

PLANNING COMMISSION



BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

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MEMORANDUM

To: Greene County Board of Supervisors
From: Community Development
Re: Comprehensive Plan: How Current County Rules Affect Residential Growth
Date: September 22, 2026

As Greene County updates its Comprehensive Plan, community members have shared valuable feedback about where new homes are being built and how the County is growing. To help provide context for those conversations, it is important to understand how the County's current land division and subdivision regulations influence where and how new residential lots can be created. The Greene County Board of Supervisors adopted the current Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. These local laws explain how land can be divided into new lots. The Board can change these ordinances in the future by holding public hearings and adopting new rules.

Before deciding whether the ordinances should be changed, it is important to understand how the current rules have guided residential growth over the last 20 years.

A-1 (Agricultural) and C-1 (Conservation) Zoning Districts

In 2001, the Board of Supervisors changed the rules for land in the A-1 (Agricultural) and C-1 (Conservation) zoning districts.

These changes created a system called **division rights**. If a property owner has division rights available, they may divide their land into new lots **by right**, as long as they meet the County's zoning and subdivision requirements.

"By right" means the owner does not need a rezoning or special approval from the Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors. If the proposal meets the ordinance requirements, County staff must approve it.

Subdivisions Created on Private Roads

When land is divided under Section 6A of the Subdivision Ordinance (Minor Divisions), the new lots may be served by a private road instead of a public road.

These private roads do not have to meet the same construction standards as public roads that are built for VDOT to maintain.

Property owners must still follow other County rules, including:

- Minimum lot size
- Road frontage requirements (when required)
- 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** and have **3 inches of base stone**.

Types of Subdivisions That May Be Created on Private Roads

The Subdivision Ordinance also allows several other types of land divisions that can be approved by County staff.

Family Subdivision

A one-time division that allows a property owner to sell or give a lot to an eligible close family member.

Agricultural Partition

Land may be divided into parcels of at least 10 acres for farming or other agricultural purposes.

Single Lot Exemption

A one-time option that allows one new lot to be created from a parent tract in the A-1 or C-1 zoning district on a qualifying private road without meeting the normal public road frontage requirement.

Boundary Line Adjustment

Property lines between neighboring parcels can be moved without creating any new lots.

Over the past 20 years, property owners have used these options to create many rural subdivisions throughout Greene County.

Subdivisions on Public Roads

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

Some rural subdivisions create only a few lots, while others create 20 or more lots. All of these that meet the current ordinances must be approved by County staff.

A developer may also choose to build public roads that meet VDOT standards so the roads can eventually become part of the state road system.

Examples of Rural Subdivisions with 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

Examples of Rural Subdivisions with 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 Subdivision – 7 lots
- Octonia Highlands – 21 lots
- Middle River Subdivision – 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

These are only a portion of the rural subdivisions that have been approved over the last 20 years.

They do not include many older rural subdivisions that were created during the 1970s and 1980s, including:

- Dogwood Valley – 300+ lots
- Flattop Mountain – 100+ lots
- Greene Acres – 300+ lots
- Greene Valley – 100+ lots
- Riverdale Subdivision – 100+ lots
- Twin Lakes – 600+ lots

- Wildwood Valley – 130+ lots

Why This Matters

As Greene County updates its Comprehensive Plan, it is important to understand that many of the new residential developments being built today do **not** require a rezoning or a vote by the Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors.

Instead, they are being built because the current Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances already allow them.

Understanding how these rules work will help the County decide whether the current ordinances still support the community's goals or whether changes should be considered in the future.