



GUILFORD COUNTY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Planning Board Rural Family Occupation

OVERVIEW

A Rural Family Occupation (RFO) is an accessory use that allows the operation of a business on the same property as one's residence. It is permitted in the AG Agricultural District subject to approval of a Special Use Permit by the Guilford County Planning Board. The RFO differs from a Home Occupation because the RFO is conducted in an accessory building, detached from the home and involves a more intensive land use. *(For more information on Home Occupations, refer to the Home Occupation Bulletin)*

TYPES OF OCCUPATIONS

The RFO was originally designed to allow farm related services and industries in agricultural areas. However, the concept of the RFO has expanded over the years. Traditionally, a RFO could be a welding or small engine repair shop. Under the current usage horticultural specialties, cabinet making, and septic tank repair services are examples of possible RFO's.

RFO's are limited to uses that:

- Assemble or manufacture products on-site for sale elsewhere, or
- Provide a service on- or off-site, with stock-in trade clearly incidental to the service provided.

Retail and wholesale operations which bring products on site for resale are not permitted.

APPROVAL PROCEDURES

In order to legally operate a RFO, the applicant:

1. Should consult the Planning and Development Department to determine if the proposed use qualifies for RFO status and if the location meets the development requirements;
2. Must prepare a Site Plan for the proposed RFO in accordance with the specifications for Minor Site Plan;
3. Must make application for a Special Use Permit; submit a complete Site Plan; and submit a written evaluation from the Guilford County Environmental Health Division; and
4. Must appear and testify at the Planning Board Public Hearing.

The Public Hearing for a Special Use Permit is a quasi-judicial hearing. The applicant, under oath, must provide factual information showing that the proposed use:

1. Will not materially endanger the public health or safety if located where proposed and developed according to the plan submitted;
2. Meets all required conditions and specifications;
3. Will not substantially injure the value of adjoining or abutting property, or that the use is a public necessity; and
4. That the location and character of the use, if developed according to the plan submitted, will be in harmony with the area in which is to be located and in general conformity with the plan of development of the Jurisdiction and its environs.

The Planning Board may approve or deny the Special Use Permit based on the facts above.

SPECIFIC REGULATIONS

All RFO's must meet the following standards and any specific standards for an individual use as defined by Section 6-4 of the Development Ordinance. The RFO Site Plan should illustrate all required and proposed standards and be submitted with the application for the Special Use Permit.

Minimum Area

1. The RFO must be located on a tract of land of two (2) acres or more; and
2. A portion of the tract measuring forty thousand (40,000) square feet with one hundred and fifty (150) feet of width must be designated and reserved as exclusively residential.

Maximum Area

1. The total floor area of all buildings occupied by the RFO shall not exceed five thousand (5,000) square feet; and
2. The total land area that may be used in conjunction with the Rural Family Occupation is not more than fifteen thousand (15,000) square feet.

Use Separation: All operations of the RFO shall observe a one hundred (100) foot setback from all property lines.



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Location: All operations of the RFO shall be located behind the rear line of the building occupied as the principal residence.

Landscaping: All operations of the RFO, including buildings, outside storage areas and parking, shall be treated as a separate use and subject to the landscaping requirements of the Guilford County Development Ordinance.

Signs: RFO's are allowed one (1) freestanding identification sign a maximum of four (4) square feet in area and six (6) feet in height.

Environmental Review: A written evaluation of the potential environmental impacts is required by the Guilford County Environmental Health Division prior to the consideration of any request for an RFO. At the request of the applicant, the Environmental Health Division shall evaluate each RFO request to determine the occupation's impact on the surrounding area with respect to excessive noise, dust, air emissions, odors and surface or groundwater discharge.

The RFO shall be required to mitigate the impact of any environmental concerns determined by the Environmental Health Division.

Operation

1. The owner/operator of the RFO must own and reside on the property containing the RFO.
2. No more than five (5) persons shall be employed, other than those residing on the property.
3. There shall be no more than two (2) commercial vehicles operating in and out of the property associated with the RFO.
4. The RFO shall not be operated between the hours of 9 P.M. to 6 AM.

This document is intended for public information purposes only. It summarizes and omits some provisions. It is not to be construed or used as an official interpretation of the Guilford County Development Ordinance in any legal proceeding.

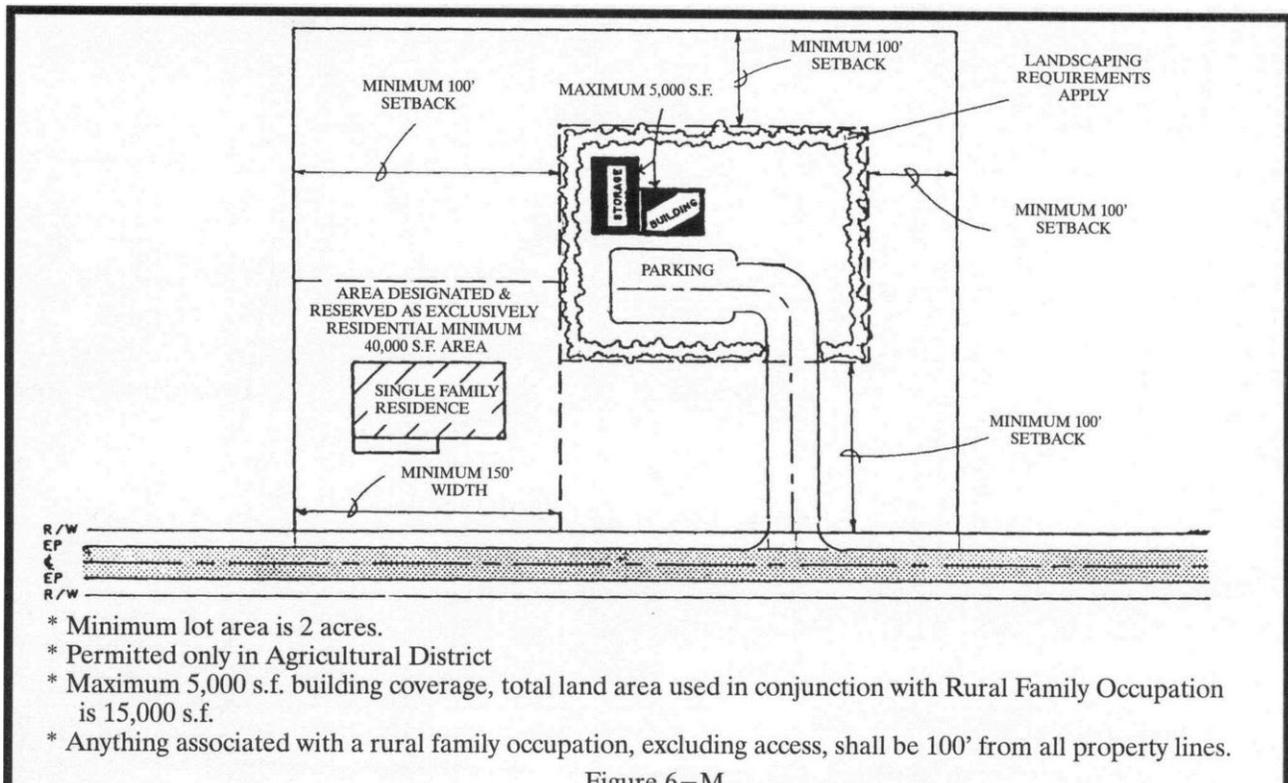


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