

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Howey-in-the-Hills Development Review Committee  
**CC:** J. Brock, Town Clerk  
**FROM:** Thomas Harowski, AICP, Planning Consultant  
**SUBJECT:** Lake Hills Commercial Development Preliminary Site Plan  
**DATE:** October 18, 2023

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The Town has received an application for preliminary site plan approval for the commercial portion of the Lake Hills development. The preliminary site plan is the first step in the approval process to initiate construction. The preliminary site plan process is guided by Section 4.03.01 - .09 in the Town's land development regulations. The comments provided in this report are based on these code sections, the development agreement for Lake Hills and plans submitted to the Town on October 12, 2023.

### Preliminary Site Plan Submittal Requirements

Section 4.03.09 includes the requirements for preliminary site plan drawings. The submittal has been reviewed in comparison with these requirements and the following deficiencies have been noted:

- 4.03.09 D: The required vicinity map was not provided.
- 4.03.09 H: Required and total open space were not provided.
- 4.03.09 I: Dedications and reservations, if any, were not noted.
- 4.03.09 M: A tree survey was not provided.

Also, are there any wetlands on the commercial parcel, including the proposed outparcels?

The identified outparcels were accepted as project phases. The tree survey does not require inclusion of the citrus trees. The area containing citrus should be noted on the survey. Open space is a requirement of the overall Lake Hills development. If the commercial area is not contributing to the overall open space commitment for the project, this determination needs to be noted, and the applicant needs to provide an analysis of how the open space requirement is being met for the full project.

## **Subdivision Requirements**

The development of the commercial portion of the Lake Hills mixed use project will be the third time property has been parceled off from the initial parent tract. One parcel was sold to the Lake County School district and a second parcel was sold to the Town for development of a water treatment plant. A subdivision of the parent tract needs to be prepared and recorded to formally create the various parcels. This plat can be done as the final plat creating the parcels only, without the need to include all the detailed engineering design that typically accompanies a plat document.

For the subject commercial parcel, a plat needs to be prepared to create the primary commercial parcel and the various out parcels. This plat, at a minimum, will need to identify any dedicated roadway (main collector road), all utility services that are proposed for dedication to the Town, and provide for cross-easement access to the outparcels where this is proposed. The commercial parcel plat needs to include any property management association proposed for the maintenance of common areas and buffers. The plan also needs to detail how the commercial tract will be related to the overall Lake Hills development, including any agreement for off-site stormwater retention.

The master parcel subdivision can proceed separately from the commercial parcel subdivision and site plan process. The commercial parcel subdivision may be done in advance of, or concurrently with the preliminary site plan.

## **Lake Hills Development Agreement Requirements**

The Lake Hills approved development agreement includes several provisions that need to be observed in the site plan and there are some organizational issues which need clarification.

1. Note that the maximum building height is 35 feet with an allowance to 45 feet for items such as parapets, towers and other decorative building elements as shown in the design examples.
2. The commercial parcel development will be considered the first development pod for purposes of activating the requirements for sidewalks on SR-19. Sidewalks need to extend across the primary commercial parcel and Outparcels A, B and C as these abut SR-19 right-of-way. The sidewalks are expected to be located within the SR-19 right-of-way and permitted by FDOT.
3. The 25-foot buffer requirement along the SR-19 frontage will also include the primary commercial parcel as well as Outparels A, B and C. The buffer design requirements are detailed in the attachments to the approved development agreement.
4. Page 5 Subsection h of the development agreement includes design requirements for commercial entrances and buffer walls. These need to be addressed in the final site plan submittal.

5. The development agreement includes design examples for the commercial development which need to be addressed in the final site plan submittal.
6. Note that the enforcement language in the development agreement references the Mayor as the responsible agent. The Town has changed to a council-manager government format so the enforcement agent will now be the town manager.
7. The development agreement allows 150,000 square feet of commercial area. With the area proposed for development the overall project retains 88,700 square feet of building area for the commercial outparcels.
8. The allowable floor area ratio (FAR) is 0.23%. The project proposes an FAR of 0.154%.

### **Preliminary Site Plan Concept Design**

The following comments are offered based on the design as submitted. The applicant is encouraged to review the comments from the Development Review Committee meeting in July, 2022 as well as the approved development agreement and the code sections cited.

1. The design locates the storm water retention area off site. The applicant needs to provide documentation that the applicant has approval from the property owner to drain to the off site location. The off site owner also needs to be aware that the current design of the proposed retention area does not meet the code requirements for counting as a contributing location to minimum open space requirements.
2. Is the proposed off-site retention area expected to be a wet pond? The applicant may want to consider options to make the retention area more of a contributor to the overall project design.
3. What is the applicant's current plan to provide sewer service for the project? If on-site treatment is proposed a short-term solution, where is the facility proposed?
4. The project site has a severe slope from the SR-19 frontage going towards the lake. The slope drops some 50 feet across the project area. What is the proposal for dealing with the slope in the project design?
5. Project access considerations:
  - a. Will a full access at the CR-48 location meet County standards? Has the access proposal been coordinated with Lake County?

- b. Is the spacing from the project driveway to the planned intersection of the central collector road sufficient to meet Lake County standards?
  - c. FDOT has been considering a traffic circle for the SR-19 and CR-48 intersection. The project needs to coordinate with FDOT to determine if the project and the project traffic study needs to consider this option.
  - d. Is additional right-of-way required by either Lake County or FDOT to meet minimum standards and/or provide for future improvements?
  - e. Access easements will be required between the proposed project and the access to the various outparcels.
  - f. As noted earlier, sidewalks will be required along the SR-19 frontage.
  - g. The overall plan for the Lake Hills project includes a bicycle/pedestrian facility within the central collector right-of-way. This facility needs to be included in the design for the portion of central collector to be constructed to serve the commercial properties.
  - h. The methodology proposal for the the TIA was inadequate. Comments have been forwarded separately/
6. Parking lot design. Refer to Section 7.05.00 for requirements.
- a. Parking standards for shopping centers require one space for every 250 square feet of gross floor area. Based on 61,300 square feet, the minimum number of parking spaces is 245, not 306 spaces as shown on the submittal. The project exceeds the minimum requirement by 69 spaces or 28%.
  - b. We are assuming the outparcels will contain their required parking without reliance on the primary parcel.
  - c. The code (7.05.01 A) requires terminal islands at the end of each parking row measuring 200 square feet as a minimum and meeting the listed landscaping standards. The landscape requirements need to be provided with the final site plan submittal.
  - d. Interior islands of at least 200 square feet are required (7.05.01 B) every ten parking spaces. Again the final site plan needs to demonstrate compliance with the landscape requirements.
  - e. Divider islands measuring a minimum of 10 feet are required (7.05.01 C) between parking rows. The final site plan needs to demonstrate compliance with the associated landscape requirements. Note that this requirement was a comment in the July, 2022 DRC meeting.

- f. The project should consider including EV charging stations.
7. Buffers and Landscaping
- a. A tree survey is required. Citrus trees do not need to be individually surveyed, but the area planted with citrus should be noted.
  - b. Please review the landscape planting requirements (7.01.02) for the final site plan submittal.
  - c. A buffer needs to be provided along the northern project boundary to screen the service area from residential development to the north.
  - d. Buffers along SR-19 need to be provided across the outparcels as well as the primary parcel.
  - e. Is the proposal to require the outparcels to provide their other buffers internally?
  - f. Section 7.04.01 needs to be reviewed for Water Star requirements and Florida Friendly landscaping.
  - g. Section 7.06.00 needs to be consulted for irrigation system design. Please note that potable water sources may not be used for landscaping irrigation. The applicant may wish to consider a joint solution with the residential portion of the project.
  - h. Please note the foundation planting areas required with the buildings. The applicant may wish to review Section 7.04.02 A to determine if a hardscape solution might be available for some of the foundation planting requirements.
8. Proposed sign locations need to be identified. If a sign is proposed at the CR-48 access, provision needs to be made for a sign location.