



GLPC AGENDA ITEM # 6

MARCH 31, 2025

Rezoning Request by Justin Nijem File #: VA-2025-04

Justin Nijem is requesting to rezone 0.84 acres from Neighborhood Commercial (C-N) to Multi-Family Residential (R-M). The subject property is a triangular-shaped parcel located at 1604 Lankford Drive, which is along the north side of the road about 400 feet east of North St Augustine Road. This is also between the Westside Baptist Church and the Circle K convenience store. The property is currently vacant and the applicant is proposing to develop it with a 15-unit, 2-story apartment building in accordance with a submitted site plan. Each dwelling unit will consist of one (1) bedroom and one (1) bath, and total about 850 square feet of heated floor area. Because C-N does not allow multi-family development, the applicant is seeking the downzoning to R-M.

The subject property is located within a **Community Activity Center (CAC)** Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan, which allows the possibility of R-M zoning.

The subject property is one of the last remaining vacant properties along the Lankford Drive corridor which is dominated by mainly institutional and high-density residential uses, with limited commercial uses at either end. The existing zoning pattern along this corridor is dominated by R-10 and R-M. Most of the R-10 portion is misleading in that it is mostly developed with institutional uses such as the adjacent Westside Baptist Church and the Parker Mathis Learning Center (alternative school) just beyond. There are seemingly increasing levels of traffic along this corridor, and this will probably increase dramatically if/when Lankford's planned connection to Norman Drive is completed. The subject property is definitely not conducive for R-10 single-family residential development due to its irregular shape, and its location along this 4-lane arterial roadway. Although the uses allowed in the existing C-N zoning or even in an R-P or O-P alternative would be deemed acceptable here, there is some merit in choosing multi-family development for this property --- given the large apartment complex across the street and the adjacent non-residential uses. This would make a choice of either R-P or R-M zoning interchangeable here, but given the current lack of actual R-P zoning along this corridor, R-M would seem the better choice for now.

Staff Recommendation: Find consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP) and recommend approval to the City Council.

Planning Analysis & Property Information

Applicant:	Justin Nijem		
Owner:	LePaul Watson Properties LLLP		
Request:	Rezone from Neighborhood Commercial (C-N) to Multi-Family Residential (R-M)		
Property General Information			
Size & Location:	One parcel consisting of 0.84 acres located along the north side of Lankford Drive, about 400 feet east of North St Augustine Road.		
Street Address:	1604 Lankford Drive		
Tax Parcel ID:	Map # 0084D Parcel: 107	City Council District:	3 <i>Councilman McIntyre</i>
Zoning & Land Use Patterns			
		Zoning	Land Use
Subject Property:	Existing:	C-N	Vacant land (cleared)
	Proposed:	R-M	Apartment complex (max. 15 dwellings)
Adjacent Property:	North:	R-10	Single-family residential neighborhood
	South:	R-M	Blanton Common apartment complex
	East:	R-10	Westside Baptist Church
	West:	C-N, C-H	Circle-K convenience store & gas station
Zoning & Land Use History	The subject property was part of the "Islands Annexation" (island #70) in 2006. It was previously zoned Rural Commercial (C-R) in the county, and was given C-N zoning in the City upon annexation. The property has been vacant for more than 35 years.		
Neighborhood Characteristics			
Historic Resources:	There are no designated historic resources in the area		
Natural Resources:	Vegetation:	Cleared land	
	Wetlands:	There are no NWI wetlands within or near the subject property	
	Flood Hazards	Located well-outside the current FEMA designated 100-year floodplain	
	Groundwater Recharge:	No significant recharge areas in the vicinity	
	Endangered Species:	No known endangered species on or near the property	
Public Facilities			
Water & Sewer:	Existing Valdosta water and sewer services along Lankford Drive.		
Transportation:	Lankford Drive (Minor Arterial)		
Fire Protection:	Fire Station # 6 (Enterprise Drive) = approximately 1.2 miles to the south. The nearest fire hydrants are located along Lankford Drive, directly across from the subject property		

Comprehensive Plan Issues

Character Area: Community Activity Center

Description: A focal point for several neighborhoods that has a concentration of activities such as general retail, service commercial, office professional, higher-density housing, and appropriate public and open space uses easily accessible by pedestrians.

Development Strategy: Each Community Activity Center should include a relatively high-density mix of retail, office, services, and employment to serve a regional market area. Residential development should reinforce the town center through locating higher density housing options adjacent to the town center, targeted to a broad range of income levels, including multi-family town homes, apartments and condominiums. Design for each Community Activity Center should be very pedestrian-oriented, with strong, walkable connections between different uses. Road edges should be clearly defined by locating buildings at roadside with parking in the rear. Direct connections to greenspace and trail networks should be provided. The pedestrian-friendly environment should be enhanced by adding sidewalks and other pedestrian-friendly trails/bike routes linked to other neighborhood amenities such as libraries, neighborhood centers, health facilities, parks, and schools.

Goals and Policies:

GOAL 3: HOUSING – To ensure access to adequate and affordable housing options for all residents in all income levels.

POLICY 3.1 – The growing need for workforce and affordable housing shall be addressed through public-private partnerships.

Objective 3.1.3 – Promote the appropriate use of infill and redevelopment in established residential neighborhoods

POLICY 3.2 – The existing housing stock shall be proactively protected and maintained, utilizing public-private partnerships when necessary.

Objective 3.2.3 – Protect well established neighborhoods from incompatible uses.

GOAL 7: LAND USE – To ensure the community’s anticipated growth occurs in a well-integrated yet organized fashion, which protects our community resources, promotes efficient use of infrastructure and transportation facilities, and supports quality economic development.

POLICY 7.5 – Available land shall be utilized in the most efficient manner while focusing on redevelopment of land where feasible.

Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (Review Criteria)

In reviewing and making a decision on a rezoning request, the City staff, Planning Commission and City Council shall consider the following standards. The proposed responses to these standards by the applicant and staff are listed below.

(1) Whether a proposed rezoning will permit a range of uses that are suitable, in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property.	
<i>Applicant:</i>	Yes, there is an existing apartment complex located on the other side of Lankford Drive and it is zoned R-M
<i>Staff:</i>	Yes. The proposed use is compatible with the adjacent development patterns
(2) Whether a proposed rezoning will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property.	
<i>Applicant:</i>	It will not. Adjacent property uses include a c-store, cemetery, church and an apartment complex.
<i>Staff:</i>	No adverse impacts.

(3) Whether the property to be affected by a proposed rezoning has a reasonable economic use as currently zoned.	
<i>Applicant:</i>	Yes.
<i>Staff:</i>	No. The subject property is not conducive for single-family residential development due to its irregular shape, and its location along a 4-lane arterial roadway and generally surrounded by uses that are more intensive.
(4) Whether the proposed rezoning will result in a use that will or could cause an excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities or schools.	
<i>Applicant:</i>	No.
<i>Staff:</i>	No adverse impacts.
(5) Whether the proposed rezoning is in conformity with the policy and intent of the Comprehensive Plan.	
<i>Applicant:</i>	Yes.
<i>Staff:</i>	Yes. The proposed R-M zoning is compliant in the CAC Character Area and supported by the Goals & Policies of the Comprehensive Plan
(6) Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property that give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the proposed rezoning.	
<i>Applicant:</i>	The approval of the rezoning will allow the property to be developed as an apartment complex.
<i>Staff:</i>	Yes, this is a slowly developing corridor with increasing traffic along Lankford Drive, and the most recent new development is the very large apartment complex (Blanton Common) across the street.
(7) Whether, and the extent to which, the proposed rezoning would result in significant adverse impacts on the natural environment.	
<i>Applicant:</i>	None.
<i>Staff:</i>	No adverse impact.
(8) Whether the proposed change will constitute a grant of special privilege to the individual owner as contrasted with adjacent or nearby property owners or the general public.	
<i>Applicant:</i>	No.
<i>Staff:</i>	No. The proposed rezoning would not constitute a grant of special privilege.

Supplemental Regulations in the LDR Applicable to the Proposal

Section 218-13 Standards of Use and Development (V) Multi-Family Dwellings

- (1) Multi-family dwelling units shall not consist of more than 4 bedrooms.
- (2) Multi-family developments with more than 150 units must have access to a collector or arterial street as classified in the most recent GDOT Functional Classification System for the City of Valdosta.
- (3) Minimum building spacing. Buildings shall be separated by a minimum of 15 feet side to side, 40 feet front to back or front to front, and 25 feet back to back or back to side.
- (4) No building façade shall measure greater than 250 feet in length.
- (5) Architectural Standards for multi-family development:
 - (a) Building facades shall incorporate architectural modulations at intervals of no more than every 25 feet.
 - (b) Buildings must have pitched roofs with a minimum of 4:12 pitch.
 - (c) No exposed concrete masonry units may be used on exterior building walls.
 - (d) Preliminary architectural building elevations shall be submitted prior to approval of rezoning or building permit.

- (6) Streets and Circulation.
 - (a) Private streets may be permitted, provided such streets meet the standards of public streets as specified in Chapter 332, Article 1.
 - (b) Adequate provision is made for vehicular traffic to and from the premises and for vehicular traffic and pedestrian traffic to and from the proposed buildings, structures and parking areas on the premises; including firefighting and police equipment and personnel, ambulance service, garbage collection service, postal service, delivery service and other public and private services and individuals who would require access to the premises.
- (7) Open Space and Recreation: In residential zoning districts, multi-family residential developments with more than 50 dwelling units shall provide a minimum of 300 square feet of open space or outdoor recreation per dwelling unit.
- (8) Parking
 - (a) Parking areas shall be screened from view of public streets by buildings or by an evergreen hedge, solid fence, or wall not less than 4 feet in height.
 - (b) If parking is provided in covered garages or carports, such parking shall be within the principal building or in separate garages that are constructed of similar materials, roof slope, and design as the principal structure.
 - (c) Required parking for multi-family developments shall be provided off-street in small parking lots grouped in bays with no more than 100 parking spaces in a non-linear area. No off-street parking space shall be more than 200 feet, by the most direct route on the ground, from a ground floor exterior entrance of the dwelling unit it intends to serve.
 - (d) Parking areas with more than 25 parking spaces shall provide at least two points of access.
- (9) Non-residential zoning districts. Multi-family developments in non-residential zoning districts shall be located on their own parcel of land, unless otherwise approved as part of a Planned Development pursuant to Chapter 212.

Development Review Comments

The following comments are provided by the reviewing departments and are only intended to provide the developer with useful information for planning purposes. This list should not be considered all inclusive as additional items may appear during the plan review process.

Building Plan Review: No comments on these cases

Engineering: No issues or concerns

Fire: The Fire Dept has no issues with the conceptual site plan that is submitted, but it will still need to go through the standard review process. The proposed multi-family development will require a fire suppression system

Landscape: Development must comply with LDR Chapter 328.

Police: < No comments received >

Public Works: No issues or concerns

Utilities: < No comments received >

Attachments:

- Zoning Location Map
- Character Area Map
- Aerial Location Map
- Letter of Authorization
- Boundary survey
- Site Plan
- Building elevations

VA-2025-04 Zoning Location Map

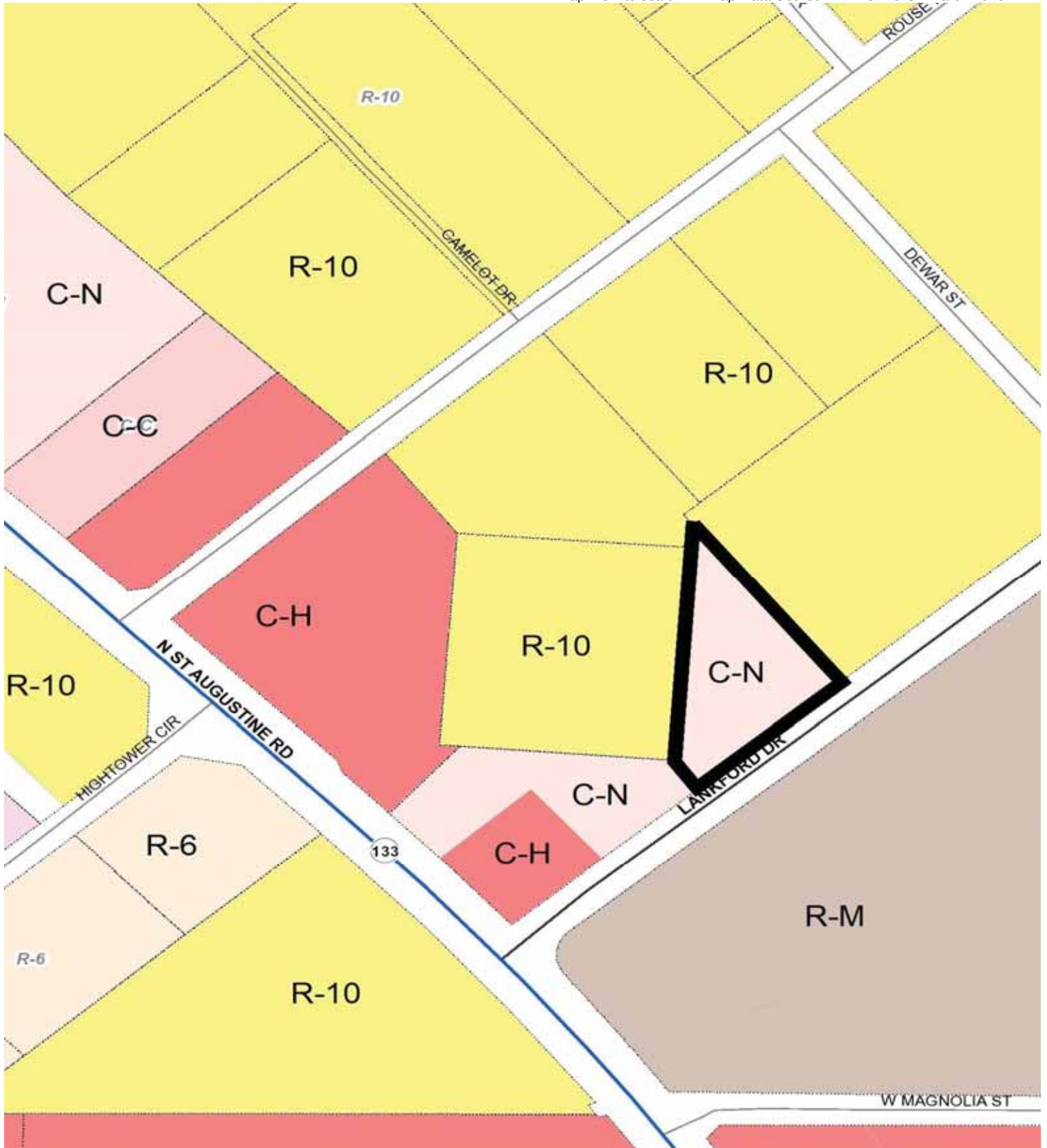


Justin Nijem
Rezoning Request

1604 Lankford Drive
Tax Map # 0084D Parcel # 107

Current Zoning = C-N

** Map NOT to scale Map Data Source: VALOR GIS March 2025



VA-2025-04

Future Development Map

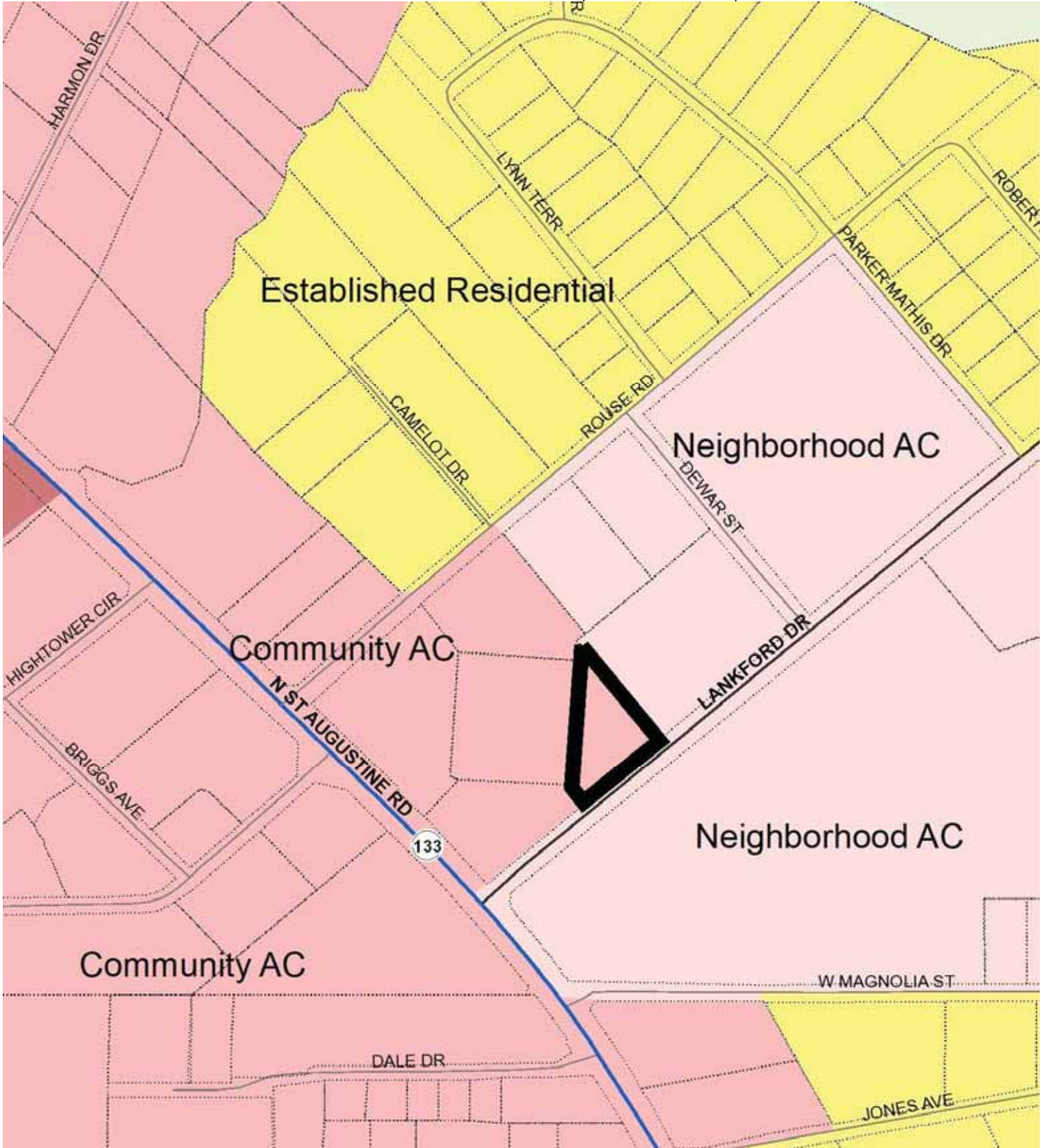


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1604 Lankford Drive
Tax Map # 0084D Parcel # 107

Character Area = CAC

** Map NOT to scale Map Data Source: VALOR GIS March 2025



VA-2025-04 Aerial Location Map



Justin Nijem
Rezoning Request

1604 Lankford Drive
Tax Map # 0084D Parcel # 107

2007 Aerial Imagery

** Map NOT to scale Map Data Source: VALOR GIS March 2025



LETTER of AUTHORIZATION

To: Greater Lowndes Planning Commission
Valdosta City Council

Regarding property located at 1604 Lanford Drive 0084D 167
(street address) (Tax Map/Parcel #)

I / We the owner(s) of the above described real property in the City of Valdosta, Georgia, do hereby authorize I Nijem Properties to act as agent on my/our behalf, in submitting an application requesting the Rezoning of my/our property to a RM zoning classification, and to represent me/us in all public hearings and other matters with the City of Valdosta relating to this application.

[Signature]
Signature(s)

S. LEE WATSON
PRINT name(s)

1/9/25
Date

NOTARY PUBLIC

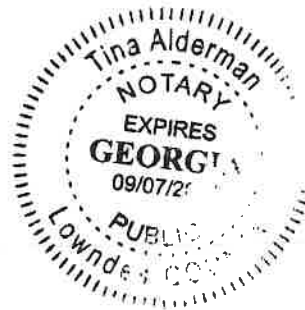
State of GEORGIA, County of LOWNDES

Sworn to and subscribed to me on this 3RD day of FEB. 2025.

My commission expires 9/7/2027.

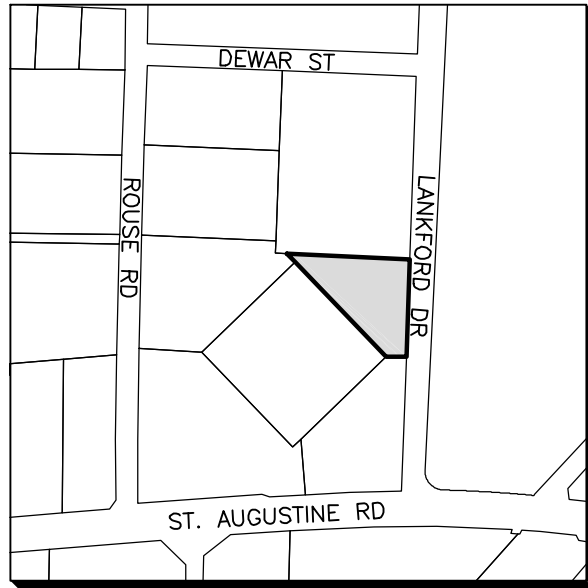
[Signature]
Notary Public

(seal)



#VA-2025-04

P:\1922-NIJEM 1604 LANKFORD APARTMENTS\SURVEY\REZONING\1922_REZONE.DWG 2/12/2025 1:12 PM



VICINITY MAP

NOW OR FORMERLY
CAESAR BATTLE JR
DB 6164 PG 268
PARCEL# 0084D 111

NOW OR FORMERLY
WESTSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH OF
VALDOSTA INC
DB 3747 PG 98
PARCEL# 0084D 106

POB: SOUTHEAST CORNER
TRACT NO.3, SURVEY OF
PROPERTY OF E.R LANKFORD
PLAT BOOK 28 PG 304

S 42°20'00" E 295.29'

TRACT 1
0.84 Acres
36571 Sq. Feet

N 01°25'00" W 323.05'

NOW OR FORMERLY
ER LANKFORD CEMETERY
PARCEL# 0084D 108

S 48°26'00" W 220.56'

LANKFORD DRIVE (64' R/W PER PB 28 PG 304)

N 31°49'00" W
49.05'

NOW OR FORMERLY
KEMP RIDGE
HOLDINGS LLC
DB 4724 PG 208
PARCEL# 0084D 109



LOCATED IN
LAND LOT 15
11th LAND DISTRICT
LOWNDES COUNTY, GA

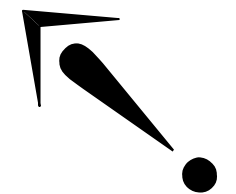
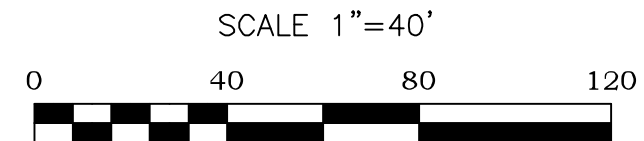
- THE PURPOSE OF THIS MAP IS TO REZONE PARCEL# 0084D 107 FROM ITS CURRENT C-N ZONING TO R-M ZONING.
- ACCORDING TO FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP FOR LOWNDES COUNTY, GA. MAP #13185C0210E EFFECTIVE DATE SEPTEMBER 26, 2008. THIS PROPERTY IS IN FLOOD ZONE " X ". AN AREA DETERMINED TO BE OUTSIDE THE 0.2% ANNUAL CHANCE FLOODPLAIN.

INNOVATE

Engineering & Surveying

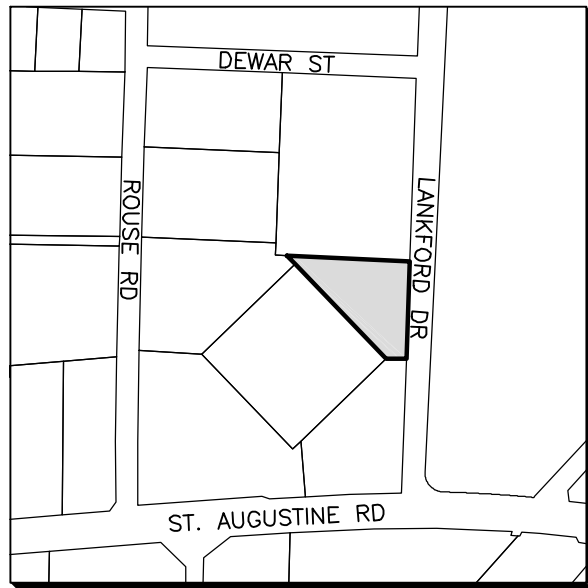
PHONE: 229-249-9113 www.innovatees.com
2214 N. Patterson Street, Valdosta, GA 31602

REZONING MAP FOR: J NIJEM PROPERTIES



GRID NORTH
GA WEST ZONE

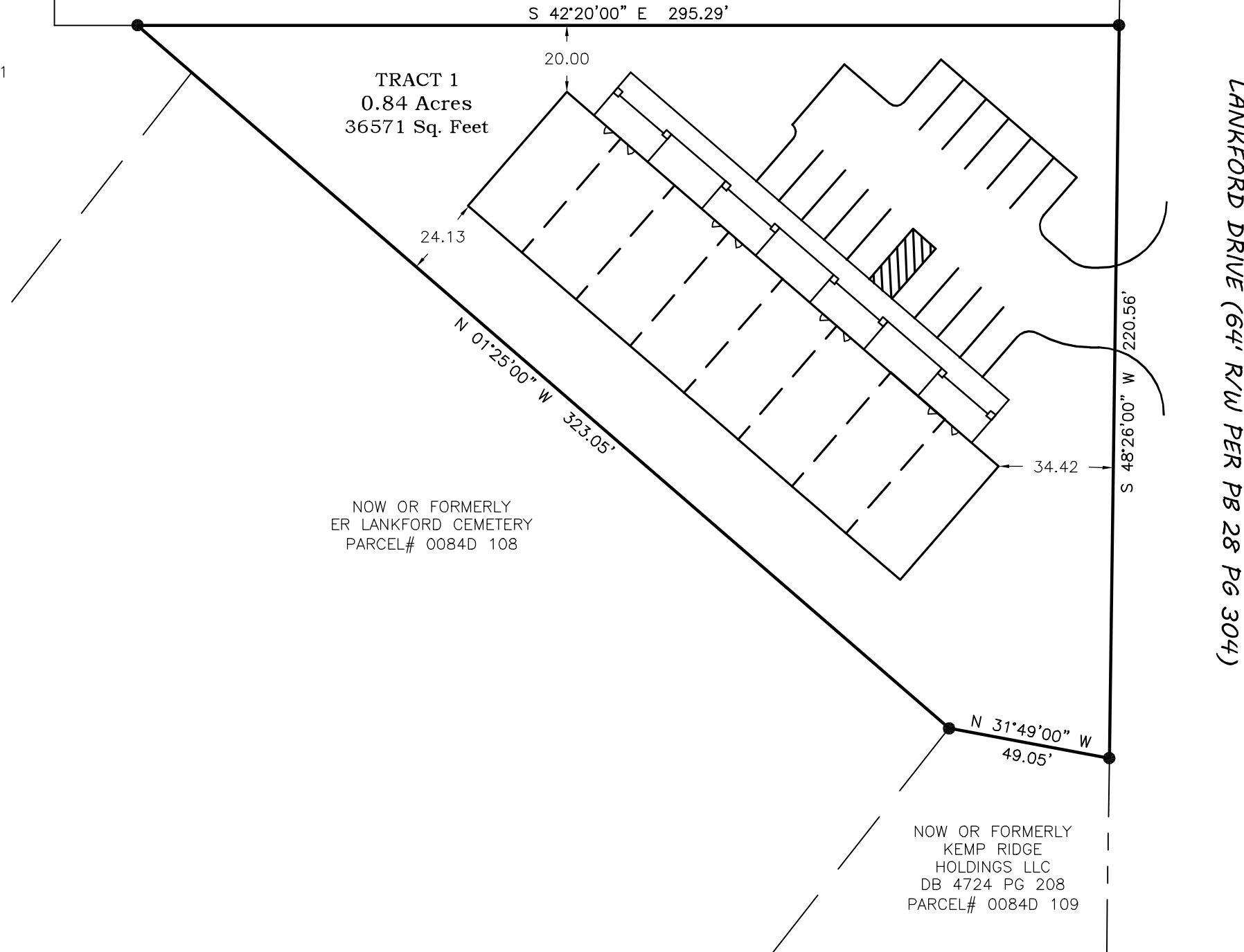
P:\1922-NIJEM 1604 LANKFORD APARTMENTS\SURVEY\REZONING\1922 SITE PLAN.DWG 2/12/2025 12:59 PM



VICINITY MAP

NOW OR FORMERLY
CAESAR BATTLE JR
DB 6164 PG 268
PARCEL# 0084D 111

NOW OR FORMERLY
WESTSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH OF
VALDOSTA INC
DB 3747 PG 98
PARCEL# 0084D 106



NOW OR FORMERLY
ER LANKFORD CEMETERY
PARCEL# 0084D 108

NOW OR FORMERLY
KEMP RIDGE
HOLDINGS LLC
DB 4724 PG 208
PARCEL# 0084D 109

LOCATED IN
LAND LOT 15
11th LAND DISTRICT
LOWNDES COUNTY, GA
PLAN DATE: 02/12/2025

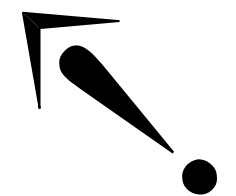
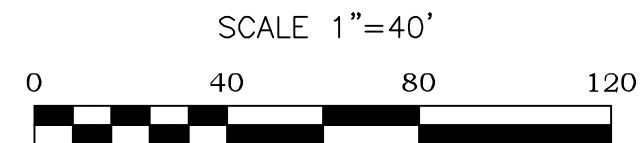
- THE PURPOSE OF THIS MAP IS A CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN OF PARCEL# 0084D 107 .
- ACCORDING TO FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP FOR LOWNDES COUNTY, GA. MAP #13185C0210E EFFECTIVE DATE SEPTEMBER 26, 2008. THIS PROPERTY IS IN FLOOD ZONE " X ". AN AREA DETERMINED TO BE OUTSIDE THE 0.2% ANNUAL CHANCE FLOODPLAIN.

INNOVATE

Engineering & Surveying

PHONE: 229-249-9113 www.innovatees.com
2214 N. Patterson Street, Valdosta, GA 31602

SITE PLAN FOR: J NIJEM PROPERTIES



GRID NORTH
GA WEST ZONE