

Chatham County Planning Board
Chair: Jon Spoon
80 East Street A
Pittsboro, NC 27312

05 October 2021

RE: Fearington Preserve – Request to Amend the CCO Map to include 184.04 acres.

Dear Planning Board Members:

I have been working with VRC on the Fearington Preserve Land Use and Master Planning process since January 2020. During the early stages this project consisted of 184 acres that could have simply been developed as a conventional subdivision. There were aspirational goals for the project, but as the assemblage grew the development limitations became apparent as we considered the options for various housing types, amenities, and experiences that would be possible with the current entitlements. As we worked through various design alternatives, VRC reached the conclusion that only a Compact Community zoning would provide the planning tools necessary to achieve a design quality that could be consistent with the neighboring developments of Briar Chapel and Fearington Village.

Through this design process we have considered amenities with a rural character such as a "bonafide farm" on a portion of the site. We've looked at a farmer's market as a commercial use, and considered a vocational school as an institutional need that could be met. We've considered developing more than 10% of the density as true on-site affordable housing. We have considered a conservation easement that would protect 1 mile of Pokeberry Creek and provide a direct connection to the Park at Briar Chapel. We have considered dedicated pedestrian paths and bike trails that could complete a network between Fearington Village and Briar Chapel through Fearington Preserve. We have considered wastewater treatment options that include a new regional plant that could potentially alleviate the issues at Briar Chapel and Fearington Village. None of these options have been ruled out. All options are being contemplated using an extensive amount of survey data and environmental analysis as a background. The developers are local and are sensitive to the environment, the history of the area, the needs of the community, the character of North Chatham and the future of the area. Our design process has been focused on adding options and exploring any concept that could make Fearington Preserve a greater asset to Chatham County.

Ferrington Preserve could be designed as 184 acres of conventional subdivision and 184 acres of compact community, and it could still be developed that way even if the Text Amendment is approved. Approval of the Text Amendment does not guarantee rezoning approval. There is a long process that leads to a Compact Community. The request to extend the Compact Community Ordinance boundary is being made to allow us to continue our current design process and maximize the quality of the project. If the text amendment is denied the potential of the project will be diminished significantly and the community, Planning Board, and County Commissioners will not get the opportunity to judge what Ferrington Preserve could be.

This is an exciting project and I believe the Text Amendment is necessary to allow Ferrington Preserve to proceed to a point where it can be fully evaluated. I respectfully request your approval of the Text Amendment.

Sincerely,

Brandon Moore, ALSA
Principal, Landscape Architect
The Site Group, PLLC

CC: Randolph Voller