

My name is Rusty Field and I am speaking on behalf of StopChathamNorth, an incorporated nonprofit representing homeowners within Briar Chapel. We are voicing opposition to the current requests from Fearington Preserve and Vickers Village to extend the compact community map originally designated for Briar Chapel.

Our main concern with these proposals is they attempt to utilize the Compact Community Ordinance in ways that Chatham County never intended and will result in a large, densely populated zone in NE Chatham County without an adequate wastewater solution for this part of Chatham County.

The Compact Community Ordinance (CCO) was developed to provide Chatham County some control over large-scale, dense development, by capping the size of these communities. We support smart growth, but compact communities were meant to be few and far between to protect the rural character of the area. It was never intended to be utilized by developers to create clusters of multiple compact communities that essentially overwhelm a region of the county.

Fearington Preserve and Vickers Village are seeking to extend the compact community map to allow them to propose their developments under the CCO. We have another developer (Herndon Farms) who already falls within the compact community map and is also proposing a compact community. All of these proposals are for property contiguous to Briar Chapel. Briar Chapel is already approved for 2,649 residential units. Approving these requests will basically negate the sizing cap for compact communities in Chatham County.

Vickers Village plans include a wastewater (WW) facility for their development. Fearington Preserve has not yet finalized their plans for wastewater, but hopes to request a contiguous service area extension to connect to Briar Chapel's WW system and if that fails, Fearington Village's WW system. As you well know, both the Briar Chapel and Fearington Village WW systems have significant issues and do not have the capacity to extend service to Fearington Preserve. What is needed is a long term plan for wastewater. Members of StopChathamNorth and residents of Briar Chapel have recently met with the Chatham County Commissioners and the County Manager, Dan LaMontagne, to urge formation of a Study Commission to develop a comprehensive plan for wastewater in NE Chatham County. We need to get ahead of this issue by developing agreement on a sustainable approach to managing wastewater in this part of Chatham County.