

To: Greater Lowndes Planning Commission and Lowndes County Commission
% J.D. Dillard, Lowndes County Planner

Re: Please reject REZ-2023-04 2.5-acre rezoning on Quarterman Road

Dear Greater Lowndes Planning Commission and Lowndes County Commission Members,

I will start by asking you to deny REZ-2023-04 E-A to R-A on Quarterman Road.

Quarterman Road is predominantly agriculture and forestry land, zoned Estate Agriculture (E-A), with a few minimum 5-acre lots, in an Agriculture/Forestry/Conservation Character Area. The proposed REZ-2023-04 2.5 acre rezoning is inconsistent with the Lowndes County Comprehensive Plan. It is inappropriate and should be rejected. If approved, in addition to causing more traffic, clearcutting, paving, and impervious surface, it would serve as a precedent for more such rezoning, which would greatly damage this Character Area. Additionally, many of the properties on Hambrick Road, which one must use to access Quarterman Road, have covenants preserving the rural nature of the land. Any RA zoning would be spot zoning. By right, the subject property can be divided into three five plus acre lots and remain consistent with the neighborhood and character area.

Within the last year or so the Planning Commission has recommended against and the County Commission has denied a similar rezoning on Miller Bridge Road, and a rezoning for a Dollar General at GA 122 and Skipper Bridge Road. Please do the same for this inappropriate rezoning.

In the packet for the Planning Commission, county staff include some numeric calculations that miss the main point of the character area.

In their first calculation, county staff try to dilute agriculture and forestry by including a nearby subdivision. Quarterman Road is almost all E-A zoning with large fields and forests with some minimum 5-acre lots. A few R-21 lots on the northwest end of the road were grandfathered in back in the 1980s along with the R-21 half-acre-lot house-packed subdivision. County staff inappropriately lump together Quarterman Road and the very different subdivision.

County staff's second calculation chooses only one part of Quarterman Road and includes only lots with a single-family dwelling, excluding almost all of the agriculture and forestry land that is characteristic of Quarterman Road. Such presentations are disingenuous and inappropriate for county planning. See below for details. The main point is simple: county staff cannot justify the Quarterman Road rezoning if they look at what is actually on the road, and the whole road. And, they are ignoring the character area set out in the Lowndes County Comprehensive Plan.

Staff also omitted a relevant calculation: that residential sprawl costs the taxpayers more than it can return in tax revenue.

County staff's mis-calculations cannot hide the plain fact: agriculture and forestry are characteristic of Quarterman Road, and that is how it should remain.

Planning Commissioners and County Commissioners should see through these mis-calculations and deny this inappropriate rezoning.

Please find attached petitions against this rezoning. Signatories include almost all the landowners and residents of Quarterman Road, and many from the nearby subdivision.