



# **CITY OF DAHLONEGA**

## **Planning Commission Meeting Agenda**

**July 01, 2025, 6:00 PM**

**Gary McCullough Chambers, Dahlonega City Hall**

---

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those requiring accommodation for Council meetings should notify the City Clerk's Office at least 24 hours prior to the meeting at 706-864-6133.

Vision - Dahlonega will be the most welcoming, thriving, and inspiring community in North Georgia

Mission Statement - Dahlonega, a City of Excellence, will provide quality services through ethical leadership and fiscal stability, in full partnership with the people who choose to live, work, and visit. Through this commitment, we respect and uphold our rural Appalachian setting to honor our thriving community of historical significance, academic excellence, and military renown.

---

### **CALL TO ORDER**

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG**

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. Public Hearing of June 3, 2025  
Rhonda Hansard, City Clerk
- b. Meeting of June 3, 2025  
Rhonda Hansard, City Clerk

### **OLD BUSINESS**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- 1. REZN 25-2  
Allison Martin, City Manager / Prepared by Doug Parks, City Attorney

### **ADJOURNMENT**

---

Guideline Principles - The City of Dahlonega will be an open, honest, and responsive city that balances preservation and growth and delivers quality services fairly and equitably by being good stewards of its resources. To ensure the vibrancy of our community, Dahlonega commits to Transparency and Honesty, Dedication and Responsibility, Preservation and Sustainability, Safety and Welfare...for ALL!

---



# **CITY OF DAHLONEGA**

## **Planning Commission Public Hearing Minutes**

**June 03, 2025, 6:00 PM**

**Gary McCullough Chambers, Dahlonega City Hall**

---

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those requiring accommodation for Council meetings should notify the City Clerk's Office at least 24 hours prior to the meeting at 706-864-6133.

Vision - Dahlonega will be the most welcoming, thriving, and inspiring community in North Georgia

Mission Statement - Dahlonega, a City of Excellence, will provide quality services through ethical leadership and fiscal stability, in full partnership with the people who choose to live, work, and visit. Through this commitment, we respect and uphold our rural Appalachian setting to honor our thriving community of historical significance, academic excellence, and military renown.

---

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Conaway called the Public Hearing to order at 5:59 p.m. with all members of the Planning Commission present.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

1. BZA-24-7  
Allison Martin, Prepared by Doug Parks

Chairman Conaway declared the Public Hearing open.

Speaking in favor:

None

Speaking in opposition:

None

Chairman Conaway declared the Public Hearing closed.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There was a motion by Commissioner O'Gorman and a second by Commissioner Norton to adjourn the Public Hearing.

Motion carried unanimously, and the Public Hearing was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

---

Guideline Principles - The City of Dahlonega will be an open, honest, and responsive city that balances preservation and growth and delivers quality services fairly and equitably by being good stewards of its resources. To ensure the vibrancy of our community, Dahlonega commits to Transparency and Honesty, Dedication and Responsibility, Preservation and Sustainability, Safety and Welfare...for ALL!

---



# **CITY OF DAHLONEGA**

## **Planning Commission Meeting Minutes**

**June 03, 2025, 6:00 PM**

**Gary McCullough Chambers, Dahlonega City Hall**

---

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those requiring accommodation for Council meetings should notify the City Clerk's Office at least 24 hours prior to the meeting at 706-864-6133.

Vision - Dahlonega will be the most welcoming, thriving, and inspiring community in North Georgia

Mission Statement - Dahlonega, a City of Excellence, will provide quality services through ethical leadership and fiscal stability, in full partnership with the people who choose to live, work, and visit. Through this commitment, we respect and uphold our rural Appalachian setting to honor our thriving community of historical significance, academic excellence, and military renown.

---

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Conaway called the Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with all members of the Planning Commission present.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG**

Chairman Conaway led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. Public Hearing of May 6, 2025  
Rhonda Hansard, City Clerk

There was a motion by Commissioner O'Gorman and a second by Commissioner Norton to approve the Minutes of the Public Hearing of May 6, 2025.

Motion carried unanimously.

- b. Regular Meeting of May 6, 2025  
Rhonda Hansard, City Clerk

There was a motion by Commissioner Feagin and a second by Commissioner Norton to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 6, 2025.

Motion carried unanimously.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

1. ZONING CASES:
2. CONDITIONAL USES:

### **NEW BUSINESS**

1. ZONING CASES:
2. CONDITIONAL USES:
3. BZA-24-7

Allison Martin, Prepared by Doug Parks

Bruce Clem addressed the Commission and stated that this request is seeking approval of a variance to decrease the front setback of the principal building from thirty-five feet to fifteen feet due to topographic limitations. Mr. Clem further stated that, if approved, there will be no negative impacts on the property and that the existing Easement with Georgia Power will be the only issue.

The Commission held a discussion to include inquiring of Mr. Clem about the structure's layout and whether Mr. Clem knew if his client was aware of the power line as referenced in the Staff Recommendations.

Mr. Clem and Allison Martin, City Manager, addressed the Commission.

There was a motion by Commissioner Feagin and a second by Commissioner Guy to approve BZA 24-7, an application seeking a variance to reduce the minimum required thirty-five feet front principal building setback to fifteen feet.

Motion carried with four members in favor (Conaway, Feagin, Guy, and Steinberg) and three members opposed (Norton, O'Gorman, and Spivey).

*[Clerk's Note: Chairman Conaway cast his vote to break a tied decision.]*

4. Election of Chairman for Remainder of 2025 Term  
Chairman Conaway

Chairman Conaway addressed the Commission and informed that he is retiring from the Planning Commission effective immediately due to current health-related concerns. The Chairman recommended that his seat remain vacant until the City Council determines the future of the Planning Commission.

Various members of the Commission expressed their gratitude for Chairman Conaway and for his service.

There was a motion by Commissioner Feagin and a second by Commissioner O'Gorman to appoint Commissioner Spivey as the Planning Commission Chairman for the remainder of 2025.

Motion carried with five members in favor (Feagin, Guy, Norton, O'Gorman, and Steinberg) and one member abstained (Spivey).

Mayor JoAnne Taylor thanked Commissioner Conaway for his dedication of twenty-five years of service to the Planning Commission, and she thanked the other members of the Commission for volunteering their time to serve the community.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There was a motion by Commissioner Guy and a second by Commissioner Feagin to adjourn the Meeting.

Motion carried unanimously (Feagin, Guy, Norton, O'Gorman, and Steinberg), and the Meeting was adjourned at 6:17 p.m.

---

Guideline Principles - The City of Dahlonaga will be an open, honest, and responsive city that balances preservation and growth and delivers quality services fairly and equitably by being good stewards of its resources. To ensure the vibrancy of our community, Dahlonaga commits to Transparency and Honesty, Dedication and Responsibility, Preservation and Sustainability, Safety and Welfare...for ALL!

---



## Planning Commission Review

---

**DATE:** 7/1/2025  
**TITLE:** REZN 25-2  
**PRESENTED BY:** Allison Martin, Prepared by Doug Parks, City Attorney  
**PRIORITY** Strategic Priority - Communication

---

### AGENDA ITEM DESCRIPTION

REZN 25-2 Rezoning: Baldr Capital, LLC, by Kent Baltare, SPG Planners and Engineers, applicant, RCA Dahlonaga, LLC, property owner, seeking to rezone from PUD Planned Unit Development District Conditional to B-2 (Highway Business District) 20.071 acres fronting on the north side of Summit Drive in Land Lot 1077, 12th district (Map/Parcel 077/ 249). Proposed use: Nordic-style resort spa (indoor/outdoor wellness facilities) with retail and food service.

---

### HISTORY/PAST ACTION

None.

---

### FINANCIAL IMPACT

None.

---

### RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation is to follow the consultant's advisory opinion in the attachment.

---

### SUGGESTED MOTIONS

A motion consistent with the view of the issues presented in the Consulting Planner's Report attached.

---

### ATTACHMENTS

Consulting Planner's Report REZN 25-2.

---

## **CONSULTING PLANNER'S REPORT**

**TO:** Dahlongega Planning Commission and City Council  
c/o Doug Parks, City Attorney

**FROM:** Jerry Weitz, PhD, FAICP, Consulting Planner

**SITE VISIT DATE:** April 27, 2025

**DATE:** April 29, 2025

**SUBJECT:** REZN 25-2: Rezoning from PUD (Planned Unit Development District) Conditional to B-2 (Highway Business District)

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:** TBD 2025 @ 6:00 p.m. (Planning Commission)  
TBD 2025 @ 4:00 p.m. (Mayor and City Council)

**VOTING SESSION:** TBD 2025 @ 6:00 p.m. (Mayor and City Council)

**APPLICANT:** Baldr Capital, LLC, by Kent Baltare, by SPG Planners and Engineers

**OWNER(S):** RCA Dahlongega, LLC

**LOCATION:** Fronting on the north side of Summit Drive; Land Lot 1077, 12<sup>th</sup> District

**PARCEL #:** 077/ 249

**ACREAGE:** 20.071

**EXISTING USE:** Undeveloped

**PROPOSED USE:** Nordic-style resort spa (indoor/outdoor wellness facilities) with retail and food service

**SURROUNDING LAND USE/ZONING:**

**NORTH:** Agricultural and commercial; vacant/agricultural (unincorporated)

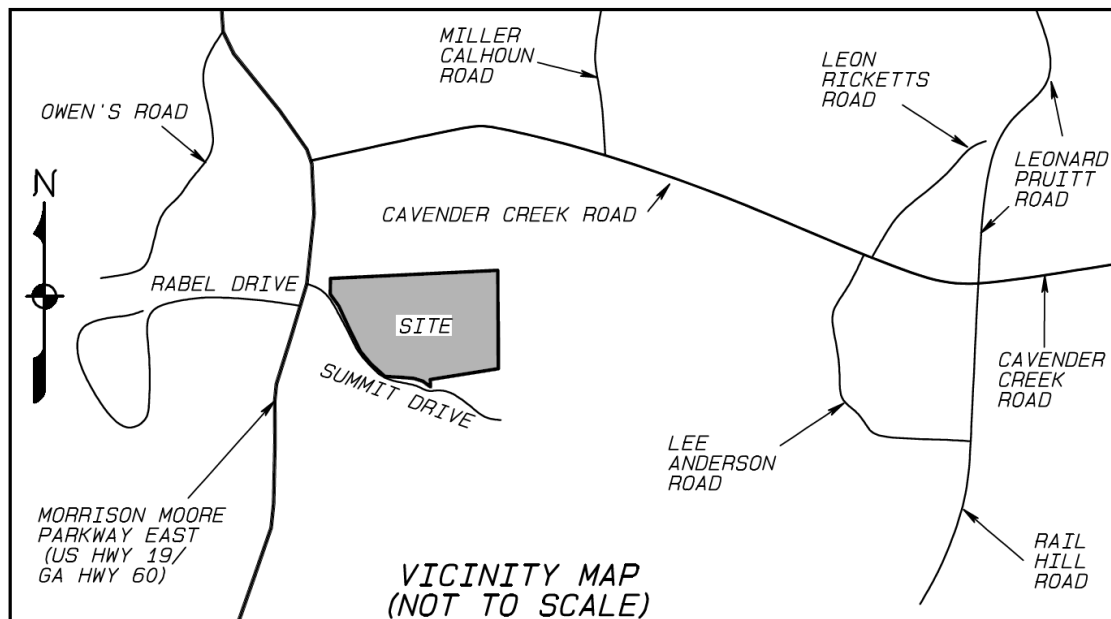
**EAST:** Vacant (conservation use) (unincorporated)

**SOUTH:** Vacant (future phase 3 of Summit of Dahlongega PUD) and condominiums, PUD, (phase 1A of Summit of Dahlongega PUD) (city)

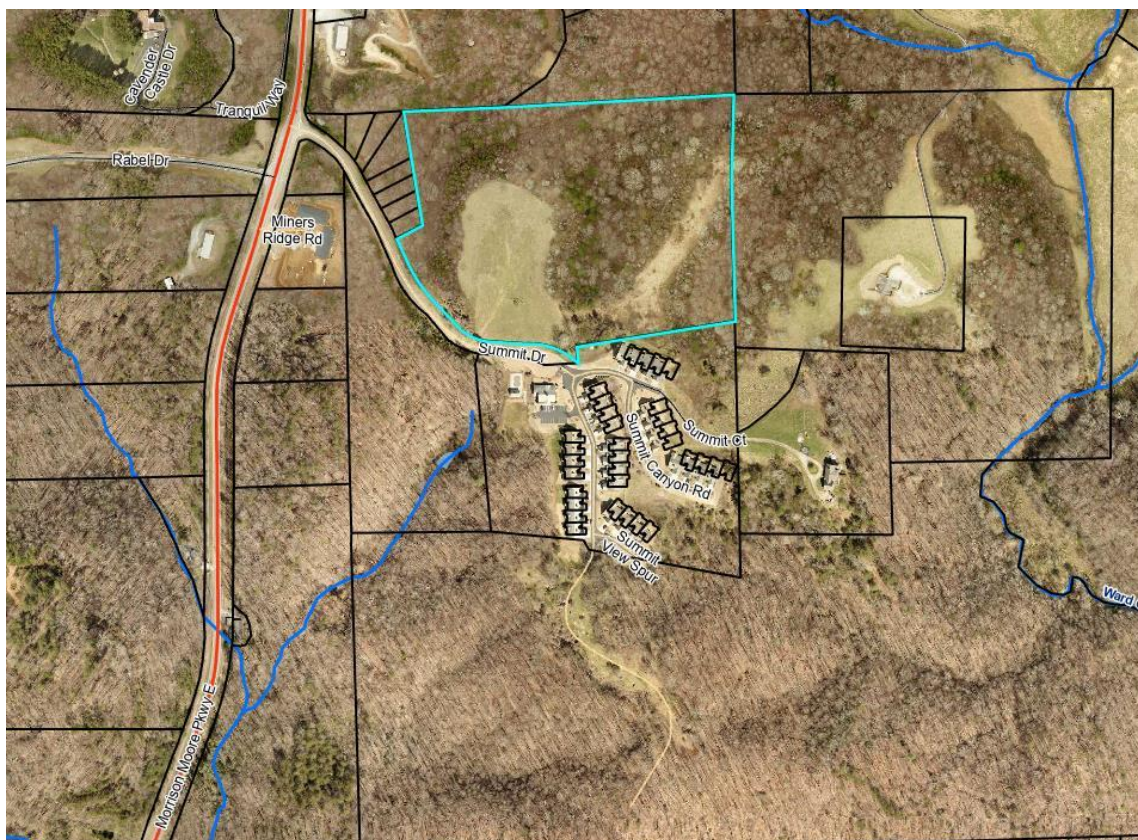
**WEST:** Vacant platted lots (Summit of Dahlongega Phase 2A); and vacant

**RECOMMENDATION:** **Approval**





**Vicinity Map (Source: Application)**



**Tax Map/Aerial Photograph of Property**



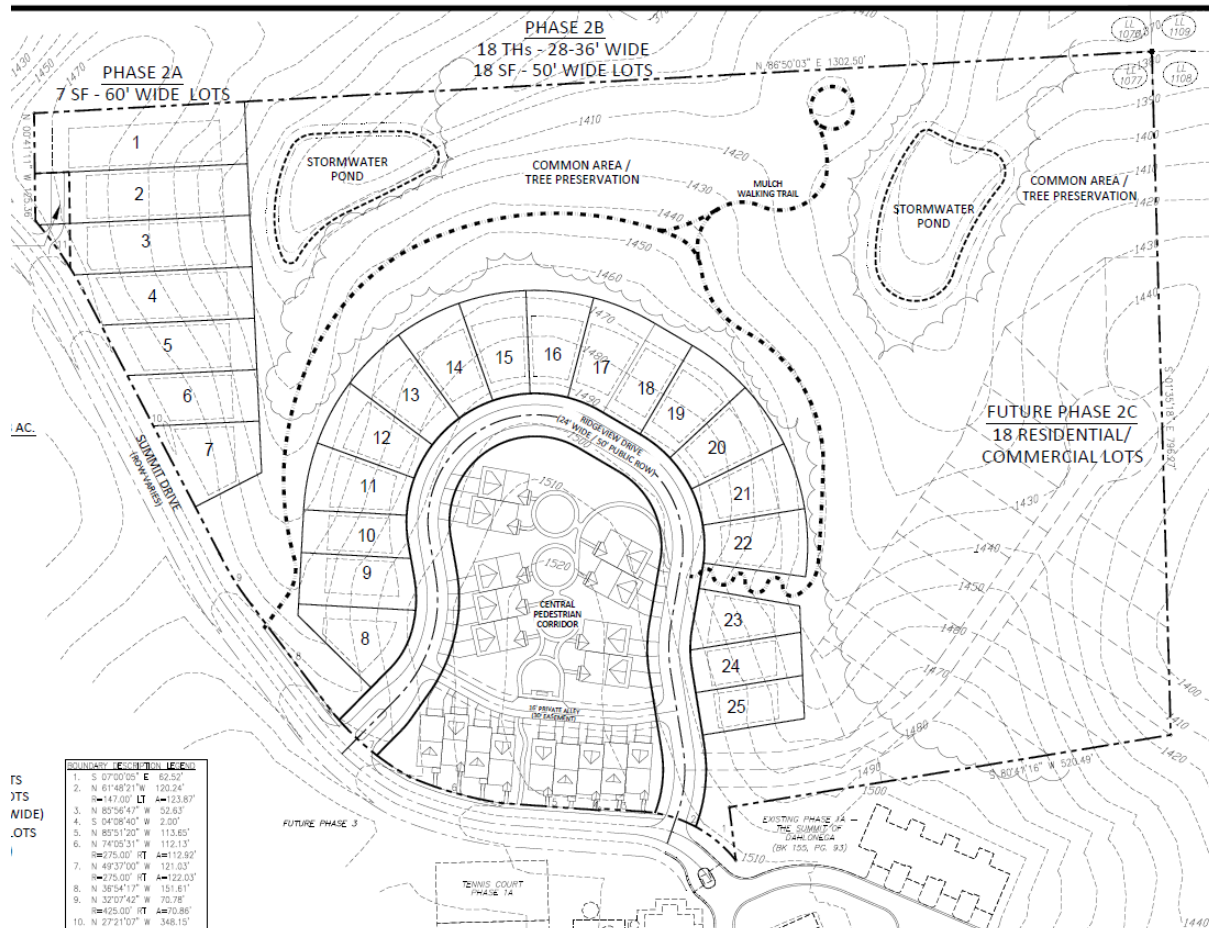


**Photograph of Subject Property Taken from Summit Drive**



## ZONING HISTORY

This property was originally annexed and rezoned in 2005/2006 as “The Summit: An Active Adult Retirement Community.” Phase 1A was approved as 32 condominiums with amenities that started construction in 2006 and was eventually completed. Phase 1B was approved as 32 condominiums and 5 optional villas. It was never developed, per the 2021 staff report for REZN 21-1. The subject property is the major part of phase 2 of Summit Planned Unit Development (21.75 acres). The subject property is 20.7 acres and excludes the seven “Phase 2A” single-family lots already platted at the western edge of the 20.7-acre site. Phase 2 was rezoned to PUD (Planned Unit Development District) by the City of Dahlonega Per Ordinance 2021-12, approved October 4, 2021. Phase 2 of Summit PUD was rezoned (from a prior PUD zoning district) to PUD conditional, for 61 dwelling units with an overall density of 2.8 units per acre and a minimum heated floor area of 1,700 square feet per dwelling unit. Phase 2A (7 lots) from the 21.75-acre tract has been platted and is excluded from the subject request (i.e., it would remain PUD conditional).



**Site Plan Excerpt, 21.75-acre PUD**

Per Ordinance 2021-12, and as shown on the 2021 site plan excerpt above, the land use mix was proposed to consist of 25 detached, single-family homes, 20 townhouses, and a phase with 18 future residential or commercial lots. The subject property's PUD zoning has a number of zoning conditions attached to it, as follows:

**PUD ZONING CONDITIONS, ORDINANCE 2021-12**

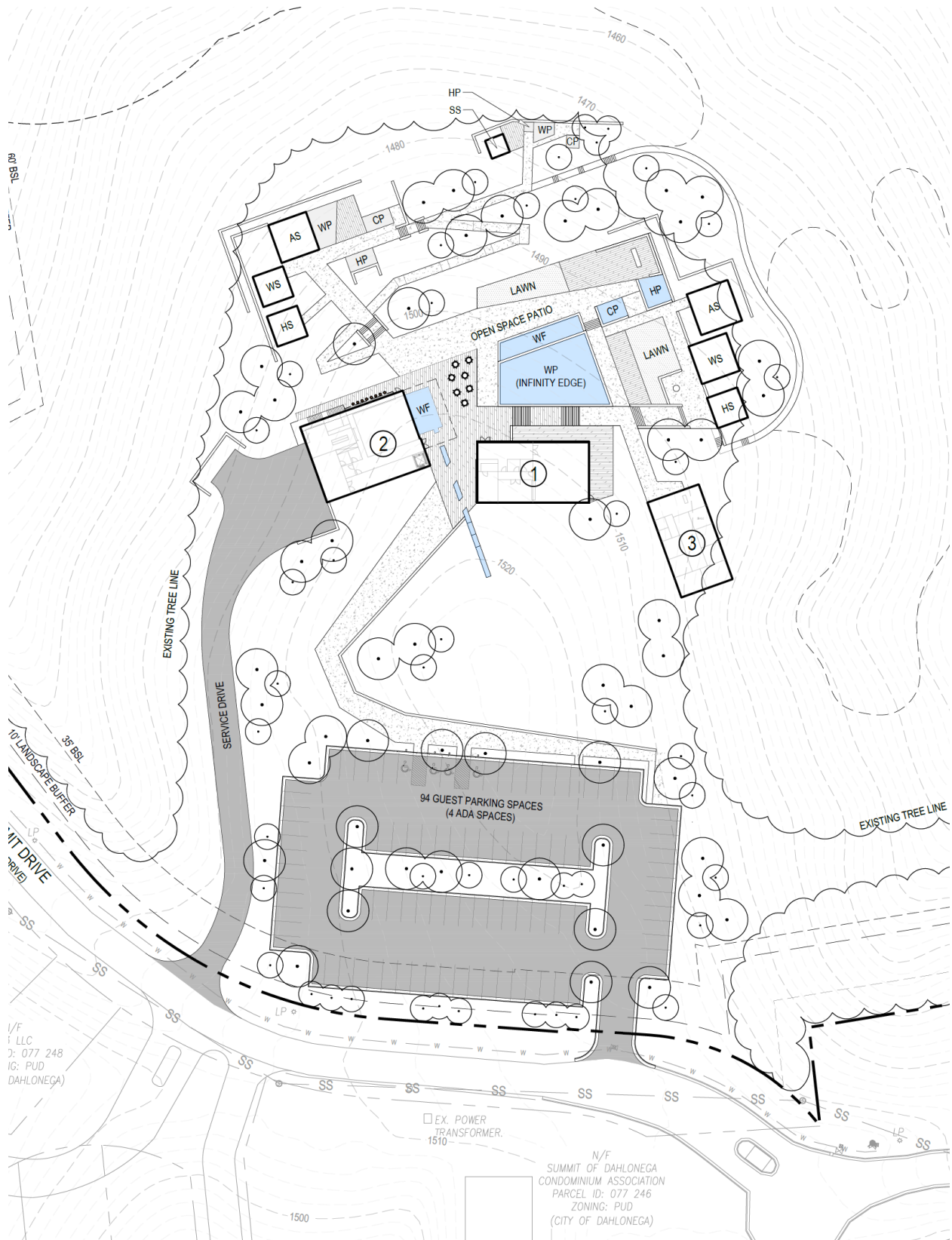
1. The residential Phase 2 density shall be limited to 2.8 units per acre which is proposed on the site plan.
2. The heated square footage of residential structures constructed shall be a minimum of 1700 square feet in order to be more compatible with the existing development.
3. Architectural styles of new construction shall conform substantially to the existing architectural styles in the Summit PUD. The front elevations of all dwellings will consist of a mixture of masonry and fiber cement siding or shake. A minimum 18" masonry water table on the front elevations is required. The remaining balance of each home's side and rear elevations are to be fiber cement siding. Vinyl siding will not be allowed, however vinyl architectural features such as cornices, soffits, windows, columns, etc. are allowed. Architectural shingles or metal roof materials are to be utilized. Final design and approval of the elevations is subject to the approval of the Planning and Zoning Administrator prior to issuance of the building permit.
4. Short Term Rentals, as defined in the Code of the City of Dahlonega, are prohibited in this approval.
5. The applicant shall obtain any required DOT approvals before building permits shall be granted.
6. The minimum building setback requirements in this development are twenty (20) feet from the front, five (5) from the side, and thirty (30) feet from the rears for all single family detached lots.
7. The maximum building height in this development is limited to thirty-five (35) feet above grade.
8. Phase 2c approval is for single family detached lots. Commercial use requests will require final council review and approval before permitting development.
9. Curb cuts will be limited to nine. This includes the lots in Phase 2a and Ridge View Drive.
10. All internal roads in this development are to be Private.
11. This approval includes 61 residential units identified as Phases 2 (2a, 2b, 2c). Any additional phases noted on the site plan are not part of this application.

## **SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL**

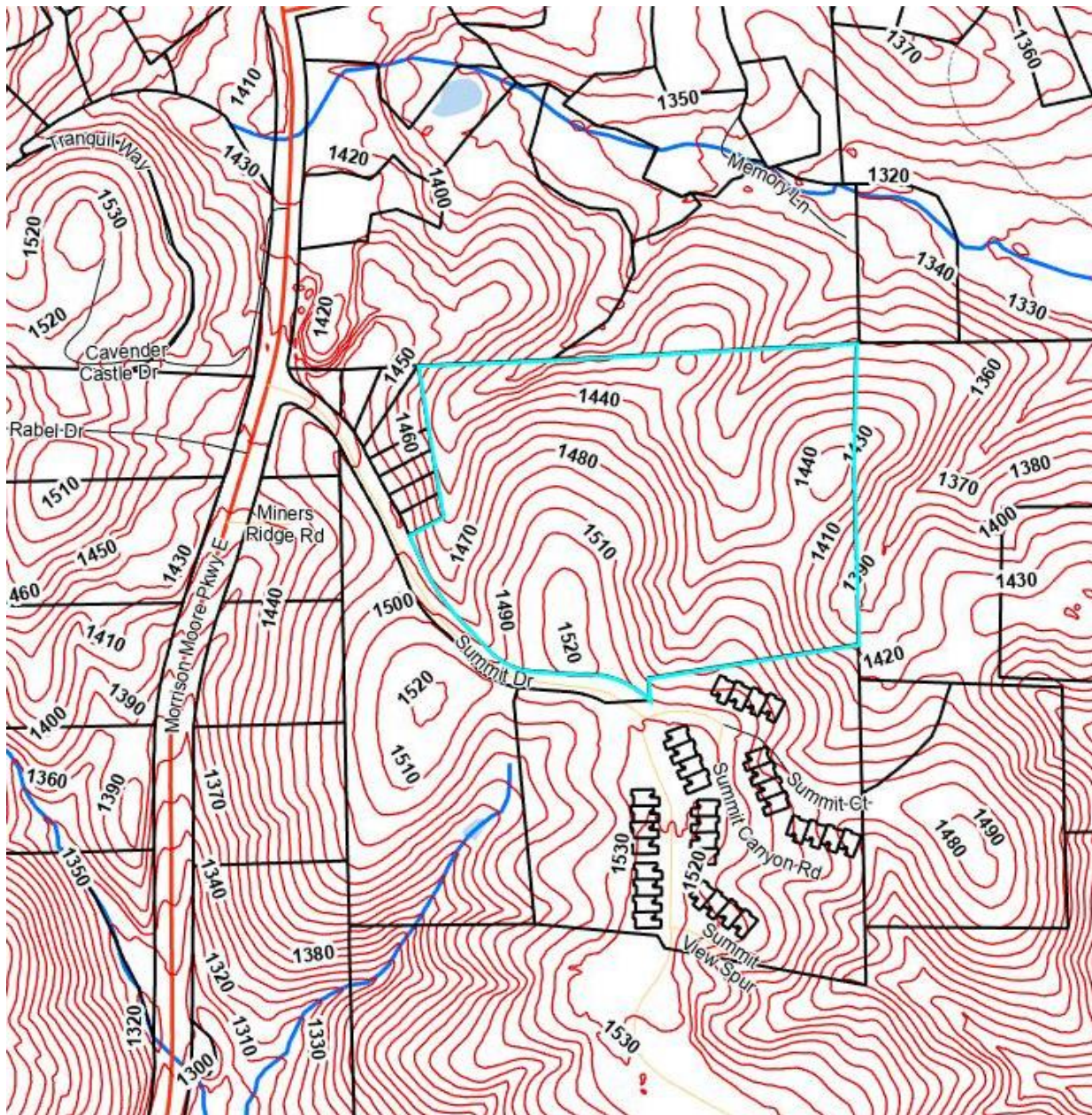
The subject site is just east of U.S. Highway 19 (State Route 60) (Morrison Moore Parkway East) south of Cavender Creek Road. The site has frontage on the north side of Summit Drive. The applicant has provided a letter of intent (3 pp.) and written response to the zoning criteria (5 pp.), both of which are attached to this report. The applicant is seeking B-2 (Highway Business) zoning for development of an indoor/outdoor Nordic-style health spa (wellness facilities), including retail and food service. The project is titled Nordica Thermal Experience.

A conceptual site plan has been provided (attached at end of this report) which shows an intent to develop 3.93 acres of the 20-acre parcel. Two curb cuts are proposed along the north side of Summit Drive. The applicant proposes three, two-story, spa buildings totaling 14,100 square feet, six saunas, cold, warm and hot pools, and 94 parking spaces. The first spa building is marked as reception and retail with changing rooms. The second building is a café with utility and receiving. The third proposed building is marked for specialized treatment (massage).

A 50-foot-wide buffer is shown abutting condominiums to the south/east of the subject property north of Summit Court. Outside the roughly four acres of development proposed, the site would remain as open space with walking trails.







**Topography (Lumpkin County Q Public)**

## **ZONING CRITERIA**

Section 2607 of the Dahlonega zoning ordinance articulates the criteria by which an application for rezoning should be evaluated. They are as follows:

1. Whether the zoning proposal will permit a use that is suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property.
2. Whether the zoning proposal will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property.
3. Whether the zoning proposal will result in a use that will or could cause an excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities, or schools.
4. Whether the zoning proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, transportation plans, or other plans adopted for guiding development within the City of Dahlonega.
5. Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of property that give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the zoning or special use proposal.

*This report provides consulting planner's findings below. The applicant has addressed these criteria in writing (attached to this report).*

*Note: The Planning Commission and City Council may adopt the findings and determinations provided in this report as written (provided below), if appropriate, or it may modify them. The planning commission and city council may cite one or more of these in its own determinations, as it determines appropriate. The Planning Commission and City Council may modify the language provided here, as necessary, in articulating its own findings. Or, the Planning Commission and City Council can reject these findings and make their own determinations and findings for one or more of the criteria as specified in the Dahlonega zoning ordinance and any additional considerations it determines appropriate.*

### **1. Whether the zoning proposal will permit a use that is suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property.**

Finding: With regard to nearby property: north of but not abutting the site is commercial (retail) use ("Crisson" gold mine) fronting on the east side of SR 60. The site abutting the subject property to the northwest has a commercial building on it but is shown as agricultural according to the Lumpkin County Tax Assessor. West of the subject property, fronting on SR 60, is an apartment complex (accessed by Miner's Ridge Road). Abutting the site to the west are small (less than one-acre) undeveloped lots platted as part of the Planned Unit Development. Across Summit Drive to the



southwest of the site is vacant land zoned PUD in the city. Conservation uses exist on abutting properties to the east and northeast in unincorporated Lumpkin County. South of the site, south of Summit Drive, are residential condominium units (The Summit of Dahlonega) with a clubhouse and common area. The surrounding and nearby zoning and use pattern tend to support the request for a business use, one that requires a highway business zoning district, but which is designed with character and extent that is compatible with steep topography **(supports request)**.

**2. Whether the zoning proposal will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property.**

Finding: The application indicates that screening will be utilized to minimize the visual presence of on-site parking. Further, the application indicates sustainable building practices will be utilized and the project will be designed with a low environmental footprint to ensure minimal disruption to nearby properties **(supports approval)**.

Finding: Per the staff report for REZN 21-1, this property has some extensive challenges with topography. This suggests the clustering of development on the land with less steep slopes is needed in order to balance development with minimal land disturbance **(supports approval with the general design proposed)**.

Finding: Per the staff report for REZN 21-1, it was recommended that the previously approved development should use architectural styles similar to the existing residences in the development, subject to approval of the Planning and Zoning Administrator before issuance of the first building permit **(supports conditional approval)**.

**3. Whether the zoning proposal will result in a use that will or could cause an excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities, or schools.**

Finding: All city services are available to serve this PUD, per the 2021 planning staff report **(supports request)**. A sanitary sewer line runs along the south side of Summit Drive. An upgrade of the sewage lift station may be required or is being completed. The property is located within the Dahlonega water service area per Lumpkin County Q Public. The site will be accessed via Summit Drive, which is a 50-foot right of way with an asphalt surface per boundary survey submitted as part of the application. The subject request if approved will not result in a use that could cause excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, and utilities; there will be no impact on schools **(supports request)**.

Finding: According to the applicant, the proposed spa will not generate excessive noise, pollution, or traffic beyond what is typical for similar recreational, or hospitality uses.

**4. Whether the zoning proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, transportation plans, or other plans adopted for guiding development within the City of Dahlonega.**

Finding: Per the staff report for REZN 21-1, the subject property is in the “residential” character area with the following “encouraged distinctions” (i.e., development standards and recommendations):

- Preservation of existing structures where possible, or context sensitive infill development
- 1-2 story structures oriented close to the street front, with minimal on-site parking and pedestrian accessibility where possible
- Landscaping and decorative elements encouraged
- Variety of residential, parks and institutional uses, with some office possible adjacent to downtown
- Rural/ Mountain themed design elements preferred, such as steeply pitched roofs with deep overhangs, wood or masonry siding, and front porches

Finding: The subject property is designated as “residential” character area, which does not include commercial uses. Such residential character areas are almost exclusively residential per the 2022 comprehensive plan (***does not support request***). However, if conditioned to that proposed in the application, the HB zoning would provide for a viable alternative to residential use that could be a benefit to the health of the community (***tends to support request with conditions***).

Finding: Per Lumpkin County Q Public, properties to the west are in the vicinity are designated as “community village” character area in unincorporated Lumpkin County. Unincorporated parcels abutting to the north and east are designated as “rural places.”

Finding: The applicant indicates that the proposed Nordic Spa is consistent with the region’s identity as a destination for nature-based wellness tourism.

***5. Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of property that give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the zoning or special use proposal.***

Finding: The Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning district was initially established in the 2005-2006 time period per the staff report for REZN 21-1. As of 2021, conditions had reportedly changed from the original PUD proposal, and a change was requested and granted to the original PUD zoning for the subject property. These past changes give some supporting grounds for approval of the request. Per the applicant’s letter of intent, “the proposed spa project will enhance the area by offering a wellness retreat that harmonizes with the natural landscape, promotes health and relaxation, and attracts locals while encouraging light tourism to the region.” (***supports approval***).

Finding: According to the applicant, if the property remains an approved PUD but lacks developer interest, its reduced value could leave it vacant, leading to ongoing trespassing, litter, and other illicit activities. Further, the applicant contends that “if the property remains an approved PUD and market conditions continue to delay residential

development, the landowner would likely face ongoing trespassing, site degradation, erosion from unauthorized vehicle access, and complaints from Summit community residents.” To the extent there is a lack of interest for residential development on the subject property, these statements tend to provide supporting grounds for approval ***(tends to support request)***.

## **CONCLUSION**

The application meets applicable criteria for zoning decisions. Consulting planner recommends approval. A set of zoning conditions may be developed in the future.



**SPG Planners + Engineers**  
1725 Electric Avenue  
Suite 320  
Watkinsville, GA 30677

**T:** 706 769 9515  
**E:** hello@onespg.com  
**onespg.com**

April 7, 2025

**Owner**  
RCA Dahlonega, LLC  
3644 Spring Street  
Atlanta, GA 30341

**Applicant/Developer**  
Kent Baltare  
Baldr Capital, LLC  
8900 Liberty Circle  
Englewood, CO 80112

RCA Dahlonega, LLC, Baldr Capital, LLC, and SPG Planners + Engineers are excited to present this rezone application to allow a Nordic Spa, by right, in the foothills of Dahlonega. The proposed spa project will enhance the area by offering a wellness retreat that harmonizes with the natural landscape, promotes health and relaxation, and attracts locals while encouraging light tourism to the region.

The proposed Nordic spa development will be thoughtfully designed to integrate seamlessly with the natural landscape, offering a balanced mix of indoor and outdoor wellness facilities. The site layout will prioritize a low-impact approach by clustering structures to preserve open space and maintain the area's natural character. Strategic screening will minimize the visual presence of on-site parking, while pathways and view corridors enhance connections to the surrounding environment.

A diverse range of spa amenities—including thermal experiences, relaxation areas, and gathering spaces—will be complemented by a small café, creating a welcoming retreat for spa guests. Sustainability and harmony with the land are central to the design, ensuring a tranquil, restorative experience while respecting the area's scenic and ecological value. The organization of structures along the site's steep topography minimizes site disturbance within this critical watershed and maintains a low-profile presence within the surrounding neighborhoods.

The architectural design is carefully woven into the existing tree canopy, preserving the mature hardwoods and allowing the built elements to feel as though they have naturally emerged from the landscape. Thoughtful placement balances cut and fill,



reducing environmental impact while enhancing the site's inherent beauty. The architecture will reflect the forms, details, and regional qualities of the surrounding landscape, using natural materials that harmonize with the forest setting. Expansive windows will frame mountain views, blurring the boundary between indoor and outdoor spaces, reinforcing a deep connection to nature, and enhancing the sense of discovery for guests.

The surrounding area primarily consists of an active adult retirement community, residential properties, and recreational land. The proposed Nordic Spa is consistent with the region's identity as a destination for nature-based wellness tourism. The development will be designed to complement the existing land uses, utilizing sustainable building practices and maintaining a low environmental footprint to ensure minimal disruption to nearby properties. Given the serene and wellness-oriented nature of the spa, it will not generate excessive noise, pollution, or traffic beyond what is typical for similar recreational, or hospitality uses.

**Conclusion**

RCA Dahlonaga, LLC, Baldr Capital, LLC, and SPG Planners + Engineers are pleased to submit this rezone application for the Dahlonaga Nordic Spa. We are excited about this project, and believe it aligns well with the City of Dahlonaga's comprehensive plan while honoring the land through a low-impact approach to development.

Sincerely,



Wes Ryals  
Senior Urban Planner + Project Designer  
SPG Planners + Engineers



**SPG Planners + Engineers**

1725 Electric Avenue  
Suite 320  
Watkinsville, GA 30677

**T:** 706 769 9515

**E:** hello@onespg.com

**onespg.com**

April 7, 2025

**Owner**

RCA Dahlonega, LLC  
3644 Spring Street  
Atlanta, GA 30341

**Applicant/Developer**

Kent Baltare  
Baldr Capital, LLC  
8900 Liberty Circle  
Englewood, CO 80112

**Existing Zoning:** PUD (Planned Unit Development)

**Proposed Zoning:** B-2 (Highway Business)

**Existing Use:** Approved for up to 61 residential units per Zoning Ordinance 2021-12, with full set of Site Development Plans approved on 09/22/2022

**Proposed Use:** Indoor/Outdoor Resort Spa with Retail and Food Service

**Site Acreage:** 20.08

**Property Location:** Summit Drive, Dahlonega, GA 30533

**Tax Parcel:** 077 249

With a focus on seamlessly blending elements of wellness, nature, and sustainability, the proposed Nordic Spa development offers a natural fit for this site and aligns well with Dahlonega's identity as a premier destination for relaxation and adventure. The project will be thoughtfully designed to integrate with the landscape and prioritizes a low-impact approach by clustering structures to preserve open space, view corridors, and maintain the area's natural character. Rezoning to B-2 Highway Business allows for a sustainable, public-oriented use that supports the local economy while minimizing disruption to the surrounding environment. To ensure compatibility with nearby properties, the most intensive B-2 uses can be restricted. The development will protect the site's natural beauty, minimize land disturbance, and reduce anticipated traffic compared to currently approved PUD zoning. With no burden on schools and minimal impact on infrastructure, this project aligns with Dahlonega's vision for responsible growth, providing a valuable wellness-focused amenity for residents and visitors alike.



**The existing uses and zoning of nearby property and whether the proposed zoning will adversely affect the existing use or usability of nearby property.**

The proposed Nordic Spa development will not negatively impact the existing use or usability of adjacent properties. The surrounding area primarily consists of an active adult retirement community, residential and condominium properties, and recreational land. This proposed health and wellness development aligns with the region's identity as a destination for nature-based wellness tourism and will be designed to complement the existing land uses, utilizing sustainable building practices, and maintaining a low-impact environmental footprint to ensure minimal disruption to nearby properties. Given its serene and wellness-oriented nature, the spa will not generate excessive noise, pollution, or traffic beyond what is typical for similar recreational, or hospitality uses.

**The extent to which property values are diminished by the particular zoning restrictions.**

The approved PUD zoning site plan under Zoning Ordinance 2021-12 restricts the property to residential use, limiting its community value. Development restrictions further cap the project at 61 residential units, reserving access exclusively for private owners and their guests. Rezoning to B-2 Highway Business offers a more sustainable and compatible alternative, allowing for a high-end Nordic Spa that preserves the property's rural character while supporting the local economy. The proposed development prioritizes minimal land disturbance, tree preservation, and the protection of surrounding viewsheds, ensuring the site's natural beauty is maintained and ultimately enhancing long-term property values.

**The extent to which the destruction of property values promotes the health, safety, morals or general welfare of the public.**

If the property remains an approved PUD but lacks developer interest, its reduced value could leave it vacant, leading to ongoing trespassing, litter, and other illicit activities. While this would preserve views, maintain the natural landscape, and prevent land disturbance, it would not contribute to public health, safety, or general welfare through economic investment or community enhancements. If developed as permitted, the site would remain private property. Alternatively, rezoning to B-2 Highway Business would allow for a balanced approach, integrating preservation with responsible development to create a wellness-oriented retreat that supports both the local economy and community well-being.

**The relative gain to the public as compared to the hardship imposed upon the individual property owner.**

If the property remains an approved PUD and market conditions continue to delay residential development, the landowner would likely face ongoing trespassing, site degradation, erosion from unauthorized vehicle access, and complaints from Summit community residents. Rezoning to B-2 Highway Business would not only address these challenges by enabling a use that aligns with current market demand but would also provide broader public benefits. The proposed development supports the region's tourism and recreation-based economy, creates jobs, and enhances local amenities while maintaining a low-impact, nature-



focused design that complements neighboring properties. Additionally, through multiple community engagement meetings, Summit Community Board Members have expressed a preference for the Nordic Spa development over the previously approved residential project. This balanced approach ensures a sustainable, mutually beneficial land use for both the public and property owner.

**The physical suitability of the subject property for development as presently zoned and under the proposed zoning district.**

While the site's challenging topography may be a disadvantage for most types of development, it is an asset in this context. By thoughtfully clustering facilities and infrastructure, the project balances growth with minimal land disturbance. The property's natural features, including wooded areas and rolling terrain, make it ideally suited for a Nordic Spa. Under the proposed zoning, the land will be utilized in a way that enhances its natural beauty while maintaining ecological integrity and promoting sustainability.

**The length of time the property has been vacant, considered in the context of land development in the area in the vicinity of the property, and whether there are existing or changed conditions affecting the use and development of the property which give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the rezoning request.**

Given the lack of development over the past 15+ years and the evolving market conditions, rezoning the property to B-2 Highway Business would provide the flexibility needed to support an economically viable use that aligns with the immediate neighboring community, local residents, neighboring businesses, and the area's tourism and recreation-based economy while ensuring responsible land stewardship.

**The zoning history of the subject property.**

The property has remained vacant since the completion of the original Summit Community development in 2007-2008. While Phase 1A, consisting of 32 condominiums with amenities, was completed, Phase 1B—approved for 32 condominiums and five optional villas—was never developed. The original rezoning envisioned potential future uses, including a hotel, convention center complex, or a continuation of retirement living, but Phases 2, 3, and 4 were never built. In 2021, amendments to the PUD were introduced which limited the density of the development to 2.8 units per acre, or 61 residential units.

**The extent to which the proposed zoning will result in a use which will or could cause excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities, schools, parks, or other public facilities.**

The proposed development is not expected to place an excessive burden on existing infrastructure, streets, or public facilities. According to the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11th Edition ITE Trip Generation Report, the project is estimated to generate approximately 40 trips during the Saturday peak hour, 18 trips during the weekday AM peak hour, and 49 trips during the weekday PM peak hour. By comparison, the proposed Nordic Spa is estimated

to achieve 22% less traffic than the currently approved and fully GDOT permitted PUD site plan. The designated ITE land use category is “492 – Health/Fitness Club,” using “1,000 Sq. Ft. GFA” as the multiplier. All driveways will be paved and designed in compliance with the City of Dahlonega’s Fire and Life Safety standards to ensure safe access for guests and service vehicles. Recent improvements to the Summit Drive and Morrison Moore Parkway intersection, including the addition of deceleration lanes and planned advanced warning flashers, will further enhance traffic safety and efficiency. Compared to the existing PUD zoning—which would require significant land clearing, higher resource consumption, and larger-scale buildings—the proposed zoning and development approach will have a lower overall impact on infrastructure and the surrounding environment.

**Exhibit 1. Trip Generation Summary for Previously Approved PUD**

Description/ITE Code	Units	Units Type	Units	Peak AM			Peak PM		
				AM Hour	AM In	AM Out	PM Hour	PM In	PM Out
Single Family Detached	210	DU	45	39	10	29	49	32	17
Single Family Attached	215	DU	15	9	2	7	12	7	5
Total Trips:				48	12	36	64	39	22

**Exhibit 2. Trip Generation Summary for Proposed Development**

Description/ITE Code	Units	Units Type	Units	Peak AM			Peak PM		
				AM Hour	AM In	AM Out	PM Hour	PM In	PM Out
Health/Fitness Club	492	KSF	12.5	18	8	10	49	25	24
Total Trips:				18	8	10	49	25	24

**Exhibit 3. Approved PUD vs Proposed Development**

Approved PD	-	-	48	12	36	61	39	22
Proposed Development	-	-	18	8	10	49	25	24

Based on the data in Exhibit 3, the average daily trips have decreased from the previously approved PD design.

**Impact to School System**

There will be no impact on the Lumpkin County School System, as recreational use would not qualify guests as eligible for enrollment since there are no permanent residences or long-term rentals.

**Impact to Utilities**

The proposed development will have minimal impact on existing utilities, as it will incorporate a water recycling system to reduce reliance on the City's water supply. Additionally, existing utilities, including sanitary sewer and water, are already available in the area, allowing for a straightforward connection to support future development without requiring significant infrastructure expansion.

**Whether the zoning proposal is in conformity with the policy and intent of the comprehensive plan, land use plan, or other adopted plans.**

The proposed rezoning aligns with the intent of the comprehensive plan by maintaining a compact development footprint and minimizing land disturbance, consistent with the area's residential character. While the plan designates the site for residential use, the proposed Nordic spa serves as a complementary amenity, integrating seamlessly with the neighboring active adult retirement community. Dahlonega and Lumpkin County, known for their small-town charm and reliance on tourism and the university, continue to evolve as a rural destination. The addition of a wellness-focused development enhances the region's appeal, attracting visitors and new residents while supporting the local economy. Furthermore, the project connects with the broader parks, recreation, and conservation corridor to the south, tying into the Yahoola Creek Dam and Reservoir conservation area, reinforcing the area's commitment to sustainability and outdoor recreation.