

How Current Ordinances Shape Residential Growth

Understanding Greene County's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances and how they have guided residential development over the past two decades.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



Why This Matters Now



As Greene County updates its Comprehensive Plan, it is essential to understand how existing regulations have shaped where and how residential lots are created.

Legal Authority

Ordinances adopted by the Board of Supervisors under the Code of Virginia.

Local Control

The Board may amend these ordinances at any time through the public hearing process.



A-1 & G1 Zoning Districts: The Foundation

In 2001, the Board of Supervisors established that all parcels in the **A-1 (Agricultural)** and **G-1 (Conservation)** zoning districts would be treated as **parent tracts** with an assigned system of division rights.

Division by Right

Property owners with available division rights may create additional lots by right, provided zoning and subdivision requirements are met.

Administrative Approval

Most rural subdivisions are approved administratively —no rezoning or discretionary action required.

Ongoing Flexibility

Ordinances may be amended by the Board of Supervisors through a public hearing process.

Private Roads: A Key Feature of Rural Subdivisions

Section 6A —Minor Divisions

When land is divided under Section 6A, new lots may be served by a **private road** rather than a public one. Private roads do not have to meet the same construction standards as roads maintained by VDOT.

Property owners must still follow:

- Minimum lot size requirements
- Road frontage requirements (when applicable)
- Building setbacks

❏ Greene County currently has very few design standards for private roads. In most cases, the road must be at least **18 feet wide** with **3 inches of base stone**.



Types of Subdivisions That May Be Created on Private Roads

The Subdivision Ordinance provides several specific administrative approval procedures beyond standard minor divisions.

1

Family Subdivision

A one-time division to sell or gift a lot to an eligible immediate family member.

2

Agricultural Partition

Division of land into parcels of at least 10 acres for bona fide agricultural purposes.

3

Single Lot Exemption

One-time exemption allowing one lot on a qualifying private road without public road frontage.

4

Boundary Line Adjustment

Adjustment of property lines between adjoining parcels without creating additional lots.

Rural Private Road Subdivisions

Property owners have exercised their division rights to create numerous rural subdivisions served by private roads. These represent only a portion of those approved over the past twenty years.



River Ridge

Fredericksburg Road



Greene Landing

Wilhoits Mill Road



Haywood Preserves

Garth Road



Alexander Heights

Moore Road

Other examples include **The Grange** and **Timber Ridge** .

Subdivisions on Public Roads



If a property has sufficient frontage on an existing public road, the owner may also divide the land into new lots **by right** —as long as all County requirements are met.

Some rural subdivisions create only a few lots. Others create **20 or more** . Most are approved by County staff because they comply with current ordinances.

A developer may also choose to build roads to **VDOT standards** , allowing them to eventually become part of the state road system .

Rural Public Road Subdivisions

Some developers elect to construct public roads built to VDOT standards for eventual acceptance into the state secondary road system. These subdivisions range from a handful of lots to over 70.

Hancock Farms

70+ lots * Route 33 East

Stone Brook

29 lots · Dyke Road

Little Mountain

26 lots * Octonia Road

Octonia Highlands

21 lots * Octonia Road

Godalming

21 lots * Route 33 East

Cardinal Forest

14 lots · Fredericksburg Rd

Other approved public road subdivisions include **Quin Oaks**, **The Pastures**, **Lexington** (14 lots), **Simmons Gap Road** (7 lots), **Middle River** 7 lots, **Guildford Farms** 35 lots, and **Valley View** 27 lots.

- ❏ These subdivisions were approved administratively because they complied with existing ordinance requirements —no rezoning was required.

Legacy Subdivisions: 1970s & 1980s

Many of the large rural retreat subdivisions were created decades before the current ordinances. These earlier developments established a significant residential footprint that continues to shape the County today.

500+

Twin Lakes

Largest legacy rural retreat subdivision

300+

Dogwood Valley

Early rural retreat development

300+

Greene Acres

Early rural retreat development

130+

Wildwood Valley

Early rural retreat development

Also included: **Flattop Mountain** (100+), **Greene Valley** (100+), and **Riverdale** (100+).



Rural Subdivisions Approved Over the Last 20 Years

These are some of the subdivisions approved under current ordinances —they do not include older developments from the 1970s –1980s.

Subdivisions on Private Roads

- River Ridge (Fredericksburg Road) —7 lots
- Greene Landing (Wilhoits Mill Road) —27 lots
- The Grange (Fredericksburg Road) —27 lots
- Haywood Preserves (Pea Ridge Road)—17 lots
- Alexander Heights (Moore Road) —15 lots
- Timber Ridge (Dunnes Shop) —12 lots

Subdivisions on Public Roads

- Quin Oaks (Moore Road) —7 lots
- The Pastures (Fredericksburg Road) —34 lots
- Cardinal Forest (Fredericksburg Road) —14 lots
- Stone Brook (Dyke Road) —29 lots
- Simmons Gap Road —7 lots
- Octonia Highlands —21 lots
- Middle River —7 lots
- Guildford Farms (Welsh Run Road) —35 lots
- Hancock Farms (Route 33 East) —70+ lots
- Godalming (Route 33 East) —32 lots
- Lexington (Dyke Road) —14 lots
- Little Mountain (Octonia Road) —26 lots
- Valley View (Welsh Run Road) —27 lots

Two Decades of Growth by Right



Over the past twenty years, property owners have consistently exercised their division rights under the existing ordinances —creating a pattern of rural residential growth that reflects the rules as written, not discretionary approvals.

No Rezoning Required

Most rural subdivisions were approved administratively under existing zoning.

Property Rights in Action

Division rights assigned in 2001 continue to be exercised today.

Scale Varies Widely

Rural subdivisions range from a few lots to over 70 on both private and public roads.

Key Takeaways for the Comprehensive Plan Update

Understanding how current ordinances function is essential before considering whether policy or ordinance amendments are warranted.

→ **Current Development Reflects Existing Policy**

Most residential growth is the direct result of long -standing subdivision rights —not rezoning or discretionary approvals.

→ **Ordinances Are Amendable**

The Board of Supervisors may amend zoning and subdivision ordinances at any time through the public hearing process.

→ **Alignment Is the Goal**

The Comprehensive Plan update is an opportunity to evaluate whether current ordinances align with the County's future growth goals.