

**REZONING CASE:**

**RZ-2017-009**

**CITY OF SUWANEE  
REZONING ANALYSIS**

**CASE NUMBERS:** **RZ-2017-009**  
**REQUEST:** R-100 (RESIDENTIAL SINGLE FAMILY DISTRICT) TO OTCD (OLD TOWN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT)

**LOCATION:** WHITE STREET

**TAX ID NUMBER(S):** 7-210-048

**ACREAGE:** 1.59 ACRES

**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:** RECEPTION HALL

**APPLICANT:** JENNIFER SPENCER  
3749 BAXLEY RIDGE DR.  
SUWANEE, GA 30024

**OWNER(S):** KAREN WILLIAMS  
9714 U.S. HIGHWAY 129 N.  
TALMO, GA 30575

**CONTACT:** TANYA CHRISTIANO  
PHONE: 678-907-4031

**RECOMMENDATION:** **APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS**

**PROJECT DATA:**

The applicant requests a rezoning from R-100 (Single-Family Residential District) to OTCD (Old Town Commercial District). The request is to allow for the development of an approximately 6,000 square foot reception hall and associated parking on the subject property.

The subject property is a 1.59 acre undeveloped parcel along White Street that slopes up steeply to the railroad tracks from White Street. The proposed reception facility would include an approximately 3,000 square foot ballroom room/meeting space. The building would be a rustic style, white farmhouse that sits approximately 30 feet tall with a large covered side porch facing a garden area. The proposed facility would have a direct sidewalk connection from the building's main entrance to a new sidewalk the applicant would provide along White Street.

A single curb cut on White Street would provide access to the subject property. The developer of the new adjacent Harvest Park neighborhood is extending White Street to intersect with Buford Highway just past White Street Park. This new public road will serve as the primary access for the proposed reception hall.

The project will include approximately 120 surface parking spaces in a parking lot located to the side of the building. The design standards for the Old Town Overlay District would require the parking to be screened. The applicant is working with Norfolk Southern railroad to lease approximately 12,000 square feet of railroad right of way for a portion of the parking lot. The parking lot would integrate some porous asphalt to minimize impervious surfaces.

#### **DEVELOPMENT COMMENTS:**

If the request is granted, the project would go through the development review and permitting processes in order to ensure compliance with applicable regulations. The applicant has not addressed how stormwater quantity or quality will be addressed on the site. This will need to be addressed to satisfy applicable regulations prior to issuance of a Development Permit.

The applicant proposes to extend sewer to the site from the new Harvest Park neighborhood prior to development.

The applicant will need a grading easement from the Norfolk Southern Railroad to grade the site.

#### **ANALYSIS:**

The applicant requests a rezoning of a 1.59 acre parcel from R-100 (Single-Family Residential District) to OTCD (Old Town Commercial District) to allow for the development of a reception hall on White Street across from Harvest Farm and adjacent to the new Harvest Park neighborhood.

The OTCD (Old Town Commercial District) zoning category allows for most commercial uses allowed in C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial District) along with some of the alcohol related uses allowed in C-2A (General Commercial District). The Old Town Overlay District may only be used within the Old Town Overlay District. This property is within the Old Town Overlay District, and the proposed use of a reception hall is an allowable use within the OTCD.

The property is located across the street from White Street Park (zoned R-140), which includes the Harvest Farm community garden, Harvest Farm barn and the newly completed Orchard. The property to the north is occupied by a vacant church on property also zoned R-100. The 32 acres directly adjacent south of the subject property between White Street Park and McGinnis Ferry Road were recently rezoned from R-100 and C-2 to PMUD (Planned Mixed-Use Development) for the development of a new neighborhood called Harvest Park that will include detached single family homes and townhomes.

The subject property is currently zoned R-100 like most of the parcels along White Street. The Downtown Suwanee Master Plan (DSMP) calls for White Street to preserve its semi-rural character while incorporating a mix of small lot single family housing types. Although the proposed development would be a commercial use, the proposed development is rural in character and would therefore be compatible with the surrounding area.

The project appears to meet Suwanee standards for high quality, and the proposed agrarian character building across from the Harvest Farm barn would reinforce the unique identity of the

area. The use as a reception hall is complimentary to the park and could potentially be used in conjunction with the park for events, but not all commercial uses allowed in the OTCD would be appropriate in this context. If the request is approved, the property use should be limited to a reception hall or single family detached similar to what was approved for the adjacent new neighborhood to insure the preservation of the character of the area. Any other commercial uses should require the property to go through the rezoning process, so that Council can consider the appropriateness of future uses at this location.

The Future Land Use Plan in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan calls for the subject property to be Mixed-Use Village. Mixed-Use Village is defined in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan as “predominantly residential developments that may include a variety of housing types, both single-family and multifamily, and possibly such limited-scale nonresidential uses as a church, corner market or other neighborhood-oriented service uses.”

The 2009 Downtown Suwanee Master Plan further refined the vision for this area. The Plan established 10 distinct character districts to guide future development within downtown Suwanee. The proposed development is within the Suwanee Farm Village District, also known as Williams Farm Village District, which is anchored by Harvest Farm at White Street Park. The Plan calls for the Suwanee Farm Village District to be predominately residential and include a mix of dwelling types transitioning to mixed-use majority residential development in proximity to McGinnis Ferry Road. Per the vision of the 2009 Downtown Suwanee Master Plan, the conservation area was cultivated into a community garden known as Harvest Farm. It was intended that this park would set the tone for the development of this area.

The Downtown Suwanee Master Plan encourages a distinct character for this area that is influenced by the character of White Street Park. The City has made significant investment in creating a park that fits in with the rural nature of the property surrounding White Street Park. Harvest Farm barn, the community garden, and the Orchard create a unique identity referencing Suwanee’s agrarian history. These public investments are attracting private investment such as recent renovation of a historic home on White Street, the creation of a new neighborhood embracing the agrarian character of White Street Park, and the proposed development.

The 32 acres directly south of the subject property between White Street Park and McGinnis Ferry Road were recently rezoned from R-100 and C-2 to PMUD (Planned Mixed-Use Development). The intent of the PMUD zoning category is to allow for a larger master-planned projects that connect residential uses to non-residential uses, encourage pedestrian mobility, promotes more efficient use of land, and allows for the creation of neighborhoods with their own distinct character. The proposed new neighborhood that is currently in the development review phase is creating just that, a unique, master planned neighborhood with a mix of single family housing types, open spaces, and pedestrian and vehicular connectivity throughout the neighborhood and to Suwanee’s larger bicycle and pedestrian network. As a condition of zoning, this new neighborhood will embrace a farmhouse character inspired by adjacent Harvest Farm and White Street Park. The addition of a non-residential use directly adjacent to this new neighborhood would add a non-residential use to the area to better fit the overall vision of a mixed-use village. The proposed project would be compatible in style to the new neighborhood as well as White Street Park.

The 2015 Downtown Suwanee Master Plan states that “the emerging vision of downtown Suwanee is that of an intentionally connected series of distinct places and character areas.” The proposed project will enhance the Suwanee Farm Village District by creating a use that does not currently exist in Suwanee in a style that is unique to Suwanee’s Farm Village District, which will further establish the sense of place and identity for this part of Old Town.

In conclusion, the requested OTCD rezoning is appropriate for the subject property for the proposed use of a reception hall. If approved, the architecture and landscaping for the project should be subject to approval of the City to insure the facility meets the vision of the Suwanee Farm District and enhances the White Street Park area. As such, the Planning Department recommends **APPOVAL WITH CONDITIONS** of **RZ-2017-009**.

Recommended Conditions  
RZ-2017-009

The Planning Department recommends approval with the following conditions for the subject property:

1. Develop in accordance with the concept plan (submitted November 5, 2017) and associated attachments and exhibits approved by City of Suwanee. If needed due to conditions of zoning that require substantial changes to the concept plan, submit revised plans to the City that reflect the changes required herein by the conditions of zoning.
2. Use shall be limited to a reception hall that shall be subject to the requirements of the Old Town Overlay District and the development standards of the Old Town Commercial District standards or single family detached residential.
3. Building elevations, building materials and colors, and illustrations of open spaces shall be submitted and approved by the Planning and Inspections Director prior to issuance of a Development Permit.
4. Architecture shall be neo-rural style.
  - A. For a reception hall architecture shall have a farmhouse or barn style with simple roof lines, metal or architectural shingle roofs, cementitious fiber siding painted white, and windows with true or simulated or divided lites. A maximum of one masonry material may be used for foundation walls and/or chimneys.
  - B. Single family detached architecture should have a farmhouse style and primarily cementitious fiber siding to compliment existing homes in Old Town and the Harvest Farm barn. Building materials and the number of roof pitches should be kept simple and to a minimum. Roofs should have a pitch between 6:12 and 12:12. Brick and stone should be allowed as materials but their use should be minimized and they should not be used in combination. Usable (minimally 6 feet deep and ideally 8 feet deep) front porches should be provided. Windows should have true or simulated divided lites. Single Family Detached shall be subject to the following development standards:
    - i. Minimum lot width: 35 feet
    - ii. Minimum lot size: 2,500 square feet
    - iii. Minimum front yard: 5 feet from the back of the sidewalk but not within the right-of-way
    - iv. Minimum side yard setback: 0 feet
    - v. Minimum building separation: 5 feet
    - vi. Minimum rear yard setback: 5 feet
    - vii. Minimum unit size: 1,400 square feet
    - viii. Maximum building height: 35 feet and the highest point of any roof may not exceed the height of the Harvest Farm barn or structures on adjacent property.
    - ix. Minimum parking required: 2 spaces per unit within a garage.

- x. All garages shall be rear loaded.
5. All utilities shall be located underground.
  6. Provide a bicycle rack with a minimum of 5 spaces near the entrance of any non-residential building.
  7. Landscaping for the project shall be subject to the approval of the Planning and Inspections Director.



## Standards Governing Exercise of Zoning Power

Pursuant to Section 2006 of the City of Suwanee Zoning Ordinance, the City finds the following standards are relevant in balancing the interest in promoting the public health, safety, morality, or general welfare against the unrestricted use of property and shall govern the exercise of the zoning power therewith.

- A. Whether the zoning proposal will permit a use that is suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property;

The proposed rezoning for a reception hall designed to look like a farmhouse would be suitable in view of White Street Park, the adjacent non-residential church building to the north and the agrarian themed new neighborhood to the south, Harvest Park. These existing developments benefits aesthetically from the current rural environment of the area, and the propped project would preserve and enhance this context.

- B. Whether the zoning proposal will adversely affect the existing uses or usability of adjacent or nearby property;

Approval of the request would not likely affect the existing uses or usability of nearby property. This development will actually aid any future development of nearby property by bringing sewer further up White Street.

- C. Whether the property to be affected by the zoning proposal has a reasonable economic use as currently zoned;

The subject property has a reasonable economic use as currently zoned.

- D. Whether the zoning proposal will result in a use which will or could cause an excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities or schools;

Approval of the request likely would not result in excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities or schools.

- E. Whether the zoning proposal is in conformity with the policy and intent of the Land Use Plan;

The proposed concept is in conformity with the general policy and intent of the Land Use Plan, which calls for Mixed-Use Village. It is not mixed-use, but it provides a commercial use that is compatible with a surrounding mix of other uses including a church, residential and open space.

- F. Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property which give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the zoning proposal;

There are no other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property.



### REZONING APPLICATION

AN APPLICATION TO AMEND THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF CITY OF SUWANEE, GEORGIA

<b>APPLICANT INFORMATION*</b>	<b>OWNER INFORMATION*</b>
NAME: <u>Jennifer Spencer</u>	NAME: <u>Karen Williams</u>
ADDRESS: <u>3749 Baxley Ridge Dr. Suwanee, GA 30024</u>	ADDRESS: <u>9714 US Highway 129N Talmo, Georgia 30575</u>
PHONE: <u>404-914-1800</u>	PHONE: <u>770-561-3082</u>

CONTACT PERSON: Tanya Christ CONTACT PHONE: 678-907-4031  
 EMAIL ADDRESS: Belleweddings@yahoo.com FAX NUMBER: -

**PROPERTY INFORMATION**

PRESENT ZONING DISTRICT(S): R100 REQUESTED ZONING DISTRICT OTCD  
 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT: Reception Hall  
 TAX PARCELNUMBER(S): 7-210-048  
 ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: 0 White Street Suwanee, GA 30024  
 TOTAL ACREAGE: 1.59 PUBLIC ROADWAY ACCESS: White St. / Buford Hwy

<b>FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT:</b>	<b>FOR NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT:</b>
NO. OF LOTS/DWELLING UNITS: _____	NO. OF BUILDINGS/UNITS: <u>1</u>
DWELLING UNIT SIZE (SQ. FT.): _____	TOTAL GROSS SQUARE FEET: <u>6,000</u>

### CERTIFICATIONS

I hereby certify that the above and attached information is true and correct. I am also aware that pursuant to Section 2004 no reapplication on the same land which has been denied by the City Council shall be acted upon within 12 months from the date of last action unless said time period is waived by the Council. In no case shall a reapplication be acted upon in less than 6 months from the date of last action by the Council. I am also aware that pursuant to Section 2003 of the Zoning Ordinance any and all conditions which may be attached to the property shall be binding on the property and all subsequent owners.

<u>[Signature]</u> Signature of Applicant*	<u>11/2/2017</u> Date	<u>[Signature]</u> Signature of Owner*	<u>11/01/2017</u> Date
<u>Jennifer Spencer</u> Print Name*	<u>11/2/2017</u> Date	<u>Karen W Williams</u> Print Name*	<u>11-01-2017</u> Date
<u>[Signature]</u> Signature of Notary	<u>11/2/2017</u> Date	<u>[Signature]</u> Signature of Notary	<u>11-01-2017</u> Date

\* If Additional Applicant or Owner Information is Needed Please Complete Additional Application Form(s)

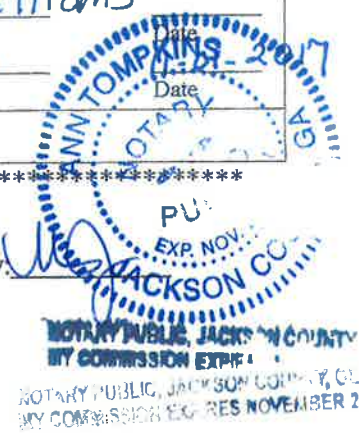
\*\*\*\*\*Kaleb Fisher\*\*\*\*\*

**Notary Public CITY OF SUWANEE USE ONLY**

Date Received Gwinnett County, State of Georgia Case No.: RZ-2017.009 Accepted By: [Signature]

**W-00343183**

**Expires Oct 18, 2021**



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# LETTER OF INTENT

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City of Suwanee  
330 Town Center Avenue  
Suwanee, GA 30024

RE: Rezoning Application  
Belle Decor LLC., Jennifer Spencer  
3749 Baxley Ridge Rd. Suwanee, GA 30024

Dear Mayor and Council, Planning Commissioners and Planning and Zoning Department Staff,

Jennifer Spencer (the "Applicant"), submits this Letter of Intent and attached Rezoning Application for the purpose of rezoning the approximately 1.59-acre tract (the "property") situated on White Street. The property is currently zoned R-100 (Residential Single Family District) and the Applicant respectfully requests that the property be rezoned Old Town Commercial District (OTCD).

The Applicant proposes to develop a Community Gathering Place/Reception Hall. The building will be 6,000 sq. ft. with a 3,000 sq. ft. ballroom/meeting space. The proposed building would include attractive architectural elements which are compatible with the surrounding area. The Applicant proposes a quality mixture of building materials subject to all applicable ordinances. The building's "Country Farmhouse Design" will perfectly complement the surrounding area of Harvest Farms and Orchards with rustic architecture. The building will be a visually stunning white farmhouse that sits thirty feet tall with a gorgeous covered porch and serene garden/green space. It is our intent to not only meet, but exceed the community's aesthetic goals for the development of historic Suwanee.

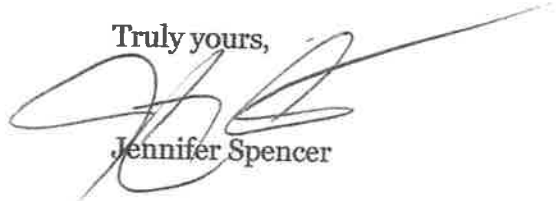
There will be approximately 120 parking spaces at the Property, meeting local city regulations and eliminating the need for any offsite parking. The Applicant is working with Norfolk Southern railroad on the lease of approximately 12,000 sq. ft of railroad owned land along the property line. This leased land will be used for grading purposes as well as to develop the necessary amount of parking required. The Applicant proposes to use engineered plans to design a parking lot that integrates standard asphalt with sections of strategically placed porous asphalt in order to accommodate storm water drainage requirements.

The Applicate proposes to develop the Property with a single entrance to be located off of White Street. The Applicant is willing to construct a sidewalk along the property. This will provide future potential connectivity and is in line with Suwanee's walkability goals. The adjacent residential development will be paving the remainder of White Street leading to Buford Hwy, which will create an easily accessible route directly to the Property. Our clients/guests will be directed to use this entrance.

The proposed development is compatible with the 2030 Comprehensive Plan which encourages the preservation of an old town rural feel, while allowing "some mixed uses". The building's country farmhouse design aims to maintain the spirit of Suwanee's rural past.

The Applicant welcomes the opportunity to meet with staff of the Planning and Zoning Commission to answer any questions or to address any concerns relating to the matters set forth in this letter or in the Rezoning Application filed herewith. The Applicant respectfully requests your approval of this Application.

Truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Spencer', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Jennifer Spencer

RZ-2017-009

**REZONING APPLICANT'S RESPONSE**  
**STANDARDS GOVERNING EXERCISE OF THE ZONING POWER**

Pursuant to section 2006 of the 1998 Zoning Ordinance, the city council finds that the following standards are relevant in balancing the interest in promoting the public health, safety, morality, or general welfare against the right to the unrestricted use of property and shall govern the exercise of the zoning power.

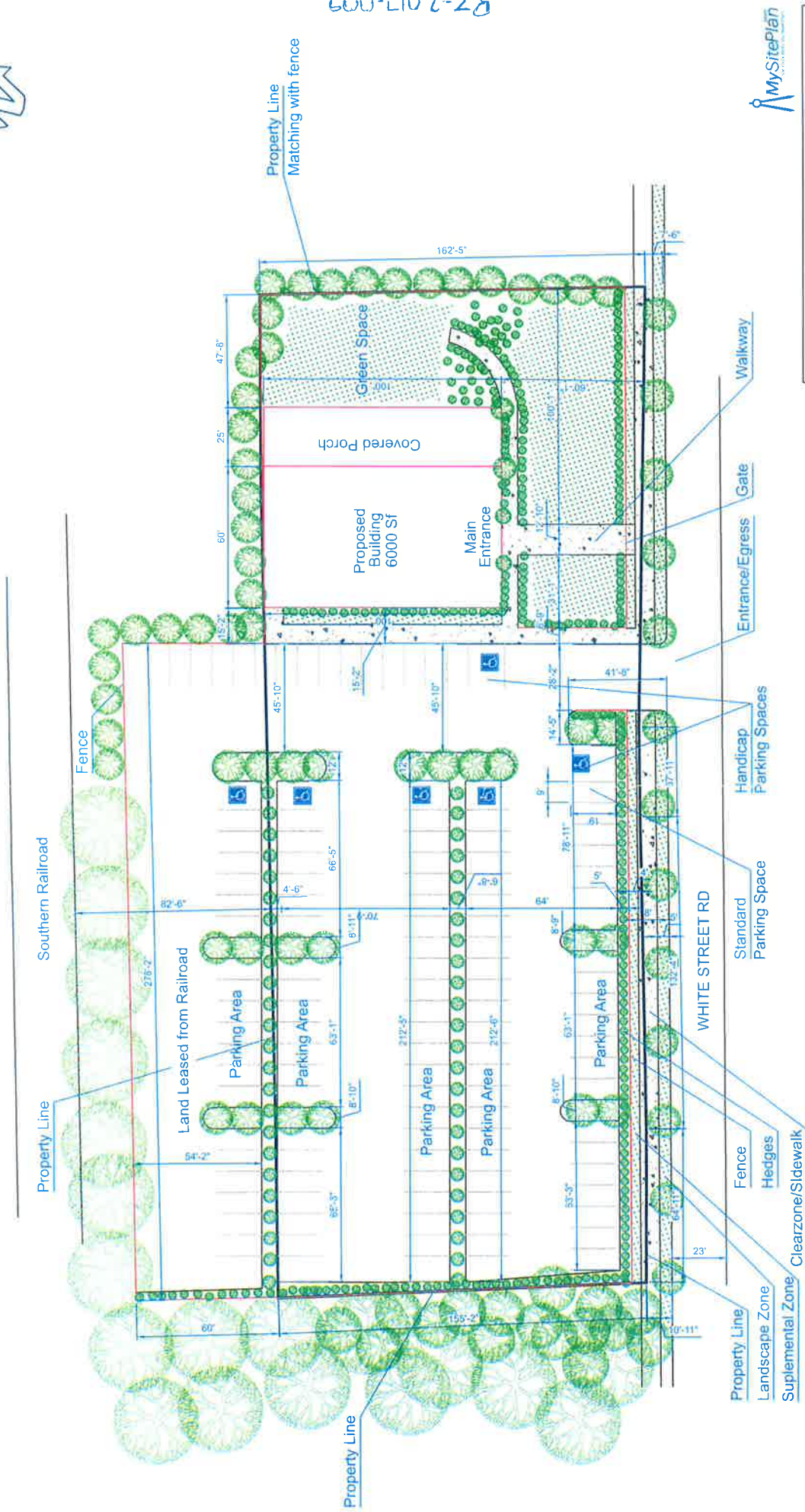
Please respond to the following standards in the space provided or use an attachment as necessary:

- (A) Whether the zoning proposal will permit a use that is suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property:  
Yes, the proposed rezoning application will permit a use that is suitable in the view of the use and development of the adjacent and nearby property.
- (B) Whether the zoning proposal will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property:  
No, the proposed rezoning application will not adversely affect the existing use or usability of any of the nearby properties.
- (C) Whether the property to be affected by the zoning proposal has a reasonable economic use as currently zoned:  
Due to the size, location, layout and dimensions of the subject property, the applicant submits that the property does not have reasonable economic use as currently zoned.
- (D) Whether the zoning proposal will result in a use which will or could cause an excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities or schools:  
No, the proposed rezoning will not result in an excessive or burdensome use of the infrastructure system.
- (E) Whether the zoning proposal is in conformity with the policy and intent of the land use plan:  
Yes, the proposed rezoning application is in conformity with the policy and intent of the Suwanee land use plan.
- (F) Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property which give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the zoning proposal:  
The Applicant submits that the property will have a new alternate entry provided by new community developer which will negate any negative traffic impact to residents.

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Date Received: 11/2/17 CITY OF SUWANEE USE ONLY Case No.: RZ-2017-009 Accepted By: [Signature]





0 white street  
 Suwanee, GA 30024  
 Scale: 1"=40'

Parcel No. (APN) 7-210-048  
 Land Use Cat. VACANT LAND  
 Land Use Desc. MISCELLANEOUS VACANT LAND  
 Lot Area 69260 SF (1.59 ACRES)

# Exhibit A

11-5-17



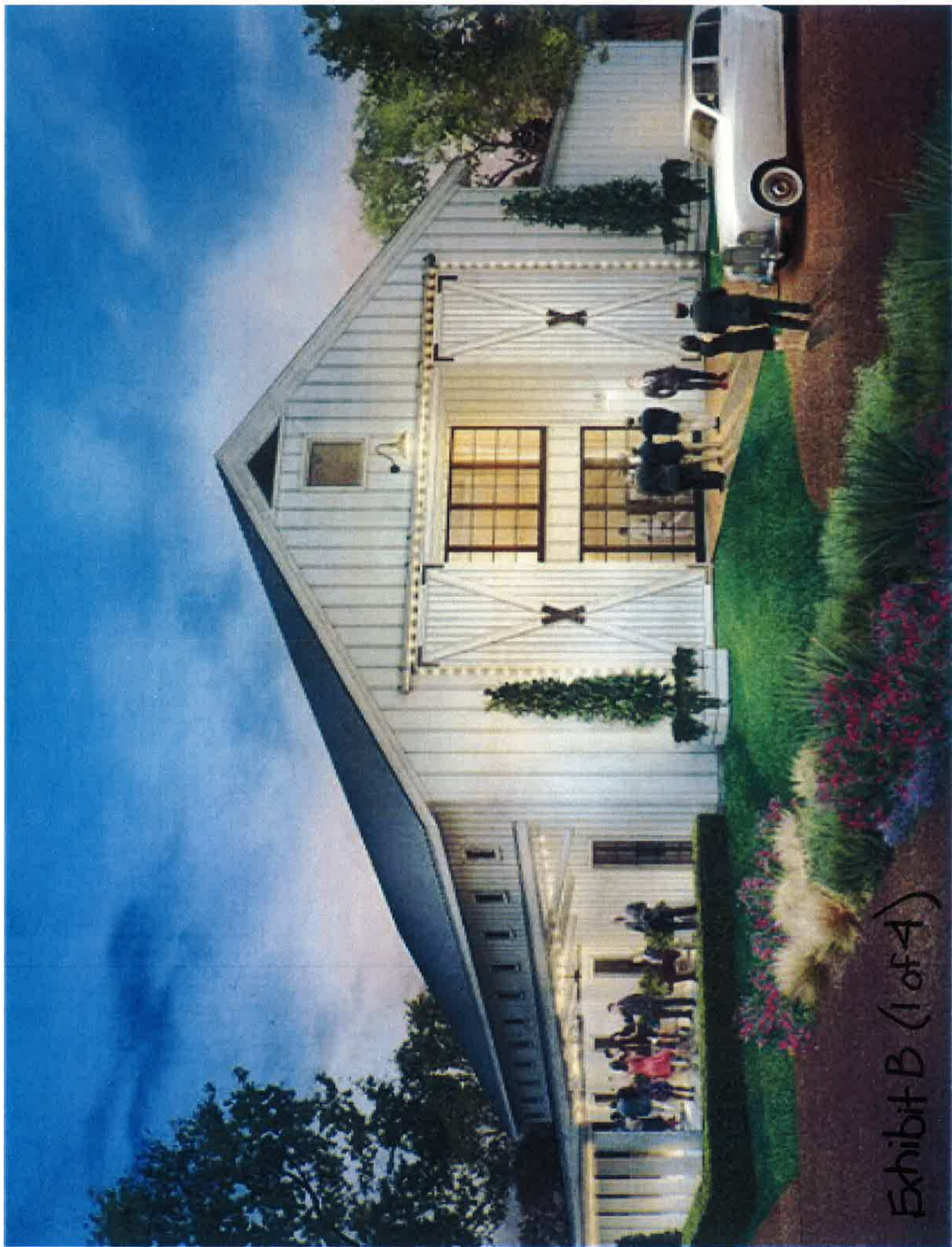


Exhibit B (1 of 4)





Exhibit B (2 of 4)



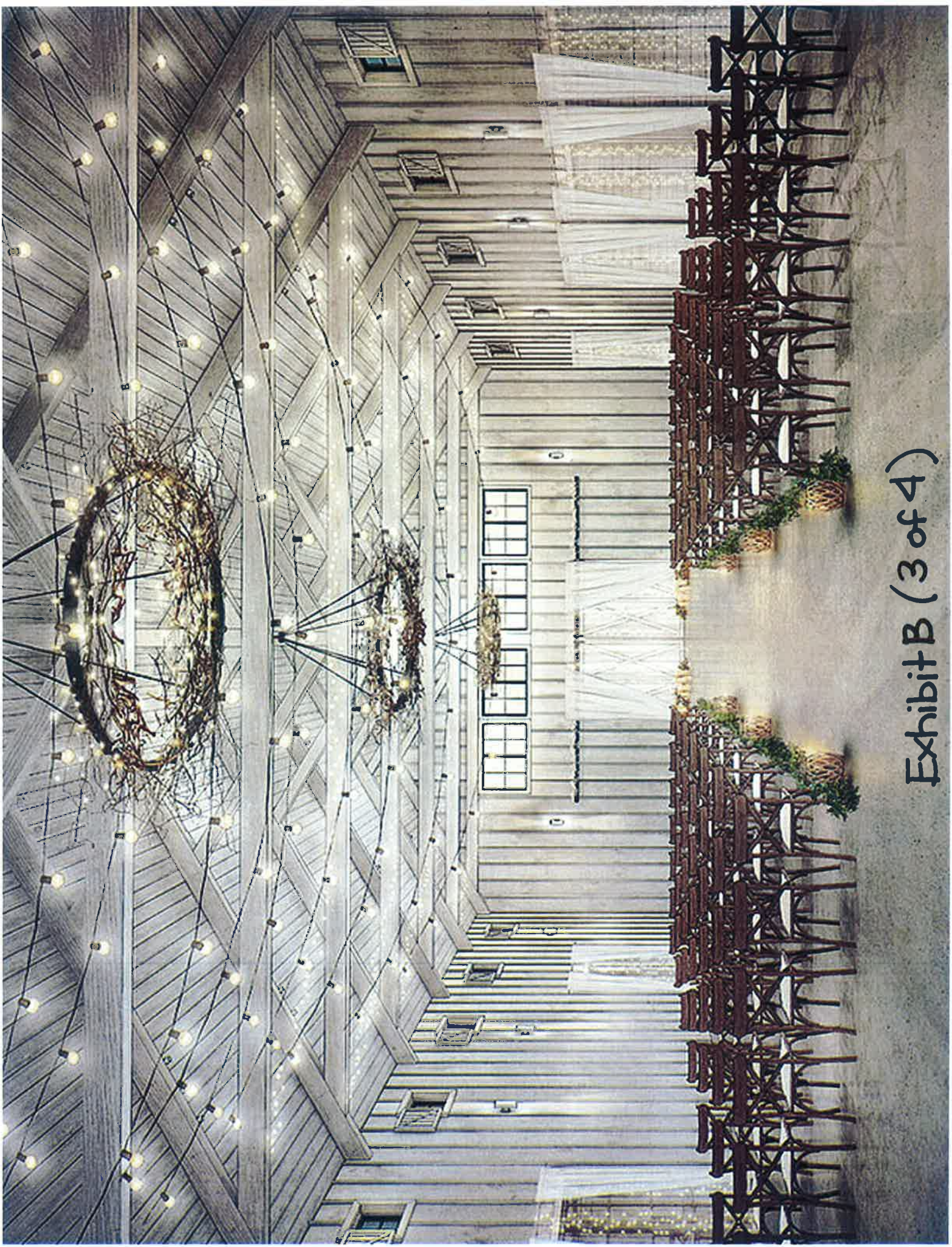


Exhibit B (3 of 4)





Exhibit B (4 of 4)





# Location Map RZ-2017-009



### Legend







# Zoning Map RZ-2017-009

**Legend**

- RZ-2017-009
- ZONING**
- C-1
- C-2
- C-2A
- C-3
- GCA
- IRD
- M-1
- OI
- OTCD
- PMUD
- R-100
- R-140
- R-75
- R-85
- RM6
- RM8
- streams
- roads

