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PLANNING & ZONING

April 18, 2024

**Narrative for Proposed Stream buffer work
at The Falls of Autry Mill Neighborhood.**

To: Johns Creek Staff and Local Stakeholders

Sears Smith & Associates was hired by the HOA to enhance this area between the Tennis courts and lakeshore. The body of water, which appears unnamed, was most likely created during the development of this subdivision, more than 30 years ago, and its outflow heads southeasterly through the Neighboring Autry Mill Preserve, then through River Pines Golf course before entering into the Chattahoochee River.

Previously the site appears to have had some Landscape enhancements that were created by others, and left unsafe and with unsightly or usable conditions. The board has cordoned off the area due to its current condition. Its currently an attractive nuisance to children both from the neighborhood and outside of it , due to its close proximity to the swim and tennis facilities.

Currently the site is not only unusable by the community, for any recreation potential, but abhorrent from the perspective of buffer standards. There is no adequate riparian zone, or plantings at the lakeshore that would filter sediment and slow runoff to the body of water. Vegetation has previously been mowed tight to the ground, and inadequate landscape maintenance has morphed into creating a mowed surface to the lakeshore. With 3 of the 5 existing tennis courts immediately to the south of this area draining directly toward the lake, the evidence of rills and erosion is evidenced and needs immediate attention. The lake has also recently been dredged, and the timing of this project is urgently needed.

We not only wanted to create more usable access to the water for the residents, but recreate a more sustainable environment with more suitable buffer conditions to protect the lake from further erosion.

This plan starts by addressing and creating safe access to the lake, via controlled or directed walkways for a proposed dock for fishing and kayak accessibility. Much of the upper surface water flow has been redirected to a rock swale to control and slow runoff down the slopes to the shoreline. More planted areas, and less mowable turf has been proposed, to again add more planting areas. Site walls, and gabion basket walls help reduce the steep slopes and speed of runoff as well.

Much of the slope plantings were chosen for a combination of vegetative attributes, slope stabilization and naturalizing of the buffer. *Itea Virginica*, *Iris Laeviata*, & *Carex Lacustris*, nearest the shore, with some native grasses like Muhly, panicum, and bald cypress trees

We have already been granted permission by the State EPD for the state waters buffer encroachment, and now are requesting the City variance to proceed.

Should this project proceed, we anticipate being able to further guide the HOA with better maintenance practices for other areas, such as slopes along the pool and playground areas, to help create better re- naturalization of the stream banks.

Sincerely,



Chris Sears, PLA

President

Sears Smith & Associates, Inc

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