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MEMORANDUM

TO: Howey-in-the-Hills Planning Board
CC: J. Brock, Town Clerk
FROM: Thomas Harowski, AICP, Planning Consultant
SUBJECT: Lake Hills Residential Preliminary Subdivision Plan
DATE: February 15, 2024

The Town has received an application for Preliminary Subdivision Plan Approval for the residential portion of the Lake Hills Development. This project is governed by Ordinance 2011-008, Ordinance 2015-005 and a development agreement recorded February 24, 2016 in addition to the land development code including Section 4.05 which addresses subdivision review. The residential portion of the project is its largest land allocation and extends in an arc north of the commercial area from SR-19 to CR-48. The adopted development agreement designates the residential area within the larger Lake Hills project, and the preliminary subdivision plan under consideration will locate the lots, roads, community facilities, landscaping and other features of the project in sufficient detail to assess compliance with the Town codes. The final subdivision plan will complete the subdivision design based on final engineering and other site improvements. Final subdivision approval may be sought by phases.

The residential development is part of the larger Lake Hills development which has been determined to meet the minimum requirements for a Village Mixed Use development. In addition to the residential and commercial components, the larger project includes private community recreation facilities, a four-acre public park and a bicycle/pedestrian link along the primary collector road connecting SR 19 with CR 48 through the main residential portion of the project. Additionally, the Town has purchased a 3.23-acre tract for new wells and a water treatment plant. This facility is currently under construction. The Lake County School Board has also purchased a 22-acre site at the northwest corner of the project for eventual development of an elementary school. However, no planned school improvements are programmed for at least the next five years.

The residential development includes 571 single-family units on lots with widths of 40-feet, 50-feet and 60-feet to be constructed in five phases using housing types permitted by the master development agreement. A phase map is provided on page CO-01 of the applicant's submittal. The phases are proposed as follows:

Units	Lot	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5	Total
Paired Home	40	0	18	42	38	0	98
Single Family	50	31	44	149	60	37	321
Single Family	60	26	32	25	36	33	152
Total		57	94	216	134	70	571

The homes are proposed as age limited for residents age 55 and older. As such, the issue of school concurrency does not apply, but the project will have to meet the Lake County School Board requirements. The project is proposed to have non-exclusive gated access. Residents and visitors will be required to pass through a control gate, but entry will not be denied. The tract table identifies the roads will be maintained by home owners association.

The project includes a central collector road that extends from SR-19 through the project connecting to CR-48 opposite the gated entry into the Mission Inn complex. The central collector road will include a bicycle/pedestrian shared use path. The balance of the project will have local streets serving the residential areas along with a future connection to the school district site. According to the development agreement, the paired lots are to be accessed by alley service. The applicants do not propose alleys, and this revision will need to be approved by the Town Council. This item will be a condition of approval.

Other features of the project include a six plus acre community recreation facility and park and a four-acre public park to be constructed by the development. The public park is located on the SR-19 side of the project just outside the security gate. This location is inconsistent with the original concept plan and needs to be approved by the Town Council. This decision will be identified as a condition of approval. Lots fronting on the lake are entitled to private docks and a community dock is proposed with the private recreation facility.

The applicant submitted a tree survey for the project identifying trees to be preserved and trees to be removed. The tree analysis identifies 231 trees designated for removal (reduced from 348 trees in an earlier submittal) and identified the historic trees on the site. All of the historic trees will be preserved except for one tree identified as dead. Most of the trees to be removed are in areas where storm water retention facilities are proposed and in areas where significant grade changes will occur. Most of the trees to be preserved fall within the wetland areas. The analysis of historic trees meets the Town code, but the code also requires preservation of 50% of the specimen trees (trees over 20-inches in diameter). This analysis was not provided and needs to be submitted.

The residential project has been reviewed by the Town’s Development Review Committee for compliance with the development agreement, compliance with the Town codes, and compliance with the Village Mixed Use development rules. As noted above, the project includes several proposals that are not compliant with Town codes and the adopted development agreement. The applicant is seeking approval from the Town to

eliminate the alley access and relocate the public park. These items, along with some other items will be suggested as conditions to the Planning Board action.

Concurrency Review

At the preliminary subdivision plan stage, a review is conducted to determine if sufficient capacity is available to support the public services required by the project. At this stage the Town conducts a planning level review; no certificate of concurrency will be issued until the final subdivision plan is approved for the entire project or for a phase of the project. The key concurrency items are potable water, sanitary sewer, storm water management and traffic. The findings are as follows:

Potable Water: With the completion of the new wells and water treatment plant, the Town will have adequate water volume and water pressure to support the proposed project.

Sanitary Sewer: Sewer is not currently available to the site. Capacity may be available from the Central Lake Community Development District (CDD) or potentially from other options currently under consideration by the Town Council. The sewer service issue will need to be resolved before a final subdivision plan can be approved.

Storm Water Management: Storm water treatment will be provided in retention areas placed throughout the project. The size of the retention areas is an engineering issue that will be reviewed by the Town's engineer and reviewed and permitted by the St. Johns River Water Management District.

Traffic: The applicant submitted a traffic study that covered both the residential and commercial portions of the development. The study included existing traffic, growth in background traffic that is a normal part of traffic movement, and other development projects that have been approved. These projects include:

- Talichet Phases 1 and 2 (2023)
- Whispering Heights (2023)
- Drake Point (Unincorporated Lake County) (2025)
- The Reserve (All components) (2028)
- Watermark (2027)

While other developments in and around Howey have been discussed, and in some cases preliminarily reviewed, none of these projects have received any level of formal approval. These projects will rank behind the Lake Hills development in the pecking order for traffic capacity. The traffic study uses very compressed time lines for each of the background projects (as noted by the dates in parentheses) and for the subject project (both residential and commercial) at 2028. Actual traffic impacts will certainly extend over a longer period of time giving more opportunity to address identified needs.

The traffic study made recommendations in three areas including impacts to road segments, impacts to intersections and access control design. The impacts can be addressed as follows:

- SR-19 from CR 561 to Central Avenue is projected to operate over the designated level of service. In part, this segment can be addressed through a reclassification of the link in the FDOT system. The segment is mis-classified and should have a higher designated capacity. There is a current project to widen SR-19 to four lanes from CR 561 to Citrus Avenue. The project is currently funded through the PD&E stage and the segment will eventually move through construction.
- SR 19 from CR 455 to US 27 is another segment that would operate within the designated level of service if the link was properly classified in the FDOT system.
- The intersection of SR 19 and CR 48 falls below the adopted level of service with delays generated by a traffic signal. The traffic study examined the intersection with a roundabout traffic control and found that it would operate within the designated level of service under that scenario. FDOT has determined that the intersection should be managed with a roundabout, and the applicant will be required to contribute funding to the project equivalent to its fair share of the traffic generation.
- The intersection of SR-19 at Central Avenue can be addressed with a traffic signal, and the Town has been working with FDOT to review a warrant study for installation of a full signal. This project does not generate traffic on the eastbound approach which is the source of the problem.
- The intersection of SR 19 with the project east entrance, which serves both the residential and commercial portions of the project, will initially operate with stop sign control, but will eventually need a signal upgrade. The signal will be provided by the residential and commercial project components. There is some discussion about using a roundabout at this project entrance as well as at the intersection with CR 48. The proposed project will need to fund the final option selected.
- In reviewing site access, turn lanes will be required at all intersections based on the design and permitting requirements of FDOT for SR-19 and Lake County for CR-48. Part of the access management review will include an analysis of right-of-way increases if any are required. If additional right-of-way is needed, the projects will be expected to provide that area as part of the permitting process.

Discussion and Conditions

The proposed residential development is consistent with approved Lake Hills adopting ordinance and development agreement with regard to the location of residential uses, allowed lot sizes and setbacks, and the supporting uses proposed. The most recent version of the preliminary subdivision plan does not fully comply with the the development agreement for two items that are noted previously. Therefore any recommendation for approval offered by the Planning Board should include a set of conditions addressing these items. The conditions offered for consideration include:

1. The Town Council will need to approve the development of the paired lot units without the alley access currently required by the development agreement. Paragraph 14 of the development agreement allows the applicant to pursue this request.
2. The development agreement and conceptual land use plan identifies the public park location as being in POD 4 which is centrally located on the lake front. The applicant is requesting the public park be relocated to an area outside the gated portion of the community. Again, Paragraph 14 allows the request. According to the development agreement, the public park is not required until the building permit for 500th unit is issued. The Town may wish to ask that the public park be advanced to Phase 1 if the new location is approved.
3. Should the proposed location be approved, the Town Council needs to approve the placement of storm water retention for the access road within the public park.
4. Compliance with the minimum open space requirement for the overall project needs to be documented. The data submitted for the residential portion of the overall project notes that 10-acres of the required open space will come from other areas of the project. The property owner needs to document these sources.
5. Prior to approval of the final subdivision plan for the entire project or a phase of the project, the applicant needs to provide evidence that the access road from SR 19 to the residential phase of the project will be constructed.
6. The tree analysis for specimen trees needs to be provided.
7. The project covenants and restrictions need to include language that either prohibits individual swimming pools and other accessory structures or states that the owner waives his right to seek a variance to the setback requirements.
8. The applicant needs to calculate the “fair share” cost of its impact on the SR-19 and CR-48 intersection and provide the payment for use in intersection improvements. Design and construction will be coordinated with FDOT and Lake County.
9. The applicant needs to provide an adequate guarantee for improvements to the east entrance of the project from SR 19. This guarantee can be done in conjunction with the commercial development component. These improvements are solely project related and the funding contributions need to be assured if the intersection upgrades do not occur with the initial construction. The traffic study recommendations suggest signalization may not be warranted with the initial project phases.
10. The applicant will provide at its cost the access controls required by FDOT for SR-19 and Lake County for CR-48 as part of their respective permitting process. These items will include turn lanes, deceleration lanes, and other access controls and, if necessary, right-of-way required by the permitting agencies.

Recommendation

The staff recommends approval of the preliminary site plan with the conditions noted above.