



DEVELOPMENTS OF REGIONAL IMPACT

Finding

Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center • 305 Research Drive, Athens, Georgia 30605-2795 • 706.369.5650 • Fax 706.369.5792 • www.negrdc.org

TO: Affected Local Governments and Other Interested Parties
FROM: James R. Dove, Executive Director *JRD*
DATE: January 9, 2008

The Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center (RDC) has completed its review of the following Development of Regional Impact (DRI). The Northeast Georgia RDC reviewed the proposed project with regard to conflicts with regional plans, goals, and policies and the impacts it might have on the activities, plans, goals, and policies of other local jurisdictions and state, federal, and other agencies. The finding does not address whether the DRI is or is not in the best interest of the local government.

DRI ID Number: 1623
Name of Proposed Project: Hwy 81 Development
Submitting Local Government: Barrow County

Finding: After review of information submitted by the host government and comments received from affected agencies, the Northeast Georgia RDC finds that the development is in not the best interest of the Region and therefore the State.

Additional Comments:

The reasons for this finding are as follows:

- The proposed development conflicts with the County's Future Land Use map.
- The potential traffic generated by the development will negatively impact SR81 particularly given its proximity to GA 316. In addition, the current configuration of the development's access point to Carter Hill Church Road may further cause negative impacts on the road network.
- The amount of impervious surface as well as the potential effects of stormwater runoff and the subsequent impacts on water quality considering the project is located within the Fort Yargo Small Water Supply Watershed and a tributary to the Reservoir is located on the property.
- The adverse impacts on the capacities of the local school system resulting from the proposed project independent of additional growth throughout the county.
- The cumulative effects of development on the local school systems which presently is forced to rely on portables for at least one school that would serve this development.
- The cumulative effects of development and the potential adverse impacts on the capacities of local supportive infrastructure particularly water, wastewater, and solid waste service.

Should the project be pursued, the following recommendations are made:

- If approved, Barrow County's must amend its Future Land Use with regards to the intensity of the proposed development.
- A detailed traffic impact analysis should be conducted to address the direct impacts on the adjacent road network and identify the needed improvements. The developer(s) should work closely with Barrow County, the City of Winder, and GDOT to minimize the adverse impacts on the road network's level of service.
- The developer should address the project layout to mitigate stormwater management issues. The project should implement Best Management Practices for stormwater management controls as found in the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual (www.georgiastormwater.com) to minimize the potential adverse impacts on local and regional water quality.
- The project should be phased concurrent with the ability of supportive infrastructure to accommodate the additional growth.
- Every effort must be made to comply with all local, state, and federal environmental regulations throughout the development phase to ensure minimal impact on the surrounding areas.

DRI Review Committee Members

Tom Mayers, John Middleton, Beverly Montgomery, Mary Quinn,
Bob Thomas

Date approved by NEGRDC Board of Directors _____

Chairperson's Signature _____



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Request for Comments

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DRI Number:	DRI #1623 Highway 81 Development, Barrow County
Name of commenting organization:	City of Hoschton
Department:	Planning and Development
Address:	79 City Square
Telephone:	706-654-3034
Email address:	wharmon@cityofhoschton.com
Date:	December 12, 2007

This project has no perceptible impact on Hoschton.



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DRI Number:	DRI #1623 Highway 81 Development, Barrow County
Name of commenting organization:	City of Winder
Department:	Planning
Address:	23 North Jackson Street, Winder, Georgia 30680
Telephone:	770-867-3106
Email address:	barry.edgar@cityofwinder.com
Date:	December 13, 2007

Traffic: A detailed traffic study should be completed for this project. The traffic immediately surrounding the project site is already very congested. The HWY 81 interchange at HWY 316 needs to be upgraded as soon as possible to handle the additional traffic. The intersection of Carter Hill Church Road and HWY 81 is very awkward. This intersection should be improved to better line up with the entrance of the proposed project.

Environmental: The proposed project is directly above two small branches that eventually feed into the Fort Yargo State Park reservoir. It will be very important that all erosion control measures are in place throughout the construction process to protect all down stream property owners. The proposed detention pond discharge point will be a very critical point in the erosion control management plan.



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DRI Number:	DRI #1623 Highway 81 Development, Barrow County
Name of commenting organization:	Barrow County Schools
Department:	Planning
Address:	179 W Athens St Winder GA 30680
Telephone:	770-307-4775
Email address:	cbeggs@barrow.k12.ga.us
Date:	December 13, 2007

Please note: This is a copy of the original letter submitted to the County Planning Department. Please note that nothing in the original application submitted to us indicated that there would be 300 apartments. Our only indication as to the scope of the project was the sketch plan which indicated 56 SF units and 25 town home units.

September 23, 2007

Zoning Response
Barrow County Department of Planning
233 E. Broad Street
Winder, Georgia 30680

RE: #2007-042

To Whom It May Concern:

As you requested, we have examined the R-3 rezoning on Hwy. 81. for its impact on the school system. It appears that 56 single family homes and 25 townhomes will be located on 47 of the proposed 56 acres. It is not clear what, if any, amenities will be provided for this development or what price point this development will

provide. The proposed commercial strip center, if similar to others recently attached to residential developments, is likely to provide little benefit in the form of tax revenues. All surrounding properties are zoned AG or single family residential and the existing comprehensive land use plan does not indicate high density residential development in this area. We are opposed to random R-3 zoning, which makes planning for future school sites extremely difficult.

Our statistics indicate that each house in Barrow County produces approximately 1.25 students. The local per year expenditure to educate a child in Barrow County Schools is approximately \$2797. It would take a home with an assessed value of \$375,000 home with only one child to cover this expense. A \$125,000 assessed value on a property would generate \$925 or 1/3 enough revenue to educate one child.

In addition to the cost of educating students, the cost of housing students is also borne by local funds. The proposed development would currently be served by Kennedy Elementary, Westside Middle and Apalachee High Schools. There are currently over 600 additional homes awaiting buildout in the Kennedy Elementary attendance zone. This development alone would result in many additional portables, which must be funded solely by local taxpayers. The state does not provide any funding for portable classrooms. All of the burden for these portable classrooms must be borne by the local taxpayer. In addition to teachers, classrooms and lunchroom space, serving this development would require additional bus routes and increasing the number of buses and bus drivers.

I appreciate the fact that you seek our input on these important matters. If I can answer specific questions, please feel free to call me. As always, we appreciate developers who are willing to work with us to lessen the burden on the school system.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ron Saunders
Superintendent



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DRI Number:	DRI #1623 Highway 81 Development, Barrow County
Name of commenting organization:	Department of Natural Resources
Department:	Historic Preservation Division
Address:	34 Peachtree Street, NW, Ste 1600
Telephone:	404-651-6452
Email address:	Melina.Vasquez@dnr.state.ga.us
Date:	December 13, 2007

The Historic Preservation Division (HPD) has reviewed the information submitted concerning the proposed project in Barrow County, Georgia. Our comments are offered to assist the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center in assessing the potential impacts of the proposed project as it pertains to the Georgia Planning Act.

Regarding historic structures that may be located in the area, we recommend a survey be conducted by a qualified historian to identify historic structures located within the project's area of potential effects.

Regarding archaeological resources, due to the size and topographic setting of the subject property, we recommend that an intensive (Phase I) archaeological survey be conducted by a qualified archaeologist.

We offer these comments now as technical assistance; however HPD looks forward to reviewing this project under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act if at some stage in the development federal funding, permitting or licensing becomes required, or under the Georgia Environmental Policy Act (GEPA) if state funds are utilized.

If we may be of further assistance, or for more information on compliance requirements for Section 106 or GEPA, please contact Michelle Volkema at (404) 651-6546.



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DRI Number:	DRI #1623 Highway 81 Development, Barrow County
Name of commenting organization:	GA DNR / EPD
Department:	404 675 1621
Address:	kevin_farrell@dnr.state.ga.us
Telephone:	December 14, 2007
Email address:	
Date:	

Site actually does appear to be in a small water supply watershed as its just upstream of Lake Yargo which Winder is using to meet water supply needs.



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DRI Number:	DRI #1623 Highway 81 Development, Barrow County
Name of commenting organization:	Athens-Clarke County Unified Government
Department:	Planning Department
Address:	120 W. Dougherty Street
Telephone:	706.613.3515
Email address:	leahstewart@co.clarke.ga.us
Date:	December 26, 2007

December 26, 2007

Mr. Moneyhun,

In general, the proposed Mixed Use development in the Barrow County (Project ID DRI-1623), as proposed, would not have a measurable impact on Athens-Clarke County's transportation infrastructure, solid waste management services, natural or historic resources, or other community facilities or services.

Should you have any questions or comments regarding our comments, please contact Brad Griffin, Planning Director, or myself at (706) 613-3515.

Leah Graham Stewart
Long Range Planner



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DRI Number:	DRI #1623 Highway 81 Development, Barrow County
Name of commenting organization:	GDOT
Department:	Gainesville-District 1 Preconstruction Office
Address:	2505 Athens Hwy., SE, Gainesville, Ga. 30507
Telephone:	770-532-5520
Email address:	robert.mahoney@dot.state.ga.us
Date:	December 31, 2007

GDOT is currently working on the Concept Design plans for a new interchange at SR 316 and SR 81 under project # CSNHS-0008-00(429) Barrow County. Limited Access will be acquired a set distance from the interchange ramps under the right of way acquisition phase of this project. The proposed development's access points onto SR 81 should be far enough away from the ramps to not cause operational issues with SR 81. This is normally a distance of 1000' rural and 600' in urban areas.

An Access Permit will need to be requested by developer to be granted access to SR 81. A review of detailed Access and Site development plans will need to be made by GDOT prior to granting this access.

Improvements to SR 81, which will be the sole responsibility of the developer, will be set based on the review of development's Traffic Engineering study and the development plans. The need for turn lanes, which could be center turn and right turn, will be part of this review.

It is strongly recommended that a review by Barrow County and GDOT be made of the intersection of Carter Hill Church Road/Punkin Junction Road and one of the proposed access points on SR 81 for realignment and operational improvements. It also appears the development's two access points may be too close together to have necessary separation distance between them. This will be looked at in greater detail once scaled drawing plans are submitted to GDOT.

Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Wildlife Resources Division

Nongame Conservation Section
2065 U.S. Highway 278, S.E., Social Circle, Georgia 30025-4743
(770) 918 6411

December 18, 2007

Jim Moneyhun
Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center
305 Research Drive
Athens, GA 30605-2795

Subject: Known Occurrences of Conservation Areas and Special Concern Animals and Plants On or Near Hwy 81 Development, DRI # 1623, Barrow County, Georgia

Dear Mr. Moneyhun:

This is in response to your request of December 10, 2007. According to our records, within a three-mile radius of the project site there are the following Natural Heritage Database occurrences:

GA *Cypripedium acaule* (Pink Ladyslipper) approx. 1.5 mi. E of site
Pilularia americana (American Pillwort) approx. 3.0 mi. NE of site
Fort Yargo State Park [GA DNR] 0.5 mi. NE of site
Greenspace [Barrow County] approx. 1.0 mi. NE of site

* Entries above preceded by "US" indicates species with federal status in Georgia (Protected or Candidate). Species that are federally protected in Georgia are also state protected; "GA" indicates Georgia protected species.

Recommendations:

We have no records of species of concern within the property boundary. However, this could be due to a lack of survey information at this site. There are records of species of concern within three miles of the project area and the potential for species of concern at this site. We recommend completing thorough surveys for species of concern before this project is begun.

We advocate community planning that focuses on leaving open space in newly developed residential areas. These subdivisions are designed to protect natural habitats by clustering development and minimizing infrastructure, such as paved surfaces and utilities. Development should occur away from sensitive environmental resources, such as streams, wetlands and critical wildlife habitat. Undisturbed buffers of at least 100 feet should be left surrounding any streams or wetlands at the site. Open space should be protected by use of a conservation easement or other legal agreement. The open space may be used for recreation, wildlife habitat and stormwater control. We recommend these cluster developments that set aside as much land as possible to remain in a natural state. This will allow for the conservation of wildlife and natural resources as well as recreation opportunities for residents of the planned development and

surrounding communities. For more information on Conservation Subdivisions visit The River Basin Center Website at http://www.rivercenter.uga.edu/service/tools/cons_subdivisions.htm.

New Data Available on the Nongame Conservation Section Website

We have recently updated the Nongame Conservation Section Website!!! You can view the updated rare species and natural community information by Quarter Quad, County and HUC8 Watershed. To access this information, please visit our GA Rare Species and Natural Community Information page at:

<http://georgiawildlife.dnr.state.ga.us/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=89>

An updated ESRI shape file of our rare species and natural community data by quarter quad and county is also available. It can be downloaded from:

<http://georgiawildlife.dnr.state.ga.us/assets/documents/gnhp/gnhpds.zip>

Disclaimer:

Please keep in mind the limitations of our database. The data collected by the Nongame Conservation Section comes from a variety of sources, including museum and herbarium records, literature, and reports from individuals and organizations, as well as field surveys by our staff biologists. In most cases the information is not the result of a recent on-site survey by our staff. Many areas of Georgia have never been surveyed thoroughly. Therefore, the Nongame Conservation Section can only occasionally provide definitive information on the presence or absence of rare species on a given site. Our files are updated constantly as new information is received. **Thus, information provided by our program represents the existing data in our files at the time of the request and should not be considered a final statement on the species or area under consideration.**

If you know of populations of special concern species that are not in our database, please fill out the appropriate data collection form and send it to our office. Forms can be obtained through our web site (<http://www.georgiawildlife.com>) or by contacting our office. If I can be of further assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,



Katrina Morris
Environmental Review Coordinator