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MEMORANDUM

TO: Howey-in-the-Hills Town Council
CC: J. Brock, Town Clerk
FROM: Thomas Harowski, AICP, Planning Consultant
SUBJECT: Hillside Groves Phase 1 Final Subdivision Plan
DATE: October 3, 2023

The Town has received an application for final subdivision approval for Phase 1 of the Hillside Groves mixed use development. This project, formerly known as The Reserve, was approved in its current form following a major amendment to the original development approval. The amended project was approved by the Town Council at their regular meeting of October 24, 2022. The submittal of a request for final subdivision approval is the next logical step in the development process. The Planning Board reviewed the application at their regular meeting of September 28, 2023, and recommended approval of the final subdivision plan.

Review Process and Project Status

The Town's process for Village Mixed Use developments includes approval of planned unit development agreement that sets out the concept plan for the development and any specific parameters that will govern the project in addition to the Town's land development regulations. Once the development agreement is approved (October 24, 2022, in this case) the project can proceed to a preliminary subdivision plan for any lots to be created or a site plan for any non-residential development. In this case the preliminary subdivision plan was approved at the same time as the amended development agreement. As noted above, the next step in the process is the final subdivision plan.

The final subdivision plan is the point in the development process where detailed engineering for streets, utilities, stormwater facilities and any other subdivision improvements are completed. The review process for a final subdivision plat is to check the design for compliance with Town standards and compliance with general engineering design principles. The plan is compared with the preliminary subdivision plan to verify that the design as submitted is consistent with the preliminary subdivision plan. The layout of streets, lots, and other site arrangements of land in the project is done at the preliminary subdivision phase. So long as the final subdivision plan is consistent with the preliminary subdivision plan, the review is basically a technical evaluation.

The Reserve project includes 378 acres. Phase One encompasses 140 acres or 37% of the total project area. The overall project includes residential development in four phases using the Hillside Groves name, commercial development, and a civic use tract. The Town has previously approved a site plan for the Howey Self Storage mini-warehouse project located on SR 19 just south of the Florida Avenue intersection. The Howey Self Storage project is part of the larger Reserve development. At this time the Howey Self Storage Project has not sought a permit for construction. Hillside Groves is the residential portion of The Reserve project with this application seeking approval for the final subdivision plan for phase one. The first phase residential development includes 245 units or about one-third of the residential unit total of 728.

Final Subdivision Plan

The final subdivision plan is the last step before the project is authorized for construction. The project has reserved sewage treatment capacity with the Central Lake Community Development District, and the final subdivision plans show the sewage collection system that will support the project. The Town has adequate potable water capacity to support the project and the final subdivision plans include designs for extending water service to the site and for serving individual lots. The traffic study found the affected roadway segments have adequate capacity to operate within the designated level of service for phase one and for the project at buildout. The traffic study recommended turn lanes at the project entrance on SR-19 which will be provided in accordance with FDOT permitting, and the project will include turn lanes at the intersection with Number Two Road as required by Lake County. Additional right-of-way dedication is also required by Lake County. The stormwater plan meets current state and Town requirements per the engineering review. Due to the age of the project it is exempt from Lake County School concurrency.

The first phase of the project includes the central collector road and residential neighborhoods in the center of the project as shown on the accompanying diagram. The first phase residential component includes 129 units on 50 x 80 foot lots and 116 units on 50 x 115 foot lots. This phase also includes stormwater systems and utilities to support the residential development. Some of the utility work will be off-site to extend water and sewer systems from the current plant locations.

The project was reviewed by the Development Review Committee at several meetings with the last review conducted on August 10, 2023. Following that DRC meeting the applicant made final adjustments that were reviewed by the Town engineer and found to be in compliance with the Town code and engineering practice.

Final subdivisions are required to begin construction within 18 months of final approval by the Town, unless the project is granted a time extension. The applicant will be required to submit permits from state and local agencies including:

- Florida DEP for water and sewer system construction
- Florida DEP for wetland impacts
- FDOT for improvements within the SR 19 right-of-way
- Lake County for improvements within the Number Two Road right-of-way

- St Johns River Water Management District for stormwater systems
- An NPDES permit is also required for runoff control during construction

At the August 19, 2023 Development Review Committee meeting Mr. Miles submitted a list of eight questions about the proposed plan set. The applicants were asked to provide a response for each of these items. The response from the project engineer is included in the agenda packet. These comments were discussed as part of the Planning Board meeting including the formal response submitted by the applicant and comments from staff. The Planning Board did not direct any changes to the plan based on this discussion. There may still be some open issues so far as Mr. Miles is concerned, and he will discuss these at the Town Council meeting.

Recommendation

The final subdivision plan is consistent with the approved preliminary subdivision plan, and the Town's engineering consultant has found the plans to meet the Town's design requirements and good engineering practice. The recommendation is to approve the final subdivision plan.