

CASE SUMMARY

APPLICATION TYPE: REZONING



File Number: 9-C-25-RZ

Related File Number:

Application Filed: 7/23/2025

Date of Revision:

Applicant: JEFFREY LAWSON

PROPERTY INFORMATION

General Location: West side of Blacks Ferry Rd, north of W Emory Rd

Other Parcel Info.:

Tax ID Number: 66 051

Jurisdiction: County

Size of Tract: 8.1 acres

Accessibility: Access is via Blacks Ferry Road, a local street with a pavement width which varies between 17 ft and 20 ft within a 50-ft right-of-way.

GENERAL LAND USE INFORMATION

Existing Land Use: Rural Residential

Surrounding Land Use:

Proposed Use:

Density:

Planning Sector: Northwest County

Plan Designation: RC (Rural Conservation), HP (Hillside Ridgeline Protection)

Growth Policy Plan: Planned Growth Area

Neighborhood Context: The subject property is in an area that predominantly features single family houses on large 1+ acre lots and in subdivisions, interspersed with undeveloped forested slopes and fields cleared for agricultural use. There are two multifamily subdivisions within a mile to the east of the subject property.

ADDRESS/RIGHT-OF-WAY INFORMATION (where applicable)

Street: 7505 BLACKS FERRY RD

Location:

Proposed Street Name:

Department-Utility Report:

Reason:

ZONING INFORMATION (where applicable)

Current Zoning: PR(k) (Planned Residential) up to 4 du/ac with conditions

Former Zoning:

Requested Zoning: A (Agricultural)

Previous Requests:

Extension of Zone: Yes, it is an extension.

History of Zoning: In 2024 the property was rezoned from A (Agricultural) to PR (k) (Planned Residential) up to 4 du/ac with conditions (4-N-24-RZ).

PLAN INFORMATION (where applicable)

Current Plan Category:

Requested Plan Category:

SUBDIVISION INFORMATION (where applicable)

Subdivision Name:
No. of Lots Proposed: No. of Lots Approved: 0
Variances Requested:
S/D Name Change:

OTHER INFORMATION (where applicable)

Other Bus./Ord. Amend.:

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION AND DISPOSITION

Planner In Charge: Malynda Wollert
Staff Recomm. (Abbr.): Approve the A (Agricultural) zone because it is consistent with the Knox County Comprehensive Plan and the surrounding area.

Staff Recomm. (Full):

Comments: PURSUANT TO THE KNOX COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE, ARTICLE 6.30.01, THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS MUST BE MET FOR ALL REZONINGS (must meet all of these):

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT SHALL BE NECESSARY BECAUSE OF SUBSTANTIALLY CHANGED OR CHANGING CONDITIONS IN THE AREA AND ZONES AFFECTED, OR IN THE COUNTY GENERALLY.

1. The residential density has steadily increased since the late 1990s along the section of W Emory Road to the south of the subject property, with rezonings from A (Agricultural) to RA (Low Density Residential) and PR (Planned Residential) with densities ranging from 3-5 du/ac within a mile radius. However, only one subdivision with access to Blacks Ferry Road has been approved, which was approved in 2011 and features 18 houses on 6.5 acres (Blacksferry Pointe). The area to the north of the subject property retains a more rural feel, primarily featuring large lots zoned A with residential and agricultural uses.

2. The Emory Orchard subdivision, zoned PR up to 4 du/ac that abuts the property to the south features 92 single family houses and was completed in 2022. The Belltown Planned Development is approximately 1 mile to the east of the Blacks Ferry Road and W Emory Road intersection.

3. In April 2024 another applicant requested to rezone the subject property from A to PR up to 5 du/ac (4-N-24-RZ). Planning staff and the Planning Commission recommended approval of PR up to 4 du/ac. The County Commission approved PR up to 4 du/ac, adding the following four conditions in response to community concerns: "1) Developer will widen the road from the midpoint of development to Emory Road to a minimum of 20 ft; 2) A traffic study be completed at the expense of the County and improvements to Blacks Ferry Road and Emory Road be prorated in cost between the developer and the County; 3) A landscape buffer be implemented with a condition that a buffer be on all four sides; 4) No construction to begin until Blacks Ferry Road improvements are complete, including the intersection at Emory Road." A rezoning to A would remove these conditions, since a development of the type intended under the approved density would no longer occur.

4. The 2024 rezoning was requested before the Knox County Comprehensive Plan became effective on April 26, 2024, so the Northwest County Sector Plan's LDR (Low Density Residential) future land use classification applied. The subject property currently has the RC (Rural Conservation) place type, and the requested A zoning is directly related to this place type, while the current zoning would be partially related.

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT SHALL BE CONSISTENT WITH THE INTENT AND PURPOSES OF THE APPLICABLE ZONING ORDINANCE.

1. The A zone is intended to provide for a wide range of agricultural and related uses as well as residential uses with low population densities and other compatible uses which generally require large areas or open spaces.

2. Rezonings should be based on the entire range of uses allowed within a zone to ensure that any development brought forth at a future time would be compatible with the surrounding land uses. The agricultural and low density, large lot residential uses permitted in the A zone align with the existing character of the area.

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT SHALL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT ANY OTHER PART OF THE COUNTY NOR SHALL ANY DIRECT OR INDIRECT ADVERSE EFFECTS RESULT FROM SUCH AN AMENDMENT.

1. The A zone allows for low density residential uses at a density of one dwelling unit per acre, which is compatible with surrounding residential density. As mentioned previously, the current zoning conditions related to landscape buffers and traffic improvements would no longer be necessary if the property was rezoned to A. Approval of this request would be a minor extension of the surrounding A zoning.
2. While some of the agricultural uses in the A zone could pose a nuisance to the subdivision to the south, the peripheral setback of the subdivision and the large setbacks of the A zone would minimize any potential adverse effects, and the heaviest uses of the A zone require Use on Review approval.
3. The subject property is within the Hillside Protection area, and most slopes are 15-25% grade, with small pockets of slopes with 25-40% grade near the streams that run along the southern and western lot lines (Exhibit B). All proposed developments must comply with the Knox County Stormwater Management Ordinance.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT SHALL BE CONSISTENT WITH AND NOT IN CONFLICT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF KNOX COUNTY, INCLUDING ANY OF ITS ELEMENTS, MAJOR ROAD PLAN, LAND USE PLAN, COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN, AND OTHERS:

1. The property is within the RC place type, which lists the A zone as directly related. Areas in the RC place type are intended to conserve forested areas, ridges, wetlands, and other significant natural areas by clustering development and minimizing land disturbance. The housing mix of the RC place type calls for single family houses in subdivisions with a conservation pattern that conserves 50-70 percent of a site as natural open space. While the current PR zoning allows for clustered development, the 1 acre minimum lot size of the A zone conserves natural features by limiting residential development.
2. The recommended rezoning complies with the Comprehensive Plan's Implementation Policy 2, to ensure that new development is sensitive to existing community character, and Implementation Policy 7, to encourage development practices that conserve and connect natural features and habitat. The lot sizes and allowable uses in the A zone are consistent with the character of the surrounding area and will encourage conservation of the hillsides, streams, and locally important farm soil present on the property.
3. The subject property is within the Planned Growth Area of the Growth Policy Plan, which encourages a reasonably compact development pattern. The allowable lot sizes and housing types of the A zone support the intent of the Planned Growth Area.

Action: Approved **Meeting Date:** 9/11/2025

Details of Action:

Summary of Action: Approve the A (Agricultural) zone because it is consistent with the Knox County Comprehensive Plan and the surrounding area.

Date of Approval: 9/11/2025 **Date of Denial:** **Postponements:**

Date of Withdrawal: **Withdrawn prior to publication?:** ☐ **Action Appealed?:**

LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND DISPOSITION

Legislative Body: Knox County Commission

Date of Legislative Action: 10/20/2025

Date of Legislative Action, Second Reading:

Ordinance Number:

Other Ordinance Number References:

Disposition of Case: Approved

Disposition of Case, Second Reading:

If "Other":

If "Other":

Amendments:

Amendments:

Date of Legislative Appeal:

Effective Date of Ordinance: