



LUMPKIN COUNTY Planning Commission

Regular Meeting Minutes

**342 Courthouse Hill
Dahlonega, GA 30533**

**November 10, 2025
5:30 PM**

Members Present: Robin Hall, Chris Adams, David Woodward, Barbara Bosanko, Danny Clark, Trevor Eudy, Mireya Eavey

Staff Present: Vanessa McGrath, Martin Durand

CALL TO ORDER

David Woodward called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and read the Procedures for Meeting Announcement.

CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA

Chris Adams made a motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Second by Robin Hall.

All members present voted in favor. Motion passed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Barabara Bosanko made a motion to approve the October 13, 2025, Regular Meeting minutes as corrected.

Second by Robin Hall.

All members present voted in favor.

Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

2. **Jody Pelfrey, on behalf of Property 400 LLC, is requesting a variance from Sec. 27-2.2.3. Chart of performance standards in order to access the principal activities Vehicle Parking (Limited) by way John D Reeves Road, which has a Local Road Classification. The request pertains Tax Parcel 067 143, located off JOHN D REEVES ROAD within the Gateway Corridor Overlay District Character Area.**

Vanessa McGrath stated the applicant is requesting the land use activity Vehicle Parking (limited) at parcel 067 143. This parcel has frontage along Hwy 400 (arterial) and John D Reeves Road (local). This parcel is only accessible by way of John D Reeves Road, which is a local road classification. The proposed land use is not allowable off a local road, only a collector or arterial road. The applicant has reached out to GDOT for access by way of 400 but have been denied, leaving their only access to the property by ways of John D Reeves Road and therefore seeking a variance from Sec. 27-2.2.3. Chart of performance standards.

The county contacted a road engineer. He stated the road is currently a gravel road with no posted speed limits or traffic signage. There is a 100' right of way but the road does not meet the criteria of a collector street. The road would need to be upgraded to meet the design criteria for 50 MPH and the plans would have to be reviewed for the horizontal and vertical curves of a collector road and that design speed.

Jody Pelfrey spoke on the item. They want to improve the property. It is currently being used for private parking and they would like to update the property to allow others to use the site.

Chris Adams asked when the applicant spoke with GDOT.

Ms. Pelfrey spoke with GDOT in Feb of 2025. These restrictions were not on the property at that time.

Barbara Bosanko asked what had changed since the last time the applicant came in front of the commission.

Ms. Pelfrey stated there was no change since the last time they were in front of the commission.

Ms. McGrath stated that the county had gotten in touch with the engineer on the possibility of the road becoming a collector so that the use would be allowed.

Mireya Eavey asked if the applicant had spoken with Dawson since they wanted to use both the property in both counties.

Ms. Pelfrey said they had not spoken with Dawson County.

Public Hearing was opened.

Steve Sylvester spoke in opposition of the request since 1) the use is prohibited by the land use code and this will be setting a presidency; 2) this is self-imposed this variance is not tied to the land but the use.

Public Hearing was closed.

Robin Hall made a motion to deny the request as presented.

Second by Barbara Bosanko

All members present voted in favor to deny the request based on the use is not allowed on a local road.

Motion was denied unanimously.

3. Bailee Praigg is requesting a variance to Section 27-2.2.3 (Chart of performance standards) Table 1: Performance Standard Chart to allow Animal Facility (Limited) to be allowed within a platted subdivision and be closer than 50 feet to the property lines. The property is located at 8493 Dawsonville Highway within the Rural Places Character Area.

Vanessa McGrath stated that the applicant is asking for a use of Animal facility (limited): temporary lodging and boarding, clipping, training, or grooming of domestic house pets within a fully enclosed building not exceeding 5,000 square feet, with soundproofed exterior walls. Animal rescue and/or adoption facilities, whether operated for profit or

as nonprofit organization, shall be included in this category. 8493 Dawsonville Hwy is within a subdivision in the Rural Place Character Area on an Arterial road. This use is not allowed within a platted subdivision, so a variance will be needed to allow an Animal Facility (limited) within this subdivision. The use requests a 50 ft setback to the adjoining property, a 30 ft buffer and 50 ft screening. The lot is only 110 ft wide, leaving only 10 ft of land in the middle of the lot to comply with those requirements. A variance to not meet the setback, buffering and screening requirements will be needed. Applicant has to get with the State Agricultural department to ensure all items that are needed are met.

Bailey Praigg is the owner of Willow Creek. They usually have 6 dogs in each group class and she does private lessons also. They have them at the house between 9 am and 6 pm. It is a fully fenced back yard and if the weather is bad, they have converted the garage to house the classes there.

Barbara Bosanko asked if the subdivision had a homeowner's association.

Ms. Praigg stated it does not.

Public Hearing was opened.

David Smelt is the property owner and Mrs. Praigg's father. He stated the land is 8 houses in a row along the highway. There are woods on one side and the rear and have good relations with their neighbors.

Steve Sylvester spoke in opposition of the request since 1) the use is prohibited by the land use code and 2) this is a self-imposed hardship.

Public Hearing was closed.

Mireya Eavey questioned what if new neighbors moved in and they did have opposition to the use. And what would stop them from having kennels if the use was granted.

David Woodward asked if Ms. Praigg had applied with Georgia Agricultural.

Ms. Praigg stated she had applied and was approved.

Danny Clark stated thinking long term; individual lessons were one thing but groups include facilities and parking that this land does not have.

Ms. Praigg stated the max is 8 people in a lesson and the driveway allows for that many cars. The group lessons are 2 to 3 days a week, 1 to 2 hours a day. They have a sail shade in the back yard and clients stay on the property with the dogs.

Mr. Clark stated that them staying on the property makes the property a business not a residence. That with that they should provide handicap parking, ADA accessible entrance and bathroom.

Robin Hall agreed with Mr. Clark and this was not a use for a residence.

Mr. Clark said this property is in a subdivision.

Ms. Smelt stated they purchased this property because it was the land was flat and it was in a good location to allow this business.

Chris Adams stated they agree with what Ms. Praigg is doing and that he could use her services. But this what the code states and they see how this does not fit the code.

Danny Clark states there is a clear separation on the residential and commercial. If you have multiple people at the house then it is no longer a residence but commercial property.

Robin Hall reiterated that this variance is for Animal Facility (limited) and that would permit different uses including kennels in the future.

Mr. Clark stated we need a different category for smaller groups.

Trevor Eudy stated they want to find a solution but we do not have one. It is awesome that she has her neighbors support but they have to think ahead for when the property is sold.

Mireya Eavey made a motion to deny the request as presented.

Second by Chris Adams

All members present voted in favor to deny the request based on use was transforming the residential home into a commercial use and that made it so the structure would no longer be in compliance with the building code, specifically the ADA compliance with entrances, parking and restrooms. There were concerns for the parking and traffic that the business would generate. The setback and buffers were too narrow to adjoining properties. With pending Department of Agricultural approval, animals could be boarded and kennels could be on the property. The use is not suitable under the County Ordinance.

Motion was denied unanimously.

4. Geoffrey and Laura Ammann at Lot 3 of Bk 2023 Pg: 247-247 (Parcel 050 150) is requesting a variance to Section 26-68 (2) b & c. to allow the original tract to be subdivided prior to the three-year time requirement for exempt divides.

Vanessa McGrath stated this property was divided into 4 (5 ac or more) lots in November 2023. The owner at that time bought it with the understanding that they could subdivide the land in 2years. In March of 2025, the County changed the rules to be 3 years instead of 2. The owner is asking for a variance to subdivide in the 2-year period instead of the 3 years.

Geoffrey Ammann lives in Kathleen, GA. They bought this land to build a house for his daughter, who teaches 4th grade in Dahlonaga. The hardship is the budget does not allow for the them to keep all the land and start the house. They have done the civil plans and have the health department approval for the septic.

Davis Woodward asked how they will access the lots.

Mr. Ammenn they will have driveway easements to the two lots.

Mireya Eavey stated the ordinance changed 18 days after they closed on the property. She asked when did they put a contract on the land.

Mr. Ammann stated it was several months prior to the closing.

Trevor Eudy asked how long did they anticipate construction to last.

Mr. Ammann stated it is a 1300 sq ft house so he did not think it would take long to build. If they do not get a variance then it will be a calendar year from this meeting to when they could engage a company to split the lot and then after that they could start on the house. Versus if they get a variance, they can start on splitting the lot now and hopefully start on the house beginning of next year.

Barabar Bosanko asked if they don't get a variance then they do intend to wait the year and subdivide?

Mr. Ammann stated they would have to, it is not financially viable to build on all the property.

Chris Adams asked staff if minus the date of the subdivision does the subdivision meet all the requirements.

Martin Durand stated that yes it met all the other subdivision requirements.

Danny Clark asked if we are creating two flag lots.

Mr. Durand stated there is nothing against flag lots in minor divides.

Public Hearing was opened.

Steve Sylvester stated there needs to be an understanding of a hardship. There is no hardship on the property and that he feels we are setting a precedence if this is approved.

Trevor Eudy stated they bought the property and did their due diligence. Is not the hardship that the rules were changed.

Mr. Sylvester agreed and thought that the applicant should be grandfathered in.

Vanessa McGrath stated when the applicant came in, she questioned the County Attorney about the grandfathering. The attorney stated since nothing was in the ordinance for grandfather there was none.

Danny Clark stated that there was no precedence, each condition they hear is unique and that word is a misnomer; each person and property is unique.

Robin Hall stated the real hardship is a change in the rules. It is unique to the number of possible people that can come forward and that number will drop off until that year

after the ordinance was changed.
Public Hearing was closed.

Tevor Eudy made a motion to approve the request as presented.
Second by Chris Adams
All members present voted in favor to approve the request.
Motion was approved unanimously.

5. Austin Chapman at 130 Chapman Ridge Lane (Parcel 119 021) is requesting a variance to Section 26-68 (2) b & c. to allow the original tract to be subdivided prior to the three-year time requirement for exempt divides.

Vanessa McGrath stated Austin Chapman at 130 Chapman Ridge Lane (Parcel 119 021) is requesting a variance to Section 26-68 (2) b & c. to allow the original tract to be subdivided prior to the three-year time requirement for exempt divides. Mr. Chapman wants to subdivide 5 ac from his 19.57 ac to finance the just the 5 ac and the future house versus the 19.57 ac.

Mr. Austin Chapman stated that he is not sure where the address 130 came from he has 400 and 430 Chapman Ridge Lane as the addresses. He bought the property. He is looking to split 5 acres off to construct his home. The bank will not fiancé all 19 acres. He knows he needs an easement to get to the 5 acres.

Mireya Eavey asked when did he purchase the property?

Mr. Chapman stated he purchased the property in June of 2023.

Barabara Bosanko asked did he not know at the time that it was 3 years.

Mr. Chapman was told at the time of purchase that it was 2 years and was not aware of the change till he came in to subdivide the land and was informed that the ordinance was changed and that he would need a variance to do this.

Trevor Eudy asked if the bank gave him options on his loan.

Mr. Chapman stated he could go to another bank and get a loan but he did not want to tie up all his land with the house loan.

Mireya Eavey asked why did he need to build the house now?

Mr. Chapman stated he wanted to try and do most of the work himself and he did not see the interest rates going down.

Trevor Eudy asked if they had offered any line of credit on the land?

Mr. Chapman stated the bank did not like to deal with raw land; he would have to go thru a credit union and again he did not want to tie up the entire property.

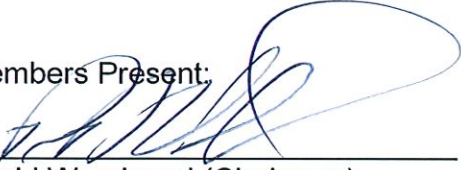
Trevor Eudy stated he had similar issues when he went to get a loan on his house.
Public Hearing was opened.
Public Hearing was closed.

Tevor Eudy made a motion to approve the request as presented.
Second by Robin Hall
Robin Hall, Chris Adams, David Woodward, Barbara Bosanko, Danny Clark and Travor
Eudy voted in favor to approve the request.
Mireya Eavey voted against the request.
Motion was approved.

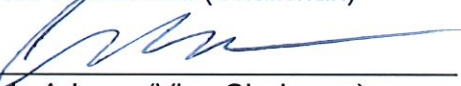
ADJOURN

Robin Hall made a motion to adjourn.
Seconded by Chris Adams.
Motion passed unanimously.
Meeting adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

Members Present:



David Woodward (Chairman)



Chris Adams (Vice Chairman)



Trevor Eudy

Mireya Eavey

Danny Clark



Robin Hall



Barbara Bosanko