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Chatham County Planning Board  
P.O. Box 54 80-A East Street  
Pittsboro, North Carolina 27312  
*Via Electronic Mail to Planning Board Staff*

**RE: COMMENTS BEFORE THE FEBRUARY 6, 2024, CHATHAM COUNTY PLANNING BOARD REGARDING WALT LEWIS REZONING REQUEST.**

Dear Members of the Planning Board:

My name is Alan McConnell, and I live with my family at 1535 Tody Goodwin Road in Chatham County. I have lived on Tody Goodwin Road for 31 years. Though I had intended to present these oral comments at the Planning Board meeting tonight, a conflict has prevented me from attending the meeting in person. This letter is submitted in opposition to the above-referenced rezoning request.

A summary of my comments follows:

1. I hereby incorporate by reference my comments submitted to the Board of Commissioners dated November 20, 2023. Key points in those comments include:
  - a. This exact Project was rejected by the Planning Board and Full Board of Commissioners in 2016. Statements by the Planning Staff at that time included “It is staff opinion this rezoning would have a destabilizing effect on the residential uses in the surrounding area.” Other than construction of a new house of worship and dramatically increased traffic on Beaver Creek Road, nothing significant has changed since the determination by the County to reject the Project. Contrary to the applicant’s assertions, I believe that another house of worship in our neighborhood will strengthen our residential community rather than destabilize it.
  - b. As demonstrated in 2016, the Project would diminish the value of nearby residential real estate. Please refer to Mr. Galvin’s written comments submitted on November 22, 2023.
  - c. The Project would be located on property that is suitable for residences. The applicant argues that the property is not suitable for residential development, because it does not percolate to an acceptable degree. This is demonstrably incorrect. Please refer to Mr. Galvin’s comments previously referenced.
  - d. A comprehensive traffic study should be required by the County. This is discussed in more detail below.
2. In comments submitted during and after the November public hearing, the applicant continues to emphasize how dire the need is around Jordan Lake for more boat and RV storage. The applicant alleges that all storage facilities around Jordan Lake are “full”.

However, in the last week I have seen roadside signs in the Wilsonville area advertising boat storage availability at both Crosswinds and Between the Lakes Boat and RV Storage.

3. Without conceding that the need for more boat and RV storage near Jordan Lake is correct, I don't believe this argument supports the current application. If more storage is needed, it can be built in properly zoned areas. The County should not support the destruction of a residential neighborhood simply because the applicant bought less expensive land that he continues to argue should be rezoned, rather than stepping up and paying for commercial property.
4. In comments submitted by the applicant after the November public hearing, the applicant states "Five of the six adjacent property owners either support or have no issues with the project." I do not believe this is true, and the County should demand written documentation of this statement by the applicant. Please see the signed petitions against the rezoning and Ms. Dotten's comments thereto included in the record.
5. In comments submitted by the applicant after the November public hearing, the applicant discounts my comments at the November public hearing because I live "approximately 2 miles from the project site." This statement by the applicant demonstrates how shallow and insufficient the "traffic study" performed to date is. As discussed in comments previously submitted by Patricia and Gay Goodwin and Sharon McConnell, Tody Goodwin Rd. has become a key access road to Jordan lake for thousands of new residents of exploding development in western Wake County. As it stands today, the applicant has offered no analysis of the impact of the project on the dramatically increased traffic from the south on Beaver Creek Road, headed toward US 64 from western Wake County, Lee County, enormous new developments in the Moncure area, and dramatic changes along Pea Ridge and New Elam Church Roads. Moreover, members of my household use Beaver Creek Road regularly to travel north toward Chapel Hill and west toward Pittsboro. We are well aware of and affected by the traffic impacts on that road.
6. The applicant's traffic analysis remains woefully inadequate and completely fails to consider traffic approaching the facility from the south. The applicant relies entirely on a four-page document that the author of the document, Chase Smith of Ramey Kemp Associates, refers to as a "trip generation letter of sorts" in his communication with NC DOT (see e-mail in the record to NC DOT dated 12/27/23). As I understand it, this "trip generation letter of sorts" is based on data from self storage facilities (not boat and RV facilities where lengthy towed vehicles are the norm and there are days of the week and times of the year when traffic will be excessive) and focuses only on the expected number of visits into and out of the proposed facility. The letter does not address turning traffic, increased traffic on Beaver Creek Rd., and how the facility will add to lengthy backups on Beaver Creek that already occur.
7. The applicant's most recent proposal to add a turn lane for traffic approaching the facility from the north is woefully inadequate to address the traffic problems that will be created by this facility. The applicant completely ignores traffic from the south, headed north on Beaver Creek, and how boats and RVs turning left into the facility will impede traffic. This Planning Board knows very well how much growth and development – industrial and residential – is ahead for the Moncure area. This development is already dramatically increasing traffic on Pea Ridge Road and Beaver Creek Road heading to the north. Add to this the increased

traffic that would approach the facility from the south out of western Wake County (using Tody Goodwin as a cut-through), coupled with RVs and boats turning left into the facility without any turn lane, and enormous traffic congestion and backups will result. Please again refer to Sharon McConnell's comments on this topic already submitted.

8. I am concerned that the applicant will allege "all is well" with regard to traffic based on e-mail communications with NC DOT from December and January. In this dialog (in the record) between the applicant and NC DOT, Mr. Lewis proposes to install a right turn lane (only) leading to the northernmost entrance of the facility (only). Ms. Britt of NC DOT responds to the proposal that "**Based on the information provided so far**, a proposed right turn lane on the northernmost driveway with storage at 100 LF and taper **is appropriate**" (emphasis added). Mr. Galvin has reached out to Ms. Britt at NC DOT to provide additional information, particularly focusing on northbound traffic approaching the facility with no left turn lane. Please see Mr. Galvin's correspondence to Ms. Britt, and the response, submitted for the record in this case. In short, while the right turn lane proposed by the applicant is indeed "appropriate," it is not *adequate* to address the serious traffic problems, particularly from traffic headed north on Beaver Creek, that will be created by this facility.

In conclusion, the proposed Development consists of the construction of a huge building complex that runs parallel to Beaver Creek Road for .36 miles and allows for the storage of approximately 200 RVs and boats, retail sales (ice) and petroleum fueling. If approved, the Development would be the third such storage facility along a short (1.1 mile) stretch of Beaver Creek Road. If approved, the Development would result in over 1/2 of a mile of storage areas, the equivalent of a substantial strip mall, to be placed within a short 1 mile stretch of a scenic road, within the heart of an R-1 Residential District.

The County should reject the request to approve the Development.

Sincerely,



Alan H. McConnell  
Retired Partner

cc: Dan Garrett  
Angela Plummer  
Jason Sullivan