



Legislation Text

File #: 20-1037, **Version:** 2

Agenda Item Name:

ZOX-03-20: GRU Groundwater Recharge Wetland Park Special Exception

Presenter:

Mehdi Benkhatar, 352-374-5249, ext. 2361

Description:

A request by CHW, Inc., agent, for Gainesville Regional Utilities, applicant, and Mitchem-Rivers, LLC, owner, for a special exception for a major utility (groundwater recharge wetland park) on approximately 76.22 acres on tax parcels 04433-000-000 and 04433-003-000 located at 3602 S.W. 122nd St. The project involves the construction of a man-made wetland that would receive reclaimed water from GRU's Kanapaha Water Reclamation Facility. The purpose of the wetland park is to recharge the aquifer with high quality, low nutrient water. The parcels have a future land use designation of Rural/Agriculture (1 dwelling unit/ 5 acres) and are in the Agriculture zoning district.

Recommended Action:

Staff recommends that the Board of County Commissioners **approve ZOX-03-20** with the bases and conditions as listed in the staff report.

Prior Board Motions:

n/a

Fiscal Consideration:

n/a

Background:

The intent of the proposed groundwater recharge facility is to infiltrate approximately 5 million gallons of reclaimed water/day (MGD), resulting in high quality, low nutrient water that recharges the Floridan aquifer. The reclaimed water will come from a Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU) water reclamation facility.

According to GRU, *"A groundwater recharge wetland is man made wetland constructed on sandy soils that allow water to gradually percolate through the soil and recharge the aquifer beneath it. Reclaimed water is used to continuously hydrate the wetland and maintain a relatively constant water level of 12 to 18 inches deep in order to facilitate growth of emergent aquatic vegetation. Natural wetland processes reduce nutrients in the water to low levels as it percolates into the ground."*

County staff has met with the applicant to understand the project and options available for its design, with any potential adverse impacts being mitigated. Of particular concern is the possibility of sinkhole formation and water quality (affecting nearby residential wells).

The Planning Commission heard this item at its November 18, 2020 meeting and recommended (7-0) that the Board of County Commissioners **approve ZOX-03-20** with the bases and conditions as listed in the staff report.