

GRIFFEY ENGINEERING, INC.

February 11, 2024

Sean O'Keefe, Town Manager
Town of Howey-in-the-Hills
101 N. Palm Avenue
Howey-in-the-Hills, FL 34737

RE: Hillside Groves SR 19 Access Connection

Dear Sean:

This letter is a follow up to the town council meeting of January 8, 2024 regarding the SR 19 access connection for Hillside Groves. At that meeting I reported on our prior meeting with FDOT regarding the width of the proposed access connection (three lanes versus a four lane divided boulevard). As I discussed with the council, FDOT would only permit the three lane connection at this time, and that they would reevaluate the connection configuration when the commercial portion of the project came forward for permitting.

In my report to the council, I also looked at a roundabout as an alternate type of connection, and it was my opinion that it was preferable to the standard turn lanes as shown in the construction plans. During our discussion council members expressed concerns that changing the connection at this point in the process would create delays, and that there would be an increase in cost. My working assumptions during the meeting were that a roundabout would cost less than the turn lane option, and that, while it might cause some delay, it would not be inordinately long. At the conclusion of our discussion I told the council that I would work with FDOT and the developer to determine if a roundabout would be a viable alternative.

I have since had communications with the developer's consultants and with FDOT, and it turns out that my assumptions were not correct. The project engineers have provided us with cost estimates for both options and they assert that a roundabout would be costlier. I've also been in contact with FDOT, and while they are generally positive, they seem to be bound by their processes and procedures. It looks like the roundabout option would result in a time delay to the project. Based on those findings, my recommendation is to continue forward with the access connection as shown in the approved construction plans, and issue a Local Government Letter of Authorization for the FDOT Notice of Intent to Issue Permit (NOI).

It should be noted that this intersection will likely require signalization in the future. Also, the primary need for a signal will be project generated traffic. Accordingly, the majority of the cost of the signal should be borne by the project developer. As the later phases of Hillside Groves (residential and commercial) come forward in the future, this intersection will be reevaluated by the town and FDOT. We will certainly look closely into future signalization.

Sincerely,



Donald A. Griffey, P.E.