




*Texas City*

EST. 1911

ENGINEERING & PLANNING

## STAFF REPORT

To: Zoning Commission - Regular Meeting – December 17, 2024

From: Kim Golden, P.E., City Engineer 

CC: Doug Kneupper, P.E.

Date: December 11, 2024

RE: Willow Wood Subdivision - Master Plan and request to rezone from District A - Single Family Residential to District I – Planned Unit Development

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**Background:** At its regular meeting on November 19, 2024, the Zoning Commission held a public hearing on the request from Castlerock Communities to rezone 80 acres located southeast of SH3 and south of FM 1764 from District A - Single Family to District I – Planned Unit Development. After receiving comments from the public and concluding the public hearing the Zoning Commission tabled consideration of the request to allow additional time for the applicant to provide additional information.

### **Response to comments received at public hearing:**

**1) Drainage Issue:** Concerns were expressed regarding existing drainage issues in the area and a suggestion that the City undertake a comprehensive approach to mitigate and improve the area for economic development.

**Response:** Galveston County Drainage District No. 2 has jurisdiction over the watershed at issue and has approved the detention improvements proposed by the developer based upon a comprehensive study of the entire watershed. At the request of the District, the Developer engaged Burton L. Johnson, P.E. to study and provide a Floodplain Mapping and Modeling Report for the Ditch 7 Watershed (Ditch 7, Ditch 7A, Ditch 7B). The watershed encompassed the entirety of the watershed which was more than the 80 acres of Developer's site being considered by the Zoning Commission. The study computed flood flows and flood inundation in the Ditch 7 watershed for the 5-year, 10-year, 25-year, 50-year, 100-year and 500-year event using HEC-HMS and a coupled 1d/2d HEC-RAS model. The models were developed in consideration of the guidance by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Hydrologic Engineering Center (HEC) and the Harris County Flood Control District's *Two-Dimensional Modeling Guidelines*. The District also required the Developer to provide a Drainage Impact Analysis (DIA) specific for the detention proposed for the subdivision. The DIA used the floodplain mapping and modeling to **conclude the proposed development, including full development and Phase I development, could be constructed as proposed by the Developer without adversely impacting the drainage and flood risk upstream, adjacent to, and downstream of the project.** The GCDD#2 Engineer recommended, and the Board approved the DIA at its meeting on June 13, 2024.

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**Transparency:** Copies of the District Engineer's recommendation and the Minutes of the GCDD#2 Board meeting are enclosed in the Zoning Commission agenda packet and will be posted on the City's website for general availability to the public. The entirety of the two reports provided to and reviewed by the GCDD#2 will also be posted on the City's website for general availability. Hard copies can be obtained via Public Information Requests.

**2) Ingress Egress into Subdivision:** Concerns were expressed regarding the single entrance via Phillips Street into the subdivision. **Response:** Willow Street, identified as N. Pine St. on Google Maps, is an existing local street which runs through the site providing connections to FM 1764 to the north and Phillips Street to the south. Willow Street will be the access for both east and west sections of the project. As noted in the previous staff report, the Developer has expressed an intent to obtain additional property to provide a second point of ingress egress upon approval of the Phase I Master Plan and PUD. Developer has been advised that the number of building permits issued may be limited by the Fire Marshal and Building Officials until a second entrance is provided.

**3) Look, feel and vision of the finished product:** Concerns were expressed regarding the look, feel and vision of the finished product which is understood to refer to the housing product. **Response:** Castlerock Communities is a well-known developer in Texas City having developed the Pearlbrook and Steed Landing subdivisions in Texas City and producing many houses in the Lago Mar planned community. Developer will present examples of its housing products to the Zoning Commission and provide example renderings of the proposed amenities and landscaping enhancements which will be required by the terms of the PUD. Developer indicates a willingness to adhere to the 60% masonry content reflected in the Development Agreement when approved in 2007. Developer also indicates it does not allow copper clad aluminum wire in the construction of homes and has no objection to such requirement in the Development Agreement.

**4) Adjacent existing livestock uses:** Concerns were expressed about the uses of adjacent undeveloped property as pasturage for livestock by existing owners. **Response:** It should be noted that pasturage for livestock is not an allowed principal use in the existing District A – Single Family Residential district. It is an allowed principal use only in the District O-Open Space which is reserved for undeveloped acreage. It is understood that actual land uses transition within a zoning district as development occurs over time, with higher value uses replacing lower value uses in response to market trends and forces. Even so, as an added measure of safety the Developer is proposing to add new barbed wire fencing adjacent to the development's perimeter fencing as needed.

**5) Future Land Use Plan:** Concerns were expressed regarding whether the proposed use was the highest and best use for the area and consistent with the City's comprehensive plans and goals. **Response:** The Planning Board considered the master plan and re-zoning application at its regular meeting on October 7, 2024 and

unanimously recommended approval of the proposed Master Plan. The site is one of the few remaining large open spaces served by existing utilities which is also situated within the Texas City ISD boundaries. The TCISD is challenged with declining enrollment. The development of new conventional subdivisions likely to serve growing families aligns with the City's vision to support a thriving school district. At full buildout the 213 new homes could be estimated to provide additional annual revenue of \$1,171,500 to the school district based upon projected student enrollment of 0.5 students per household. In addition, the property is south of the area designated as an activity corridor which the future land use plan describes as "parallel to freeway and highways with higher intensity land uses. These uses are primarily region serving and include malls, commercial, and open display retailing, wholesale, distributing and warehousing operations, restricted light industry, business offices, hotels and motels, and higher density residential development." The proposed master plan will not detract from the purpose of the activity corridor and therefore serves the city's long-term goal to diversify the tax base with commercial, retail and other non-residential uses along the Emmett F. Lowry Expressway.

**6) Community Benefits/Amenities:** Concerns were noted regarding proposed benefits for the community such as parks and recreational facilities. **Response:** An important component of a viable residential development is providing parks and meaningful open spaces. The PUD Application and Exhibit B Conceptual Master Plan incorporates walking/jogging trails as well as 7.1 acres in parks in greenspace. Four dual amenity/detention ponds located to the north, south and east exceeds the requirements of the Subdivision Ordinance of one-half acre per 100 homes. Exhibit D-1 illustrates the Park and Trail Plan with Exhibit D-2 providing examples of the representative amenities.

The PUD Application and Development Agreement require the creation of a Homeowner's Association that will be responsible for maintenance of parks and common areas. The HOA document should include strong language regarding the HOA's ability to keep the subdivision clean, attractive, and sustainable by abating nuisance and property maintenance type issues.

**7) Infrastructure:** Concerns were noted regarding adequate infrastructure such as roads, schools and utilities. **Response:** Water and sewer facilities are readily available to this project and can be extended from existing mains. Detailed engineering for the extension of services within the subdivision are part of the platting process and are not required with the master plan.

**8) Impact on Property Value -** Concerns were noted regarding the impact of the development on existing property values. **Response:** Property values are increasing in Texas City as a result of the balanced residential and non-residential growth in the area. This is likely to continue whether the Willow Wood or other developments move forward at the particular site.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Planning Board considered and unanimously recommended approval of the Master Plan and PUD at its regular meeting on October 7, 2024. City staff have reviewed this Subdivision Masterplan, Development Agreement and PUD Application and has no objections to approval of the masterplan or to the zoning change request. Staff recommends provision be made in the PUD to allow amendment of the PUD to incorporate the additional property when acquired by the developer to provide for the construction of a second entrance. A limit should be determined for the number of permits which will issue until a second entrance is added to the master plan.