SMALL TOWN, BIG BEACH

Cottages at Craft Farms – Site Plan

Staff Report: Andy Bauer
Application #:ZA21-000075
Planning Commission Meeting Date: January 25, 2022
Applicant: Dewberry
Property Location: Coastal Gateway Blvd

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS

SUMMARY OF REQUEST

The applicant seeks site plan approval for 52-unit townhouse development. The Zoning Ordinance classifies townhouses as a type of single family attached dwelling units. The property is located on the south side of Coastal Gateway Boulevard and is zoned R-3 Residential/Limited-Density Multiple-family District.

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND SURROUNDING CONTEXT

The site is located along Coastal Gateway Boulevard, ¼ to ½-mile from the Foley Beach Express. The property is currently vacant, and it is platted as lots 204, 205, and 206 of Craft Farms North Phase II Subdivision. The surrounding zoning and land uses are as follows:

- North – BG (General Business District) & AG (Agricultural District) / Gulf Shores Utilities Well & Vacant land
- South – R-1-5 (Residential/High-Density Single-family District) / Large Pond and Single-family houses within Craft Farms North Subdivision
- East – ED (Education District) / Vacant land (future City of Gulf Shores Higher Education Campus)
- West – R-3 (Residential/Limited-Density Multiple-family District) & R-1-5 (Residential/High-Density Single-family District) / Single-family houses

BACKGROUND

- **December 2006** – Craft Farms North, Phase II, received Final Subdivision Plat approval from the Planning Commission.

- **February 2007** – Lots 204, 205, and 206 were conditionally rezoned from BG-1 (General Business -1) to RML (Limited Density Multi-family). RML was the predecessor to the current R-3 zoning district.

- **December 14, 2021 Planning Commission Meeting** – An application for a Preliminary Subdivision Plat for a 52-lot townhouse subdivision on this property was withdrawn by the applicant.

Developer/Craft Farms North Home Owners Association Meetings – The developer held two meetings with the Craft Farms North Home Owners Association in January. The purpose of the meetings were to discuss the project and answer any questions of the Craft Farms North Home Owners Association.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

This area is designated as "Residential - Medium" by the City's Future Land Use Plan. Medium-density residential uses are characterized by apartments, condominiums, townhouses, single family detached, and duplex housing on smaller lots. Medium-density neighborhoods are highly connected to the city street network and have relatively short block lengths.

ZONING

R-3 Residential/Limited-Density Multiple-family District

This district exists for the protection of areas that are, or are planned to be, developed for attached housing in central neighborhoods. The R-3 Zoning Districts permits up to 10 dwelling units per acre.

February 2007 Zoning Conditions
Lots 204 and 205 are restricted to three stories of building height, and Lot 206 is restricted to two stories of building height.

Townhouse Ordinance
Article 11-3 of the Zoning Ordinance establishes standards for townhouse developments. The Cottages at Craft Farms development is subject to the standards of the townhouse regulations.

PROPOSED SITE PLAN
The proposed development is located on the existing Lots 204, 205 and 206 of Craft Farms North Phase II Subdivision. Specifics of the Site Plan are as follows:

- Acreage – 5.91ac
- Use – Townhouses
- Number of Units – 52
- Max. Dwelling Units per Acre (10): 8.8
- Max. Building Height (2 & 3 stories): 2 stories
- Max. Building Coverage (25%): 19%
- Max. Impervious Coverage (55%): 47%
- Min. Open Space (30%): 53%
- Min. Number of Parking Spaces (2 per unit/104 spaces): 2 per unit provided/104 spaces
- Min. Setbacks (Front 30ft, Rear 30ft, Side Yards 0ft): Front 30ft, Rear 73ft, Side Yards 20ft;
- Rear Loaded Lots - All 52 lots are accessed from the rear of the houses by a private alley;

ANALYSIS

Future Land Use Plan- Townhouses are a use encouraged by the "Medium-density Residential" designation of the Future Land Use Plan. The proposed Site Plan furthers a Policy and Implementation Opportunity of the Land Use Plan by providing a townhouse building type that will promote population and housing diversity. Townhouses are encouraged along major thoroughfares, such as Coastal Gateway Boulevard, and within areas of the community with high levels of street connectivity.

Zoning

I. R-3- The R-3 Zoning District allows townhouse uses by "Right". A townhouse is a type of single family dwelling unit -- instead of being detached it is attached. A townhouse is designed for the use of one family, and may be attached to two or more buildings of similar design.
The proposed site plan complies with the R-3 zoning standards and the conditions placed on the property when it was rezoned from BG-1 to R-3 in 2007.

II. Article 11-3 – In addition to the underlying R-3 zoning standards, Article 11-3 of the Zoning Ordinance imposes specific standards for townhouse developments. The proposed site plan complies with Article 11-3 as follows:

- Rear Access – An Ingress/Egress driveway (Summerhouse Lane) is located along the rears of the lots. This will allow future development to meet the zoning standard, "parking shall be provided at the rear of each unit."
- Number of Attached Units in a Row – Proposed units are clustered in groups of six and eight, with common open spaces in between. This unit arrangement complies with the zoning standard that "no more than eight (8) Townhouses shall be located within a continuous Building."
- Area & Dimensional Requirements – The development complies with the minimum townhouse site area of 14,000sf, and the townhouses are 2 stories in height, which meets

the zoning conditions placed on the property in 2007.

- Open Space --Proposed Open Space of 53% exceeds the minimum requirement of 30%.
- Land Transfer & Ownership – Providing for the development of the entire tract, retaining, however, title to all of the lands in the name of the condominium owners, and providing for all other usual condominium documents and procedures.

Access –A right-in/right-out driveway connecting to Coastal Gateway Boulevard is located on the west side of the development, and two additional accesses connect the project with Royal Troon Circle. The driveways are designed in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance. Coastal Gateway Boulevard was recently expanded to a four lane divided roadway, and is designed to accommodate the additional traffic generated by this project.

Parking – Townhouses are classified by the Zoning Ordinance as single family attached houses and are required two parking spaces per unit. The site plan indicates a minimum of two parking spaces will be provided for each unit.

Building Architecture – Each of the 52 units will be 2 stories, with 3 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms. The buildings will have white cement board and batten siding with asphalt shingle roofs. The buildings comply with the architectural standards of the Zoning Ordinance.

Open Space – An open space plan has been provided which shows numerous green open space areas within the development. Small green spaces are provided between each building group, with larger green spaces located on the east and west sides of the development. Two linear open space areas, totaling more than an acre, are proposed along the south property line. These spaces will serve as passive open space areas and natural transitions to existing development to the south. The proposed subdivision provides 3.1ac (53%) of green space, which can be used for active and passive recreational purposes. All green spaces will be privately owned and maintained by the Cottages at Craft Farms property owners association.

Landscape & Tree Preservation – The Landscape Plan complies with the landscape requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and Tree Protection Regulations.

The applicant submitted a survey which indicates there are no protected trees on the property.

A 10ft landscape buffer, planted with trees and shrubs, is proposed along Coastal Gateway Boulevard, complying with the Street Frontage Landscape Standards of the Zoning Ordinance. A "Class A" buffer is provided along the southern property line of the eastern section of lots to buffer the existing single family detached houses in this area. The remainder of the southern property line, adjacent to the existing pond, is planted with one tree and four shrubs as required by the Zoning Ordinance.

Stormwater Drainage – The original stormwater management plan for Craft Farms North Phase II included the utilization of the existing pond for storm water drainage for Lots 204, 205, and 206. The Cottages at Craft Farms will utilize the existing pond, and the Stormwater Drainage Plan has been reviewed and approved by the City Engineering Department.

Lighting Plan – A Lighting Plan has been submitted, and it complies with the Zoning Ordinance Regulations. Twelve light pole fixtures will be provided along the roadways at the rear of the townhouses. The light poles will not exceed 26ft in height, and the light fixtures are Baldwin EMC acorn style lighting used on many of the streets within Gulf Shores. Baldwin EMC is transitioning from the use of acorn style lighting therefore the applicant shall work with the City and EMC to select a different light fixture.

Trash Collection – The trash collection plan shows individual containers are provided for each unit. The containers will be serviced from the rear alley ways. A letter from Republic Services has been submitted indicating the trash can be serviced.

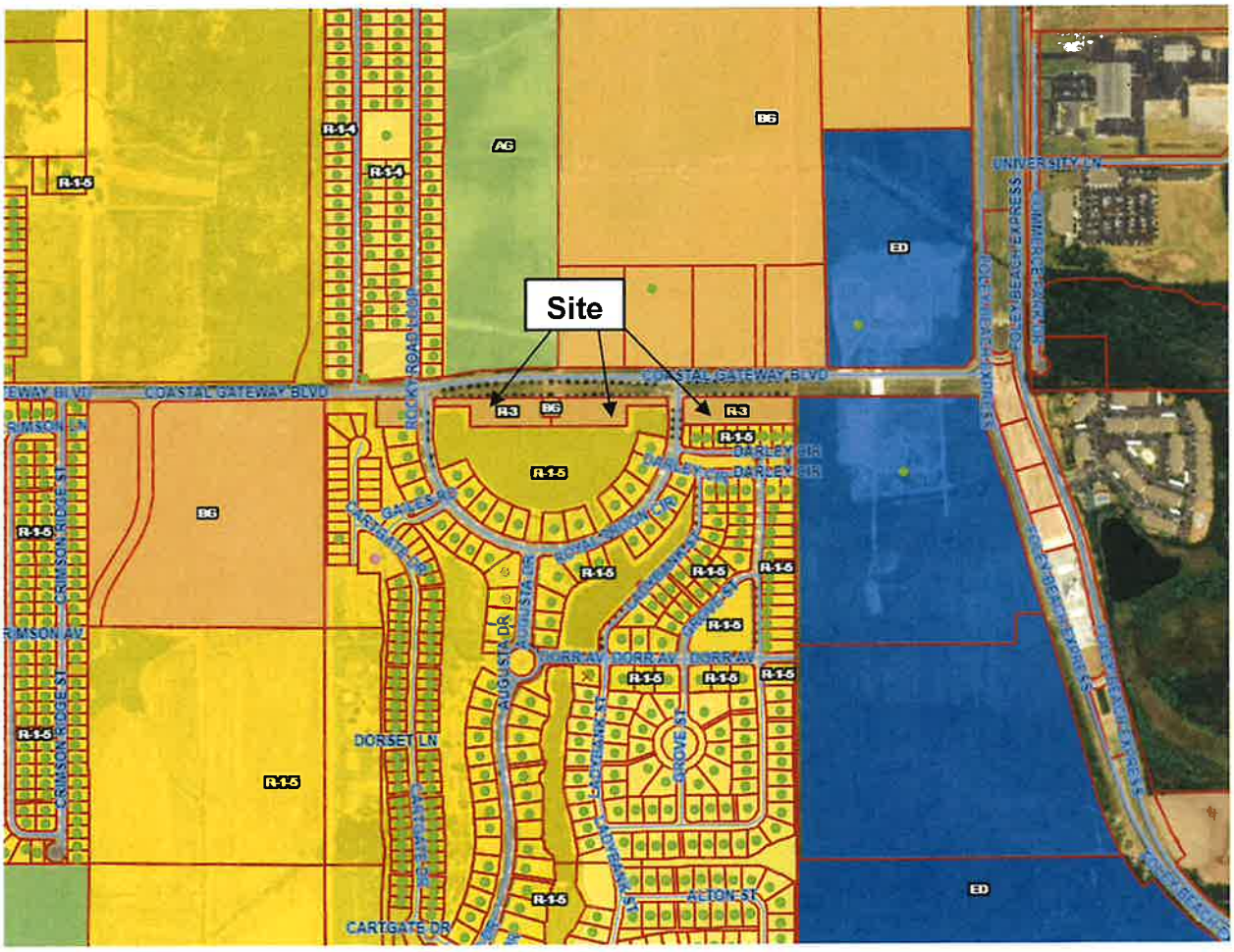
Engineering Department & Fire Marshal – The plans have been reviewed and approved by the Engineering Department and by the Fire Marshal.

RECOMMENDATION – Staff recommends approval of the site plan with the following conditions:

1. Prior to the issuance of a Building Permit, the applicant shall replace the proposed acorn style light fixtures with a current Baldwin EMC light fixture as approved by the City of Gulf Shores. Lighting shall utilize full cut-off fixtures as required by the Zoning Ordinance.
2. Gulf Shores Utilities. The applicant shall verify the line pressure/head connections for the proposed grinder pumps.

Attachments: Plans, Draft Resolution

Craft Farms Cottages –Location Map



RESOLUTION ZA21-000075
COTTAGES AT CRAFT FARMS
SITE PLAN

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF GULF SHORES, ALABAMA, WHILE IN REGULAR SESSION ON JANUARY 25, 2022 as follows:

By a vote of ?-?, the Gulf Shores Planning Commission approves hereby approves, subject to the special conditions set out below and based on the following Findings of Fact and Conclusions related to the proposed Site Plan for Cottages at Craft Farms to be located on Coastal Gateway Boulevard:

1. The Plan is consistent in all respects with the Comprehensive Plan and the purpose and intent of the applicable district.
2. The Plan is in conformance with all applicable regulations of the applicable district.
3. The Plan is in conformance in all respects with the City's Subdivision Regulations and all other applicable City requirements including design, adequacy and construction of streets, drainage, utilities and other Essential Services or facilities.
4. The Plan is consistent with good design standards in respect to all internal and external relationships, including but not limited to
    a. Relationship to Adjacent properties;
    b. Internal circulation, both vehicular and pedestrian;
    c. Design of access and egress and impact on Adjacent Thoroughfares;
    d. Disposition and use of Open Space, provision of Screening and/or Buffering, and preservation of existing natural features including trees, Wetlands, and Dunes;
    e. Size and apparent Bulk of Structures;
    f. Building arrangements both between Buildings in the proposed development and those on abutting sites.
5. The Plan is in conformance in all respects with City policy in respect to sufficiency of ownership, guarantees for completion of all required improvements, and, if private, the guarantee for continued maintenance.

Approval is subject to the following Special Conditions:

1. Prior to the issuance of a Building Permit, the applicant shall replace the proposed acorn style light fixtures with a current Baldwin EMC light fixture as approved by the City of Gulf Shores. Lighting shall utilize full cut-off fixtures as required by the Zoning Ordinance.
2. Gulf Shores Utilities. The applicant shall verify the line pressure/head connections for the proposed grinder pumps.

Be advised that before any construction activities can commence on the property, City permits must be issued prior to any construction on the site. A Building Permit must be obtained within two years of the date of this Resolution or the Site Plan will become null and void.

This resolution shall become effective upon its adoption.

ADOPTED this 25th day of January, 2022.

_____
Robert Steiskal, Jr.
Chairman, Planning Commission

Attest:

_____
Mell Davis
Secretary, Planning Commission