

From: [Steve Merritt](#)
To: [Bjorn Hansen](#)
Cc: [Mark Diamond](#)
Subject: Re: House of Pearls Rezoning Application
Date: Tuesday, April 7, 2026 6:29:43 AM

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Good Morning Bjorn,

I am requesting a five year vesting rights as a condition of this rezoning for The House of Pearls project located on Camden Rd in Marshville, NC. Thanks and have a great day!!

Steve Merritt
His Perfect Love Ministries
House of Pearls
704-622-6030

On Monday, April 6, 2026 at 11:55:04 AM EDT, Bjorn Hansen <bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov> wrote:

Steve, hopefully the last email today. I don't see any email or correspondence requesting the five-year vesting of this rezoning (if approved). State law says you automatically get two years guaranteed to start development of your project, but you can request up to five years. The benefit is that it protects you from a potential downzoning by the County if you don't move forward with the project. It is typical for applicants to request five years, but you have to request it. Weird, I know. All you have to do is email back and state you are requesting five year vesting rights as a condition of this rezoning.

Sincerely,

Bjorn

Bjorn E. Hansen, AICP CTP, CZO

Senior Planner – Long Range Planning | Planning Department

T 704.283.3690

bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov
unioncountync.gov

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recipient of this e-mail, please contact the sender immediately.

From: Steve Merritt <sdmerritt13@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, April 3, 2026 5:57 AM
To: mark@gatewaydesigngroup.com; Bjorn Hansen
<bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov>
Cc: 'Alec Sithong' <alec@studioone9.com>
Subject: Re: House of Pearls Rezoning Application

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Good Morning Bjorn,

Please find the Minutes and Sign In Sheets for the Community meeting held for the House of Pearls Camden Rd Project. Thanks for your help and have a great Easter!!!

Steve Merritt
House of Pearls
704-622-6030

On Thursday, March 19, 2026 at 09:53:31 AM EDT, Bjorn Hansen
<bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov> wrote:

Thanks, Steve. When we see each other at the community meeting could you please have a signed copy.

Take care.

Bjorn

Bjorn E. Hansen, AICP CTP, CZO

Senior Planner – Long Range Planning | Planning Department

T 704.283.3690

bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov
unioncountync.gov

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From: Steve Merritt <sdmerritt13@aol.com>

Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 6:36 AM
To: mark@gatewaydesigngroup.com; Bjorn Hansen
<bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov>
Cc: 'Alec Sithong' <alec@studioone9.com>
Subject: Re: House of Pearls Rezoning Application

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Good Morning Bjorn,

Please find attached the letter from the Secretary/Treasurer of His Perfect Love Ministries and The House of Pearls explaining my relationship with this organization. Thanks and have a great day!!

Steve Merritt
House of Pearls
704-622-6030

On Monday, March 16, 2026 at 04:47:28 PM EDT, Bjorn Hansen
<bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov> wrote:

Sounds good. I will note that in the conditions of the rezoning.

Bjorn E. Hansen, AICP CTP, CZO

Senior Planner – Long Range Planning | Planning Department

T 704.283.3690

bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov

unioncountync.gov

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From: Steve Merritt <sdmerritt13@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, March 16, 2026 4:45 PM
To: mark@gatewaydesigngroup.com; Bjorn Hansen
<bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov>
Cc: 'Alec Sithong' <alec@studioone9.com>
Subject: Re: House of Pearls Rezoning Application

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Bjorn,

I think just the portion where the facility is located.

Steve

On Monday, March 16, 2026 at 10:41:23 AM EDT, Bjorn Hansen
<bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov> wrote:

Good morning,

Please confirm you would like the entire parcel rezoned versus just the portion on the south side of Camden Road where the facility will be located.

Sincerely,

Bjorn

Bjorn E. Hansen, AICP CTP, CZO

Senior Planner – Long Range Planning | Planning Department

T 704.283.3690

bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov

unioncountync.gov

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From: Bjorn Hansen <bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2026 10:05 AM
To: mark@gatewaydesigngroup.com; 'Steve Merritt' <sdmerritt13@aol.com>
Cc: 'Alec Sithong' <alec@studioone9.com>
Subject: RE: House of Pearls Rezoning Application

I have attached the mailing labels for the community meeting. Something to think about for the rezoning is the fact you have a portion of the property on the north side of the road (see attached land use map). You might want to sell it in the future, and it is not necessary to rezone to MPD. You can clarify in your letter of intent to say that this rezoning only applies to the portion on the south side of Camden Road. If you want the rezoning to apply to all of the property, just let me know.

Sincerely,

Bjorn

Bjorn E. Hansen, AICP CTP, CZO

Senior Planner – Long Range Planning | Planning Department

T 704.283.3690

bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov

unioncountync.gov

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From: mark@gatewaydesigngroup.com <mark@gatewaydesigngroup.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2026 8:26 AM
To: 'Steve Merritt' <sdmerritt13@aol.com>; Bjorn Hansen <bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov>
Cc: 'Alec Sithong' <alec@studioone9.com>
Subject: RE: House of Pearls Rezoning Application

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Good morning Bjorn,

Please see attached rezoning documents.

Thanks!

Mark Diamond, P.E.

Project Manager

Gateway Design Group, PLLC

919-368-8867

8516 Foxbridge Drive

Weddington, NC 28104

From: Steve Merritt <sdmerritt13@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2026 8:21 AM
To: Bjorn Hansen <bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov>
Cc: mark@gatewaydesigngroup.com; Alec Sithong <alec@studioone9.com>
Subject: Re: House of Pearls Rezoning Application

Bjorn,

I believe Mark Diamond sent all of that information to you via email last week.

Mark can you resend that information to Bjorn? Thanks

Steve Merritt

On Wednesday, March 11, 2026 at 08:13:28 AM EDT, Bjorn Hansen <bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov> wrote:

Steve,

I appreciate you being proactive with the community meeting work, but we need the rezoning application to be submitted before any letters can be sent out. I am in the office today and then out Thursday and Friday. Let me know if you are able to drop the materials off today.

I made a few proposed changes in Track Changes in the attached document.

Sincerely,

Bjorn

Bjorn E. Hansen, AICP CTP, CZO

Senior Planner – Long Range Planning | Planning Department

T 704.283.3690

bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov

unioncountync.gov

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From: Steve Merritt <sdmerritt13@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2026 7:42 AM
To: Bjorn Hansen <bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov>
Cc: mark@gatewaydesigngroup.com; Alec Sithong <alec@studioone9.com>
Subject: Re: House of Pearls Rezoning Application

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Good Morning Bjorn,

Please find the Notice Letter (Community Meeting) attached. Thanks and have a great day!!!

Schedule is March 31, 2026

Dinner Served at 6:00

Meeting to start at 6:30

Centerview Baptist Church - Fellowship Building

2711 Old Pageland-Marshville Rd

Marshville, NC

Steve Merritt

House of Pearls

His Perfect Love Ministries

704-622-6030

On Monday, March 9, 2026 at 02:02:39 PM EDT, Bjorn Hansen
<bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov> wrote:

Will do. It's on my calendar. Please submit the application materials and draft community letter for me to review ASAP. I can then send you the address list for you to mail the meeting notices to. The letters need to be in the mail by next Friday.

Bjorn E. Hansen, AICP CTP, CZO

Senior Planner – Long Range Planning | Planning Department

T 704.283.3690

bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov

unioncountync.gov

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From: sdmerritt13 (null) <sdmerritt13@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2026 1:56 PM
To: Bjorn Hansen <bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov>
Cc: mark@gatewaydesigngroup.com; Alec Sithong <alec@studioone9.com>
Subject: Re: House of Pearls Rezoning Application

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Ok. That makes sense. Let's lock in Tuesday March 31.

Steve

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 9, 2026, at 1:36 PM, Bjorn Hansen <bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov> wrote:

I am but that is the night before Good Friday, so I suspect it won't work well for people to attend.

Bjorn E. Hansen, AICP CTP, CZO

Senior Planner – Long Range Planning | Planning Department

T 704.283.3690

bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov

unioncountync.gov

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From: sdmerritt13 (null) <sdmerritt13@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2026 1:27 PM
To: Bjorn Hansen <bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov>
Cc: mark@gatewaydesigngroup.com; Alec Sithong <alec@studioone9.com>
Subject: Re: House of Pearls Rezoning Application

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Bjorn,

Would you be available for a meeting on April 2? That is a Thursday night 6 o'clock at Centerview Baptist Church in Marshville.

Steve Merritt

704-622-6030

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 9, 2026, at 8:14 AM, Bjorn Hansen <bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov> wrote:

Steve,

Thank you for the update.

1. Regarding the community meeting, I now have another rezoning meeting on March 30. I am still available on March 31 and April 1 though.

2. For payment, once you submit the application we can send an invoice through our Evolve review portal, but honestly it would be a lot easier if you delivered all paperwork in person so I can confirm everything is ok.
3. You can submit the petition and other meeting materials as part of the application. I can reference it in the staff report, but the community meeting in a few weeks would be the definitive one.
4. I can appreciate your frustration, and the good news is that the utility work you have done would have been required anyways, so you can move to implementation earlier than if you did the rezoning first and then the utility work. The rezoning will ideally be complete on June 1, but the Board of Commissioners has the option of approving the night of the hearing, which hopefully will be May 18.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Bjorn

Bjorn E. Hansen, AICP CTP, CZO

Senior Planner – Long Range Planning | Planning
Department

T 704.283.3690

bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov

unioncountync.gov

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From: Steve Merritt <sdmerritt13@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2026 8:06 AM
To: mark@gatewaydesigngroup.com; Bjorn Hansen <bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov>
Cc: 'Alec Sithong' <alec@studioone9.com>
Subject: Re: House of Pearls Rezoning Application

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Good Morning Bjorn,

Thank you for the information provided below. To recap, this has been quite a journey for the House of Pearls. I'd like to share some background since you haven't always participated in these meetings. We first met with Jim King in 2023, and he gave us a list of items needed to move forward. Following his direction, we held a community meeting at Centerview Baptist Church in Marshville, NC, which over 30 people attended. At this gathering, we presented our site plan, explained the ministry's mission, and hosted a Q&A session. Every attendee signed a petition supporting the project, though Mr. King mentioned the petition was merely hearsay.

To be honest, my frustration is considerable. However, I understand that all county rules, regulations, and codes must be followed before we can proceed. Thanks to your guidance, we are finally making progress. Our organization has served the community for nearly 20 years, helping women transition from the streets into a safe environment, where they can live sober lives and serve God.

I am the Chairman of the Board for His Perfect Love Ministries and the House of Pearls. I'll obtain the necessary

documentation from our Secretary/Treasurer and send it to you.

How should we handle the \$1000.00 payment? Is there an option to pay online, or does someone need to deliver a physical check to your department?

I am working on arranging another meeting, possibly on Monday, March 30, at Centerview Baptist Church (2711 Old Pageland-Marshville Rd, Marshville, NC 28103) in their fellowship building. I will confirm this date with you as soon as the church approves the arrangements.

Best Regards,

Steve Merritt

Chairman of The Board of Directors

His Perfect Love Ministries

House of Pearls

704-622-6030

On Tuesday, March 3, 2026 at 02:14:27 PM EST, Bjorn Hansen <bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov> wrote:

Mark,

Here are my comments about the rezoning application:

1. The proposed zoning district would be Master Planned Development (MPD). I can change on the application form, so really an FYI.
2. Provide some sort of documentation

showing Steve's relationship to His Perfect Love Ministries, Inc. allowing him to submit an application.

3. There is an application fee of \$1,000.
4. Regarding my earlier comments about prior community meeting documentation, we discussed internally and need a second meeting. The meeting can be in person or virtually. I have attached a sample community letter. Please propose some dates at least two weeks from now. My evening availability is March 23, 25, 26, 30, 31, April 1.

You do not need to go through another site plan review process. We can get you on the April 21 Land Use Board meeting, and then a public hearing with the Board of Commissioners May 18.

Sincerely,

Bjorn

Bjorn E. Hansen, AICP CTP, CZO

Senior Planner – Long Range Planning | Planning Department

T 704.283.3690

bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov

unioncountync.gov

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From: mark@gatewaydesigngroup.com
<mark@gatewaydesigngroup.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2026 9:30 AM
To: Bjorn Hansen
<bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov>
Cc: sdmerritt13@aol.com; 'Alec Sithong'
<alec@studioone9.com>
Subject: RE: House of Pearls Rezoning Application

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Good morning Bjorn,

Wanted to confirm you have received all of the rezoning documents we sent last Friday?

Thanks!

Mark Diamond, P.E.

Project Manager

Gateway Design Group, PLLC

919-368-8867

8516 Foxbridge Drive

Weddington, NC 28104

From: mark@gatewaydesigngroup.com

<mark@gatewaydesigngroup.com>
Sent: Friday, February 27, 2026 1:10 PM
To: 'Bjorn Hansen'
<bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov>
Cc: sdmerritt13@aol.com; 'Alec Sithong'
<alec@studioone9.com>
Subject: RE: House of Pearls Rezoning Application
Importance: High

Good afternoon Bjorn,

I have attached documents for the rezoning application. Let us know the best way to pay the \$1,000 fee and we will get that taken care of as well.

Please let us know if you need anything additional to make sure we are on the agenda for March.

Thanks!

Mark Diamond, P.E.

Project Manager

Gateway Design Group, PLLC

919-368-8867

8516 Foxbridge Drive

Weddington, NC 28104

From: Bjorn Hansen
<bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov>
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2026 11:24 AM
To: sdmerritt13@aol.com;
mark@gatewaydesigngroup.com
Subject: House of Pearls Rezoning Application

Steve and Mark,

My apologies for any confusion. The application form is attached. You will also need to attached the sketch plan and a letter of intent. A letter of intent is you in your own words explaining the proposal. It would be helpful to include details about the proposal – number of residents, employees, activities on site, the fact an septic permit is already in hand, etc. The application fee is \$1,000.

I advise you to drop off the forms in person because we can fix anything at that time. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Bjorn

Bjorn E. Hansen, AICP CTP, CZO

Senior Planner – Long Range Planning | Planning Department

T 704.283.3690

bjorn.hansen@unioncountync.gov

unioncountync.gov

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**Union County
Government**

500 North Main Street,
Suite 70

Monroe, NC 28112

<image001.png>

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