of 212.48 feet to a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch RBF; thence leaving said right-of-way South 44 degrees 11 minutes 39 seconds West, 24.24 feet to a point; thence South 31 degrees 17 minutes 34 seconds West, 14.93 feet to a point; thence South 48 degrees 57 minutes 18 seconds West, 25.69 feet to a point; thence South 65 degrees 32 minutes 00 seconds West, 42.4 feet to a point; thence South 69 degrees 48 minutes 42 seconds West, 15.21 feet to a point; thence North 89 degrees 18 minutes 05 seconds West, 20.78 feet to a point; thence South 73 degrees 11 minutes 08 seconds West, 13.01 feet to a point; thence South 48 degrees 06 minutes 16 seconds West, 7.88 feet to a point; thence South 18 degrees 10 minutes 27 seconds West, 34.65 feet to a point; thence South 06 degrees 58 minutes 16 seconds West, 42.56 feet to a point; thence South 22 degrees 34 minutes 59 seconds West, 33.33 feet to a point; thence South 24 degrees 59 minutes 28 seconds West, 16.86 feet to a point; thence South 61 degrees 04 minutes 14 seconds West, 42.99 feet to a point; thence South 53 degrees 23 minutes 40 seconds West, 23.11 feet to a point; thence South 60 degrees 20 minutes 55 seconds West, 43.50 feet to a point; thence South 58 degrees 36 minutes 30 seconds West, 26.70 feet to a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch RBF; thence South 31 degrees 18 minutes 03 seconds East, 6.87 feet to a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch RBF, thence South 30 degrees 18 minutes 05 seconds West, 356.49 feet to a $\frac{3}{8}$ inch RBF, thence North 27 degrees 00 minutes 52 seconds West, 781.03 feet to a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch RBF, thence North 60 degrees 50 minutes 07 seconds East, 766.30 feet to a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch RBF, THAT BEING THE TRUE POINT OF BEGINNING.

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NARRATIVE

BETHLEHEM CHURCH OCONEE CAMPUS – 1820 RAYS CHURCH ROAD

SPECIAL USE REQUEST SUBMITTED 01/16/2024

GENERAL DATA

Property Address: 1820 RAYS CHURCH ROAD – Parcel A 05 013D

Owner: Fellowship Baptist Church

Existing Zoning: AG

Proposed Use requiring Special Use: Community-Scale Church in AG Zoning

Property Area: 10.02 acres

ADJACENT LAND USES AND ZONING

North – AG – undeveloped

West – AG - undeveloped

East – AG – single family home

South – AG – single family home

OWNERSHIP TYPE

Property will be owned by current owner.

SITE AND SPECIAL USE REQUEST NARRATIVE

The total property consists of approximately 10.00 acres and is currently zone AG with an existing church campus on the property. Access is from 2 entry points on Rays Church Road. The Church has grown and continues to grow, serving the people of Southern Oconee County and other areas. Due to the growth of the Church, expansion is needed. This planned expansion includes an additional building, parking, and useable outdoor lawn areas. Interior renovations will also occur which will allow for seating expansion. Due to the proposed expansion of up to 500 seats, the Church will fall under the Community-Scale Church designation in the Oconee UDC which is triggered by having more than 350 seats. Due to this triggered designation, a Special Use Permit is required per UDC guidelines.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The property is located at 1820 Rays Church Road. The Character Area for the property and its surrounding properties is identified as 'Country Estates' according to the Oconee Future Development Map. The requested Special Use request is in keeping with this Character Area.

The property is comprised of approximately 10.02 acres and has an existing church campus along with parking. The property slopes toward the south towards the southern property line. There is no sanitary sewer available for the property so it is on septic today and will be on septic after expansion. There is no existing county watermain available so the church is on a private well.

PROPOSED BUILDINGS, ARCHITECTURE, AND MATERIALS

The proposed expansion of the church includes the construction of an additional building as well as interior and exterior renovations. The architecture will consist of brick, wood, and metal siding with colors and styles to match their other campuses. See provided architectural images for the look of the buildings.

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NARRATIVE

The two existing buildings total 18,125 sf. The proposed new building as shown will be 9,862 sf. The total enclosed building area as shown will be 27,987 sf. In the future, covered patios and walkways could be enclosed to add more total square footage. The maximum square footage could be 35,000 sf at a future date.

ACCESS

Access will be via 2 drives on Rays Church Road

TRAFFIC IMPACT

Per the Institute of Transportation Engineers, Trip Generation, 11th Edition (ITE Manual), the proposed development does not generate the 1,000 trips per day that is required to trigger a Traffic Impact Analysis.

Projected trips are as follows:

Church (Use Code 560) – 500 seats = 450 ADT

WATER SUPPLY

Water will be provided by private well.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL

Sewage disposal will be provided via septic.

GARBAGE COLLECTION

Garbage collection will be handled by private contractor via dumpsters. Dumpsters will be shielded from view per the Oconee County UDC requirements.

UTILITIES

Electricity and Data will be provided by power/data providers in the area.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AND DRAINAGE

This project will provide a stormwater pond to manage stormwater management per the Oconee County UDC. To convey stormwater to the pond, curb and gutter along with RCP, CMP, or HDPE stormpipe will be utilized to carry the stormwater runoff to the system. There is not an existing stormwater pond onsite. As part of the expansion, a stormwater pond will be built to accommodate the development.

IMPACT TO SCHOOL SYSTEM

There will not an effect on the school system as the church will not cause families to move into the community.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Once Special Use is approved in approximately March 2024 then site development plans will be created and permitted to begin construction in the late of 2024. The project will be built in multiple phases.

SIGNAGE

The project will have signage that will meet the Oconee County UDC and be permitted through the sign permit process.

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NARRATIVE

LANDSCAPING & BUFFERS

Landscape strips, parking lot buffers, and parking lot tree plantings will be installed in accordance with the Oconee County UDC.

PARKING

Parking will be provided onsite to meet the UDC requirements.

ESTIMATED VALUE OF PROJECT

The complete expansion of the project is estimated to be valued at \$8,000,000.

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PLAT

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**Planning Department
Oconee County, Georgia
STAFF REPORT**

SPECIAL USE CASE #: P24-0008

DATE: March 7, 2024

STAFF REPORT BY: David Webb, AICP (Senior Planner)

APPLICANT NAME: Pittman & Greer Engineering

PROPERTY OWNER: Fellowship Baptist Church
(operating as Bethlehem Church)

LOCATION: 1820 Rays Church Rd. (A 05 013D)

PARCEL SIZE: ± 10.02 acres

EXISTING ZONING: AG (Agricultural District)

2040 CHARACTER AREAS MAP: Country Estates

EXISTING LAND USE: Church campus

ACTION REQUESTED: Special Use Approval for a Community-Scale Church

REQUEST SUMMARY: The applicant is requesting Special Use Approval to allow the expansion of the current church campus to accommodate 500 people in the primary area of assembly.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends conditional approval of this request.

DATE OF SCHEDULED HEARINGS

PLANNING COMMISSION: March 18, 2024

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS: April 2, 2024

ATTACHMENTS:

- Application
- Narrative
- Special Use Impact Analysis
- Plats of Survey
- Concept Plan
- Architectural Sketches



BACKGROUND INFORMATION & FINDINGS OF FACT

HISTORY

- The church campus has two existing buildings built in 1994 and 2007 according to tax and permit records.
- The concept plan indicates the existing buildings are 5,585 square feet and 12,540 square feet.
- This church is currently allowed as a Neighborhood Scale Church in the AG zone with less than 350 persons maximum seating.

SURROUNDING LAND USE AND ZONING

	EXISTING LAND USES	EXISTING ZONING
NORTH	Vacant/ Agricultural	AG (Agricultural District)
SOUTH	Residential	AG (Agricultural District)
EAST	Residential	AG (Agricultural District)
WEST	Vacant/ Agricultural	AG (Agricultural District)

PROPOSED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to allow the expansion of the current church campus to accommodate 500 people in the primary area of assembly.
- The concept plan indicates a new “Next Gen” building will be built that is 9,862 SF.
- The total proposed building area is 27,987 SF for the two existing and the one proposed building.
- The concept plan indicates proposed parking lot improvements will bring the capacity to 262 spaces.

SPECIAL USE REQUIREMENTS

The requirements for a Community Scale Church are found in UDC Sec. 318.01 and 318.02:

318.01 Community and neighborhood churches; defined.

- a. *A COMMUNITY-SCALE CHURCH is a place of worship, such as a church, chapel, synagogue, temple, mosque or other such facility that contains any of the following:*
 - (1) *A seating capacity in its primary area of assembly of greater than 350 persons (Calculation of maximum seating capacity shall include the rostrum, choir seats, fixed seating and overflow seating area(s). Seating capacity assumes one person per chair or other type of seat, one person per 18 lineal inches of pew space, or one person per 6 square feet of overflow seating area, not containing fixed seating);*
 - (2) *Use of the facility includes operations other than or in addition to regular worship services and ceremonies, Sunday school, incidental offices relating to operation of the church and other regular incidental uses normally associated with places of worship;*
 - (3) *The facility is rented or leased to members of the general public for events not directly associated with religious services or ceremonies;*
 - (4) *There are regular weekday school, childcare or daycare, or religious exempt nonpublic postsecondary programs that occur on the site (other than occasional programs such as “Mother’s Morning Out”, “Vacation Bible School” or other similar programs);*
 - (5) *The institution has designated athletic fields, such as areas for baseball, softball, football, soccer, etc. as opposed to an open lawn area;*
 - (6) *The total building square footage of all buildings on the property combined exceeds 30,000 square feet;*

Sec. 301.01. Restrictions; agricultural or residential zoning districts.

Churches, chapels, temples, synagogues, mosques and other such places of worship must meet the following minimum requirements if located in any agricultural or residential zoning district:

- a. *The site must contain at least 5 acres.*
- b. *The site must have frontage of at least 200 feet on an arterial or major collector street, from which all access to the property shall be derived.*

- c. *A landscape buffer meeting the requirements for landscape buffers for an office or institutional use in the Landscaping and Buffers Article of this Code shall be provided.*

TRAFFIC PROJECTIONS

- There is an estimated 450 ADT (average daily trips) to be expected for the church campus use (Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition).
- There is no previous resolution for this property for traffic projection comparison.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Water:

- The project is proposed to utilize a private well.

Sewer:

- Sewage disposal will be provided via on-site septic.

Roads:

- The site will be accessed from Rays Church Road.

ENVIRONMENTAL

- The Generalized U.S. Fish and Wildlife Wetlands map indicates that wetlands are present on site. The site will have to meet the requirements of Article 9 Environmental Protection.
- The wetlands locations are required to be verified by the US Army Corps of Engineers or a certified wetlands delineator prior to permitting. (UDC Sec. 919.02).
- There are no Flood Hazard Areas on the site.

COMMENTS FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES

Water Resources Department:

- No comments as of March 6, 2024

Public Works Department:

- No comments as of March 6, 2024

Fire Department:

1. The property does not currently have any fire waterlines on the property.
 - a. According to the 2018 Life Safety Code Section 12.3.5, any assembly occupancy that has an occupant over 300 people must have a fire sprinkler system.
 - b. The 2018 Life Safety Code Section 14.3.5 states educational occupancies shall be protected by a fire sprinkler system.
 - i. Please see the code for the exception requirements.
 - c. The buildings must be protected by fire hydrants according to the 2018 International Fire Code (IFC).
 - i. This will include the adding of fire waterlines.
 - d. There are two viable options for water on the property
 - i. Option 1. There is a county water line approximately 7,500+- feet away.
 1. It is recommended that the water line have a complete pressure test performed by a fire protection company to ensure the fire waterline will be able to support the required water needed for the property.
 - ii. The second option is to put a water tank on the property to supply all the water needed for the property.
 1. This is to include water for the fire hydrants as well as water for the fire sprinkler systems.
 - a. This will need to be designed by a fire protection company.
2. The following items will be required at the time of land disturbance permit application:

- a. To be in compliance with the 2018 International Fire Code, there will need to be fire hydrants added on the property.
- b. A fire hydrant is required within 400 feet from all parts of an un-sprinklered building.
- c. A fire hydrant is required within 600 feet from all parts of a sprinklered building.
- d. The buildings will need to meet all adopted codes by Oconee County, all state adopted code (as adopted by the Georgia DCA) and the Georgia State Fire Marshal's Office.
- e. The turning radius must comply with all applicable codes for interior and exterior turning radius.
- f. As stated, in the 2018 IFC Appendix D, a minimum of 24-foot parking lot driveway width, if the elevation of any structures exceeds 30 feet, then the driveway width must be a minimum of 26 feet.
- g. The fire department turnaround must be designed at a minimum to the 2018 International Fire Code Appendix D.

3. The Oconee County Fire Marshal's Office is not conducting a full review on the plans submitted the comments are on obvious items. We reserve the right to have additional comments and revisions as needed depending on the information submitted during the Land Disturbance Permit submittal and review process. These preliminary comments are based on the conceptual site plan provided in your application for public hearing. No approval of any land disturbance or building permit at this location is granted or implied because of this review.

There is no objection to the request for special use for the property, provided that the project is in compliance with all local and state adopted codes.

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). The specific property must be developed according to the principal uses allowed in the AG zoning district. Staff notes that the requested campus expansion to a Community Scale Church is allowed with a Special Use Permit Approval. Staff finds that the site as proposed can meet the requirements of Sections 318.01 and 318.02.

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

The subject portion of the property lies within with the Country Estates character area, as shown on the 2040 Future Development Map. The Country Estates character area “provides a transition between the more rural areas of the county and traditional suburban residential development and provides an “edge” between the urban and rural fringe.” The Comprehensive Plan lists institutional uses as a compatible secondary use. Staff finds that the proposed special use for a Community-Scale church is compatible with the goals, objectives, purpose, and intent of the Comprehensive Plan and Future Development Map.

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 zoned AG. Primary land uses in the area are a mixture of agricultural and residential. The proposed expansion of the church campus should not impede the normal and orderly development of surrounding properties. There will be required landscape buffers along the south property line. Staff finds that the proposed development is suitable in view of the existing nearby development and zoning.

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 Country Estates, a desirable pattern of development for the area would include institutional uses. The proposed development aligns with the intent for this character area.

E. Is or will the type of street providing access to the use be adequate to serve the proposed special use?
The existing access point from Rays Church Road is expected to be adequate to serve the proposed use. Rays Church Road is classified as a major collector street by Oconee County Public Works. The site meets the requirement to have 200 feet of frontage on a major collector.

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?
The existing access point from Rays Church Road is expected to be adequate to serve the proposed use. The proposed development does not generate the 1,000 trips per days that is required to trigger a Traffic Impact Analysis. Adequate access through existing and proposed parking lot drives for appropriate fire department vehicles will be confirmed by the Fire Department prior to approval of final plans.

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?
There is no public water or sewer lines existing at this site and none are proposed. The Fire Department will have to determine if the well water supply is sufficient to meet the requirements for the project prior to approval of final plans. The impacts to police and fire protection services should be minor for this expansion to the existing campus. Public schools will not be impacted by this specific church expansion project. Staff finds 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?
The existing site will be subject to Article 8 requirements for landscape buffers adjacent to all neighboring properties of lower intensity.

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 associated with the proposed special use are not expected to have significant adverse impacts on nearby properties above and beyond those already associated with the existing church campus. The applicant did not indicate expected hours of operation in the application.

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?
This application is for an expansion of an existing church from a neighborhood-scale to a community-scale. The applicant is not proposing a change in zoning. The AG zone has a height limitation of 40 feet. It is not expected the proposed building will exceed the height limitation.

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 special use request. Staff recommends it be subject to the following conditions to be fulfilled by the developer/owner at their 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 at their own expense shall construct the improvements required by the County for public water and public waste services for the subject property and shall convey the 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. All new or renovated buildings shall meet the requirements of UDC Sec. 306 *Standards for Non-Residential Uses*, including, but not limited to, the architectural requirement that building façades shall have an exterior material consisting of the following: brick or brick face, natural or manufactured stone or artificial stone panels, stucco, EFIS (e.g., dryvit™), glass, wood siding, or fiber cement lap siding with metal accent materials not to exceed 20% of each building face.

Site Pictures





Special Use # P24-0008 - Fellowship Baptist Church

Parcel #
A-05-013D



1:2,500

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235

470

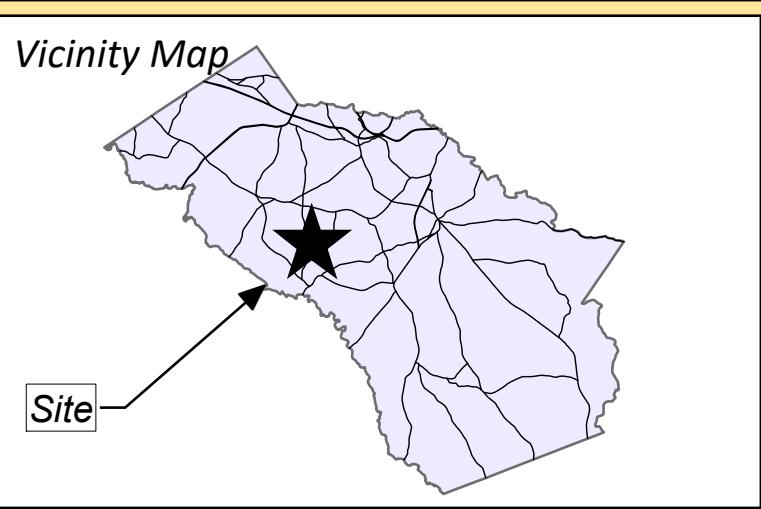
940

1,410

1,880

Feet





Oconee County Planning Department



This map is a representation of the future development map
and should be used for planning purposes only

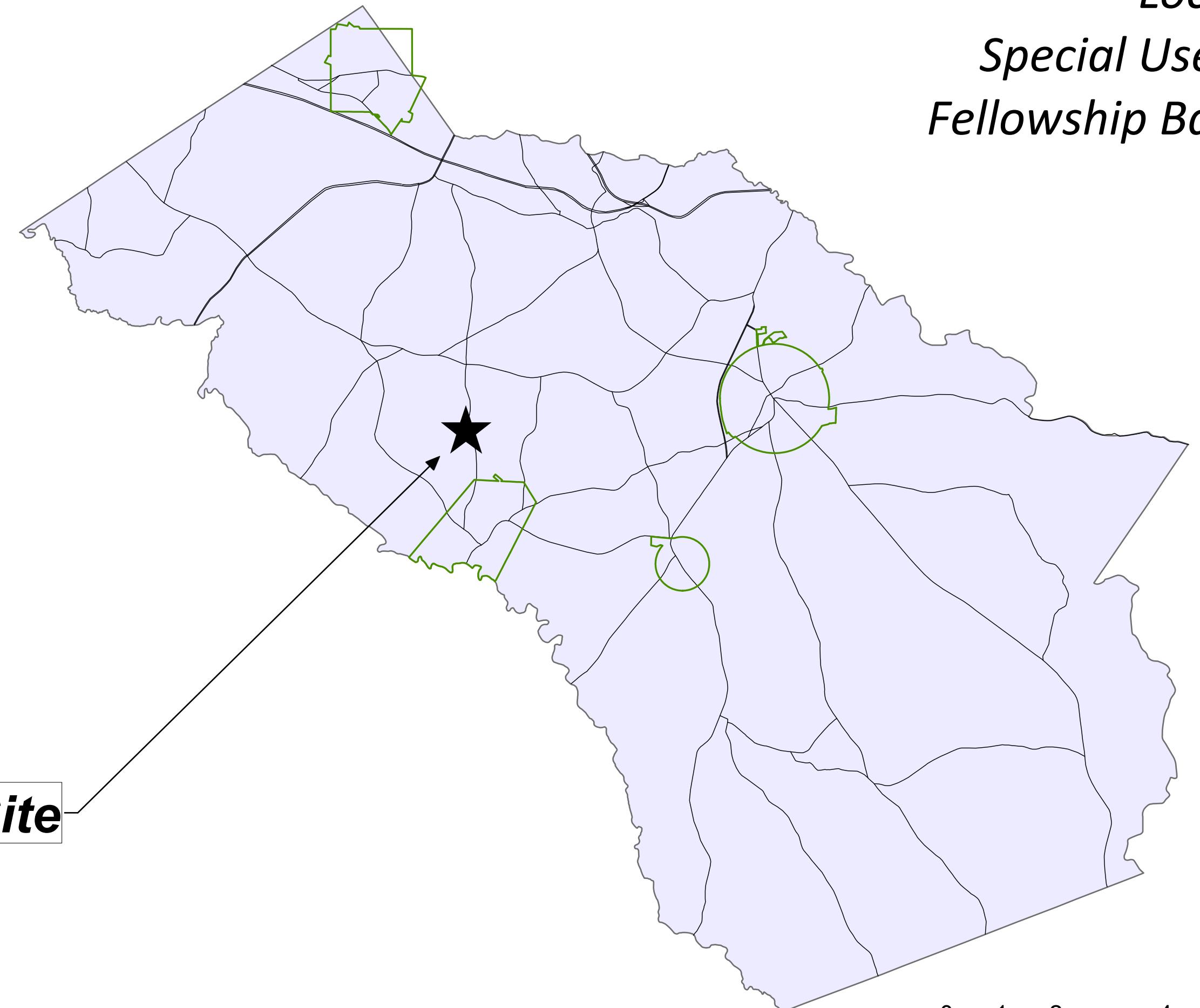
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Character Areas Map - 2023 Joint Comprehensive Plan

**Country
Estates**

Rural Places

Location Map -
Special Use # P24-0008
Fellowship Baptist Church



1:120,000

0 1 2 4 6 8 Miles

