Rev. Leroy Godfrey Jr.
519 Gross Avenue, Windwood · Berkeley County, SC 29461
godfreyforcountycouncil@gmail.com · 843-485-VOTE (8683)

September 21, 2026

Ms. Amanda Turner Troy, Clerk to Council
Berkeley County Council
1003 Highway 52, Moncks Corner, SC 29461
cc: Supervisor Johnny Cribb, Chairman; Members of Berkeley County Council; Land Use / Planning Committee

RE: A plain-language answer, drawn from the County's own records, to the question repeatedly posed from the dais — "Why not just build by right?" — Cane Bay / Lake Village rezoning (Bills 26-38 through 26-59), third reading scheduled Monday, September 28, 2026.

Dear Ms. Troy, Supervisor Cribb, and Members of Council,

Please enter this letter into the official record for the Cane Bay / Lake Village rezoning, as a companion to the pedestrian-safety submission I have also filed. I write not as a candidate but as a resident of the Windwood neighborhood, where I have lived for 25 years. I am a United States Air Force veteran and a minister, and I have followed this matter closely, in the packets and in the hearings.

For months now, from the dais, our community has heard a version of one question: *"Why not just build by right? They could put thousands of homes here anyway."* I want to say plainly that it is a fair question, and Supervisor Cribb and others are right to raise it. But I would ask Council to consider the pattern that has formed around it — because that pattern, and not any one person, is what I am writing about.

The question has been paired, again and again, with a large number — and left without the County's own context. A number that big, repeated that often and explained that little, does not calm a community. It frightens one. In my own neighborhood I have watched good people go quiet, or repeat the fear back to one another as settled fact, not because they do not care but because no one — not Council, not staff — has given them a clear, plain explanation of what "by right" actually means on this land. That is the pattern: a fair question, a frightening number, and a silence where the answer should be. And silence and confusion are not the same thing as consent.

I have asked for that explanation, on the record, three separate times, and it has not come. So, with respect, let me offer one — not my opinion, but what the County's own records say.

As a resident first, and an advocate for this community, I have spent countless hours in these records, asking questions that have gone unanswered. Please understand this letter for what it is: not the work of a candidate, and not the political grandstanding I have been accused of by sitting members of this Council, but the work of a citizen doing what he had hoped his representatives would do — advocating for the very people who elected them. I take no pleasure in having to do it from the outside. I only believe the work has to be done, by someone, before the vote.

THE ANSWER, FROM THE COUNTY'S OWN RECORDS

First, the number itself is a ceiling on paper, not a forecast. The Planning Department's Staff Summary estimates a by-right yield of roughly 5,721 units across the assemblage — and states plainly, both in its narrative and again in the footnote to its own table, that this figure is a maximum "based on the gross acreage" that "does not account for required infrastructure or development-limiting factors." By the County's own words, it is the most that could ever fit if nothing — no road, no drainage pond, no wetland — were subtracted. That is not what gets built. It is the outer edge of what is imaginable.

Second, most of that number is leftover paperwork, not a study of the land. Of the 5,721, some 3,928 units — about 69 percent — are what the County labels "untapped entitlement." It defines the figure in black and white: the leftover balance of Cane Bay's original 10,995-home cap (its stated formula is the number of permits issued minus 10,995). That balance is then assigned to four leftover Cane Bay parcels totaling 664.86 acres. It is not an engineer's finding that 664.86 acres can hold 3,928 homes. It is the unused portion of an old permit ceiling.

Third, put those homes where they would actually sit, and the picture changes entirely. 3,928 homes on 664.86 acres works out to about 5.9 homes per acre — more than double the 2.75 homes per acre the Staff Summary says this very plan proposes. You cannot build 5.9 an acre as the single-family town shown on the drawings; the developer's own traffic study describes the plan as 3,206 single-family detached homes and 1,800 multifamily units. To reach 3,928 on that leftover land, you are building apartments and condominiums — and once you take out the roads, the drainage, and any wetlands the developer's own master plan calls the "limits of development," the homes that remain sit closer together still.

Fourth, the rest of the land barely adds up by right. Every other parcel in the assemblage — more than a thousand acres of it — yields only about 1,793 homes by right, at roughly 1.7 homes per acre. And one 314-acre parcel the County lists, by its own hand, as "undetermined."

By the numbers — all figures from Berkeley County's own documents:

• What the plan proposes: **5,500 homes on ~2,000 acres = 2.75 homes/acre** (mostly single-family detached).

• The "by-right" leftover cap, where it sits: **3,928 homes on 664.86 acres = 5.9 homes/acre** — over double the proposed density.

• That 3,928 is **69% of the whole "by-right" number**, and is defined as permits issued minus the old 10,995 cap.

• All other assemblage land (1,000+ acres) yields only **~1,793 homes by right**; one 314-acre parcel is listed as "undetermined."

Sources: Berkeley County Planning Staff Summary, Parcel Summary Table (internal pp. 344–345) & density finding (p. 13 of the Staff Summary); Traffic Impact Analysis unit mix (Staff Summary, Transportation Considerations); rezoning ordinance surrender-of-rights provision.

So here is the plain answer to the question. "Just build it by right" does not produce the plan before you. By right, that land gives a low-density scatter of roughly 1,793 homes, plus — at most — a dense apartment build on the leftover Cane Bay parcels. It does not give a 5,500-home walkable town with a marina village and a waterfront district. That town does not exist without this rezoning. In large part, the "by-right" threat and the rezoning are the very same land — simply moved into a new plan. The rezoning ordinance itself confirms as much: it releases those leftover Cane Bay parcels from "any and all development rights and entitlements" under the old Cane Bay Planned Development and folds them into the new Lake Village district.

I want to be careful and fair about what I am and am not saying. I am not accusing anyone of anything, and I will not guess at intentions I cannot see. I write only because the question was fair, the answer was owed, and it was not given — and the cost of that silence has been a community left more afraid, and more confused, than the County's own records warrant. That is the pattern I am respectfully asking Council to break.

WHAT I RESPECTFULLY ASK

1. Before the third-reading vote, place on the record a clear, plain-language explanation of the "by-right" numbers — including the County's own written caveat that the figure is a gross-acreage maximum that "does not account for required infrastructure or development-limiting factors" — so that residents can understand what "by right" truly means on this land, rather than fear a number that has never been explained to them.
2. Where the "by-right" comparison is offered as a reason to approve, state alongside it the density, product type, and land involved — so the comparison is between real things, not

between this plan and a number on paper.

3. Answer this, and the questions in my companion submission, on the record before the vote — or defer the third reading until they are answered. This is not a request to stop the project. It is a request to let the public decide in the light, not in the dark.

A fair question deserves a full answer — and the people we serve deserve to make up their own minds with the facts in front of them, not a fog of half-told ones. I still believe this can be a good project for our community. That is exactly why the plain truth should be on the record before the gavel falls. Answers should come before advancement, not after.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Leroy Godfrey Jr.
Resident, Windwood · Berkeley County District 6

Note: All figures cited are drawn from Berkeley County's own project record — the Planning Staff Summary and Parcel Summary Table, the Traffic Impact Analysis unit counts, and the rezoning ordinance. The underlying page references are listed in the box above and can be provided in full on request.