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MEMORANDUM

TO: Howey-in-the-Hills Planning Board
CC: J. Brock, Town Clerk
FROM: Thomas Harowski, AICP, Planning Consultant
SUBJECT: Revisions to Grid Street Policy
DATE: November 3, 2022

The Town has decided to modify the Future Land Use element Policy 1.11.6 requiring the use of a grid street network to be applied in some circumstances where new residential development is proposed. The policy directive is to remove the policy completely or modify the policy so that the application of the policy is not mandatory. At the October regular meeting of the Planning Board, the issue was discussed in some detail and the Planning Board requested that the item be brought back to the Board with additional explanation so that the Board may make recommendation to the Town Council on language to amend the policy. The comprehensive plan objective and supporting policies as currently adopted are listed below:

OBJECTIVE 1.11: *Innovative Land Development Applications.* Future growth and development shall be managed through the preparation, adoption, implementation and enforcement of innovative land development regulations.

POLICY 1.11.1: *Use of Mixed Use Developments.* To discourage urban sprawl and to maximize existing and planned public facilities, the Town has adopted the Village Mixed Use and Town Center Mixed Use land uses.

Mixed Use designations may include single family, multiple family, commercial, recreation, open space and institutional land uses not to exceed development densities and intensities of use established for these land uses in this *Element*.

POLICY 1.11.2: *Use of Cluster Developments.* To promote the conservation of permeable surface area and maintain the Town's rural character, cluster developments shall be promoted by the Town during the development review process. Developers of Mixed Use/Planned Unit Developments and residential subdivisions shall be encouraged to cluster development in order to preserve open space.

- POLICY 1.11.3:** *Maintaining Innovative Land Development Regulations.* The Town shall maintain innovative land development regulations that encourage mixed-use developments and incorporate site design planning techniques that will enhance the quality of large scale developments or redevelopment area(s).
- POLICY 1.11.4:** *Establishing Architectural Guidelines.* By December 2012, the Town shall amend the Land Development Regulations to establish architectural guidelines for the Town Center Mixed Use and Village Mixed Use land use to maintain the unique and hometown charm of Howey-in-the-Hills. The Town shall encourage historical and traditional styles native to the Howey-in-the-Hills area and new and innovative architectural design when appropriate.
- POLICY 1.11.5:** *Requiring Underground Utilities.* The Town shall require all new subdivisions, residential and commercial developments, approved after the adoption of this *Comprehensive Plan*, to have underground telephone, cable and electrical utility lines to provide a more attractive, efficient, and safer development.
- POLICY 1.11.6:** *New Development Following the Town's Existing Street Grid Pattern.* The Town shall require all new subdivisions, residential and commercial developments, approved after the adoption of this *Comprehensive Plan*, to follow the Town's existing street grid pattern when appropriate.

Proposed Policy Amendment Options

Proposed amendments to the current policy group include three proposed actions. First is a minor revision to Policy 1.11.4 to reflect that the action directed by this policy has been completed. The second action is to delete policy 1.11.6 or modify the policy so that identified actions are not mandatory. The third action is to add a policy that clarifies the basis on which subdivisions require more than one general public access as a support for and clarification of the access requirement currently included in the Town's land development regulations. Proposed amendment language is presented below.

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POLICY 1.11.2: *Use of Cluster Developments.* To promote the conservation of permeable surface area and maintain the Town’s rural character, cluster developments shall be promoted by the Town during the development review process. Developers of Mixed Use/Planned Unit Developments and residential subdivisions shall be encouraged to cluster development in order to preserve open space.

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POLICY 1.11.4: *Establishing Architectural Guidelines.* ~~By December 2012,~~ The Town shall amend continue to apply the Land Development Regulations ~~to establish~~ for architectural guidelines for the Town Center Mixed Use and Village Mixed Use land use to maintain the unique and hometown charm of Howey-in-the-Hills. The Town shall encourage historical and traditional styles native to the Howey-in-the-Hills area and new and innovative architectural design when appropriate.

POLICY 1.11.5: *Requiring Underground Utilities.* The Town shall require all new subdivisions, residential and commercial developments, approved after the adoption of this *Comprehensive Plan*, to have underground telephone, cable and electrical utility lines to provide a more attractive, efficient, and safer development.

~~**POLICY 1.11.6:** *New Development Following the Town’s Existing Street Grid Pattern.* The Town shall require all new subdivisions, residential and commercial developments, approved after the adoption of this *Comprehensive Plan*, to follow the Town’s existing street grid pattern when appropriate. (Option A)~~

POLICY 1.11.6: *Promoting interconnected neighborhoods.* The Town shall support the development of interconnected neighborhoods using pedestrian linkages, bicycle facilities, and alternative

transportation methods such as golf carts as appropriate. (Option B)

POLICY 1.11.6: *Promoting interconnected neighborhoods.* The Town shall support the development of interconnected neighborhoods using pedestrian linkages, bicycle facilities, alternative transportation methods such as golf carts, and vehicular connections as appropriate. (Option C)

POLICY 1.11.7 Multiple access to subdivisions: The Town shall require new developments consisting of 50-acres or more to have a minimum of two points of vehicular access. The use of access points restricted to “emergency use only” as one of the required access points shall only be approved as a last resort when at least two points of full vehicular access cannot physically be provided. This policy shall not be construed as prohibiting private streets or prohibiting the use of emergency only access points in addition to the standard vehicular access requirement. (New policy)

The options provided for Policy 1.11.6 are to simply delete the policy (Option A) or provide for neighborhood interconnections based on non-automotive methods (Option B) or neighborhood interconnections using both automotive and non-automotive methods. (Option C). For Options B and C the use of any one technique is available but not mandatory. The inclusion of the term “as appropriate” allows the Town Council to consider all factors in deciding which, if any, interconnection options should be applied given the specifics of the individual case. Having a policy supporting interconnected neighborhoods gives the Town Council a strong standing to pursue integrated neighborhoods to the extent that it is reasonable and desirable to do so.