

Gulf Shores Golf Club – PUD Amendment

Staff Report: Andy Bauer
Application #:ZA26-000003

Planning Commission Meeting Date: March 24, 2024
Applicant: Dennis Drewyer

Property Location: 520 Clubhouse Drive

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: DENIAL

I. SUMMARY OF REQUEST

The applicant seeks approval of a Planned Unit Development (PUD) Amendment to allow 72 single-family lots on an 8.64-acre site with the ability to rent the houses short-term.

II. EXISTING CONDITIONS & SURROUNDING CONTEXT

The 8.64-acre site is located at the Gulf Shores Golf Club near the existing clubhouse. The property is zoned PUD Overlay with an underlying zoning of R-1-4 Residential/High-Density Single-family District. The property is currently developed with the Gulf Shores Golf Club. The following are the surrounding zoning districts and land uses:

- **North** – R-1-4 Residential /High-Density Single-family District / Single-family houses
- **South** – R-4 Residential/High-Density Multiple-family District / Regency Condominiums
- **East** – R-4 Residential/High-Density Multiple-family District / Fairway Condominiums
- **West** – R-1-4 Residential /High-Density Single-family District / Single-family houses

III. BACKGROUND

1. PUD History

- 2005 Rezoning. The property was rezoned from R-1A to R-1A/PUD. Parcel 1 (169.01 acres) the golf course was designated Open Recreational Space on the PUD Master Plan and parcel 2 (6.37 acres) was approved for multi-family development along with the golf course clubhouse.
- 2006 PUD Amendment. The purpose of the PUD Amendment was to reduce the size of Parcel 1 to 164.59 acres and increased the size of Parcel 2 to 10.41 acres, reduce building heights and number of units, and add a maintenance facility to the golf course.
- 2008 PUD Amendment. The PUD Amendment changed the land use for Parcel 2 from multi-family to a 42-lot single-family subdivision and reduced the size of Parcel 2 to 7.8 acres.
- 2015 PUD Amendment. The purpose of the PUD Amendment was to decrease the number of lots from 42 to 36, require a minimum lot width of 40 feet and increase the size of Parcel 2 to 8.7 acres.

2. Public Notice

The City advertised and posted the property as required by Article 3-7, *Public Hearings and Notice*, of the Zoning Ordinance. Staff have received over 25 phone calls and emails regarding this application, 2 of which are in opposition to the application.

3. Existing Zoning

PUD Overlay/ R-1-4 Underlying Zoning. The existing PUD Master Plan designates 166 of the 175 acres as "Golf Course – Open Recreational Space" and 8.7 acres is approved for a 36 single-family lot subdivision.

4. Future Land Use Plan

The Land Use Plan designates the entire 175-acre property with Future Land Use of Open Space/Parks. Open Space/Parks shall be considered for purposes of protection, production, health and safety, parks and recreation and how these natural resource areas together form a

logical green infrastructure that may provide a framework or structuring system within which to organize, locate and interconnect development. Green infrastructure and open space needs and standards are to be considered in all land planning, design, and development actions and performed at the outset of the planning, design and review process.

IV. PUD AMENDMENT AND MASTER PLAN

1. Process

The applicant seeks to amend the PUD Master Plan. The proposed amendment is classified as a major amendment and requires City Council approval. The Commission must first prepare a preliminary report, hold a public hearing thereon, and submit a final report to the Council. The City Council may either (1) grant approval of the Master Plan as submitted, (2) grant approval subject to specified conditions not included in the Master Plan as submitted, or (3) deny approval to the plan.

2. Details of the Request

The proposed Master Plan for the PUD Amendment encompasses the entire 175-acre tract of land; 166-acres of land to remain designated Open Recreational Space (golf course), and 8.64 acres of land is proposed to be developed with a 72 single-family lot subdivision.

3. Submittal Requirements

- i. Applicant Narrative. The Zoning Ordinance requires an applicant to provide a written narrative describing fully the character and intended use of the PUD and setting forth the reasons why the PUD would be in the public interest and would be consistent with the City's statement of purposes of the PUD regulations. The narrative must also specifically call out all zoning relaxations being requested through the PUD.

The applicant's narrative states it is the intent to develop and build a 72-lot, single-family subdivision with the ability for short term rental use. The roads will be constructed of pervious pavers with no sidewalks to reduce environmental impacts. The houses will be designed like the cottages within West Beach Cottage Subdivision and be two stories over pilings. The elevated height of the cottages will allow views of the vistas and amenities of the totally restored golf course. A pool (632sf), bathroom, small parks and the golf course are offered as amenities to future residents.

Development standards, including but not limited to yards and setbacks, building design criteria, parking and loading requirements, trip generation factors, landscaping and buffer requirements, and thoroughfare standards, may be modified with approval of a PUD Master Plan. The Zoning relaxations requested by the applicant are as follows:

1. Approved PUD Master Plan
 - a. Modify developable areas to include areas previously designated as Open Recreational Space
 - b. Increase the number of units from 36 to 72 units
 - c. Increase density from 4 to 8 dwelling units per acre
 - d. Reduce the minimum lot size from 4,826sf to 1,925sf
 - e. Reduce the minimum lot width from 40ft to 35ft
 - f. Reduce the minimum front, rear and side yard setbacks
2. Article 6-18 Vacation Rental Dwelling Units
 - a. Allow the houses to be rented short term
3. Table 7-1B: R-1-4 Area & Dimensional Regulations
 - a. Reduce the maximum building coverage from 30% to 20%
 - b. Reduce the maximum impervious coverage from 50% to 25%

4. Article 15. Planned Unit Development.
 - a. Allow the streets to contain no on-street parking
 - b. Do not require street trees and planting strips or vegetated swales within the street right-of-way
 - c. Allow the development to have no sidewalks and bicycle facilities

5. Subdivision Regulations.
 - a. Allow a modification to the Minimum Street Construction Standards to allow for pervious brick paver streets
 - b. Allow for the streets to have no sidewalks
 - c. Allow the subdivision to not install street trees

- ii. PUD Master Plan. The Zoning Ordinance requires the submittal of a PUD Master Plan for review and approval. The PUD Master Plan shall consist of a master plan, preliminary landscape plan, building elevations, design guidelines, residential lot layout, open space plan, bicycle/pedestrian circulation plan, and other plans applicable to the project. The specific development standards shown on the master plan are as follows:

Proposed PUD Master Plan

 - Proposed Uses: 72 single-family lots with allowance of short-term rental
 - Overall PUD: 175 acres
 - Proposed Developed Area: 8.64 acres
 - Minimum Lot Size: 1,925sf
 - Dwelling Units per Acre: 8.3 DU/Ac Max
 - Maximum Building Height: 2 Habitable Stories on pilings
 - Maximum Building Coverage: 20%
 - Maximum Impervious Surface: 25%
 - Open Space: 17% of developed area
 - Setbacks: Front 0', Side Yards 5', Rear 5'
 - Parking: 3-4 parking spaces under each house
 - Proposed Amenities: pool & bath house, two small parks, golf course & clubhouse

- iii. Preliminary Landscape Plan. The conceptual landscape plan shows trees planted within the proposed subdivision and a 25 feet landscape buffer adjacent to Fairway Condominiums. The applicant proposes to save the existing trees in the landscape buffer.

- iv. Building Plans and Elevations & Design Guidelines. Floorplans and building elevations are provided for the single-family houses. The typical house plans and elevations submitted by the applicant utilize the plans from West Beach Cottage Subdivision (1592 West Beach Boulevard) and have the following features:
 - 2-story construction over pilings,
 - 1,500sf -2,000sf / 3 & 5 bedrooms / 3 & 4 bathrooms
 - painted in soft coastal colors
 - hardiboard siding metal accent roofs
 - Private brick paver streets
 - Home owners' association to be created and managed by Gulf Shores Golf Course

- v. Residential Lot Layout. The PUD Master Plan indicates the lots will be a minimum 1,925 square feet (35ft x 55ft), have 0ft front setbacks, 5ft rear setbacks, and 10 feet will be provided between each house. Each lot is allowed a maximum of 20% building coverage and 25% impervious coverage.

- vi. Open Space Plan. The Open Space Plan proposes 17% of the 8.64-acre site is to be common area. The components of the Open Space Plan include:

- Manicured grounds, raised vistas, of ponds, green fairways, canopy and flowering trees
 - 15.36 acres of deed restricted open space (parts of the existing golf course holes #7, # 8 & 9)
 - One pool and bathroom facility
 - Two small parks
- vii. Circulation Plan. There is no proposed change to the access to Gulf Shores Golf Club PUD, it will be provided by the existing Clubhouse Drive. The interior streets are proposed to be 34 feet wide and constructed of pervious pavers within 40 feet wide private rights-of-way. The developer proposes extending the existing bike lane located along the north side of Clubhouse Drive approximately 200 feet to the entrance of the development. Developments that contain more than 30 dwelling units require a second entrance per the adopted Fire Codes. There is an exception that allows for one access if the dwellings are serviced by sprinkler systems. The applicant has agreed to install sprinkler systems within each dwelling unit.

V. ANALYSIS

The purpose of the PUD regulations is to:

- encourage flexibility in the design and development of land to promote its most appropriate use;
- implement the goals of the Land Use Plan;
- encourage Mixed-use developments; and
- facilitate the adequate and economical provision of streets, utilities and public spaces.

The Zoning Ordinance requires that the grant or denial of approval of a PUD shall be based on findings of fact related to the specific proposal, including a finding that the public and private benefits generated from the PUD, as proposed, equal or exceed the benefit granted to the applicant through any modifications or waivers of this Ordinance.

1. Does the PUD comply with the intensity and density allowed by the base R-1-4 zoning classification? No, the proposed PUD exceeds the density allowed by the base R-1-4 Zoning District.

In accordance with Article 15-2. B., *Intensity and Density*, of the PUD regulations, the City Council is not allowed to approve an increase in density in PUDs with a base R-1-4 zoning district. The underlying zoning of the Gulf Shores Golf Club PUD is R-1-4 and applicants request 72 units. The underlying R-1-4 allows 30 units.

2. Is the proposed PUD Master Plan Overlay consistent with the statement and purpose for PUDs? No, the PUD Master Plan is not consistent with the statement and purpose for PUDs.

The applicant is utilizing the PUD to increase density and deviate from the standard regulations of the Zoning Ordinance, previously approved PUD Master Plan and Subdivision Regulations. As noted above, the applicant is doubling the density, does not comply with the minimum street construction standards within the Subdivision Regulations and PUD regulations, and the proposed plan does not implement the bicycle and pedestrian improvement standards required by the PUD regulations.

The PUD Master Plan and narrative contain numerous discrepancies, and it is unclear if the proposal complies with the PUD regulations or is feasible.

- The minimum lot size (1,925sf) and maximum building coverage (20%) yield a building footprint of 385sf, the proposed houses have minimum building footprints of 800sf.
- The house plans show houses with 5 bedrooms/4½ bathrooms and can accommodate 6 parked vehicles; the master plan indicates the houses will be a maximum of 4 bedroom/4 bathrooms with the allowance of 3-4 vehicle parking spaces.
- The master plan indicates 15 acres of the existing golf course, holes #7, #8, and #9, will

be permanently dedicated as golf course green space. This area is already designated “Golf Course – Open Recreational Space” on the approved PUD Master Plan and cannot be developed unless the PUD is amended by the Planning Commission and City Council.

3. **Is the proposed PUD consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan? The Gulf Shores Golf Club PUD Amendment is not consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.**

- *Land uses should look and feel as if they have been designed in accord with their scale, density, context and location within the city.* The surrounding area of the city is predominantly one and two stories, on grade, single-family houses and multi-family complexes which are used as owner occupied housing. The two-story houses on pilings, and short-term rental use proposed in the PUD Amendment are out of context with the surrounding neighborhood.
- *Design neighborhoods with safe, walkable, interconnected streets that accommodate the needs of all users.* The streets within Gulf Shores Golf Club do not have sidewalks nor do they provide accommodation for bicycles.
- *Require new subdivisions to connect to any off-site pedestrian and bicycle trails, multi-use paths, sidewalks, greenways or other open space areas.* The proposed PUD is only connected to one side of the existing bicycle lane on Clubhouse Drive.

4. **To what extent does the proposed PUD depart from zoning and subdivision regulations otherwise applicable to the subject property? The proposed PUD amendment significantly departs from the applicable zoning and subdivision regulations.**

The proposed PUD seeks increases in current intensity and density entitlements allowed on the property, does not comply with the area & dimensional regulations of the existing PUD or underlying R-1-4 regulations, and requests significant deviations from the required minimum street construction standards and pedestrian/bicycle improvements required by the PUD and Subdivision Regulations.

5. **Will the proposed PUD have a positive relationship with the neighborhood in which it is proposed to be established? The proposed PUD would not have a positive relationship with the surrounding neighborhood.**

The city has previously established areas that allow short-term rental use. The Gulf Shores Golf Course is in an area of the city which only allows owner-occupied and long-term rentals. Short-term rentals can cause significant neighborhood issues by creating noise, parking, and safety issues. They frequently alter the character of residential areas, replacing residents with transient guests, which can hurt community cohesion.

VI. TRAFFIC IMPACT STUDY

The applicant submitted a limited traffic study, performed by Hydraulic Consulting, identifying the impacts the 72-lot subdivision will have on the existing street network. Based on the ITE Trip Generation guidelines the proposed development will add up to 10 daily trips and 1.0 peak hour trips per dwelling, resulting in a projected total of 309 vehicles per hour, and 3,944 vehicles per day. The traffic study states Clubhouse Drive & Regency Road are classified as a Major Residential Collector Street and can accommodate maximum peak hour 2-way traffic volume of 400 vehicles per hour and maximum daily 2-way traffic volume of 4,000 vehicles per day. Based on the results of the traffic study, Hydraulic Consulting believes no additional improvements are required to the existing roadway system and a more detailed traffic study is unwarranted.

Upon review of the traffic study by City staff, Hydraulic Consulting uses only single-family housing trip generation rates and did not take into consideration the proposed short-term rental use of the houses. Short term rental uses have higher turnover, different peak hours (more tourist traffic), and larger weekend impacts, making them function more like commercial entities. The traffic study also uses only one week of existing vehicle counts and does not factor in seasonal use.



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VII. DEPARTMENT AND AGENCY REVIEWS

The Fire Marshal and Engineering Department have reviewed the PUD Master Plan.

VIII. RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommend the Planning Commission deny the proposed PUD amendment for Gulf Shores Golf Course for the following reasons.

1. The zoning regulations prohibit the City Council from approving density increases in R-1-4/PUDs. Gulf Shores Golf Club more than doubles the density.
2. The amendment to Gulf Shores Golf Club PUD does not provide public and private benefits that equal or exceed the requested modifications or waivers from the required development standards.
3. The proposed use and housing styles/short term rental uses are not consistent with the neighborhood.
4. The development plan does not promote many of goals of the Land Use Plan.

MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION

I make a motion to deny the Gulf Shoes Golf Club PUD Amendment.

ATTACHMENTS

Location Maps, PUD Narrative & Plans, Draft Resolution

RESOLUTION ZA26-000003
GULF SHORES GOLF CLUB PUD
PUD AMENDMENT

The Zoning Ordinance requires that the grant or denial of approval of a PUD shall be based on findings of fact related to the specific proposal, including a finding that the public and private benefits generated from the PUD, as proposed, equal or exceed the benefit granted to the applicant through any modifications or waivers of this Ordinance.

Be it resolved by the Gulf Shores Planning Commission while in regular session on March 24, 2026, and by vote of 0-0, denies the PUD Amendment for Gulf Shores Golf Club Planned Unit Development based on the following Standards for Approval:

1. The proposed PUD exceeds the density allowed by the base R-1-4 Zoning District.
2. The PUD Master Plan is not consistent with the statement and purpose for PUDs.
3. The Gulf Shores Golf Club PUD Amendment is not consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.
4. The proposed PUD amendment significantly departs from the applicable zoning and subdivision regulations.
5. The proposed PUD would not have a positive relationship with the surrounding neighborhood.

And for additional reasons.

1. The zoning regulations prohibit the City Council from approving density increases in R-1-4/PUDs. Gulf Shores Golf Club more than doubles the density.
2. The amendment to Gulf Shores Golf Club PUD does not provide public and private benefits that equal or exceed the requested modifications or waivers from the required development standards.
3. The proposed use and housing styles/short term rental uses are not consistent with the neighborhood.
4. The development plan does not promote many of goals of the Land Use Plan.

This resolution shall become effective upon its adoption.

ADOPTED this 24th day of March 2026.

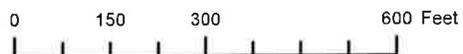
Pete Vakakes
Chairman, Planning Commission

Attest:

Mell Davis
Secretary, Planning Commission

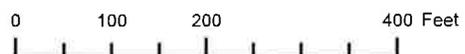
Legend

- Parcels
- Subject Area



Legend

- Parcels
- Subject Area
- Streets



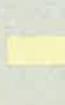
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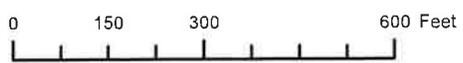
 Parcels

Zoning

 PUD - - PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT

 R-1-4 - - RESIDENTIAL SINGLE FAMILY - MED DENSITY

 R-4 - - RESIDENTIAL MULTIFAMILY HIGH DENSITY



**APPLICANT PUD
AMENDMENT DOCUMENTS**

Gulf Shores Golf Club - "Coastal Cottage Village" ^①

□ Character statement & intended use:

- Approx. 3.64 acres of disturbed area, currently zoned PUD/Planned Unit Development, with an R-1.4 underlying zoning guideline (Amendment: Conditions)
- It is our intent to develop and build up to 72 single-family residences, as Coastal Cottages on pilings, to take advantage of the vistas and amenities of our totally restored Golf Course complex & greenspace!
- These Cottages and Coastal characteristics, that have been so successful in BT districts and other PUD variations, will lend themselves to a hugely popular Golf and greenspace setting... in an "infill" location and established Golf condominium area (of attached units). It is anticipated that these detached homes, with hardi-board siding and metal roofs, gold-fortified, yet unique details and soft Coastal colors, will be marketed and sell in the \$650K range and upward (perhaps + 2-3 times the price points for the abutting R-4, attached units/with parking lots), sold separately!
- While increased property values will lift all properties, the public interest will be further served by environmental protections with all pervious pavement, private roads (no city cost or maintenance), higher tax revenue - but no added extension of existing City services/utilities !!

②

- As an "infill development" ... there will be no need for expansion of Public Safety, Fire, or Emergency services already covering this location; sewer, water, power, and gas services are on site - to be updated and improved as timely/more efficient.
- Both traffic impact (immeasurable as per Traffic Impact Study) and G.S. School capacities are not of concern! School official counts estimated as little as 12-18 students/over 12 grades. (Baldwin Schools' formula said "no students", less accurate!)
- Further public benefits... after bldg. permits & inspection fees; sewer taps, water meters, etc... continuing utility fees and sales taxes!
- Property taxes would go from zero to exceed neighboring unit tax levels by 3 times; they would then double for any cottages to be rented for golf outings, youth tournaments, vacation stays (minimum 3 day term requested), or the attraction for snow-birds & seasonal guests!
- Likely to be mostly owners' and second home residences - they can all utilize electric Golf carts/permitted at this location (reduce traffic and emissions), to the Recreation Center or Publix Center/Churches! Golf Access!!
- Visually - a new generation of landscape and "down-lighting", plus no parking on the "paver" streets (3-4 car parking under each cottage)!

□ Planned Unit Development (PUD):

- This request for an amendment to the underlying conditions of the existing zoning... demonstrates the purpose of a PUD to provide flexibility - for both the City and the applicant - in land-use design, density, circulation, and greenspace!
- PUD is intended to offer a variety of housing types, sizes, architecture and "lifestyle"... and in this case extraordinary amenities and shared open space! • Not only manicured grounds, raised vistas of ponds, greens, fairways, canopy and flowering trees... but golf privileges, lessons, youth groups, senior play, and Clubhouse/grill.

* Note: HOA, management, and maintenance by Golf Club!!

□ Improvement over existing R:1.4 Application:

- As previously approved in 2007-2008, again to the current R:1.4 site plan in 2015, our proposed design is an exceptional improvement for the subject property, the neighboring property owners, the aesthetics and the environment!!
- A standard "subdivision plat" with 36 shot-gun lots on slabs, two-story front-loaded garage homes of undetermined style-colors (8.69 acs.)
- Most damaging and impactful: All impermeous surfaces (run-off) to include 32' wide road / with 2' sidewalks, more concrete in the form of 20'w driveways, walkway, porch, rear patios for each lot; 15% common areas - mostly detention areas!

(Improvement over R-1.4 district. continued)

- Our proposed land-use plan for Coastal Cottages, raised on pilings for optimum golf vistas and hidden parking (for 3-4 vehicles)... requires less disturbed area (8.64 acres) and provides private roads of pervious paving (no City cost or future maintenance); less than 1/3 "run-off" of the R-1.4 plan.
- Our disturbed area of development is to be further enhanced by an additional 15.36 acres of "open space" (parts of holes #7, #8, #9), fully deeded restricted from ever applying for development/assuring our contiguous neighbors that no future expansion of this village is possible! (or ever reversible by zoning!)
- Our proposed total of 72 units, is just over 8 units per acre... far less than the only zoning district we adjoin (R-4 district, for "Fairway Condominiums" and the "1701 Regency" units), which allow 20 units/acre.
- We do not adjoin any R-1.4 properties, or PUD for that matter, but with our 8.64 acres development site, plus the 15.36 acres deeded permanent green space... we would present 72 lots/240 acs (3 units/ac.)
- In summary, our design maximizes Coastal character, greenspace, property value, and the quality of life/environment! We believe it will enhance the Golf Course and the City asset that it represents (not to mention future City revenue and a sustainable open space activity for all)...
... avoiding the standard subdivision tract!!

- Fire Marshal Comments (Mr. Geo. Surry) • Two access points req'd. from public R/W... Two (2) access points are provided, one from Clubhouse Drive entrance and one from Golf Club parking area!
 - Applicant/owner proffers (voluntarily) a condition that all units shall provide interior sprinkler system to City fire standards, thus waiving 2nd entrance.
 - Although private interior roads, development will provide public/dedicated/separate water hydrants.
 - Public utilities shall be provided all necessary & recorded easements, permanent & temporary, and shall not be req'd. to repair specialty paving surface!
 - Private roads shall provide approved turning radii and "hammer-head" turn arounds, as per City std!

- Traffic Impact Study has now been completed and submitted... with no road improvements implied.
 - Please see attached exhibit, proffering 200' feet of Bicycle/Pedestrian lane (5' wide) to be added, connecting Country Club Dr./Regency Road exist.
 - Architectural plans were submitted in January for "typical" (proposed) Coastal Cottage Type A (end 1).
 - Attached please find "typical" plans, elevations, paver details, landscape treatments... as adapted (with permission) from the Builder/Developers of "West Side Cottages" (1592 W. Beach Blvd.) our Model Units/reference; actual photos offered as well!

□ Narrative on Zoning Relaxations:

- Any comparison between our proposed Coastal Cottages (on pilings) must first point out that the existing R-1-4 plat (approved in October 2015) has been granted significant relaxations/as recorded:

Design Category	City Ordin. Std. R-1-4	(10.27.15) Exist. R-1-4	Proposed Cottage District
Max. Bldg. Hgt.	3-story	3-story	3-sty/park under
Min. Lot Size	11,000 sq.ft.	5,200 sq.ft.	1,925 sq.ft.
Max. Density	3.5 unit/ac.	4.14 lots/ac.	3.0 lots/ac. (24 acs)
Min Lot Width	75 ft.	40 ft. min.	35 ft.
Max. Bldg. Cover	30%	30%	20%
Max. Impervious	50%	55%	25%
Min. Front Yard	40 ft.	20 ft.	-0-
Min. Rear Yard	40 ft.	15 ft.	5 ft./planted
Min. Side Yard	10 ft.	5 ft.	10' between bldgs.
Min. Common Area	20%	15%	20%/65% total
Req. Buffer (at adjoining residential)	25 ft.	0' shown	25' @ R-4 line

- The existing R-1-4 recorded plat further demonstrates no buffer or tree save where it abuts the R-4 zoned Fairway and Regency condominiums (we have 25' trees)
- That "typical subdivision" layout further calls for over 1,900 linear feet of paved road (30' wide), with approx. 4,000 linear feet of concrete sidewalks (4' wide), plus 500 sq. ft of concrete driveway-entry walk- and patios - times 36 slab lots! • Our raised Cottages will have approx. 4,000 sq. ft. impervious roofs... all other surfaces pervious paving, open space, landscaping!