

## **Tract rezoned for shopping center, multifamily housing**

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NW GUILFORD COUNTY – Commercial development and multifamily housing will become an even bigger part of living in the northwest area since a 70-acre property along N.C. 68 was rezoned by the Guilford County Planning Board on Sept. 10.

The property, on the south side of Lebourne Road at N.C. 68, was rezoned for mixed use. Plans submitted indicate a shopping center will be constructed on about 40 acres and 400 multifamily housing units will be built on another section of the property; about 11.5 acres will be set aside as open space.

Much development is promised for the area in coming years. Maps show the ramp to the future I-73 will be built in the vicinity of Lebourne Road, and about 97 acres along N.C. 68 on the north side of Lebourne Road was rezoned for a new GTCC campus several months ago. Greensboro has promised to supply water and sewer to the area in coming years, and although developers withdrew a request to rezone a mixed-use development at the corner of N.C. 68 and Edgefield Road last month, the application may be revised and resubmitted in the future.

That leaves residents in the area quickly being surrounded by a community college, commercial development and multifamily housing. “I hate it, really I do. It’s changing so fast,” says Gordon Brewer, who built his house on Lebourne Road about eight years ago on property his wife’s family has owned for years.

Brewer says his main concern is traffic. Lebourne Road has already become a “thoroughfare” between N.C. 68 and Pleasant Ridge Road, he says, and the proposed development will add a projected 21,300 trips per day to local roads. That will only increase when GTCC’s new campus is built across the road. The neighborhood would benefit from a stop light at the intersection of N.C. 68 and Lebourne Road, Brewer said.

Joe Lyon, who moved to his house in 1961, remembers when Lebourne was a one-lane dirt road. “There was nothing here when I moved out here. If I had my way, I wouldn’t want to have it done,” he says of the coming development.

A little farming has been done on the recently rezoned property over the years, but the land has primarily been open, Lyon says, adding that he and his son used to hunt rabbits there years ago. “We just always want things to stay the same, but times, they’re going to change,” he says.

The proposed development could add as many as 290 students to Colfax Elementary, Northwest Middle and Northwest High schools.

Although the area is very close to the Oak Ridge town limits, which comes as close as Peeples Road on the east side of N.C. 68, the area may very well be annexed by Greensboro – something Lyon figures is only a matter of time. “I’m concerned the city is going to take us in and make us get water and sewer. I’m 76 years old, and it may not happen in my lifetime, but it will happen,” he predicts.

Like Brewer, Lyon also worries about traffic. He says getting onto N.C. 68 during certain morning and evening hours is almost impossible as it is. “Somebody has to let you out,” he says. Nearby residents often go to up to Pleasant Ridge Road so they can take advantage of the stop light there to get onto N.C. 68.

“It’s pretty constant now,” Lyon says of traffic on Leabourne Road. “Between this development and GTCC, it will be something terrible.”