



## STAFF REPORT

### MORGAN COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

**PETITION FOR: CONDITIONAL USE – COMMUNITY CHURCH**

Property location:	1091 Confederate Road
Property tax parcel:	036-039B
Acreage:	13.39 acres
Applicant:	Lakepoint Community Church
Applicant's Agent:	Danny Harrell, Lead Pastor
Property Owner:	Pat Reams
Existing Use:	Currently unused, former equestrian facility
Proposed Use:	Community Church

#### Summary

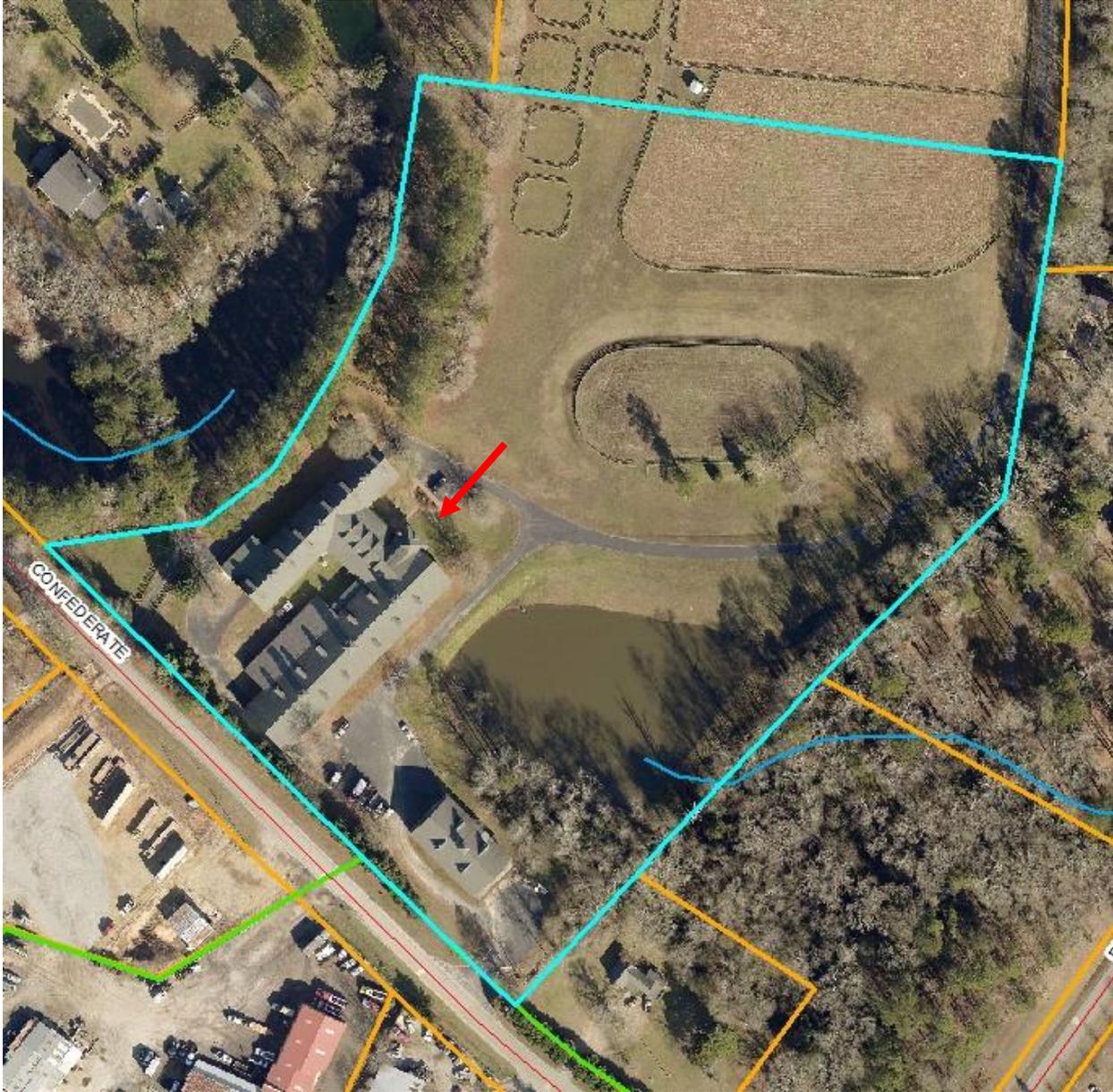


Lakepoint Community Church is requesting conditional use approval to locate a Community Church in an empty equestrian facility located at 1091 Confederate Road, just outside the city limits of Madison (known locally as Tom Dupree's horse barns). The existing structures are on 13.39 acres and are across Confederate Road from Bo's Wrecker Service. Lakepoint currently meets in the commercial building at the corner of Highways 278 and 83, in the strip center

containing the Wash Rock.

Typically, The Planning Commission receives applications for neighborhood churches, which have a seating capacity for 300 or less. The applicant's site plan indicates the seating capacity for the proposed church will be 500, which will be over the limit for a neighborhood church. The Morgan County Zoning Ordinance definition for a community church:

**Church, Community:** A church with a seating capacity of between three hundred (300) and six hundred (600) persons in the sanctuary or main activity area and additional gross floor area is limited to church offices, culinary, nursery, toiletry areas and group meeting rooms.



The property has 2 entrances on Confederate Road, the smaller of which may need to be improved to accommodate increased traffic. There is also a driveway that crosses the adjacent property and exits on Dixie Highway. Although labeled as a temporary construction entrance on the site plan, the applicant has indicated that the Dixie Highway driveway will continue to be utilized by the church. Please see the attached site plan. The parking area will be north of the buildings with the entrance to the sanctuary facing north (see arrow above). This is the façade shown in the previous photo. The indicated size of the parking lot is not based on parking spot calculations. The applicant is aware the parking lot will have to be paved. The first driveway on Confederate Road appears to go through a building. This is an inaccurate representation, as the driveway will go around the building. The applicant has clarified that the labels for “Kids and Youth” and “Middle and High School” indicate the ages of groups to use the buildings and does not mean that a school will be located at the site. Two Sunday morning services are proposed, with other smaller group meetings throughout the week. The pond may be used for baptisms and church activities.



The subject site is outlined in blue. The city limits line for Madison is green. The property has city water and will need to contact Madison about tapping onto the city sewer. The main building will require a sprinkler system and all buildings will need renovations to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

#### Section 7.19.1 Stand-Alone Churches

When permitted or approved as a conditional use in a zoning district, stand-alone churches and their customary accessory buildings shall:

- Be located on a lot with a minimum of two (2) acres that fronts on a public right of way or a private street that connects with a public right of way;
- Be set back a minimum of fifty (50) feet from all property lines;
- Have a minimum ten (10) foot wide natural or planted buffer provided within the required setback;
- Meet the parking requirements for the occupancy load;
- Require a conditional use permit for any new church or accessory use such as fellowship halls, ball fields, shelters, pavilions, schools, class room buildings, etc.

## Criteria for Consideration

### Section 21.3.1 Required Findings from Conditional Use Approval from the Morgan County Zoning Ordinance:

1. Adequate provision is made by the applicant to reduce any adverse environmental impacts of the proposed use to an acceptable level;
2. Vehicular traffic and pedestrian movement on adjacent streets will not be substantially hindered or endangered;
3. Off-street parking and loading, and the entrance to and exit from such parking and loading, will be adequate in terms of location, amount and design to service the use;
4. Public facilities and utilities are capable of adequately serving the proposed use;
5. Granting the request would not be an illogical extension of a use which would introduce damaging volumes of (1) agricultural, (2) commercial, (3) industrial, or (4) high density apartment use into a stable neighborhood of well-maintained single family homes, and likely lead to decreasing surrounding property values, neighborhood deterioration, spreading of blight, and additional requests of a similar nature which would expand the problem;
6. Granting the request would not lead to congestion, noise and traffic hazards or overload public facilities, current or planned;
7. Granting the request would conform to the general expectation for the area population growth and distribution according to the Comprehensive Land Use Plan;
8. Granting the request would not lead to a major negative change in existing (1) levels of public service, (2) government employees or (3) fiscal stability;
9. Granting the request would not have a “domino effect,” in that it becomes the opening wedge for further rapid growth, urbanization or other land-use change beyond what is indicated in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

## Staff Comments

The existing buildings do not meet the setbacks identified in Section 7.19.1. The largest building is only 20' from the front property line and the same building is 45' from the northwest property line. The Planning Commission may consider the existing nature of the buildings and that the structures have been unused for several years. The front has planted trees but the northwest side tree buffer is on the neighbor's property. Confederate Road and Dixie Road are both narrow, but Planning Commission may consider that the nearby commercial businesses will be closed during church services.



## MORGAN COUNTY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

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August 9, 2021

Monica Callahan  
Director, Planning & Development  
PO Box 32  
Madison, GA 30650

SENT VIA EMAIL

Dear Ms. Callahan,

Pursuant to HB 489, this letter is to notify you of a zoning action request near Madison city limits. The Morgan County Planning Commission has received an application for the following:

Lakepoint Community Church is requesting conditional use approval for a Community Church on 13.39 acres located at 1091 Confederate Road (Tax Parcel 036-039B).

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Kind regards,

Tara Cooner  
Secretary – Morgan County Planning Commission