



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

MEMORANDUM

TO: Howey-in-the-Hills Development Review committee
CC: J. Brock, Town Clerk
FROM: Thomas Harowski, AICP, Planning Consultant
SUBJECT: Westminster Development Pre-Application Review
DATE: October 27, 2021

The Town has received a pre-application request to review a development proposal for two holdings located on the north side of SR 19 just west of the Little Lake Harris bridge. The two holdings consist of three tax parcels identified by ALT Numbers as 1780446, 1209102 and 1209099. There is one additional parcel in the area (2762650) located at the northwest corner of the bridge and owned by FDOT. Based on the Property Appraiser Records and other reported data the parcels are described as:

Parcel ID	Total Area	Wetland	Net Area
1780446	51 ac.	14 ac.	37ac.
1209102	14.7 ac	0 ac	14.7 ac
1209099	1.3 ac.	0 ac	1.3 ac

The wetland is a reported area total that is not substantiated by field review or survey at this time.

The three parcels are in unincorporated Lake County, and the inquiry to the Town is about annexation of the parcels and consideration for development of an adult living community that would consist of 300 to 350 townhouse style independent living residences and an assisted living facility. All the residential units would be age restricted to 55 and older. Consideration of a development program in Howey-in-the-Hills will require annexation, amendment to the comprehensive plan and assignment of a zoning designation consistent with the comprehensive plan. Finding a fit for the project within the comprehensive plan is the most difficult of the required actions.

The Lake County comprehensive plan designates the three parcels as Urban Low Density (ULD) which allows residential development up to four units per acre, and the ULD allows nursing and personal care facilities. The combined parcels are zoned County R-1 Rural Residential which has a minimum one-acre lot and Agriculture which has a minimum five-acre lot. These zoning classifications are clearly holding zones for future development when compared to the allowable densities under the comprehensive plan.

The combined parcels are impacted by wetlands of approximately 14 acres in the northwest corner of the parcel and the same area is impacted the 100-year flood zone.

The flood zone also extends along the lake frontage. As with most of the parcels in the vicinity, the property has significant changes in elevation before finally sloping toward the lake.

Actions Required of the Town

Approval of a development by the Town will require annexation of the three parcels, amendment of the Town’s comprehensive plan to assign a future land use designation, and adoption of a zoning program that is consistent with the comprehensive plan.

- Annexation of the properties is a simple process requiring only a survey and a petition for annexation from the property owner.
- Assignment of a future land use classification that would support the intended scope of the project is a more challenging issue. The Lake County comprehensive plan yields a unit total of 212 units at four units per acre for the net land area (exclusive of wetlands). The Town’s Medium Density Residential also tops out at four units per acre so the unit yield is the same. The Town could consider application of the Village Mixed Use land use classification which also has a base density of four units per acre, but allows up to six units per acre if the project includes 20% usable open space (exclusive of wetlands). The comprehensive plan policies require the application of Village Mixed Use land use for any project with 300 units or more. The following chart presents a comparative density analysis.

Base Plan	Total Acres	Net Acres	Density	Unit Total
Lake County ULD	67	53	4/acre	212
Howey MDR	67	53	4/acre	212
Howey VMU Basic	67	53	4/acre	212
Howey VMU Bonus	67	53	6/acre	318

- Once the future land use designation is determined, an appropriate zoning classification is required. Application of the Village Mixed Use land use classification will require the use of planned unit development zoning.

These three actions can be initiated concurrently, but each of them will conclude at a different point. Annexation is the shortest term action and is complete upon adoption of the annexation ordinance. The comprehensive plan amendment will require following the State’s expedited plan review process which allows time for State review and intergovernmental review between the transmittal hearing (first reading) and the adoption hearing (second reading). The zoning amendments can be completed at any point, but cannot become effective until the comprehensive plan amendment is completed.

The Town's comprehensive plan does have policies which support annexation, housing diversity and group home settings for populations that need them. Note the following policies:

POLICY 1.1.8: *Annexation.* The Town shall continue to investigate the benefits of annexation to enhance the Town's housing stock.

POLICY 1.3.1: *Promote Diversity in Housing Types.* The Town shall promote a diversity of housing types by designating an adequate number of sites for single family and multiple family housing needed to support the short-range and long-range population demands of the Town on the *Future Land Use Map*.

OBJECTIVE 1.5: *Group Homes and Foster Care Facilities.* The Town shall require that the needs of those residents requiring group home or foster care are met.

POLICY 1.5.1: *Licensed Foster Care, Community Residential or Group Home Facilities.* All group homes, community residential or foster care facilities within Howey-in-the-Hills shall be licensed by the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. The development review process shall require applicants of group home and community residential home developments to provide evidence of appropriate HRS licenses prior to the issuance of a development order or permit.

POLICY 1.5.2: *Location of Group Homes, Community Residential Facilities, and Foster Care Facilities.* The Town shall continue to permit the location of foster care, community residential homes, and group homes in residential areas as well as any additional land use districts permitted in the Town's Land Development Regulations. These facilities shall serve as alternatives to institutionalization.

Village Mixed Use Land Use Considerations

Presenting the proposed project through the Village Mixed Use land use classification will require the applicant and Town to make some specific adjustments and declarations to comply with the VMU requirements.

- In order to apply the bonus density level the project must include a minimum of 20% usable open space. Usable open space excludes any wetlands. Using the data available from the property appraiser's office, the minimum open space to qualify for the bonus is 13.4 acres (67 acres x 20%). Excluding the wetland area estimated at 14.7 acres leaves 38.6 acres for actual development.

- At the maximum unit yield of 318 units, the overall project density is 4.7 units per acre and the net project density is 8.2 units per acre. The net density for the townhouse component of the project would be further increased depending on the area devoted to the ALF facility.
- The VMU requirements establish a maximum allocation of site area for residential use. Residential use cannot exceed 85% of the net land area or 45 acres. The project should meet this requirement since the bonus density criterion limits the available residential land to about 39 acres.
- The Town should include some type of policy statement that assigns group residential uses such as nursing homes and ALFs as insitutional uses for the purpose of allocating land use in the VMU projects. This policy will help with the Westminster project but would also open opportunity for insitutional development in other projects as well.

Other Project Considerations

There are some additional considerations that need to be evaluated should the project move forward.

- Traffic is going to be a significant consideration given the local road capacity and the presence of other approved and proposed projects along this stretch of SR 19. The comprehensive plan amendment will require a traffic study to evaluate available capacity.
- Some traffic operational considerations will also need to be evaluated during the comprehensive plan review stage. The primary project access from SR 19 needs to be coordinated with other development on the south side of SR 19, and a second entrance needs to be identified. One option is to work with the Lake Hills project to make a connection to their collector road and the proposed commercial area.
- Water and sewer services for the entire area along SR 19 between CR 48 and the SR-19 bridge need to analyzed to determine how service can best be provided and when service might be available. The Town's current program to construct a new water plant serving the area may need to be advanced, and sanitary sewer options need to be coordinated with the proposed project and service capacity from the Central Lake Community development District.