



TMHConsulting@cfl.rr.com
97 N. Saint Andrews Dr.
Ormond Beach, FL 32174
PH: 386.316.8426

MEMORANDUM

TO: Howey-in-the-Hills Town Council
CC: J. Brock, Town Clerk
FROM: Thomas Harowski, AICP, Planning Consultant
SUBJECT: Whispering Heights Final Subdivision Plan
DATE: July 3, 2024

The applicant is seeking approval of the final subdivision plan for the Whispering Heights single-family subdivision. For many years the project went under the name of Whispering Hills. The subdivision is located on Buckhill Road at the bend east of Lakeshore Drive and consists of 156 lots supported by other subdivision improvements. The project does have frontage on Little Lake Harris. The project has received preliminary subdivision approval which essentially fixes the plan for roads, lots, retention areas and similar subdivision improvements to meet the standards of the MDR-2 zoning classification. The final subdivision approval will allow the applicant to initiate construction of subdivision improvements.

Project Summary

The project is designated Medium Density Residential on the future land use map and zoned MDR-2. The project does have a development agreement approved which addresses more process items than development standards.. For development standards, the project is guided by the standards for MDR-2 zoning and the requirements of the land development code. As noted above the basic street and lot layout was fixed with the preliminary subdivision plan, but some of the project highlights are provided here.

- All of the homes will be single-family dwellings
- The predominant lot size is 75 feet by 120 feet but the lots fronting on the lake are larger with lot widths at 100 feet. The larger lots on the lakefront are specified in the development agreement.
- The project will be served by Town water and sewer, with both services brought to the site from Lakeshore Drive area.

- Landscape irrigation will be drawn from the wet retention pond with the option to draw water from Little Lake Harris if necessary. This approach has been cleared through the water management district.
- The project does include some park areas including one park area at the lake front.
- The project will extend sidewalk along the frontage with Buckhill Road and along Buckhill Road to connect to Lakeshore Drive.
- The project will be a gated development with private roads including two access points with Buckhill Road.
- The project will include a screening wall and landscaped buffer along Buckhill Road.

Final Subdivision Design

The final subdivision design is a technical review of the engineering to ensure the project meets the Town code and good design standards. The final subdivision design is compared with the preliminary subdivision plan to verify the final plan is consistent with the preliminary design. The plans were reviewed several times with the Development Review Committee followed by a series of exchanges between the Town's engineer and the applicant's design engineer to work through design details. The review was complicated by the need to include off-site construction to connect the project to the Town's water and sewer system as well as design considerations generated by the relatively steep slope extending from Buckhill Road to Little Lake Harris. The Town engineer has certified that the plan set meets the Town requirements, but approval needs to be conditioned on a couple of actions.

1. The plan for sewer is to use a force main to connect the project to the lift station constructed with the Venezia subdivision. The Town and the school district have been negotiating an easement to allow access to the lift station across school district property, and this negotiation process is nearing completion. The applicant has found an alternate route to connect to the lift station and avoid the school district property, so the easement should not affect this project.
2. The Central Florida Community Development district has provided the applicant with a letter stating their willingness and ability to serve the project. The applicant still needs to pay the necessary fees to reserve the actual treatment capacity.
3. The applicant will need to file an application with the school district for a school concurrency certification for any units in excess of the original 107 units. The original project is exempt from school concurrency because it preceded the establishment of the school concurrency process, however, any new units must meet the concurrency tests.

4. The applicant will need to provide current permits for stormwater treatment facilities, utility construction, and connection to Buckhill Road.

Planning Board Recommendation

The Planning Board reviewed the application at their regular meeting of June 27, 2024. The Board recommended approval of the final subdivision plan subject to several conditions as follows:

1. The applicant completes the process for obtaining school concurrency as evidenced by a certificate of concurrency issued by the school district.
2. The applicant pays the necessary fees to reserve sewer capacity for the project.
3. The applicant provides the required permits for construction of subdivision improvements.
4. If the project does need to access the sewer lift station using school board property, the necessary easement is approved and recorded.