

Memorandum

To: Scott Dadson, City Manager
From: Matt Horn, Assistant City Manager
RE: Clarendon/McLeod PDD Review
Date: November 4, 2006

At your direction I have completed a review of the PDD documents for Clarendon and McLeod Farms. These documents recommend a significant step forward in the City's effort to provide for responsible, sustainable development on these sites.

The sites are very similar in many respects, including location and natural features. The PDD document for both has been prepared by JK Tiller and Associates of Beaufort County. The two plans are heavily rooted in the new urbanist approach, while embracing the natural beauty of the area, and retaining many of the rural features associated with the site.

The plans were reviewed separately, but due to significant similarity, I have organized this analysis by issue, and not by property.

Major Omissions

City staff doggedly pursued the imposition of site design standards for development of these properties. The designer provided such standards, many tied directly to the new urbanist "Smart Code," for mixed use and residential areas. No design standards were located for AICUZ uses in either document. Additionally, the "Commercial" zone in McLeod contained no such standards.

These areas contain uses that typically carry heavier impacts on the land than residential development. Staff feels that design standards for these two zones are critical.

Hierarchy

The plans lay out a hierarchy in case of conflicts among governing documents. In such cases, the Development Agreement reigns supreme. It is essential that the development agreement explicitly state that any deviation from the Master Plan, except in cases where Smart Code v. 8.0 or higher is used, requires City Council approval.

Open Space

Several sections of these documents speak to open space on the property. The percentages and land volumes in these sections are adequate, as are many of the uses. Staff feels that one remaining issue among uses is the ability to count indoor swimming pools toward open space requirements. It is our firm belief that no completely enclosed structure should be counted toward this requirement; including pools or other indoor amenities.

Septic Treatment

It should be the City's goal that all development inside our boundaries be served by public sewer. This property, in particular, has environmental implications that almost mandate this. For this reason, language should be added to the PDDs and Development Agreements for both developments that require demonstrable negative environmental impact of public sewer installation prior to approval of septic tanks for any subdivision over 10 lots.

Permitted Uses

In each document, Table 1 of Section III provides for allowable uses in each land use district. Staff recommends the following changes:

Clarendon

- Campgrounds should be disallowed in T-4B
- Manufactured homes should be disallowed in T-2I
- Service stations should be conditional based on design criteria
- Warehouses should be conditional based on design criteria

McLeod

- Single family attached should be permitted in COM
- Two family dwellings should be permitted in COM
- Multi-family should be permitted in COM
- Family day care should be disallowed in COM
- Forest uses should be disallowed in both T-4 districts
- Guest houses should be disallowed in COM
- Warehouses, including mini, should be conditional in COM
- Drive through restaurants should be disallowed in T-4MU

Cottage Development

Section III of each document speaks to the development of cottages. The need for this type of development needs to be further explained.

Utilities

Staff feels that City Council should have explicit approval authority for power transmission facilities and communication towers. These projects have significant impact on the viewshed and neighborhood character.

Design Standards

The following changes to design standards should be considered for both developments:

- Setbacks: Page III-29 contains a table with acceptable setbacks. The rear setback described in Section IV appears to conflict
- Sidewalks in mixed use areas need to be wider (8-15 feet)
- Dumpsters need to be completely screened
- Chain link fences should be disallowed in all districts
- Pavement widths should be reduced to 20' on local streets

I welcome your comments.