

A rezoning application which would allow developers to proceed with plans for a major project on the outskirts of Southern Pines is not yet a sure thing. This week, The Southern Pines Town council postponed further discussion until next month when the elaborate undertaking is expected to be presented in its final form. Council Member Chris Smith insists that specific plans must be presented to the council if the application is to be seriously considered. The Knollwood Tract is some 550 acres adjoining The Pine Needles Lodge And Golf Club. The property and Pine Needles are owned by the Bell Family. The development has met resistance before, but in September the town planning board voted unanimously to support the rezoning effort. Bob Knoontz, a consulting engineer from Hobbs Upchurch, says a developer has not been chosen but the Bell Family would like to break ground within three years. Because of its scale, the project could take 15 years to complete construction of office and commercial space, single-family housing and assisted-living units, a hotel and a golf course.