

**GAINESVILLE PLANNING AND APPEALS BOARD  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
OCTOBER 14, 2025**

**CALL TO ORDER** Chairman Doug Carter at 5:30 p.m.

**Members Present:** Chairman Doug Carter and Board Members Jane Fleming, Eddie Martin, Kelvin Simmons, Rick Young and Ellen DeFoor

**Members Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Community & Economic Director Rusty Ligon, Community & Economic Deputy Director Matt Tate, Community & Economic Planning Manager Heather Dewese and Recording Secretary Gwen Fleming

**Others Present:** None

**RECOGNITION**

Chairman Carter confirmed Ryan Thompson will be serving temporarily on City Council due to the health of Danny Dunagan and returning in January 2026.

Chairman Carter recognized and welcomed Jonathan Elliott, candidate for City Council.

**MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 9, 2025**

**There was a motion to approve the minutes as presented.**

Motion made by Board Member Fleming  
Motion seconded by Board Member Young  
**Vote – 6 favor, 1 variant**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**There was a motion to remove the zoning amendment request from the table.**

Motion made by Board Member Martin  
Motion seconded by Board Member Simmons  
**Vote – 6 favor, 1 variant**

**A. Zoning Amendment Request**

- 1) Request from **Paul Brown** to amend an existing Planned Unit Development (P-U-D) zoning on a 0.45± acre tract located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Hidden Cove Court and Old Thompson Bridge Road, having road frontage on Holly Park Drive, across from Minor Drive (a/k/a **2486 Hidden Cove Court**).  
Ward Number: One  
Tax Parcel Number(s): 01-097A-000-018  
Request: Residential condominiums

**Staff Presentation:** Deputy Director Matt Tate gave the following staff presentation:

The applicant is proposing to amend an existing Planned Unit Development (P-U-D) zoning to construct six residential condominiums. The property is 0.47± acre in size and is located at the northwest side of the intersection of Hidden Cove Court and Old Thompson Bridge Road at its terminus. The adjacent uses include the Hidden Cove Condominiums, Terrace View Condominiums, undeveloped property and Holly Park at Lake Lanier.

The subject property is part of the original 6.84± acres, 66-unit Hidden Cove condominium subdivision approved in 1983. Specifically, the 0.47± acre tract was approved for four attached condominium units. The P-U-D zoning was later amended in 1986 to replace the four attached condominium units with a tennis court amenity which was never constructed. The condominiums are two-stories and include two separate buildings with three units each. An entrance driveway is proposed from Old Thompson Bridge Road and an exit driveway is proposed from Hidden Cove Court. Twelve on-site parking spaces will be provided. Each unit will be similar in size as the existing units, consisting of 1,700 square feet of heated floor space, 3 bedrooms, and 2.5 bathrooms.

The property is located within the *Multi-Family Residential* Land Use category and the *Lake District* Character Area. This area is planned for single-family attached or multi-family housing at densities ranging from four to twelve dwelling units per acre. The overall residential density is 10.38 du/ac which is within density range.

The Planning Division staff is recommending **conditional approval** of this Planned Unit Development (P-U-D) zoning amendment request, based on the Comprehensive Plan and the adjacent mixture of residential uses.

**Applicant Presentation:** Paul Brown, 3070 Stillwater Drive, stated the condominiums design will match the existing units and will the HOA will merge with the pre-existing units.

**FAVOR:** None

**OPPOSE:** None

**Board Comments:** Board Member Fleming asked about the HOA and timeframe for work to begin. The applicant advised the HOA will merge with Hidden Cove HOA and expected four months to begin possibly by Spring.

**There was a motion to recommend conditional approval of the zoning amendment request for residential condominiums having a zoning of Planned Unit Development (P-U-D) with the following conditions:**

**Conditions**

- 1. The proposed development shall closely reflect the applicant's site plan and architectural rendering submitted with this rezoning request. In addition, the condominium buildings with rears facing Hidden Cove Court shall be constructed with a false front. The final location and architecture of each condominium unit shall be subject to the approval of the Community & Economic Development Director.**
- 2. A mixture of evergreen buffer trees shall be planted between the proposed units and Hidden Cove Court, Old Thompson Bridge Road and Holly Park Drive. The minimum installation height of the trees shall be 7 feet. The location, spacing, size and type of trees planted shall be subject to the approval of the Community &**

**Economic Development Director.**

3. **A mandatory Homeowners Association (HOA) shall be required for the proposed development providing for the financial management, architectural controls, enforcement of community standards and management of all common areas. The Board will be established and operated by the developer until such time the powers are transferred to the HOA(s).**
4. **All access point design for the subject property shall be submitted for review by the Gainesville Public Works Director, and approval of said design shall be required prior to issuance of a development permit. All required access/traffic/sidewalk improvements associated with the proposed development shall be at the full expense of the developer/property owner.**

Motion made by Board Member DeFoor  
Motion seconded by Board Member Martin  
**Vote – 6 favor, 1 variant**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Variance Request**

- 1) Request from **Johnny Hembree** to vary the stream buffer requirement on a 0.69± acre tract located on the west side of Dixon Circle, north of Tall Oaks Drive (a/k/a **1185 Dixon Circle, NW**) having zoning classification of Residential-I (R-I).  
Ward Number: Five  
Tax Parcel Number(s): 01-113-004-072F  
Request: Detached garage addition

**Staff Presentation:** Deputy Director Matt Tate gave the following staff presentation:

The applicant is requesting to vary the stream buffer standards to construct a detached garage on a 0.69± acre property zoned Residential-I (R-I). The property is a lot of record and contains a 4,792 square foot single-family home originally constructed in 1966 at were established prior to the current stormwater ordinance being adopted in 2005. The property steeply slopes downward toward the existing stream located at the north side of the property. The adjacent and nearby uses includes single-family homes.

The proposed addition includes four garage bays over a basement to be used as storage space. Approximately 1300 square feet of disturbed area is proposed within the local 50' undisturbed buffer for temporary construction purposes. In addition, 1,254± square feet of impervious area is proposed within the local 75' pervious buffer. No land disturbance, impervious area or pervious paving is proposed within the State 25' undisturbed buffer.

The applicant states the stream buffer, topography, existing home and septic drain field located to the rear of the home severely limits the developable area.

The Planning Division staff is recommending **conditional approval** of the proposed stream buffer variance request based on the size and width of the property.

**Applicant Presentation:** Johnny Hembree, 1185 Dixon Circle, advised he had owned the property for 20 years, always desired a place to park vehicles in a general proximity to their

home. He stated the reason for seeking a variance approval was the back side would impact the septic system and potentially impact the side slope of the house and be challenging. Mr. Hembree stated if approved, he would get a geotechnical evaluation completed, evaluate the construction methodology, spoke about the stream buffer and civil site plan and would only build within the impervious setback area. He agreed with conditions recommended by staff and would work with staff regarding landscaping and stated a lot of work had been done on the property to improve it. He advised there was a neighbor with concerns but after speaking with her was happy they would have a place to park their vehicles. Mr. Hembree stated it will be an amenity to the property but unsure if there would be a basement due to the overall site constraints.

**FAVOR: None**

**OPPOSE: None**

**There was a motion to conditionally approve the request to vary the stream buffer requirement for a detached garage addition having a zoning of Residential-I (R-I) with the following conditions:**

**Conditions**

- 1. The proposed garage addition shall be consistent with the site plan and architectural renderings submitted with this application and is subject to the approval of the Community & Economic Development Director.**
- 2. A stormwater management plan shall be required must be approved by the Gainesville Department of Water Resources prior to the issuance of a permit. The management plan shall include pervious paving/pavers within the driveway and parking areas, subject to the approval of the Gainesville Department of Water Resources.**
- 3. A mixture of evergreen buffer trees at a minimum installation height of 7-feet shall be planted along Dixon Circle to buffer the garage from view. The location, spacing, size and type of trees planted shall be subject to the approval of the Community & Economic Development Director.**

Motion made by Board Member Martin  
Motion seconded by Board Member Young  
**Vote – 6 favor, 1 vacant**

**B. Rezoning Request**

- 1) Request from **Jeffery Chase Adams** to rezone a 0.46± acre tract located on the northwest side of the intersection of Cleveland Highway and Riverbend Circle (a/k/a **1725 Cleveland Highway, NE**) from Residential-I (R-I) to Neighborhood Business (N-B), with a special use.  
Ward Number: Two  
Tax Parcel Number(s): 00-084-002-010  
Request: Group home for men

**Staff Presentation:** Deputy Director Matt Tate gave the following staff presentation:

The applicant is proposing to rezone the subject property from R-1 to N-B with a special use to establish a group home for men as part of the Restore 5:10 ministry program. The proposed group home is a transitional housing and educational support program for men who have successfully completed a drug rehabilitation program.

The property is located within the Gateway Overlay Zone and the adjacent uses include single-family homes, Riverbend Church, Millie's Drapery & Decorating within a retail strip center. The property includes an existing 2 bedroom / 1 bathroom ranch-style home that was built in 1960 and contains 1,181 square feet of heated floor space over an unfinished basement.

The home was previously owned and occupied by the neighboring Riverbend Church as the "Project Hope House" which provided food and clothing for the local community. Prior to that, the property was an office that served as an addiction ministry called "Joe's Place at Riverbend". The applicant intends to renovate the interior of the home to accommodate a total of 4 residents, including the resident manager (4 bedrooms and 4 bathrooms).

The property has an access driveway from Cleveland Highway and Riverbend Circle. It is the intent of the applicant to re-establish a second driveway off Riverbend Circle to access an existing paved recreational area previously used for parking.

The subject property is located within the Gateway Corridor Overlay Zone and other nearby uses include the Atlanta Botanical Gardens, Northlake Plaza shopping center, and the closed Riverbend Elementary School in the county.

It is staff's opinion that the proposed group home is supported by the Comprehensive Plan. The Gainesville Comprehensive Plan places the subject property within the *Public/Institutional* Future Land Use category and the *Limestone Medical Corridor* Character Area. Appropriate land uses include parks and recreation, limited single-family residential, multi-family residential, general mixed-use, commercial and public and institutional.

The Planning Division staff is recommending **conditional approval** of this rezoning request with a special use based on the Comprehensive Plan and the adjacent mixture of uses.

**Applicant Presentation:** Jeffery Chase Adams, 4536 Sequoia Drive, Oakwood, representative of Restore 5:10, advised they had spoken with neighbors, Riverbend Church along with the elders of the church to make them aware of the proposal for the home and assured them it would be for men that successfully completed rehab, not a rehab facility but a transitional house for men on their feet and keep them on their feet. Mr. Adams advised there would be certain criteria for men to meet in order to live in the home for the 6-month program. He requested condition one be amended to add a fifth person in the situation a man was ready to graduate the program and if drug court reaches out to enter a 5<sup>th</sup> resident to share a bedroom for a period of time until the other person transitions out.

**Chairman Carter** advised he had spoken by phone with Casey Ryals that is also involved with the program and explained the request for amending the condition for a fifth man when one is transitioning out with one coming in. He appreciated the applicant being honest and upfront regarding the possibility of an additional person.

**FAVOR:** None

**OPPOSE:** None

**Board Comments:** Board Member Simmons asked if it was a six-month program and was confirmed by Mr. Hembree.

There was a motion to recommend conditional approval to rezone the subject property for a group home for men from Residential-I (R-I) to Neighborhood Business (N-B), with a special use with the following amended conditions:

**Conditions**

1. The proposed group home shall be limited to a maximum of five residents including the resident manager. A separate public hearing by the Planning and Appeals Board and City Council shall be required for a new or different group home.
2. The subject property shall be limited to the proposed group home, single-family home and office uses such as medical, dental, clinical, CPA, attorney, business and real estate office.
3. A resident manager shall be required to live on site daily to enforce program rules and to assure that the property is being properly maintained.
4. The subject property shall be limited to the proposed group home, single-family home and office uses such as medical, dental, clinical, CPA, attorney, business and real estate office.
5. Any replacement structure, exterior facade changes, and/or future development shall be of a single-family residential appearance.
6. The existing natural vegetation located along the north and west property boundary adjacent to the homes shall remain and shall be regularly maintained.
7. The individual garbage containers shall be stored and appropriately screened behind the existing home in a manner so as not to be visible from the adjoining properties and roads subject to the approval of the Community and Economic Development Director. A commercial dumpster shall not be approved for the property.
8. All access point design for the subject property shall be submitted for review by the Gainesville Public Works Director. The approval of said design shall be required prior to issuance of a building permit. All required access / traffic / sidewalk improvements associated with the proposed development shall be at the full expense of the owner/developer.


Motion made by Board Member Martin  
Motion seconded by Board Member Simmons  
Vote – 6 favor, 1 vacant

**ADJOURNMENT**

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:55 p.m.

Motion made by Board Member Young  
Motion seconded by Board Member Martin  
Vote – 6 favor, 1 vacant

Respectfully submitted,



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Doug Carter, Chairman



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Gwen Fleming, Recording Secretary

