

SENECA

# 235-home proposal gets rezoning OK

**BY RILEY MORNINGSTAR**  
THE JOURNAL

SENECA — After a second and final reading paired with months of discussion, a proposed development for approximately 235 patio homes and townhomes received proper zoning clearance at a special called Seneca City Council meeting Tuesday night.

Council unanimously voted to approve a request from a Greenville-based developer to rezone a 91.8-acre property between South Cove and Keowee School roads from Planned Development Undeveloped to Planned Development Residential.

“We’re excited to

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move forward," John Boyd, managing partner for R&B Lake Investments LLC in Greenville, told The Journal after the vote. "It's been a long road and great vision on the property, and we're looking forward to it and hope to start moving on it by the end of the year. We want to probably start clearing land and the grading process (by the end of the year)."

Boyd said the company wanted to build the development on about 36 of the 91.8 acres. The company had assembled separate properties together for the proposed development, paying a little more than \$1.1 million for the land.

In January, council approved first reading of an ordinance recommended by the city planning commission last December to rezone the property contingent on the developer getting a

traffic analysis and complying with any requirements for traffic issues by the S.C. Department of Transportation.

The city hired Gay Garrison Sprague of Sprague and Sprague Consulting Engineers in Greenville to complete the analysis of the traffic study that was updated in July to account for summer traffic.

"In a nutshell, Ms. Sprague has agreed with the traffic study," city administrator Scott Moulder said.

Moulder said Sprague recommended a "deeper" left-turn lane going from South Cove Road onto Keowee School Road.

The study looked at traffic volume at the intersections of Blue Ridge Boulevard and Keowee

School Road, Keowee School Road and South Cove Road and South Cove Road at the Oconee County Maintenance Facility ingress access.

The traffic study did not show the need for a second entrance into the development, according to Moulder.

### THREE RESIDENTS SPEAK OUT

Local residents Richard Sommer and Charlie Smith voiced their concerns ahead of the rezoning vote. The men each said they lived near the proposed

development during the public comments portion of the meeting.

"I'm not as concerned about the development at this point as seemingly as it is inevitable, and that kind of bothers me a little bit," Sommer said. "I'm

**'It's going to grow, and what are we doing to correct the bottleneck?'**

**Charlie Smith**  
Seneca resident

going to be impacted by these additional cars that are going to be in there. I don't think anyone moving into that development is going to have the intention of walking around Seneca."

Sommer asked for the developer to be required to buy the paint to extend the left-turn lane and for council to consider the public safety aspect of having a "one way in and out of that development."

Smith said traffic would only continue to grow in the area.

"What my real concern is that when they build the apartments, we're going to have more traffic coming into Keowee School Road," Smith said. "You're extending the lane back — which I think is a good idea — but when you extend it back, it naturally adds more traffic. If you're coming out from South Cove Road going north, I don't think you have a problem. Coming south — in the area I am — it's

growing and continuing to grow.

"My concern is once everything intersects here at South Cove Road, we're going to have a bottleneck at the Bountyland," he continued. "Now, it still backs up when school lets out and school comes in. Traffic stops across the railroad tracks. It's going to grow, and what are we doing to correct the bottleneck?"

Resident Lillie Davis said South Cove Road was "like a freeway."

"I don't know what the solution is or should be, but it's a very busy road," she said. "It's just overcrowded, and I really don't know what the solution would be, but it's unreasonable because you can hardly get out of your driveway at times. ... It's year round."

Seneca Mayor Dan Alexander was absent from the meeting.

*Norm Cannada contributed to this report.*