

TO: City Plan Board

Item Number: 4

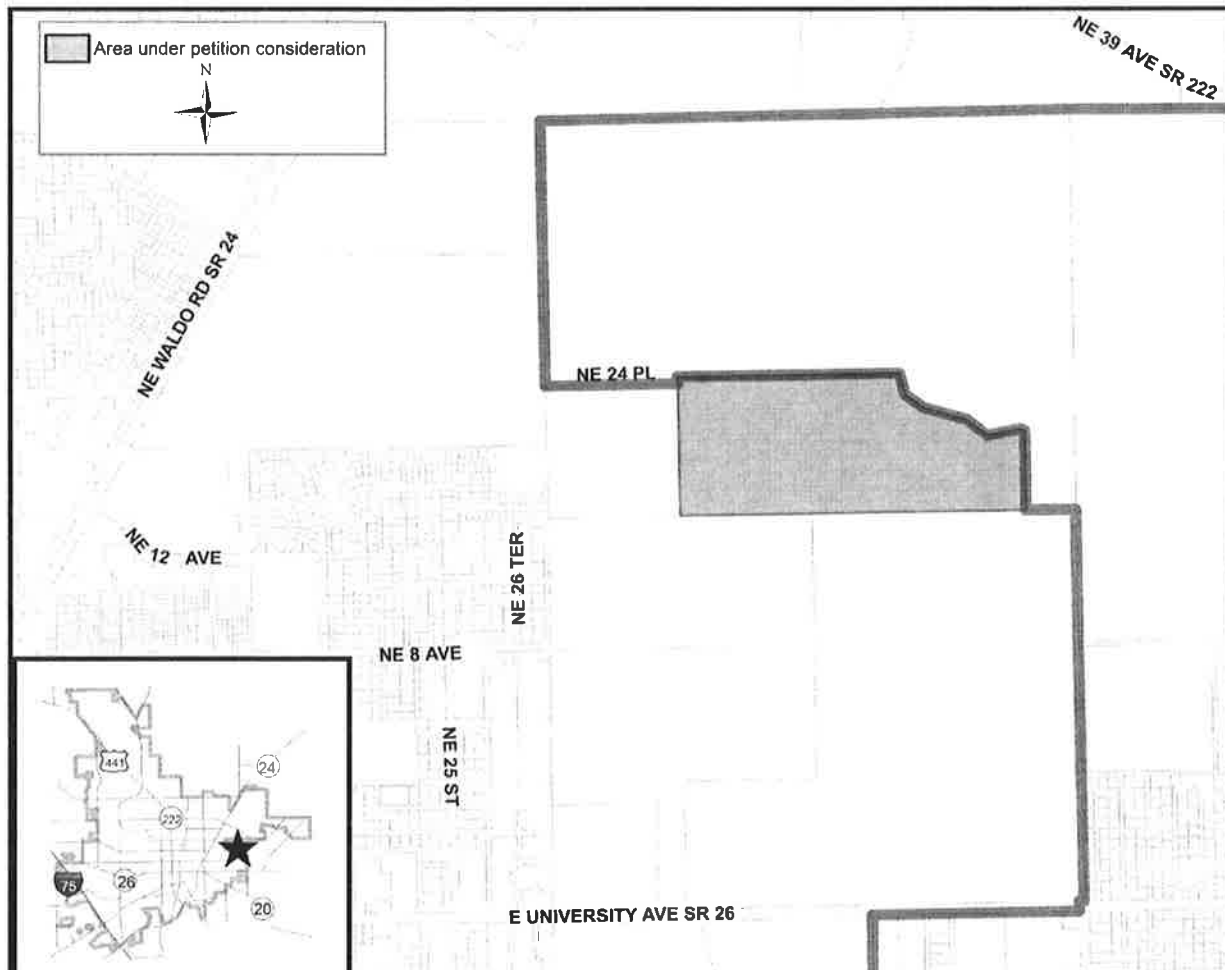
FROM: Planning & Development Services Department Staff

DATE: January 22, 2015

SUBJECT: Petition PB-14-163 ZON. City Plan Board. Rezone property from Alachua County Agriculture to City of Gainesville Conservation (CON). Located north of Morningside Nature Center (3540 E. University Avenue). Tax parcel No. 10862-001-000. Related to PB-14-162 LUC.

Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of Petition PB-14-163 ZON.



Description

This approximately 97.8-acre property (see map on previous page) was voluntarily annexed into the City on October 2, 2014 by Ordinance No. 140124. The proposed zoning change from Alachua County Agriculture to City of Gainesville Conservation pertains to an undeveloped, wooded property in east Gainesville. It is located north of the City's Morningside Nature Center and the Professional Academies Magnet at Loften W. Travis High School. Publicly owned, undeveloped and wooded lands are to the west, east and north of the property. The property is landlocked but is accessible from Morningside Nature Center of the City of Gainesville. The property is within the Plan East Gainesville area.

The City acquired this property in November 2013 with the City's Greenspace Acquisition fund for the purpose of conservation and passive recreation compatible with the protection of natural resources. This undeveloped, wooded property will contribute to the protection of wildlife and water quality at the City's Morningside Nature Center. There is a potential for trails through dry areas and/or boardwalks over wet areas to provide public access and recreation. The property lies just east of the 40.2-acre property to the west that was acquired in April 2012 as part of the Wild Spaces Public Places land acquisitions. These two properties will expand Morningside Nature Center by a total of 138 acres. Together with the new State Forest lands to the north, the properties will be better able to be jointly managed for conservation and appropriate public use. See Exhibit B-5 (Memorandum from City of Gainesville Nature and Cultural Manager).

This petition is related to Petition PB-14-162 LUC, which proposes a land use change from Alachua County Institutional to City of Gainesville Conservation (CON) district.

See Exhibit B-1 for an aerial photograph of the property and surrounding area. Exhibits B-2 and B-3 are maps illustrating the existing and proposed land use, and Exhibit C-1 is the application.

Key Issues

- This is an annexed property that requires a City zoning designation.
- The proposed rezoning to Conservation district is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan and will implement the related, proposed Conservation land use.
- The property is located within the Plan East Gainesville area.
- This City-owned property will expand the conservation/passive recreation area of the City's Morningside Park.

Basis for Recommendation

The staff recommendation is based on the five following factors, which are discussed below: Conformance with the Comprehensive Plan; Conformance with the Land Development Code; Changed Conditions; Compatibility; and Impacts on Affordable Housing.

1. Conformance with the Comprehensive Plan

The proposed rezoning to Conservation district (CON) is consistent with the proposed Conservation land use category for this property, and is consistent with Future Land Use Policies 4.1.1, 4.4.1 and Objective 4.4, below. See Exhibit A-1 for other relevant Gainesville Comprehensive Plan policies.

Policy 4.1.1 Land Use Categories on the Future Land Use Map shall be defined as follows:

Conservation

This category identifies areas environmentally unsuited to urban development, permanent buffers between land uses, areas used for passive recreation and nature parks. Privately held properties within this category shall be allowed to develop at single-family densities of 1 unit per 5 acres. Land development regulations shall determine the appropriate scale of activities, structures and infrastructure that will be allowed.

Objective 4.4 Newly annexed lands shall retain land uses as designated by Alachua County until the Future Land Use Element of this Plan is amended.

Policy 4.4.1 Land use amendments should be prepared for all annexed properties within one year of annexation.

2. Conformance with the Land Development Code

The proposed rezoning to the Conservation district will implement the Conservation land use category proposed by Petition PB-14-162 LUC. Should there be any proposed development (e.g., bathrooms to serve visitors to a passive park) such development will be required to meet applicable requirements of the Land Development Code, including those of Subdivision III - Surface Waters and Wetlands District. See Exhibit B-4 for the Conservation (CON) zoning district regulations.

3. Changed Conditions

The major changed conditions are the October 2014 annexation of this undeveloped property into the City of Gainesville and its acquisition by the City in November 2013 for conservation and passive recreation purposes.

4. Compatibility

This undeveloped, wooded property in east Gainesville is located north of Morningside Nature Center (Conservation land use and zoning) and north of the Professional Academies Magnet at Lofton W. Travis High School (Education land use and Educational services zoning). The property is east of the wooded, undeveloped 40.2-acre City property for which Conservation land use and zoning were adopted in November 2014. Publicly owned, undeveloped and wooded lands of Newnan's Lake State Forest are to the east and north of the property and have Alachua County Institutional land use and Agriculture zoning designations.

The proposed Conservation zoning designation is compatible with the adjacent properties and their land use and zoning, and with the surrounding area. See Table 1 on Page 6 of this document for a tabular summary of adjacent existing uses and adjacent land use and zoning categories. As noted in the Description section of this report, see Exhibit B-1 for the aerial photograph, and Exhibits B-2 and B-3 for maps of the existing and proposed land use for the property and surrounding area.

5. Impacts on Affordable Housing

The proposed rezoning from Alachua County Agriculture district to City of Gainesville Conservation district does not involve residential use, so it will have no impact on the potential supply of affordable housing in Gainesville.

Transportation

There are no transportation issues associated with this proposed rezoning to Conservation district for this land-locked parcel on the northern edge of Morningside Nature Park, which is on the north side of East University Avenue. It is located within Zone A of the Gainesville Transportation Mobility Program Area (TMPA). RTS Route 11 provides service along University Avenue every 30-60 minutes on weekdays and every 70 minutes on weekends between the Rosa Parks RTS Downtown Station and Eastwood Meadows (SE 43rd ST, near Eastside High School).

Environmental Impacts and Constraints

The City's Environmental Coordinator provided the following environmental analysis in a memorandum dated December 23, 2014:

The petitions for a proposed change in land use and zoning for the subject parcel have been reviewed for considerations relating to any environmental resources present on or immediately adjacent which might be regulated by City Land Development Code 30-300 *Surface Waters and Wetlands*, or 30-310 *Natural and Archaeological Resources*. The petitions propose a land use change from Alachua County Institutional to City of Gainesville Conservation (CON), and rezoning from Alachua County Agriculture to City of Gainesville Conservation (CON) district. The property was acquired by the City of Gainesville as an addition to the nature park system, and specifically to expand and protect Morningside Nature Center.

The property is a naturally wooded tract supporting a mix of pine-dominated uplands and mixed hardwood wetlands within the headwaters of the Lake Forest Creek watershed. The quality of the natural communities found in this flatwoods ecosystem is good to excellent, with minimal overall impacts. Exotic, invasive vegetation is minimal, and native understory vegetation is intact. Approximately one-fifth of the parcel is covered by forested wetlands dominated by cypress, natural pine, and hardwoods such as black gum and red maple. Minor headwater tributaries of Lake Forest Creek cross the central and east sides of the property. Forested depression wetlands (approximately 20 acres) exist on the lower elevations on the western side of the parcel. Hydrology within the wetland areas and across the adjacent flatwoods areas does

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not appear to be significantly affected by the extensive creek channelization/drainage of the developed lands of the upper Lake Forest Creek watershed which occurred in the mid 1900's. A better drained, xeric habitat with remnant sandhill vegetation is present on the eastern part of the property.

Based on available information, no regulated natural and archaeological resources or resource areas are known to be present on the subject parcel. Listed species may be present, especially in the scrubby flatwoods and xeric habitats of the property, but have not been located through survey or other assessment methods to date. Management with controlled burning through the nature operations program under the proposed land use will be expected to enhance and reveal the presence of listed species across this relatively undisturbed site. The parcel falls within the East Side Greenway (Morningside Greenway) Strategic Ecosystem, and joins Morningside Nature Center on the south and other new State Forest lands to the north and east. The contiguous habitat provided through the consolidation of these lands is a significant achievement in meeting the functional ecological characteristics required by natural communities and native wildlife in the local and regional context described for this strategic ecosystem unit.

The proposed land use and zoning would be optimal in providing for maintenance and potential enhancement of ground water and surface water quality in the watershed, and of flood storage capacity within the mosaic of wetland depressions on and adjacent to the parcel. Conservation uses of this parcel will support and expand the natural resource base and recreational assets associated with nature parks and managed forest lands of eastern Gainesville and ensure the best option for maintenance and enhancement of the resource values intended for protection under the City's comprehensive plan and land development regulations for protection of surface waters and wetlands, and natural and archaeological resources.

Respectfully submitted,



Onelia Lazzari, AICP
Principal Planner

Prepared by:



Dean Mimms, AICP
Lead Planner

Table 1**Adjacent Existing Uses**

North	Newnan's Lake State Forest (undeveloped and wooded)
South	Conservation: Morningside Nature Center. Secondary education: Professional Academies Magnet at Lofton W. Travis High School.
East	Newnan's Lake State Forest (undeveloped and wooded)
West	Conservation (undeveloped and wooded)

Adjacent Zoning and Land Use and Zoning

	Land Use Category	Zoning Category
North	Alachua County Institutional	Alachua County Agricultural (A) district
South	Conservation; Education	Conservation (CON); Educational services district (ED);
East	Alachua County Institutional	Alachua County Agricultural (A) district
West	Conservation	Conservation (CON)

List of Appendices

Appendix A Comprehensive Plan GOPs

Exhibit A-1 Comprehensive Plan GOPs

Appendix B Supplemental Documents

Exhibit B-1 Aerial Photograph

Exhibit B-2 Map: Existing Zoning

Exhibit B-3 Map: Proposed Zoning

Exhibit B-4 Conservation zoning district regulations

Exhibit B-5 Memorandum from City of Gainesville Nature and Cultural Manager

Appendix C Application Package

Exhibit C-1 Rezoning Application