

## **ZMA-7-24 Hopkins Farm Planned Unit Development July 17, 2025 Joint Public Hearing Questions & Comments**

### **Council/LURB Questions/Comments:**

1. Is there an opportunity pre-wire homes for solar or EV chargers?
  - a. McAdams Response: A new zoning condition has been added requiring that all homes (TH and SFD) be pre-wired to support EV charging.
2. Is the proposed Poole Road enhanced roadside landscaping consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and adjacent development? Is the developer willing to commit to a substantially similar design as The Haven at Griffith Meadows?
  - a. McAdams Response: To the best of my understanding, the proposed enhanced roadside landscaping is substantially similar in terms of its planting rate. We have also included small hardscaped areas with seating where our 2 pedestrian paths cross the street yard buffer (to provide access to the townhomes fronting Poole Road).
3. Will there be sidewalk in front of the townhome units adjacent Poole Road?
  - a. McAdams Response: Yes. There will be a sidewalk that runs parallel to the Townhomes units (on the back side of the street yard buffer). There will also be 2 pedestrian connections between this 5' sidewalk and the multi-purpose path within the ROW on Poole Road. This can be seen on the plan set.
4. What is the ultimate cross-section of Poole Road?
  - a. McAdams Response: 4-lane median divided.
5. Which residential lots will be within one hundred feet of the existing riparian buffer, and which lots will be subject to this mass grading restriction?
  - a. McAdams Response: As proposed, no lots would be allowed or proposed within 100 feet of the existing riparian buffer. This condition ensures that any subsequent plan changes must maintain this extra separation from the riparian buffer, since all lots are proposed to be mass graded.
6. While it is appreciated that the neighborhood design considered the already cleared agricultural land area on the site, one Council member inquired if the design of the neighborhood could be adjusted further so that additional existing tree canopy be preserved.
  - a. In addition, can the existing trees on the proposed lots be looked at more closely in an effort to preserve more tree canopy and to provide more gentle transition to the Estates at Smith Crossing?
  - a. McAdams Response: I understand the intent of this comment but respectfully disagree with this approach. If the desire of a conservation neighborhood is to conserve large contiguous areas of natural land for environmental preservation (to

provide additional habitat, stream protection, air quality, etc., while providing some means of access/appreciation to the natural environment), then that goal is best achieved by condensing your development footprint on a smaller portion of the site and thereby allowing a greater portion of the site to remain undisturbed. This is best achieved by having smaller lots, which would be mass graded. Mass grading also allows the developer to better control stormwater runoff.

Every development will have a minimum yield which is needed to be financially sustainable. If you instead applied individual/selective grading instead of mass grading, the lots would have to be larger to allow that individual grading to facilitate tree preservation. Individual grading on a 60' wide lot will not result in tree preservation because even if you left a narrow band of trees along the edge of the lot, the extent of your grading to create the pad site for the lot would damage the root zone of those trees and they wouldn't survive.

In order to preserve trees through selective grading, individual grading really needs lots that are closer to 100' wide. To achieve the same or even a comparable yield with individual grading, you need a much greater percentage of your site devoted to lots (since the lots are larger) and therefore you reduce the amount of natural/undisturbed areas compared to mass grading with smaller lots. Furthermore, the additional trees you may have saved within individual lots (if you made the lots large enough to avoid root zone compaction) are less contiguous, and therefore provide less of an environmental benefit compared to mass grading a smaller area and leaving a larger portion of the site undisturbed.

As an aside, we are evaluating whether we could move the proposed SCM to the current existing pond location so as to preserve even more trees than are currently shown, but wish to maintain mass grading for the reasons described above.

7. Will a dedicated turn lanes be built along Poole Road at the neighborhood entrance?
  - a. McAdams Response: Yes, as outlined in the TIA, the site would have dedicated left and right turn lanes.
8. What is the required buffer between the subject property and the Estates at Smith Crossing?  
What is being offered by the Applicant?
  - b. McAdams Response: There is no required perimeter buffer under the UDO. The applicant proposes a minimum of a 20' Type B Buffer, though certain portions of the perimeter would naturally have wider buffers due to existing vegetation in place.
9. Will the subject property be within two-and-a-half miles of the future Lake Myra Park?
  - c. McAdams Response: Yes, the subject property is less than 2 miles from the future Lake Myra Park (as the crow flies).
10. What are the proposed minimum driveway lengths?
  - d. McAdams Response: Min. of 25' for front-loaded SFD. Min. of 20' (measured to the edge of the alley pavement) for rear-loaded SFD and Townhomes.

11. Why does the proposal not align with the “Inclusive, Livable Town” Guiding Principle?

- a. McAdams Response: The applicant contends that the development proposal is aligned with the “inclusive, Livable Town” guiding principle, as our development proposes a range of housing options (both in terms of cost and lifestyle needs) in a highly walkable, accessible, and amenitized environment. The result will be a diverse, welcoming environment that supports public gatherings and a strong sense of community.

12. Evaluate the feasibility of using the existing farm pond for an SCM to avoid additional clearing of existing tree canopy (at the location of the proposed SCM) or shifting the location of the proposed SCM to where the existing farm pond is located today.

- a. Evaluate the feasibility of constructing a more linear SCM in an effort to preserve more existing tree canopy.
- b. Consider additional ways to amenitize any and all SCMs.

McAdams Responses: We currently only have 1 SCM, which includes a stormwater fountain, greenway access and seating, and a disc golf course which follows the opposite side. We are investigating whether this SCM could be relocated to the current location of the existing pond to be removed. Since this existing pond is not a jurisdictionally protected feature (based on our environmental consultant’s stream and wetland delineation), we believe this may be possible, but we need to confirm that the entire site could drain to this alternate location. We will have further updates on this option before the council action meeting, but we cannot commit to this at the time of this resubmittal (before LURB).

13. Consider other/additional locations for pollinator gardens so that this unique feature can be seen and appreciated, rather than being tucked away at the end of the internal “cul-de-loop”.

- a. McAdams Response: The chosen location was focused more on activating the greenway and creating an additional purpose for the cul-de-loop rather than having a traditional cul-de-sac. Our bio-retention cell would also include pollinator supportive flowering plants and would have more street presence along our N-S collector (at the southern end of the site’s main amenity).

14. Mass grading of all lots within a Conservation Neighborhood should be reconsidered.

- a. McAdams Response: Please see our response to #6 above.

15. Please share more about the discussions had at the neighborhood meeting pertaining to the existing vegetation and transition from The Estates at Smith Crossing to the future Hopkins Farm.

- a. McAdams Response: To clarify a comment made at the JPH, existing vegetation is in place along the majority of our western boundary abutting The Estates at Smith Crossing, which will be used to the greatest extent possible to provide the voluntary 20’ Type B buffer proposed along our perimeter. However, where there are any gaps in that existing vegetation (such as along the southern extent of that western

border where the site approaches Poole Road), we would still be committed per our voluntary zoning condition to provide a 20' Type B buffer with new plantings.

We have also added a zoning condition that requires the elevation of Alley # 6 (along that shared boundary The Estates at Smith Crossing) to be 3' lower than the elevation of the Type B buffer, meaning even the shrubs will be planted on average 3' higher, providing additional screening of cars, headlights, etc.

16. Where will all of the stop signs be located throughout the proposed neighborhood?
  - a. McAdams Response: All intersections outside of the traffic circle and cul-de-loop would include stop signs. The master plan shows the individual location of all proposed stop signs.
17. Provide clarity on where the guest parking areas will be located and how it relates to the proposed zoning condition.
  - a. McAdams Response: The proposed zoning condition simply commits to a minimum number of guest parking spaces for the development as a whole (min. of 100). These guest spaces are provided in the form of both on-street parking (along Street D, along Open Space B, and along the cul-de-loop) as well as off-street parking lots (along the alley connection between Street B and Poole Road, along alley connections between Alley 6 and our N-S collector Road, and along the internal block alley north of the E-W collector. The minimum 100 spaces are met without relying on the clubhouse parking.
18. Concerns were expressed about potential headlight glare due to the orientation of the proposed guest parking areas adjacent to homes.
  - a. McAdams Response: The guest parking areas along Townhomes lots #82, #83, and #95 include a proposed 10' Type A buffer around the guest parking. This Type A buffer includes 3 canopy trees every 100 ft, 2 understory trees every 100' and 20 shrubs every 100 ft.

We have also added a zoning condition that requires the elevation of Alley # 6 (along that shared boundary The Estates at Smith Crossing) to be 3' lower than the elevation of the Type B buffer, meaning even the shrubs along the Type B buffer to the west will be planted on average 3' higher, providing additional screening of cars, headlights, etc. to the neighboring community.

Public Comment:

1. 1729 Font Hills Lane:
  - a. A vegetative buffer the entire length of the western property boundary (between the subject site and The Estates at Smith Crossing) is requested.
    - a. McAdams Response: One was already provided (see response # 15).
  - b. Will the subject development extend the current terminus of Font Hill Lane into the subject development?

- i. McAdams Response: Hopkins Farm does not include the parcel of land where Font Hill Lane terminates, so there is no connection proposed as part of this development as we are not developing that land.
- c. Concerns were expressed about traffic congestion at the intersection of Greythorne Place and Bethlehem Road due to the subject development proposing to connect to Greythorne Place.
  - i. McAdams Response: The TIA performed did not identify any impacts to the intersection of Greythorne Place and Bethlehem Road that would necessitate any improvements at this location. The developer is voluntarily installing a traffic circle at the intersection of its 2 collector roads (at the edge of the existing Greythorne Place), which will serve as a traffic calming device. The developer is also posting all internal roads (including the extension of Greythorne Place) as 25mph, and has reached out to NCDOT to request that the existing roadways within The Estates at Smith Crossing also be posted as 25 mph.
- d. How will the homes within the subject development be distinguishable from The Estates at Smith Crossing?
  - i. McAdams Response: The Estates at Smith Crossing is a large home, large lot single-family subdivision without curb, gutter, or street trees. In addition to having a traffic circle serving as a visual queue that a development transition is occurring, Hopkins farm will be built under a municipal development pattern with smaller lots, curb and gutter, sidewalks on both sides, street trees, and a median divided roadway with bike lanes. There will be unmistakable visual differences that should leave no doubt in a visitor's mind that these are two compatible, yet distinct neighborhoods.