



# 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:** March 28, 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: 1730  
Name of Proposed Project: Presbyterian Village  
Submitting Local Government: Oconee 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.

### Additional Comments:

#### **The review produced the following concerns:**

- The proposed development conflicts with Oconee County's Future Development map which designates the area as "Suburban Living," defined as "areas experiencing a high volume of residential growth, primarily single-family residences."
- The amount of anticipated clearing of tree canopy and vegetation on the project site has the potential to adversely impact water and air quality of the region.
- The supplemental information indicates that access to the proposed development will be provided by extension of Bishop Farms Parkway including proposed four-way intersection to Bishop Farms Parkway from US Highway 441. The Bishop Farms Parkway and US Highway 441 intersection is dependant on access granted by GDOT.

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

- Amend the Oconee County Future Development map to reflect the proposed project, if approved.
- It is essential that the developer conform to regulations outlined in local ordinances, the Georgia Erosion and Sedimentation Act, and NPDES Permit for Stormwater Discharges for Construction Activities throughout the development phases to ensure minimal impact on the surrounding areas. Conservation practices should be utilized to minimize soil erosion during all phases of land-disturbing activity.
- Preserve a greater percentage of existing tree canopy as this is a heavily wooded site providing a significant contribution to the region's air and water quality.
- Should access to US Highway 441 not be granted by GDOT, attention should be devoted to the intersection of Bishop Farms Road and Experiment Station Road to ensure that the additional traffic resulting from the proposed development will not adversely impact this intersection and the local road network. The developer should coordinate closely with Oconee County, Watkinsville, and the Georgia Department of Transportation to address the direct impacts on the adjacent road network and identify any needed improvements.



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## Request for Comments

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

Fax 706.369.5792 : [www.negplanning.org](http://www.negplanning.org)

DRI Number:	DRI #1730 Presbyterian Village, Oconee County
Name of commenting organization:	Georgia Dept. of Transportation
Department:	Office of Planning
Address:	2 capitol Square, SW, Atlanta, GA, 30334
Telephone:	404-656-5560
Email address:	<a href="mailto:abassey@dot.ga.gov">abassey@dot.ga.gov</a>
Date:	March 19, 2008

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Contact Person: Anietie Basse (404) 656-5560

The proposed development will not have effects on the jurisdiction of the Georgia Department of Transportation. Please see the comments below and forward to the appropriate local, state and regional officials.

There is presently one GDOT project programmed close to the main access to the proposed site. This is SR 53 & CR 264/Mars Hill Road from SR 15 to SR 316 & Oconee Connector (GDOT Project ID # 142060). This project consists of the widening of SR 53 with Right of Way for FY 08 / 09 and Construction in Long Range. Currently, the LOS for the section of SR 53 which is close to the main access to the DRI's site is "D" and with additional 785 vehicle trips from the development of this DRI, the LOS still remains as "D." Access to the DRI's project site is proposed by extension of Bishop Farm's parkways which is off SR 53.

The existing LOS for the private street (Bishop Farms parkways.), an access to the proposed site is "A" and with the additional 785 vehicle trips that would be generated each day by this development, the LOS still remains "A." The LOS for SR 24 (US 441), which is a U.S. Route that serves the site is "A."

### Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements

The Developer is encouraged to consult the Bicycle and Pedestrian Guide on the Georgia DOT web site at

[http://www.dot.state.ga.us/dot/plan-prog/planning/projects/bicycle/ped\\_streetscape\\_guide/index.shtml](http://www.dot.state.ga.us/dot/plan-prog/planning/projects/bicycle/ped_streetscape_guide/index.shtml). Where possible, the Developer should adhere to the Guidelines when designing the Project. Where recreation sites are provided within or near the Project, sidewalk and multi-use trail access can be a contributor to reducing auto trips, while improving recreation options and overall mobility from one side of the Project to the other.

In conclusion, we ask that the Developer coordinate with Oconee County officials to see that the above coordination is addressed.

Date: March 17, 2008

Fax: (706) 369-5792

Mail to: Jim Moneyhun

Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center

305 Research Drive,

Athens, GA 30603-2795

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

March 21, 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 #1730, Presbyterian Village Continuing Care Retirement Community, Oconee County, Georgia**

Dear Mr. Moneyhun:

This is in response to your request of March 10, 2008. According to our records, within a three-mile radius of the project site there is the following Natural Heritage Database occurrence:

Greenspace [Oconee County] approx. 2.5 mi. SE 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. We recommend completing surveys for species of concern before this project begins.

We advocate community planning that focuses on leaving open space in newly developed communities. These communities 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 creation of open space 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](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:

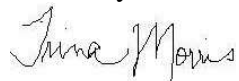
<http://georgiawildlife.dnr.state.ga.us/assets/documents/gnhp/gnhpds.zip>

### **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



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DRI Number:	DRI #1730 Presbyterian Village, Oconee County
Name of commenting organization:	Athens-Clarke County Unified Government
Department:	Planning Department
Address:	120 W. Dougherty Street
Telephone:	706.613.3515
Email address:	<a href="mailto:leahstewart@co.clarke.ga.us">leahstewart@co.clarke.ga.us</a>
Date:	March 18, 2008

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March 18, 2008

Mr. Moneyhun,

In general, the proposed Continuing Care Retirement Community development in Oconee County (Project ID DRI-#1730), 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, please contact Brad Griffin, Planning Director, or myself at (706) 613-3515.

Leah Graham Stewart  
ACC Long Range Planner