

Special Use Permit Application

Findings 1-5

Lori Lay re: home daycare/ max 12 children

3721 Old Graham Road

Pittsboro, NC 27312

Child Care is Infrastructure: <https://www.oxfamamerica.org/explore/stories/child-care-is-infrastructure/>

Chatham County is a Childcare Desert: [NC child care open for business; future, funding uncertain - EducationNC \(ednc.org\)](#)

1. The use requested is among those listed as an eligible special use in the district in which the subject property is located or is to be located. **This is an eligible special use in the district where my facility/property is located. I am proposing a child day care center in my principal residence to accommodate not more than 12 children at any one time. I am currently licensed for 8 children in my home. This was a permitted use when I began caring for children in my home. It has since been changed to require a special use permit. I would like to expand my license from a maximum capacity of 8 children to a maximum capacity of 12 children. I will be adding 4 siblings to the existing group.**

2. The requested special use permit or revision to the existing permit is either essential or desirable for the public convenience or welfare. **Absolutely. Childcare is infrastructure. Without childcare, parents can't work. NC and Chatham County are considered childcare deserts. Finding quality childcare is extremely hard to find in Chatham County. With the coming of Chatham Park and other new developments, as well as job creators such as Vinfast and ST Wooten, more and more families will be moving to our county and will be needing childcare.**

A. Traffic Document projected traffic generated by the use. **5-7 cars daily on weekdays 2x per day**

Document current capacity for the road that serves this site (available for all/most roads from NCDOT). What kinds of traffic will this be (car, bus, truck, etc.,) and what will be the peak time of day for the traffic? **This will be personal vehicle traffic from 5-7 families between 7:30-9:30am and 3:00-5:00 pm M-F**

Do you anticipate changes to the speed limit on the principal service road for this site? **I do not anticipate a need for speed limit changes on my road.**

Are modifications to the road system needed (e.g. a turning lane)? **A turning lane will not be necessary for the very low volume of traffic generated.**

How will these road improvements be financed? **N/A**

A letter of opinion from NCDOT would be required if introduction of significant new traffic loads were expected or there is already a high accident rate at this location. N/A

Will the road(s) included in the County Thoroughfare Plan accommodate these anticipated requirements? N/A

B. Visual Impact & Screening Describe the visual presentation of the completed project in context with the adjoining properties. How will fencing and/or plantings alter the future visual presentation? The visual presentation of the completed project in this context will not change except for the addition of a few more evergreen screening shrubs in the existing wood lines/ buffer zones so that the type A buffer will be as effective in winter once the leaves drop from the current greenery and vegetation. This is my current residence which is surrounded on all four sides by a tree buffer/ screen made up of evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubs. Any gaps in the buffer will be filled by approved shrubs such as Wax Myrtles per request of the appearance commission.

C. Lighting Will there be lights associated with the use? This includes but is not limited to pole lights whether for security or decorative post mounted lights, lights on buildings/structures, landscape lighting, flood lights, etc. If so, describe the wattage, type, method of support (if on poles, give height of pole), and times of night the lights would be in use. What considerations and methods have been considered to the shielding of the light from adjacent properties? Are similar lights in use elsewhere that can be evaluated? N/A I will not be operating during hours where outdoor lighting is needed.

D. Noise Will there be noise generated by the use? If so, what will be the source of this noise? Provide an estimate of the level of noise in decibels at the property lines of the site. Provide the basis for this estimate. If the noise generated is anticipated to exceed the County Noise Ordinance, a permit must be requested and approved to exceed the ordinance requirements. N/A

E. Chemicals, Biological and Radioactive Agents . Identify types and amounts of chemicals, explosives, biological and radioactive materials that will be utilized by the requested use. What is the estimated amounts of these agents that will be generated as waste; how will they be disposed? Identify the possible biochemical or radioactive hazards that may be associated with this use; how will these be handled? Identify the potential for emissions into the air. Identify the potential for discharges or runoff of liquids that would pollute the surface and/or groundwater sources. N/A

F. Signs Will the use include the display of a sign (advertisement or identification)? If so, describe the method of display, lighting, color, size, number and location on the site. N/A

G. Emergency Services

Existing residence. These services are already provided. No change.

1. Fire Protection - Document the impact on respective volunteer fire department's ability to service the site with the requested use. This should come from the Chatham County Fire Marshal as a letter. N/A

2. Police Protection - Document the impact to the Chatham County Sheriff Department's ability to provide protection for the site with the requested use. This should come from the Sheriff in the form of a supporting letter. N/A

3. Rescue 911 - Document the impact to rescue and ambulance ability to provide support to the site; provide approximate arrival time to site after a 911 call is placed. N/A

H. Impact to surrounding Land Values

What will be the impact to surrounding land values as a result of the proposed use? Is this impact anticipated to change with time or create possible 4 changes in use of the surrounding properties? Note that if the applicant does choose to provide this information to support the application, then the basis for the information must be provided. For example, if a real estate appraiser's opinion is presented, then the opinion is expected to be derived from an analysis of comparison sites with requested use, some other real estate study or survey. N/A - Caring for 2-4 more children in my home during the weekday should not have any effect on surrounding property values. I keep my outdoor appearances looking nice. My husband is a landscape installer, and he has the tools to make sure that the outdoors looks nice for my clients and neighbors. I prefer to keep a natural outdoor play area. I do not have a Little Tykes Junk yard for a playground. I can't see any reason that what I am proposing would have any effect at all on other property values.

3. The requested permit will not impair the integrity or character of the surrounding or adjoining districts, and will not be detrimental to the health, safety or welfare of the community. This is correct. It will not impair the integrity of adjoining districts or be detrimental to the community.

A. Need and Desirability The application should describe why there is a need for the proposed use in the area being applied for. Describe how this was determined (for example, an analysis of present or projected demands on existing similar uses). This is an opportunity for the applicant to establish the benefit to the county that will result from approval of this permit. In Chatham County there are only 15 licensed family childcare homes and there are only 4 in Pittsboro. There are 27 licensed childcare centers in the county and just 9 of them are in Pittsboro, with only 4 that offer care for infants and toddlers. With the Chatham Park Development and companies like VinFast coming to the county our population is expected to grow exponentially in the next few years. The current number of childcare spaces will not meet the growing demand. It does not meet the current demand now. I get phone calls every day from desperate parents searching for childcare availability. The average population growth rate for North Carolina hovers around 1%. Chatham County general population growth has routinely been one of the fastest in central North Carolina. According to the US Census Bureau, the average growth rate between 2014 and 2019 was 2.23%. This compares to Orange County at 1.06% and Durham County at 1.18%. It is only matched by Wake County at 2.23%. This increase in population is expected to

continue. Compared to the national average, North Carolina has one of the highest rates of working mothers with young children; thus, making the need for childcare one of the state's top priorities. Over 200,000 children spend part or all of their day in regulated childcare arrangements. Chatham County is already one of the fastest-growing counties in North Carolina. Now, its growth will be drastically accelerated as the largest economic development project in North Carolina history gets up and running in 2024.

Why is the proposed use more desirable than other uses permitted under the existing zoning?

The proposed use is only for one small portion of my residence... one room and one small corner of my yard. 75% + of my property will remain the same residential use. My family lives here and will continue to live here. I do not want one use over the other. I would need to have both uses.

B. Survey of Similar Uses How many other instances of this use are currently in Chatham or within an adjacent county? In Chatham County there are only 15 licensed family childcare homes (FCCH) and there are only 4 in Pittsboro. There are no Center Located in a Residence (CLIR) in our county currently.

Are there similar uses already approved for the requested use on adjacent properties? Not currently on adjacent properties. My former backdoor neighbor used to run a licensed family childcare home years ago... she has since passed away. There also used to be a Center Located in a Residence 4 houses down from me, but it is no longer operating. I noticed during my research it is/was classified as O/I. However, for what they were doing and what I am proposing to do, the correct use classification is R4. My children went to both childcare facilities at some point in their youth.

Provide summary of existing similar uses. If there are already a number of such uses allowed in the County or another similar use in reasonably close proximity to the new requested site, why is this new instance of this use essential? Access to quality Child Care is always essential and there is not enough access to quality childcare in Chatham County. We need more available quality childcare vacancies. I would support several new home daycares in our county, and they would be full as there is definitely a need.

Are these other instances currently in operation and successful? There are no other large day care homes (CLIR) currently in the county. The ones that operated in the past have been successful. There are currently 15 successful small home daycares (FCCH) in Chatham County, 4 of them in Pittsboro. I will be very successful. In fact, I will be full as soon as everything is approved. My waiting list is several pages long, and even after adding the additional sibling children, my next vacancy still isn't until 2024.

*There were 5000 licensed small home daycares statewide in 2003... only 1500 in 2019.

*Overall, the number of licensed small FCC homes fell by 48 percent from 2005 to 2017.

* In their survey responses, state respondents said that increased regulations and the economy were reasons for the decrease. They also mentioned that many providers were aging and retiring.

*25% of childcare facilities nationwide shuttered during the pandemic and many more are struggling to stay open. Centers are forced to close classrooms and deny infant/toddler care because there are not enough teachers available to meet the adult:child ratios. For 4-year-olds, the state ratio is 1:20 for infants, the ratio is 1:5

Lack of available regulated childcare is a serious problem. And I suspect the problem will become even more dire in spring 2023. I predict there will be another mass exodus of childcare providers in April 2023.

There have been Centers Located in a Residence (Large home day cares) in Chatham County in the past. But none exist currently, most likely due to the high cost of requirements and amendments that must be made to the provider's physical residence such as expensive plumbing and structural changes and other regulatory obstacles. FCCH do not require building, fire, and sanitation inspections, but CLIR do, and Child Care providers do not typically make enough money to be able to do the things that are required from central permitting, fire marshal zoning and environmental health. Prior to 2001, home daycares were categorized as small home day care or large home day care. Today they are either family childcare homes (small daycare) or Center Located in a Residence (large home daycare). I am trying to go from today's equivalent of small home day care (family childcare home – FCCH) to today's equivalent of large home day care (center located in a residence – CLIR). The number of family childcare homes and centers located in residences in the state has dropped dramatically since 2001. Many providers closed their doors because of rapidly increasing and ever-changing rules and regulations. Many home daycare providers do not have backgrounds in early childhood education and the obstacles were simply not worth the headache or the monetary cost. Many have simply retired. I have made a career out of this. I have worked in early childhood education and NC licensed childcare for 26 years – 15 years as a director and advocate for children and early childhood education. I have two degrees in Early Childhood Education and in Child Development. I have served on the board of the Chatham County Partnership for Children. I am currently a part of the NC FCCH Advisory Council and regularly attend NC Child Care Commission meetings. I follow childcare legislation news and write letters to my representatives. I am a member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. I understand the rules and regulations and the purpose for every one of them. I fully support regulated childcare. With my experience as an administrator of a 200-child capacity 5-star center for 15 years, I have become very familiar with the regulations, and they are not a headache for me. It's simply what I have done every day for the last 26 years. I do not choose to do this just to stay home with my own young kids or just to babysit for extra spending money. I am a professional early childhood educator and local business owner.

C. Public Provided Improvements Identify any public improvements, services, etc., that the county would be required to provide in support of this site if the use is approved. If no additional public improvements are needed, then state this as the case. **None**

D. Tax considerations If appropriate, or of advantage to the application, provide an estimate of the tax revenue (direct and indirect) to the County that this use would provide. Describe how this estimate was determined. What is the net result of expenditure of County services and facilities required vs. the tax revenue generated? **N/A other than the money generated by allowing parents of young children to go to work because they have access to quality childcare.**

E. Employment Discuss the number of jobs that would be created by this use. Designate these positions as full time or part time. If possible, describe the salary ranges of the employees. **Depending on the ages of the children in the group, I would have 0-1 full time employees and/or 0-2 part time employees. Salary would be no less than the current living wage in Chatham County (\$15-\$20/hour) and, if possible, free childcare.**

4. The manner in which the proposed amendment will carry out the intent and purpose of any adopted plans or part thereof. (I.e. Comprehensive Plan, Chatham/Cary Joint Land Use Plan, etc.) You must note specifics from the plan/s giving reference to page number and section. In support of the Comp Plan, include the following references at a minimum:

CHAPTER TWO: (begins on page 13) • Issues and Opportunities

CHAPTER THREE: (begins on page 39) • Goals and Objectives • Land Use Descriptions – select the correct designation for your submittal and support the various bullet points as outlined.

CHAPTER FOUR: (begins on page 51) The minimum strategies to address are the following. You may include others as you deem supportive of your application. • Economic Development (page 53) • Land Use (page 61) • Natural Resources (page 103) • Parks and Recreation (page 117) 5

The proposed amendment will carry out the intent and purpose of the Comprehensive plan in several ways.

Chapter two

Issues and opportunities – (page 13) Chatham County ties Wake County as the fastest growing county in the state. With that growth in population comes increased demand for quality childcare. I can help fill that need by serving more children. In addition to providing infrastructure that will allow families to go to work, I can contribute by producing 2-3 job openings with a living wage. Also, childcare providers who want to get a degree in early childhood education will have an opportunity to do so for free at CCCC with a partnership between my business and the TEACH scholarship. I will be able to provide access to education and opportunity in that way in addition to providing the first steps to lifelong learning for the children I care for.

Chapter three

Goals and Objectives – (page 41-43) I can support the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan in multiple ways.

1. **Preserve the rural character and lifestyle of Chatham County** by engaging in entrepreneurship, arts, gardening, and maintaining my beautiful country property.
2. **Diversify the tax base and generate more high-quality jobs to reduce dependence on residential property taxes, create economic opportunity and reduce out-commuting** by providing living wage jobs and opportunities for others to go to work and or college.
3. **Provide infrastructure to support desired development and support economic and environmental objectives** – parents cannot work without access to childcare.
4. **Provide equitable access to high quality education, housing and community options for all** by offering to partner with CCSA to provide TEACH scholarships so that Early Childhood educators may get a degree in Early Childhood Education for free.
5. **Foster a healthy community** by providing several hours of outdoor time for these children every day - engaging in obesity reducing gross motor activities and gardening of fresh vegetables as well as participation USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program.

Land Use Descriptions – Rural

- *Single family home on large lot that protects function and form of Rural character with lots of trees.
- *Large lot residential home-based small business
- *1 story building
- *Rural 2 lane roads
- *Private open space in large lot
- *Located in a residential area

Chapter Four

I intend to support economic development (pg. 53), land use (61), natural resources (pg. 103) and parks and recreation (pg. 117) by meeting the intent of the following goals:

Create in-county jobs and reduce out-commuting

Allow others to go to work and contribute to our economy

Provide equitable access to high-quality education and community options

Engage in entrepreneurship

I intend to preserve the rural character and lifestyle of Chatham County by locating my small business in my rural home.

Promote compact growth pattern by staying close to town and established communities

Keep my natural play area and tree buffers as natural and undisturbed as allowed.

Conserve natural resources and preserve, protect, and enable agriculture and forestry by maintaining watershed protection trees canopy and undergrowth on my property, planting new trees and native shrubs, and maintaining a vegetable garden.

Providing recreational opportunities and access to open space – I have a HUGE yard and my daycare children are outdoors for several hours daily.

5. Adequate utilities, access roads, storm drainage, recreation, open space, and other necessary facilities have been or are being provided consistent with the County's plans, policies and regulations. **This is already an established site as it is the home I have been living in for the last 21 years. We do have or will have adequate utilities, access roads, storm drainage, open space, etc. at this site.**

A. Water Source and Requirements. How much water will the use require? What is the source of the water (county water or private well)? If the supply is to be supplied by the county, then with the help of the Public Works Dept. (542-8270) identify how the water connections are to be provided. **Water is provided by a private well.**

B. Wastewater Management. What is the wastewater capacity needs for this use? Specify the treatment and disposal methods to be used. WWTP, public (i.e. Aqua of NC), or private septic. If individual septic, provide septic improvements permit letter from the Chatham County Environmental Health Department. If other than individual septic systems are to be used, submit a plan for wastewater management. If system requires approval from NCDENR or Aqua of NC or any other state or public source, please provide preliminary approval towards getting approval. **Wastewater is managed by a private septic system. At the direction of Environmental Health, I have hired a flow reduction engineer to reduce water flow GPD and am requesting an operations permit revision to eliminate 1 bedroom to accommodate the daycare children (even though a majority of them are in diapers and I will not be doing laundry or washing dishes).**

C. Water/Sewer Impact Statement . All applications where a public utility is to be utilized, (water or sewer) must state clearly the amount of usage that is anticipated. The usage estimate must be validated by the County Public Works Director, along with an updated usage vs. capacity statement. The impact statement should provide a projection of the demand after the site is fully developed. **N/A**

D. Access Roads . Describe the access to and from the site to public highways or private roadways. If the requested use will require a new driveway or enhancement to existing highway(s), address the following questions. If a new driveway access is part of the proposal, has NCDOT approved this access (include copy of the preliminary approval for a commercial driveway permit)? If the site is located on a road designated as a "major collector", is the site accessed by an existing or proposed service road? Describe any upgrades of public or private roads necessary to serve the property. **N/A**

E. Stormwater Runoff . Detail the methods and various structures that will be used to control stormwater runoff. (If disturbing more than 20,000 square feet of area, a stormwater management plan must be submitted with this application) This information will detail all points of offsite discharge with design techniques used and projected impact on neighboring properties. **N/A We are not going to be disturbing anything.**