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November 30, 2022

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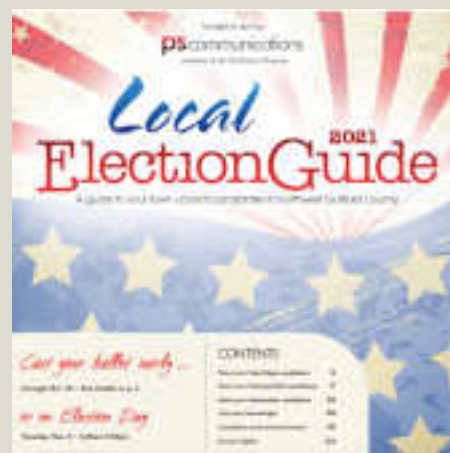
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Developer David Couch seeks to amend recently adopted UDO

by CHRIS BURRITT

SUMMERFIELD - Developer David Couch is asking Summerfield Town Council to amend its recently adopted development regulations to allow for his proposed residential and commercial expansion of Summerfield Farms.

Couch proposed an amendment to the unified development ordinance (UDO) that would create a master planned village district. If approved by the council, the new district would allow Couch to develop at least 750 acres of his property from Summerfield Road to Interstate 73 with a range of housing priced from \$250,000 to \$2 million.

Providing a mix of housing is one of the goals of Summerfield's comprehensive plan that's not adequately addressed in the UDO, Couch told Town Manager Scott Whitaker in a letter June 9, a day after the council adopted the revised development regulations in a 4-1 vote. (See related article on p. 3.)

The new district "is needed to address changes in the housing and development markets that cannot be adequately addressed with the recently adopted UDO ordinance," Couch said. "It addresses a need for a variety of housing types across a wide range of ages, income, lifestyle preferences and price points."

Couch, CEO of Blue Ridge Cos., unveiled his plans for Summerfield Farms Village last September. He proposed a mix of commercial and residential development where a network of public trails would bisect open space and pastures where he raises cattle and operates a wedding venue and marketplace store. He said construction of a variety of housing - from townhouses to luxury homes - would avoid repeating the pattern of cul-de-sac subdivisions common in Summerfield.

Couch reiterated that point in the proposed text amendment he submitted to the town last week. Establishing the new district would "regulate the orderly mixed-use development of large areas with a comprehensive and cohesive design and avoid a saturation of large tracts used for disconnected, large-lot, cul-de-sac subdivisions," it said.

Couch's proposal would rely on extending water and sewer services from the city of Greensboro to his development. The prospect of bringing public utilities to Summerfield has drawn objections from some residents, including council member Teresa W. Perryman, who say higher density development would overcrowd roads and schools and threaten the town's rural character.

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