



*City of Jonesboro City Council*  
**Staff Report – RZ 11-03: Willow Creek Apts.**  
**Huntington Building - 900 W. Monroe**  
*For Consideration by the Council on March 8, 2011*

**REQUEST:** To consider a rezoning of a parcel of property containing approximately 10.63 acres more or less from R-1 Single Family to PD-RM (144 units) and make recommendation to City Council.

**PURPOSE:** A request to consider approval by the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission and recommend to City Council for final action as PD-RM (144 Multi-family Units).

**APPLICANT/  
OWNER:** Carolyn Carlisle 4513 S. Caraway Rd. Jonesboro AR 72404  
Stanley/Katrena Hill 1803 Country Side Ln., Paragould, AR 72450

**LOCATION:** Caraway Rd.  
(Entrance thru existing Willow Creek Apts./north of development)

**SITE DESCRIPTION:** Tract Size: Approx. 10.63 +/- acres, 463,011 Sq. ft. +/-  
Frontage: Approx. 120.61 ft. along unimproved portion of Craighead Forest Rd.  
Topography: Gently Sloping in 3 directions  
Existing Developmt.: Vacant

| <b>SURROUNDING CONDITIONS:</b> | <u>ZONE</u> | <u>LAND USE</u>                  |
|--------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|
| North:                         | R-1         | Residential                      |
| South:                         | R-3         | Residential (Willow Creek Apts.) |
| East:                          | R-1         | Residential                      |
| West:                          | R-1         | Residential                      |

**HISTORY:** None.

**ZONING ANALYSIS:** City Planning Staff has reviewed the proposed Zone Change and offers the following findings.

**Approval Criteria- Section 14.44.05, (5a-g)- Amendments:**

The criteria for approval of a rezoning are set out below. Not all of the criteria must be given equal consideration by the planning commission or city council in reaching a decision. The criteria to be considered shall include but not be limited to the following:

- (a) Consistency of the proposal with the Comprehensive Plan
- (b) Consistency of the proposal with the purpose of the zoning ordinance.
- (c) Compatibility of the proposal with the zoning, uses and character of the surrounding area;
- (d) Suitability of the subject property for the uses to which it has been restricted without the proposed zoning map amendment;
- (e) Extent to which approval of the proposed rezoning will detrimentally affect nearby property including, but not limited to, any impact on property value, traffic, drainage, visual, odor, noise, light, vibration, hours of use/operation and any restriction to the normal and customary use of the affected property;
- (f) Length of time the subject property has remained vacant as zoned, as well as its zoning at the time of purchase by the applicant; and
- (g) Impact of the proposed development on community facilities and services, including those related to utilities, streets, drainage, parks, open space, fire, police, and emergency medical services.

### **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FUTURE LAND USE MAP**

The Future Land Use Map adopted on January 5, 2010 shows this area to be within the Southwest Sector and to be recommended as a Single Family Residential District Area.

### **Master Street Plan/Transportation:**

This request is proposed as Phase II of the Willow Creek Apartments, which are under construction, and very near completion. The adjoining street is Caraway Road (a Principal Arterial). It is currently two lanes in width, but is capable of accommodating a large volume of traffic. The City has Caraway Road on the list for improvement to a wider street, capable of accommodating more traffic than at present, though a firm date for the improvements has yet to be decided and announced. The existing development contains two access points on Caraway Road. The Jonesboro Fire Department has been consulted regarding the expansion of this development, and has responded that they are satisfied with the accessibility of the site. Since the fire department has the largest and least maneuverable equipment of all emergency services, it would seem to follow that other emergency services would deem the accessibility of the site to be adequate for their purposes as well.

The existing property is virtually land-locked. The proposed development has no existing frontage on improved right-of-ways. The parcels that are proposed to be acquired and developed are two of five parcels conveyed as inheritance. **The only frontage these parcels have exists on an unimproved portion of Craighead Forest Road.** In order to be developed by anyone aside from the owners of Willow Creek Apartments would require a substantial expense in the construction of City streets, simply to access the property. The developers of the Willow Creek Apartments, therefore, are the most-likely choice for the development of this parcel.



**Zoning/Vicinity Map**

**MAPC Public Hearing: Record of Proceedings on March 8, 2011:**

**Applicant:**

**George Hamman**, Civilogic represented the owner Mr. Andrew Braxton, Willow Creek, LLC. ; Applicant’s Agent- Attny. Jim Lyons.

Mr. Hamman introduced the request to rezone 10. 6 acres to PD-RM (144 units) off of E/ Craighead Forrest Road. This will be lower in density than Phase 1, which is just about 100% complete. We are proposing undisturbed buffers surrounding the second phase of this development. All traffic and access will come from Caraway Rd. in which they already have two access points. We have met with Fire, Engineering and Planning Departments to modify and solidify this plan and we are requesting approval of the PD-RM.

**Opposition: Ms. Sandra Matthews**, 1212 E. Craighead Forrest Rd. We are surrounded by apartments now; we are 3 blocks down is the golf course and they are constructing one after another there. We already have the first phase (180 units right next to me) and they are adding 144 more. The traffic is an issue. The crime is a concern. Cited the example of Cedar Heights Apartments – Apartment City is what this can turn into in my little neighborhood. When they were building last year, they would start before 6:00 am and work through the night with loud noise in the night, i.e. jack hammers and dump trucks popping their tail gates. I have a sick old husband. I wish we could have a moratorium on apartments. We have far too many right now.

**Christy West**, 1208 E. Craighead Forrest Road. We do not want a thru- street to E. Craighead Forrest Road is that for sure not going to happen? We prefer to keep it that way. Can we get confirmation? **Mr. Hamman:** within the land plan there is no plan to extend that road to the

apartments. We are on the agenda to meet with the Transportation Advisory Committee. Our intent is not to build a street but to dedicate the right of way if it is needed.

**Mr. Braxton:** Willow Creek- We build Class A- Apartments in communities. Because of the strong economy in Jonesboro, and the job growth which attracts large employers here, additional housing is obviously needed. We were building over a million and half homes in the US for the last 50 years. We only built one-half million last year. The demand for class A apartments is high in the US. Our rents at Willow Creek are higher than anyone else. We do extreme background checks with a security officer onsite. We provide amenities and we do a good job with management. We are not a student housing community. We went to the City and talked to the Fire Department and City Official; as well as we came to in your last meeting for a concept review; and we are willing to do whatever we need to do to work with the City.

**Mr. Jim Lyons, Atty.:** We are willing to execute whatever deeds are necessary for whatever the City needs. This is something the City ask us to provide in the first phase. We would prefer for that not to go through because it will alleviate a lot of the concerns of security.

**Staff:** **Mr. Spriggs** gave staff comments. The land use plan recommends Single Family Residential; however they are requesting an expansion of Phase 1. The right of way issues were mentioned where Caraway Road is a principal arterial. The issue of land-locked properties was addressed in Phase 1, by allowing for the right of way extension, which affected this subject lot. **Mr. Spriggs** added that there is no logic to retaining that easement, although it was platted in Phase 1. Once this phase is completed that right of way would lead to nowhere while following the west property line of the site extending north. The City Engineer has no need for the right of way; the site has no need for it, and the residents on E. Craighead Forrest Rd. obviously do not desire to have it extended. The Master Street Plan does not recommend it to be extended as a local or collector road due to the lack of acquired property. Given all of this information, that easement could indeed be deleted by the Commission because you were the body that imposed it in negotiating a previous site plan approval. Other than that all of the other facts of the case are presented to you in terms of buffering and open space amenities required as part of the Planned Development Process. You will see greater detail during the Final Development Plan review process. Parking does meet requirements. Staff has listed 6 conditions which were read.

**Mr. Kelton:** They mentioned a 6 ft. fence in proximity to Mrs. Matthew's house. Will it be unreasonable to ask for 8 ft. at her property? Photos were shown.

**Mr. Braxton:** There will be a 60 ft. tree buffer; trees are 30 ft. tall with privacy fence in between that buffer area. It is a rotational molded (stone appearance). We are proposing a 60 ft. on west side and 40 ft. on the other 3 sides. We can look at an 8 ft. fence if that makes a difference on that section. Mrs. Matthews stated that it would make a difference to her.

**Mr. Roberts** clarified what it would look like in appearance after looking at the photo of the immediate area next to the Matthews home with the 60 ft. buffer. It would be less intrusive being on the apartment side of the buffer with a natural undisturbed look with the trees.

**Mr. Tomlinson** asked about the right of way extension issue. **Mr. Spriggs** noted that the right of way could be vacated. **Mr. Tomlinson** expressed concerns about providing the right of way extension to Fox Meadows Rd. if a subdivision or more apartments were constructed above this site. One option would be to leave the plan as-is to leave right of way options for extension.

**Action:** Motion was made by Mr. Tomlinson to recommend approval to City Council with the Stipulations in the Staff report; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mrs. Norris.

**Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Hoelscher- Aye; Mr. Roberts- Aye; Mr. Kelton- Aye; Mr. Tomlinson- Aye; Ms. Norris- Aye; Mr. Scurlock- Aye.

**Findings:**

The proposed rezoning will result in existing R-1 Residential zoned property to be zoned to PD-RM. Although the subject property abuts a single family residence, 10.63 acre site will have a lower density with the addition of the 144 apartments than the units allowed per zoning code.

This will be Phase II of the Willow Creek Apartments in which 14 units per acre is being requested whereas the existing site (Phase I) was built at 18 units per acre. The terminus of Craighead Forest Rd. ends at the edge of the property and will continue north along the western edge and potentially connect to S. Caraway Rd. The Fire Department has been consulted regarding the expansion and is satisfied with accessibility. Two driveways provide ingress/egress on S. Caraway Rd. with a possible emergency access point planned for the future (Craighead Forest Rd. Extension).

The existing Willow Creek site was zoned R-3 and a conceptual plan was reviewed and approved by MAPC on July 2009. The development was reviewed by all City departments and has received most of their Certificates of Occupancy due to completion.

**Landscaping/Buffering:**

The site plan demonstrates green space, amenity area, 40' undisturbed buffer on North, South and East side, on the west side- a 60' undisturbed buffer (Future Right-of-Way of Craighead Forest Rd.). The plan also calls for three detention ponds and a 6' privacy fencing around the entire development. The buffering and greenspace/openspace proposal will exceed the requirements of the Zoning Resolution. A final landscape and lighting plan is required as part of the Final Development Plan review process if this petition is approved and adopted by ordinance.

**Parking:**

Three (3) buildings are proposed totaling 144 units (36 units ea.). The Jonesboro Code of Ordinances, ARTICLE VIII: OTHER STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS, Sec. 117-324. Off-street parking and loading, requires the following formula calculations:

**Multi-family Apartments**

- 1.25 per efficiency unit
- 1.75 per one-bedroom unit
- 2.25 per two-bedroom unit
- 3.00 per three-bedroom and larger units

This will yield: 333 Parking Spaces required including 8 ADA spaces; while 342 Parking Spaces will be provided including 18 ADA spaces.

**Conclusion:**

The MAPC and the Planning Department Staff find that the requested Zone Change submitted by Willow Creek Apts. should be evaluated based on the above observations and criteria, of Case RZ 11-03 a request to rezone property from R-1 & to PD-RM (maximum 144 units) and is recommended to the City Council for approval with the following stipulations:

1. The applicant shall file a Final Development Plan to the MAPC detailing all site requirements as approved during the Preliminary Plan process.
2. That the proposed development shall satisfy all requirements of the City Engineer, satisfying all requirements of the current Stormwater Drainage Design Manual.
3. That prior to any issuance of Certificate of Occupancy of new uses, all requirements stipulated by all City, state and local agencies shall be satisfied.
4. That a lighting and landscape plan be submitted and approved as part of the Final Development to the MAPC prior to any development of the 10.63 acres including perimeter fencing.
5. That the final plat shall quantify the minimum area of green space is dedicated per Zoning Ordinance.
6. The maximum number of units shall not exceed 144 units.

Respectfully Submitted for Council Consideration,



Otis T. Spriggs, AICP  
Planning & Zoning Director

## SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



*View looking North along S. Caraway Rd.*



*View looking East at Fox Meadow Elementary School.*



*View looking West of Willow Creek Apartments from S. Caraway.*



*View looking West of apartment entrance (south).*





*View looking West of apartment entrance (north).*



*View Looking North of subject property.*



*View looking East within the Willow Creek Apartments complex.*



*View Looking Northeast at subject property (End of Craighead Forest Rd.).*



*View Looking North of residence abutting subject property.*



*View looking East of Willow Creek Apts. (rear property).*