

Chatham County Application for Change in General Use Zoning Districts

Applicant: Glandon Forest Equity, LLC

R-1 to NB

Applicant Submittal Requirements:

1. Any alleged error in the Ordinance, if any, which would be remedied by the proposed amendment.

We are unaware of any errors in the Ordinance related to this rezoning request.

2. The changed or changing conditions, if any, which make the proposed rezoning reasonably necessary.

The current site was historically used as a gas station/convenience store decades ago but has fallen into disrepair over the years. All tanks have been removed and it is currently being used as a storage building for the owner and serves little to no benefit to the community. The old wooden structure behind this building is also in disrepair and an eyesore for the community.

The downtown buildings across the street are primarily vacant and not used to benefit the community.

The subject corner property represents an excellent opportunity for Bonlee to revitalize its Village Center core.

Rezoning this property is necessary in order to redevelop the property and execute on Chatham County's vision for Village Centers in its Comprehensive Plan.

3. The manner in which the proposed rezoning will carry out the intent and purpose of the adopted Land Use Plan or part thereof.

In the Chatham County Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2017, Bonlee has been classified as a Village/Village Center which promotes development to "accommodate small-scale, local-serving retail, office, institutional, and service uses, restaurants, and some residential. Mix of uses include retail, restaurant, services, and office uses clustered near a village center (typically consisting of smaller commercial footprints)" in mostly one- and two-story buildings.

- The proposed rezoning is located at the crossroads of the Village Center and is consistent with what the Comprehensive Plan suggests for this area.
- The proposed Neighborhood Business zoning will allow the redevelopment of a currently vacant corner parcel, which was historically used for commercial purposes (old gas station and vehicle repair facility), into new and more vibrant commercial uses that will serve the local residents of the Village Center.

The proposed rezoning is consistent with the following Comprehensive Plan Elements:

- Economic Development Policy 1: Provide flexibility for rural businesses that have limited impact on adjacent properties and preserve rural character
 - The proposed zoning is consistent with other Neighborhood Zoned properties across the street
 - Other properties in the Village Center are zoned for Industrial use
 - Proposed rezoning will not interfere with rural character of the area because it is concentrating the project in the node that is identified as Village Center adjacent to similarly zoned properties.

- Economic Development Strategy 1.2: Modify zoning regulations to allow for more flexibility for rural businesses that have minimal impact on adjacent properties, traffic, and rural character.
 - The proposed rezoning is located at the core of the Village Center at the intersection of Old US 421 and the main artery entering Bonlee from US 421 and supports Economic Policy #1.

- Economic Development Policy 2: Encourage growth in designated Employment Centers, towns, and other appropriate locations
 - Proposed rezoning makes way for new businesses in the Village core which will allow for growth in employment, property and sales tax revenue.

- Economic Development Strategy 2.1: Encourage small-scale retail development, service, office, “flex” space, and other small business development by designating Village Centers and Crossroad Communities at appropriate locations across the county.”
 - Proposed rezoning will encompass just over one acre allowing for a small retail/service development that will serve the local community and offer employment growth.

- Land Use Policy Strategy 2.3 – Allow designated areas designed as Village Centers and Crossroads Communities as shown on the Future Land Use Map, to be developed for residential, commercial and some light industrial purposes
 - The 3 other corners at this intersection are currently developed for commercial uses (old downtown buildings, convenience store/gas station and auto repair).
 - This corner needs to be rezoned and redeveloped in order for a viable business to serve the community.

- Other Land Use strategies mentioned in the Land Use Plan which support the rezoning
 - Encourage infill and redevelopment near Village Centers
 - Commercial and mixed-use development should be sited along major highways at key intersections and in clusters at specific, designated locations along major collectors and arterials
 - Strategy 6.1 - Limit shopping centers and highway commercial development only in areas indicated as suitable for commercial development on the Future Land Use Map:

within Towns, Employment Centers, Community and Neighborhood Centers, Village Centers, and in Crossroad Communities.

- Strategy 7.2 - Support rezoning for businesses uses or properties made non-conforming by the extension of zoning in 2016.

4. List of other circumstances, factors and reasons which the applicant offers in support of the proposed amendment.

- Currently, residents of Bonlee must travel almost 10 miles to access any meaningful retail services. The Neighborhood Business rezoning will create flexibility, as suggested in the Chatham County Comprehensive Plan, allowing businesses to locate at this site to satisfy the convenience needs for the community.
- The proposed development would also offer employment opportunities, increased property and sales tax revenue for Chatham County.
- A new business coming to Bonlee could possibly re-energize the Village Center and bring further economic activity to the area. There are several older buildings across the street that are vacant but could be available for new businesses.
- The rezoning would pave the way to redevelop a prime corner which currently has two under-utilized buildings in disrepair that is not currently the highest and best use for the property