

Specific Approval Request

The General Development Plan (“GDP”) proposes a design which is not literally in accord with applicable regulations, however, the Board may find that the public purpose of these regulations are satisfied to an equivalent or greater degree and may grant specific approval for the particular case.

(1) Roadways

The subject development is designed to be an age restricted community for persons 55 years or older. Developing for active adults requires consideration of certain alternatives to traditional design. For example, active adults spend significantly more time walking for exercise than other persons might. With that in mind, an 8 foot wide multi-use paved trail will be constructed along non-loaded roadways and additional trail systems will connect residential areas to the planned amenity center areas. The residential streets will include the traditional 5 foot wide sidewalk along one side of the street. Additional design alternatives are proposed for the width of the travel lanes for the residential streets to allow additional open space and to promote the use of the area in front of the residences for gathering and activity for pedestrians. This reduction in the pavement width also supports the applicant’s need to comply with Section 604.1.2.10, *Impervious Surface Reduction*, for projects located within the Evers Reservoir Watershed Protection Overlay District. The policy states that “maximum effort shall be made by the developer to minimize impervious surfaces within the WPE district. Included with each application shall be specifications of the measures being used to limit the amount of impervious surface that is directly connected to any drainage facility discharging into any inflowing watercourse.” While non-residential developments typically achieve this reduction within parking areas, the decrease in the travel lane width is a logical option in a residential development.

The GDP illustrates a cross section of a private street design for residential streets within the community which includes the following alternative design features:

- 22 feet of pavement width (two 11 foot wide travel lanes)
- Street trees planted within the 10 foot wide private utility easement (see further discussion under item (2) Landscaping and Greenbelt Buffers)

Additionally, to carry the theme throughout the community, trees will be planted along the spine roadways within the area between the back of curb and the sidewalk or trail.

The cross section is included to demonstrate that adequate, appropriate and safe accommodations and space have been made for all utilities, slopes, setbacks, drainage, and highway design elements. This roadway section is intended for loaded roadways and not the boulevard or main roadway through the development. The applicant requests that the Board find the public purpose of these regulations will be satisfied to an equivalent or greater degree.

740.3. The following sections include standards for the three types of private streets that do not have to meet County Standards: Private streets in planned developments, in A or A-1 Districts

and private streets serving five (5) lots or less. All other private streets must be constructed to Manatee County Public Works Standards.

740.3.1. Specific Design Requirements For Private Streets In Planned Developments. The design and construction shall adhere to the criteria set forth in Section 603.4, 740.2.5 through 740.2.7, 740.2.6.12 through 740.2.6.17, and 740.2.6.19. In addition, when the applicant proposes that the width of the private street or any element thereof, to be less than the required standards for public streets; the design must clearly reflect adequate, appropriate, and safe accommodations and space for all utilities, slopes, setbacks, drainage and highway design elements.

740.2.6.11 The minimum travel lane width for each lane shall be twelve (12) feet and a minimum of two lanes.

(2) Landscaping and Greenbelt Buffers

The property boundaries along north, east and south are current or future roadways and as such will contain landscaped areas consistent with residential development adjacent to roadways. The western boundary contains a significant forested wetland system which will require a 50 foot buffer. In addition to the required buffer, an additional 15 foot building setback is required under the Land Development Code. The planting of evenly spaced canopy trees, in accordance with Section 603.7.4.5, within the intervening area between the planned homesites and the wetland system would not serve its intended purpose of project separation and identification and the applicant requests that the Board find the public purpose of these regulations will be satisfied to an equivalent or greater degree.

603.7.4.5. Greenbelts. In order to promote and enhance the creation of unique neighborhood units, each distinct neighborhood shall be bordered by a continuous greenbelt buffer measuring fifteen (15) feet in width and containing one shade tree, meeting minimum planting size standards in Section 715, planted every thirty (30) feet on center. Greenbelts are to be so planned that where two (2) PDR districts abut one another, the greenbelt buffer areas are contiguous. Streets and utilities providing interneighborhood ties may be permitted to pass through greenbelt buffer areas.

The cross section of a private street design for residential streets within the community illustrates street trees located with the 10 foot private utility easement lying on either side of the 50 foot wide public utility easement (which serves as the “right of way” for the private streets). The applicant’s initial request, to locate street trees in the space between the back of curb and sidewalk, raised concerns with the staff of the operations division of the Utilities Department. In meetings with Manatee County staff, the applicant has attempted to balance the concerns of various departments and has presented the alternative design cross section.

715.3.4. Residential Street Trees.

- *Prior to C.O., one (1) canopy tree shall be planted within twenty-five (25) feet of the right-of-way of each local street within a residential development for every fifty (50) linear feet, or substantial fraction thereof, of right-of-way. None of these required trees shall be planted within a public or private utilities easement. Palm trees may not be utilized to meet this requirement, unless they are grouped with a minimum of two (2) used for each canopy tree. A maximum of twenty-five (25) per cent of all proposed residential street trees may be palm trees.*