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FEATURED

## Approval for rezoning, development plan for Brownland Farm turned down by Franklin Planning Commission

By John McBryde  
Feb 25, 2022

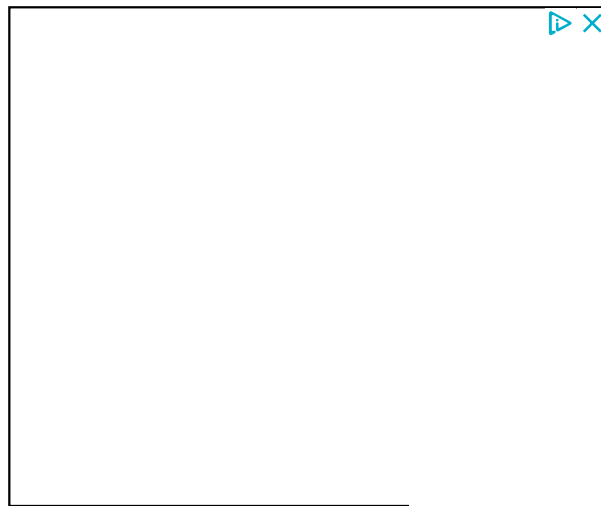


File photo by John McBryde

Marcia Allen was having none of it.

As she and other members of the Franklin Planning Commission deliberated on a rezoning request from the developers of Brownland Farm at Thursday night's commission meeting, it became clear how her vote would be cast.

"To be honest with you, when I saw this on tonight's agenda, I was perturbed," Allen told a Franklin City Hall audience that had returned after the developers' request for rezoning and development approvals were shelved by the city's Board of Mayor and Aldermen in October. "We have gone over and over and over this, and I saw nothing to justify going over this again.



"I think there's a better use for the property, ... and I do think it can be developed in a way that would benefit Franklin. I just don't think this is the way."

Allen joined five other commissioners in voting against recommendation of a zoning change for the 200-acre property from Agriculture District and Civic Institutional District to Planned District. The tally was 6-2 to disapprove that proposal and 7-1 against a development plan for Brownland Farm.

The property, which is owned by Robin and Michelle Anderton and is located at Hillsboro Road near the new Mack Hatcher Parkway extension, has served as a horse farm for about 50 years and has been a residence for four generations of Michelle Anderton's family.

"We have been and are continuing to be excellent stewards of the land," she said during public comment Thursday night. "We have the right to sell our farm. Also, as business owners, we recognize this is no longer the best use of our property."

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Greg Gamble from Gamble Design Collaborative

Photo by John McBryde

The Andertons have been working with Greg Gamble of Gamble Design Collaborative and the developer, Kevin Estes of Land Solutions Company. City of Franklin staff have consistently recommended disapproval of the rezoning and the development plan, primarily due to concerns over flooding from the Harpeth River that flows near the property.

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Gamble presented plans to address five conditions, including a recommended emergency access easement, a limit of four units to each condominium building and a reduction from 471 proposed homes to 356.



But staff was steadfast on the project's not meeting the guidelines from Envision Franklin.

“While some of these self-imposed conditions move the project closer to meeting Envision Franklin,” the summary from the meeting agenda reads, “staff is still recommending disapproval, as this plan does not meet the Conservation Design Concept in Envision Franklin, which does not support any development within the floodplain and floodway.”

Gamble said there are no plans to build on flood plains.

“There is a little misconception from the public,” he said. “We are not proposing homes in the 100-year flood plain. We are proposing to fill the area of the 100-year floodplain up to the 500-year, which is 2 feet higher than the 100-year. We are proposing to excavate out areas of the floodplain to create more volume of land.”

Dorie Bolze, president and CEO of the Harpeth Conservancy, refuted Gamble's assessment.

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“The proposed extensive floodplain alteration does not reduce flooding risks just downstream where large residential subdivisions (Fieldstone Farms and others) have over 450 homes now in the 100-floodplain that were not when approved over 20 years ago,” she said in an email.

Thursday night’s meeting featured a number of other speakers during public comment, mostly from neighbors near Brownland Farm voicing opposition to the plan.

[Click here to view](#) the full meeting.



Dorie Bolze from th Harpeth Conservancy  
Photo by John McBryde

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