

# Sumter County Council

April 27, 2016

## Planning Commission Staff Report

### RZ-16-06, Keels Rd. Knowlton and Dunlap (City)

#### I. THE REQUEST

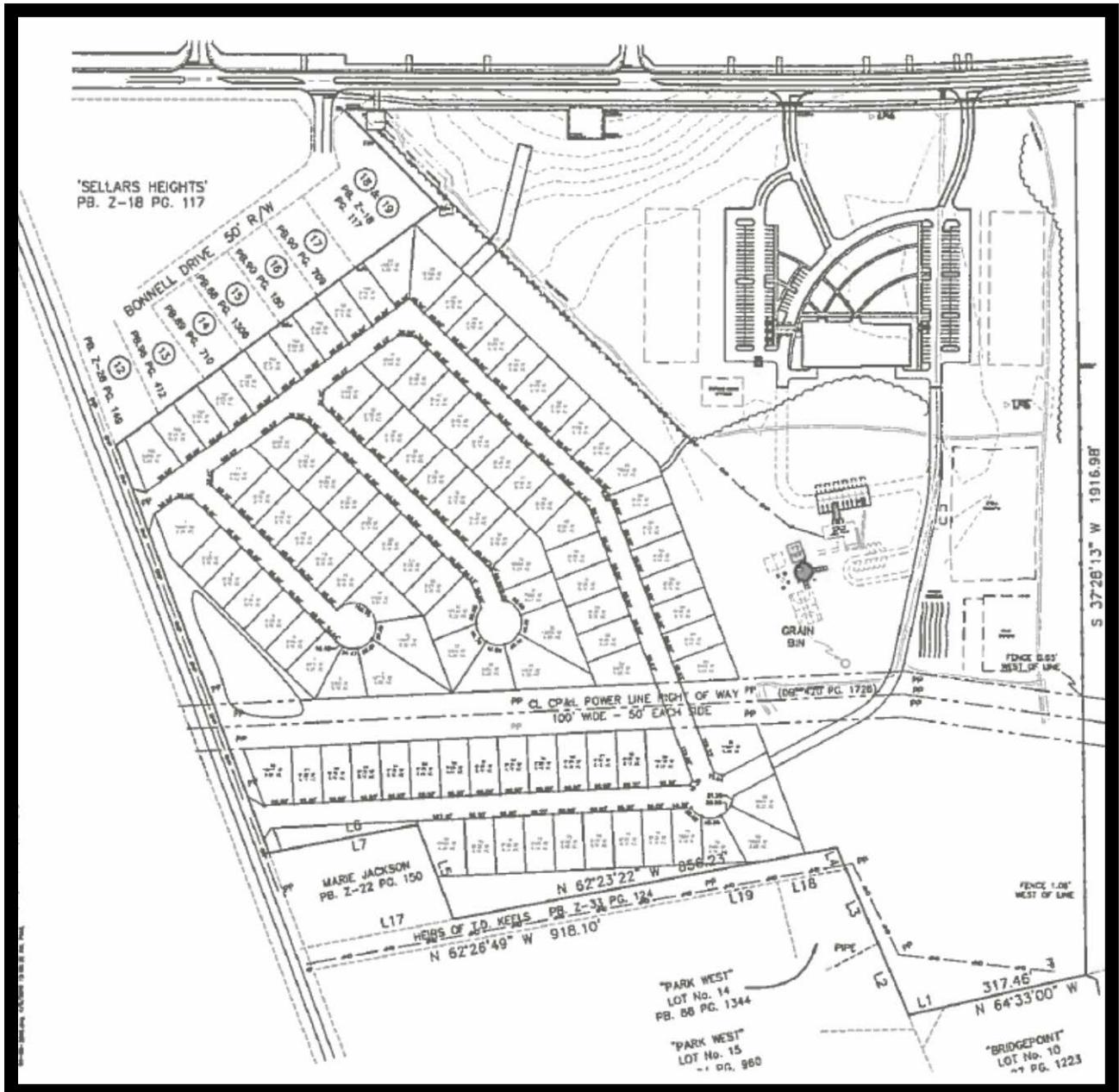
<b>Applicant:</b>	Knowlton Properties, LLC and Dunlap Properties, LP
<b>Status of the Applicant:</b>	Developer
<b>Request:</b>	A request to rezone +/-31.3 acres from R-15 to R-9
<b>Location:</b>	East side of Keels Rd., south of Loring Mill
<b>Size of Property:</b>	+/- 31.3 acres
<b>Present Use/Zoning:</b>	Vacant / R-15
<b>Proposed Use of Property:</b>	Residential Subdivision/R-9
<b>Tax Map Reference:</b>	205-00-02-002 (p)
<b>Adjacent Property Land Use and Zoning:</b>	North – Residential (R-15) South – Residential (R-15) East – Church (R-15) West – Residential (R-15))

#### II. BACKGROUND

Knowlton Properties and Dunlap Properties (together, the “**Applicant**”) are requesting to rezone approximately 31.3 acres of land from R-15 to R-9. The Applicant desires to construct a new single-family residential subdivision. The submitted concept plan shows 109 lots. The Applicant has indicated that market conditions, price points, and builder expectations are driving the need for smaller lot sizes.

This area of Keels Rd. and Loring Mill Rd. is overwhelmingly low density residential with a preponderance of R-15 zoning today. The great majority of houses are on lots above 15,000 sq. ft. or more in size. There is no R-9 zoning in proximity to this request. Thus, the pattern of development is R-15.

# Proposed Subdivision Plan<sup>1</sup>



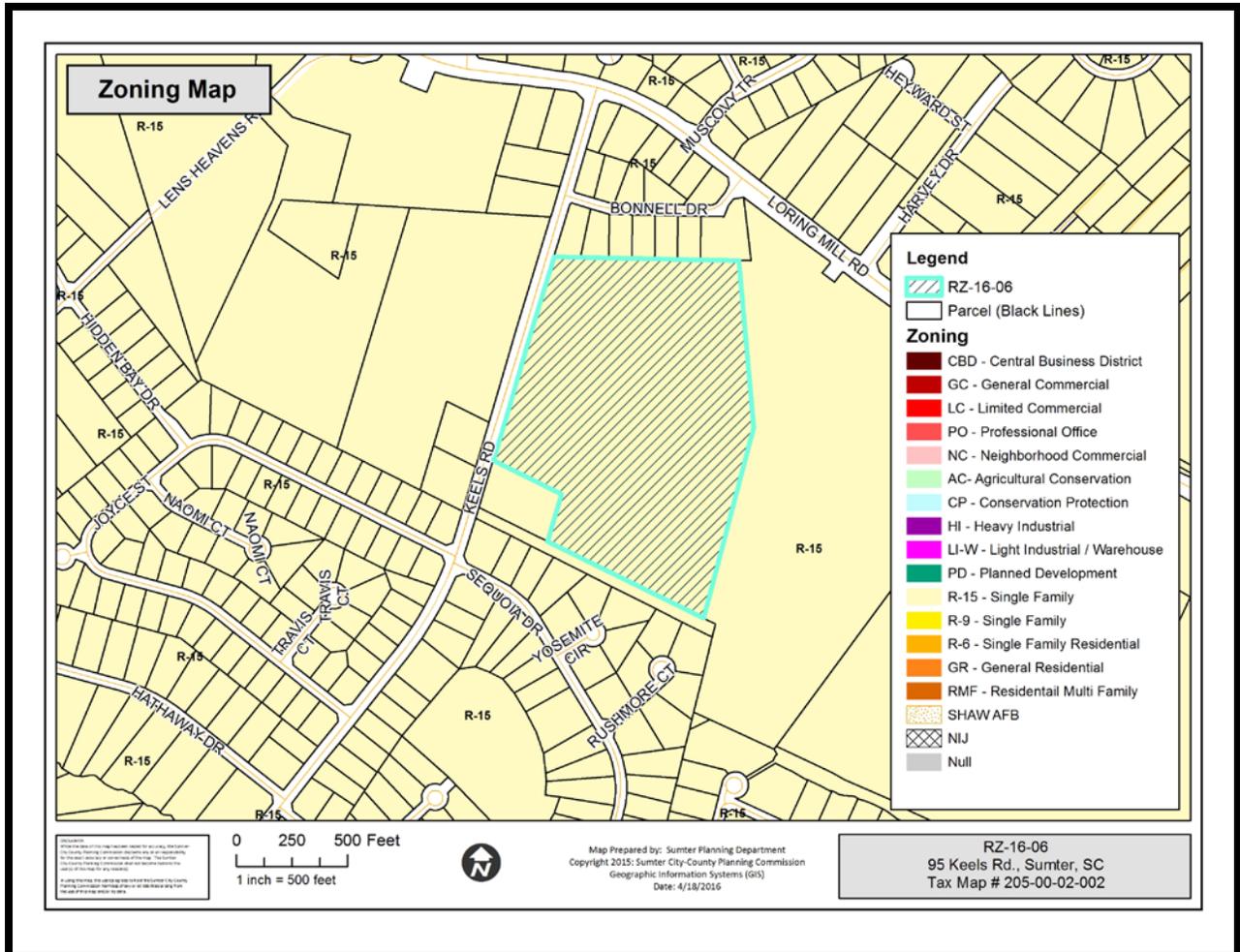
The subject parcel is the 31.3 acre remainder of the Christ Community Church, 72 acre parent tract. A sanctuary is under construction today to the immediate east of the proposed rezoning parcel. The parcel is undeveloped with little tree coverage; it is mostly field at this time. There is a significant power line (within a 100 foot right of way) running though the southern portion of the site; the concept plan shows homes on each side of the right of way.

The Applicant has approached the City of Sumter and requested public water and sewer service. Public water and sewer is required to serve lots in any R-9 subdivision. Annexation will also be anticipated by the City. Pursuant to the City's development standards ordinance, which deals with

<sup>1</sup> The Plan has not been reviewed for zoning consistency.

the future provision of services and annexation requests, the annexation, the extension of water and sewer, the rezoning, and the project design must be approved by the City of Sumter.

Consistent with the Zoning Ordinance, the Planning Commission is expected to provide a recommendation to City Council. Because the Applicant proposes an R-9 subdivision which must have public water and sewer, it is presumed the project will proceed to the City for final approvals.



### III. COMPATIBILITY WITH THE 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan designates this property as Suburban Development Area. The primary objective of the SD designation is to scrutinize and manage the existing development patterns while encouraging infill and redevelopment in areas already suited with roads and infrastructure. New residential may be encouraged so long as design features such as a mix of residential housing types, protection of adjacent uses, active and passive open space, and pedestrian connectivity are included as thoughtful elements. The City encourages the development of connected neighborhoods, not generic subdivisions.

However, the 2030 Comprehensive Plan cautions decision makers about the continued westward expansion of single family residential units especially far away from critical support services such as schools, shopping, and employment.

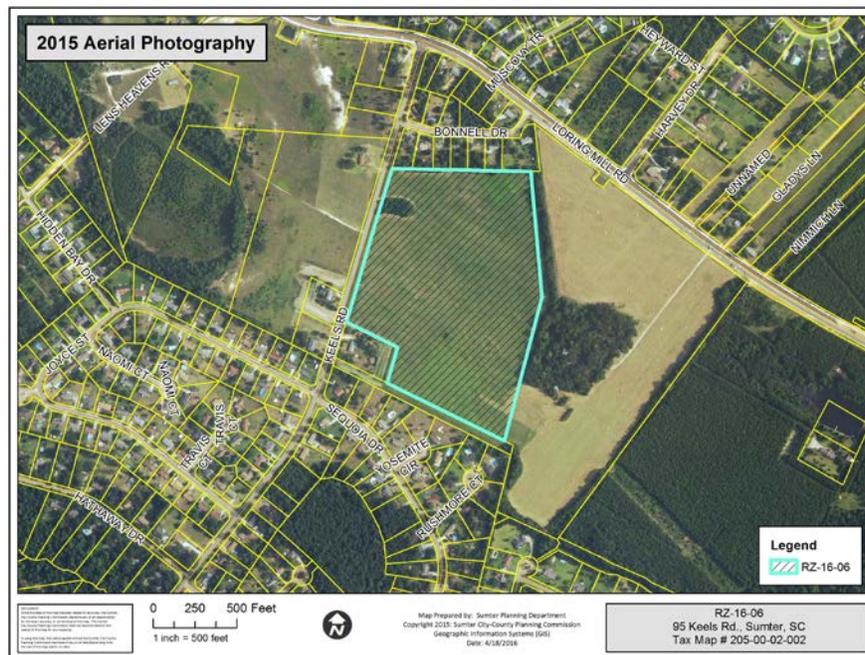
#### IV. TRAFFIC REVIEW

Increasing density from the by right R-15 to R-9 will increase traffic impacts on the local road network. The concept plan shows access via Keels Rd., a two lane collector. With a proposed 109 lots, a traffic study is required as part of the preliminary plan submission. Any project is expected to mitigate its impacts as well as to provide pedestrian connectivity to the larger network.

#### V. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The entire area surrounding the subject property, Keels Rd., and Loring Mills Rd. is currently zoned R-15 and is characteristic of low density residential neighborhoods. This established land use pattern influences Staff's disposition. Neither Staff nor the 2030 Comprehensive Plan is opposed to higher density residential projects per se. Yet, the protection of existing neighborhoods and the established development pattern has been fundamental to land use decision-making in Sumter for more than a decade.

Ordinarily, the Planning Commission and Council expect a compelling, policy-based justification for a rezoning. Smaller lots may be more consistent with a developer's analysis of market conditions, but a generic preference for smaller lots does not speak to the particular land use at a particular location. As noted above, the surrounding area is entirely R-15. Although the developer has articulated market-based reasons for the rezoning, we find that those reasons are not compelling to justify a change from the surrounding development pattern.



**VI. DRAFT MOTION**

- 1) I move that the Planning Commission recommend approval of RZ-16-06, rezoning the subject property from R-15 to R-9
- 2) I move that the Planning Commission recommend that the subject property remain R-15.

**VII. PLANNING COMMISSION – APRIL 27, 2016**

The Sumter City-County Planning Commission at its meeting on Wednesday, April 27, 2016, voted to recommend approval of this request.

**VIII. COUNCIL -**