October 30, 2019
File: 215615162/210

Manatee County
Building and Development Services Department
1112 Manatee Avenue West
Bradenton, Florida 34205

Attention: Ms. Dorothy Rainey, AICP, Senior Planner

Reference: University Lakes – Specific Approval Request

Dear Ms. Rainey,

On behalf of our Client, Davis Development, we respectfully request specific approval from the following Land Development Code requirements:

1. **The Manatee County Land Development Code, Section 1001.1.C.2 states the following:**

   “Second Means of Access Required. All residential developments or parts of phases thereof, containing more than one hundred (100) residential dwelling units; and all professional, commercial, and manufacturing development, or parts of phases thereof, containing more than fifty (50) lots shall have a second separate means of access (street). Secondary access roads must meet the following standards:

   1. The second means of access (street) shall have access to a through street, either public or private, constructed to County standards, and other than that street on which the primary access is located.

   2. If a second means of access is not available to another street, another direct access street to the same primary access street is acceptable if the primary access street is a public bi-directional thoroughfare, and separated from the other access by a minimum of three hundred (300) feet. The three hundred (300) foot separation may be reduced subject to other design considerations addressing fire protection, public safety, traffic, storm water management and other Manatee County Public Works Standards.

   3. Where a specific design incorporates site security elements for a residential planned development; the Board and the Department Director may consider an alternative design for the construction of the secondary means of access, subject to the following:

      a. The alternative design shall incorporate specific security provisions to allow satisfactory ingress by emergency vehicles.

      b. The right-of-way design standards for width and radii shall be adhered to.

      c. The design shall retain the construction of appropriate utilities and drainage requirements.

      d. The security components shall include the construction of and maintenance criteria for security gates and signage, in addition to the road base and surface stability for emergency vehicles.

      The area above the ground surface shall remain free and unobstructed to allow ready access by emergency vehicles to the planned development.”

The subject site is approximately 3.5 acres of Parcel 15 of the University Lakes DRI. The site is located at a mid-block location on Heath Park Way, directly north of Lakewood Ranch Medical Center. Our client proposes to

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construct a 175-unit apartment complex that will have a parking garage on the first two floors, wrapped with apartments and three stories of apartments above. The building is proposed to be setback approximately 20 feet from the property line.

County staff has determined that the proposed site design, with one point of entry into a parking garage, and one point of entry to the rental office, does not comply with this requirement of the LDC because two means of access are not provided to and from the parking garage. For that reason, we request Specific Approval from LDC Section 1001.1.C.2, so one means of access to the parking garage may be permitted for this specific project, given certain site constraints and design considerations.

Certain site constraints limit varied site access options. In this instance, a second access to a through street, constructed to County Standards, is not a viable option because adjacent development to the north is a private apartment complex, with internal drive aisles. The site is also gated and owned by others.

We acknowledge that the Code is intended to protect the health, safety and welfare of residents in neighborhoods of more than 100 dwelling units. We contend that the original intent of this provision is to address residential neighborhoods, when the form of development is less dense, and on larger tracts of land, with single family detached or semi-detached units, to ensure safe and efficient ingress and egress for residents and first responders.

In this instance, all apartment units are contained in a single building, with parking provided within a structured garage on a small parcel of land with 484 linear feet of street frontage, and a single building situated near the street.

A second driveway is proposed to provide access to the rental office, amenity area and a cargo elevator. This area is intended to offer prospective renters with a convenient place to enter and park and is also intended to provide First Responders direct and easy access to the pool deck and building.

We also offer a Traffic Operations Analysis, in support of this request, to demonstrate that the single means of access to serve the parking garage is more than adequate to accommodate the anticipated traffic from the apartment complex.

Finally, given the location of the project in an area with a diversity of land uses, a more holistic transportation approach that promotes non-vehicular based trips should be implemented. Utilizing a single garage access reduces conflict points for not only vehicles, but bicycles, pedestrians, and public transportation using Health Park Way. This allows for a safer, more walkable and rideable environment allowing the public right-of-way to be transformed from an auto-dominated environment to a multi-modal environment.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. Please contact our office with any questions you may have regarding this request.

Regards,

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