



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 22, 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: 1643
Name of Proposed Project: Kerala Gardens
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 the best interest of the Region and therefore the State **contingent on completion of a traffic study and contingent on the project implementing Best Management Practices for stormwater management controls as found in the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual.**

Additional Comments:

The review produced the following concerns:

- This finding is contingent on completion of a detailed traffic impact analysis. The estimated traffic impacts resulting from this development have the potential to exceed the road network's ability to accommodate the anticipated additional traffic volumes and decrease the Level of Service of SR 53.
- This finding is contingent on the project implementing Best Management Practices for stormwater management. The amount of impervious surface, general steep topography, and anticipated clearing of tree canopy and vegetation on the project site will have an adverse impact water quality without adequate stormwater management practices. The application, as submitted, did not provide adequate information on stormwater management plans.
- The cumulative effects of development and the potential adverse impacts on the capacities of local supportive infrastructure particularly the local school system.

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

- 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 and GDOT to minimize the adverse impacts on the road network's level of service.
- 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.

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

January 3, 2008

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 DRI # 1643 Kerala Gardens, Barrow County, Georgia

Dear Mr. Moneyhun:

This is in response to your request of December 27, 2007. According to our records, within a three-mile radius of the project site there are the following Natural Heritage Database occurrences:

Apalachee River [High Priority Stream] approx. 2.0 mi. SW of site
Greenspace [Barrow County] approx. 1.5 mi. E 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 is the potential for species of concern at this site and we recommend completing surveys before the project begins.

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.

Please be aware that this project occurs near the Apalachee River, a high priority stream. As part

of an effort to develop a comprehensive wildlife conservation strategy for the state of Georgia, the Wildlife Resources division has developed and mapped a list of streams that are important to the protection or restoration of rare aquatic species and aquatic communities. High priority waters and their surrounding watersheds are a high priority for a broad array of conservation activities, but do not receive any additional legal protections. We now have GIS ESRI shapefiles of GA high priority waters available on our website (<http://www.georgiawildlife.com/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=89&txtPage=13>). Please contact the Georgia Natural Heritage Program if you would like additional information on high priority waters.

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:

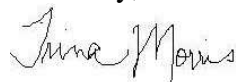
<http://georgiawildlife.dnr.state.ga.us/assets/documents/gnhp/gnhpds.zip>

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



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Request for Comments

Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center : 305 Research Drive, Athens, Georgia 30605-2795 : 706.369.5650 :

Fax 706.369.5792 : www.negplanning.org

DRI Number:	DRI #1643 Kerala Gardens, Barrow County
Name of commenting organization:	Department of Natural Resources
Department:	Historic Preservation Division
Address:	34 Peachtree Street, NW, Suite 1600
Telephone:	404-651-6546
Email address:	michelle.volkema@dnr.state.ga.us
Date:	December 28, 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 #1643 Kerala Gardens, 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 31, 2007

Hoschton has no objection to this project.



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DRI Number:	DRI #1643 Kerala Gardens, 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

Currently GDOT does not have a project in our Construction Work Program(CWP) on SR 53 in Barrow County at this location. Our comments therefore will be directed to the access requested to SR 53 for this proposed development. It is requested that a Traffic Engineering Study be completed for this DRI to determine what necessary improvements will need to be made to properly serve this development and to maintain the Level of Service on SR 53. Turn lanes, which could include Center and Right turn lanes, if required, will be the sole responsibility of the developer. Operational improvements to the intersection of Robertson Bridge Road and SR 53 should reviewed by Barrow County and by GDOT to insure there will not be operational issues generated by this development on either Road system. Please submit the TE study along with Access Permit plans for review and further comments to GDOT at the above listed address.