

GASTON COUNTY REZONING APPLICATION (REZ-25-01-03-00204)

STAFF REPORT

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Request:

To conditionally rezone the property from the (C-1) Light Commercial zoning district with the (US) Urban Standards overlay to the (CD/C-1) Conditional zoning district with (US) overlay

Applicant(s):

Jay Oliver

Property Owner(s):

Now Outreach, Inc.

Parcel Identification (PID):

154004

Property Location:

4914 Linwood Rd. Kings Mountain

Total Property Acreage:

52.9

Acreage for Map Change:

52.9

Current Zoning:

(C-1) with (US)

Proposed Zoning:

CD/(C-1) with (US)

Existing Land Use:

Conference/retreat/event center

Proposed Land Use:

Conference/retreat/event center with the potential for additional future uses as outlined in this request

COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

Area 5: Scenic Gaston / Southwest Gaston

Key issues for citizens in this area include:

- Preservation of open space
- Road improvement and better connectivity to other areas of the County and throughout the region
- More transportation alternatives
- Preservation of agriculture and maintaining the rural “feel” of the community
- Steer development towards existing infrastructure and areas immediately surrounding towns and cities

Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use: Rural

Rural areas are characterized as having plenty of open space along with farmstead style housing as well as agribusiness. Residential homes are on large jobs and are set back from the roads they front upon. There are many opportunities for agribusiness ventures including farming, landscaping, and associated nurseries. This is the default designation for Gaston County.

Staff Recommendation:

The application, as presented, is consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan as it meets the following goals:

- Goal 6: Improve the image of Gaston County to both current and potential residents, focusing on retaining and increasing the population of young professionals
 - o Encourage community events
 - o Support natural resource initiatives that seek to invest in the county’s unique assets
- Goal 7: Emphasize the importance of our natural resources by highlighting natural environments and encouraging the use of environmental recreation
 - o Emphasize already established recreational amenities and encourage new recreational amenities
 - o Conserve the natural environment
 - o Identify areas for ecotourism and/or recreational facilities

UTILITIES AND ROAD NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE

Water/Sewer Provider:

Private well / City of Gastonia sewer connection

Road Maintenance:

All internal roads are private roads

Linwood Rd. and Misty Ln. are municipal-owned roads

Technical Review Committee (TRC) comments provided by Gaston Lincoln Cleveland Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

GEMS – No issues so long as cabins are clearly marked

Police – No issues

Natural Resources – No comments

GCLMPO has provided their standard comment letter – there are no funded projects in the immediate vicinity of the site on the STIP, the MTP, or the CTP

- The CTP shows recommended pedestrian bicycle improvements along Linwood – unfunded
- The CTP also shows recommended multiuse facilities along Crowders Creek – unfunded

Building Inspections – The building code does not restrict park models; it just restricts them from being permanent buildings. Building inspections will inspect water, sewer, electrical, and site accessibility; however, the structures themselves, since they are classified as recreational vehicles (RVs), are not subject to the building code.

STAFF SUMMARY

Prepared By: Jamie Mendoza Kanburoglu, Director of Planning and Zoning

Overview

This property is located off Linwood Rd. near Crowders Mountain State Park. It currently operates as a conference/retreat/event center and has 41 permits (includes zoning, building, and flood permits) in the system.

Public Information Meetings

The applicant held two public information meetings on March 27th and 28th. Staff did assist with the scheduling and coordination of the PIMs. There were no attendees at the PIM specifically for this case. One planning board member attended the second PIM to gain general information about the case. No comments or concerns were shared.

Site Plan

The site plan is approved for public hearing purposes only. The site plan has also already been approved in the past as this site is already operating. The main purpose of the conditional rezoning is to allow for the use of park cabin model units as opposed to site-built structures. The applicant is also requesting to replace or upgrade existing structures with park cabin models as needed. A list of allowed future uses for the conditional district has also been included with this request.

Applicable Ordinance Sections

UDO Section	Proposed	Staff Comment:
Section 8.4.29: Conference/Retreat/Event Center	A. The facility may only be used by organized groups for educational or recreational purposes. B. All activities of the facility, including the parking lot, must meet the zoning district setbacks. C. In the residential districts, a minimum screening buffer of Type B is required.	All supplemental regulations for the use are being met. The applicant is proposing “tree save” areas on the edge of the site as well, which is not a requirement of the UDO.

Relief Requests

Because the applicant requesting to add the “camping and recreational vehicle” use on the lot – park model campers would be allowed “structures” under this use.

The site was initially approved with site-built cabins. Staff believed that a conditional district was necessary to establish specific uses and conditions that would permit park model cabins. Technically, a relief would be needed if the cabins were to be regulated under the small home community use, as small homes are required to be site built.

Recommended Conditions of Approval:

- All current and future uses shall meet all supplemental regulations outlined in the Unified Development Ordinance at the time of permitting unless otherwise approved through this request.
- The following uses shall be considered “uses by right” so long as all supplemental regulations are met at the time of permitting: Conference, retreat and even center, summer camp and retreat center, sporting facility, amusement park, camping and recreational vehicle park, church, miniature golf, paintball, laser tag facility, small house community, special events facility
- Park model cabins shall be approved structure types for the site and may be placed in the designated areas shown on the site plan that was approved for the purpose of this rezoning.
- Areas designated as “tree save” areas on the site plan shall not be developed. A 100’ natural buffer from the property lines shall be maintained at a minimum at all times, unless already existing and developed at the time of this request.

PLANNING BOARD MEETING DATE

The Planning Board unanimously recommended approval of the request (8-0) at its March 31, 2025 meeting.

Attachments: Application, Maps, Site Plan, Park Model Cabin Pictures, and GCLMPO Letter