Woodland Hills East – Major Preliminary Plat

Applicants:
Perficut Partners, LLC (Property Owner)
Hubbell Realty Company (Developer)
Civil Design Advantage (Project Engineer/Surveyor)

Request:
Preliminary plat approval of a major subdivision plat creating 78 residential lots (50 single-family Lots & 28 townhome lots)

Legal Description:
22.27 acres located within Part of the SE ¼ of Section 2, Township 79 North, Range 24 West of the 5th P.M., Polk County, Iowa (Saylor Township).

General Location:
Approximately 1,000 feet west of the intersection of NE 14th Street (Hwy 69) and NE 66th Avenue, lying on the south side of NE 66th Avenue

Existing Zoning:
“MDR” Medium Density Residential District

Surrounding Zoning:
North  “MDR” Medium Density Residential District
South  “LI” Light Industrial District
East   “LI” Light Industrial District
West   “MDR” Medium Density Residential District

GENERAL COMMENTS:
This preliminary plat proposes 78 total residential lots on approximately 22.27 acres zoned “MDR” Medium Density Residential District. 50 lots are proposed for single-family and 28 are proposed for townhomes. The subject property is currently vacant and utilized in agricultural row crop production. The subject property was recently rezoned to remove the prior General Commercial zoning to the north along the property’s frontage with NE 66th Avenue to allow for this residential development. The rezoning also established a new area of Light Industrial zoning for a 2.80-acre parcel adjacent to the east of the subject property for future expansion of the Perficut site located at 6550 NE 14th Street. The intent of the property owner is to transfer the 22.27-acre subject property to Hubbell Realty Company for this residential development, while maintaining ownership of the 2.80-acre parcel directly adjacent to their existing business to allow for a future expansion and site improvements for Perficut. Staff and the project engineer have been working on a plat of survey to create these separate parcels for future transfer of ownership and separate development.
Reference *Attachment A* of this report for a vicinity map of the subject property and surrounding area. The subject property lies between The Greens at Woodland Hills neighborhood to the west and existing Light Industrial development to the east, which is adjacent to the NE 14th Street (Highway 69) corridor and includes existing property owned by the current titleholder, Perficut Partners LLC, at 6550 NE 14th Street. The Greens at Woodland Hills subdivision includes an existing public street, NE 64th Avenue, which terminates at the boundary of the subject property. This public roadway would be extend as part of the proposed development. The adjacent Greens at Woodland Hills Plat 1 development to the west was the first residential development extension south from NE 66th Avenue, and was also developed by Hubbell Realty Company. The first phase of that development included the NE 64th Avenue street extension to the subject property and 44 single-family residential lots adjacent. The adjacent development is also zoned “MDR” Medium Density Residential District and was developed as a Planned Development option, which allowed a unique development style with smaller lot sizes integrated into the surrounding Woodland Hills Golf Course. Construction of the first phase of residential development started in 2009. Since that time, Hubbell has developed 136 single-family lots, south of NE 66th Avenue and 61 additional residential lots north of NE 66th Avenue.

**Lot Configuration/Plat Layout**

*Attachment B* at the end of this report contains a copy of the current version of the preliminary plat of Woodland Hills East. Lots 1 thru 14 and 65 thru 78 are located furthest north on the property and proposed for future townhomes. Lots 15 thru 64 are located in the southern portion of the site and proposed for future single-family homes. The proposed development utilizes the Planned Development option under the Polk County Zoning Ordinance for the “MDR” Medium Density Residential District, which requires a minimum 25% of the site be set aside as undeveloped open space to allow for alternative housing types and smaller lot sizes than are permitted under the standard single-family zoning district regulations. The proposed townhome lots range in size from approximately 5,000 to 7,000 square feet in area, with between 35 and 50 feet of frontage. The proposed single-family lots range from approximately 6,500 to 10,000 square feet in area, with a few lots around 15,000 square feet. Under the Conservation House Development Option utilized, the single-family lots are required to have a minimum of 50 feet of frontage and 5,000 square feet of lot area.

The required 25% open space will be contained on proposed Outlot ‘Z’ and Outlot ‘Y’ and shall be held by the developer. In addition to providing the required open space, these outlots will contain future storm water detention needed for the development. In addition, the storm water basin proposed on Outlot ‘Z’ will also assist in alleviating some of the drainage challenges within the adjacent Greens at Woodland Hills development to the west, and provide a buffer between that development and the subject property. The proposed Woodland Hills East concept is similar in nature to the adjacent Greens at Woodland Hills development in terms of lot sizes and housing types. The Greens also utilized the Planned Development option and set aside open space to create a combination of detached single-family homes and townhome/bi-attached homes.

**Roads/Utilities/Natural Resources**

The subject property has approximately 550 feet of frontage to the north onto NE 66th Avenue. NE 66th Avenue is a paved, two-lane collector roadway maintained by Polk County, and is adequate to handle the additional traffic generated by this development. The development proposes a public street extension connecting to NE 66th Avenue and extending to the southern portion of the property, including a short segment extending west to provide street connectivity to the adjacent development to the west via NE 64th Avenue. The preliminary plat proposes to utilize a modified open ditch section for the future roadway. Instead of a traditional curb and gutter,
the modified open ditch section allows a sub-drain and intakes within the adjacent road ditch. The Polk County Subdivision Ordinance requires a roadway width of 30 feet and right-of-way width of 70 feet for the modified open ditch section when serving more than 24 residential lots. The developer is requesting a waiver to allow a roadway width of 26 feet and right-of-way width of 60 feet. The adjacent Greens development to the west utilized the same modified open ditch section with a 26-foot wide road and 60-foot right-of-way.

Water service is provided by Des Moines Water Works. The developer proposes to connect to an existing 12-inch (12”) water main located along the south side of NE 66th Avenue to extend an 8-inch (8”) water main to serve the development. Des Moines Water Works has been notified of this request, and has no major concerns at this time. The developer will be responsible for coordinating with Des Moines Water Works regarding future construction plans and installation of the new water main. The property will be served by Polk County sanitary sewer via connection to an existing eight-inch (8”) sewer main located on the north side of NE 66th Avenue adjacent to the property.

The subject property contains approximately 1.28 acres of young and mature woodlands located along the western property line. The developer is required to meet the woodland protection standards of the Ordinance, requiring a minimum 50% protection for young woodlands and 75% for mature woodlands. Staff has encouraged the developer to protect as many of the trees as possible above these minimum requirements in an effort to preserve these woodlands as a natural buffer from the existing neighborhood and homes to the west. Staff has required a woodland protection easement as shown on Outlot ‘Z’ and the rear of Lots 36 thru 40. It appears that some tree removal will be necessary based on the current design to construct the required detention basin on Lots 40 and 41. In addition to compliance with the woodland protection requirements, the developer is also required to install landscape buffering along the south and east boundaries of the subdivision adjacent to existing light industrial properties. This landscaping is required under the Ordinance to provide adequate screening between the development and these adjacent uses. Sheet 5 of the attached preliminary plat (Exhibit B) shows the required landscape buffering within a proposed easement placed along the rear lot line of Lots 41 thru 58. Staff has yet to fully review the proposed landscaping to ensure it meets the Ordinance requirements, however additional landscaping will also need to be placed along the rear lot line of Lots 58 thru 78 adjacent to the future expansion area for Perficut. This landscaping is a required plat improvement, similar to the public roadway and utility extensions, that will have to be completed, or surety provided, prior to final plat approval.

**STAFF REVIEW:**

Staff has reviewed this plat for compliance with the Polk County Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. The plat is considered a major subdivision due to the number of lots requested as well as required public improvements. The developer requests a waiver to the Subdivision Ordinance standard requiring a minimum roadway width of 30 feet and minimum right-of-way width of 70 feet for a modified open ditch section serving more than 24 residential lots. The developer requests a reduction to a 26-foot wide roadway and 60-foot wide right-of-way. The waiver request can be found as *Attachment C* to this report. Staff is supportive of this waiver given the profile provided, and to ensure compatibility with the existing Greens development to the west, which utilized the same modified section design with reduced roadway and right-of-way widths.

The proposed lots meet all dimensional and sizing requirements for the requested Planned Development options under the “MDR” Medium Density Residential District. Staff will continue to work with the developer
and project engineer in resolving remaining comments. Once all comments have been addressed, the preliminary plat may be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for their approval. Any significant changes to the preliminary plat would require re-approval by the Zoning Commission. Once the preliminary plat has been approved construction drawings may be submitted for review. All required plat improvements shall be constructed, or surety provided, prior to final plat approval. Any final plat will be reviewed by staff and approved by the Board of Supervisors prior to recording, and would not come before the Zoning Commission. The Plat falls within the two-mile extraterritorial review jurisdiction of both Ankeny and Des Moines. Given the proximity to Ankeny, Des Moines has waived their review. Staff has forwarded the plat to Ankeny for their review, and no comments have been received to-date. However, staff has reviewed the Ankeny Plan 2040 and this area appears to be located outside of the City of Ankeny adopted planning boundary. Ankeny shall formally approve or waive their right to review prior to approval and recording of any final plat by Polk County.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the Preliminary Plat of Woodland Hills East, including the requested waiver to allow a modified open ditch section roadway with a roadway width of 26 feet and right-of-way width of 60 feet, subject to a revised preliminary plat addressing all staff comments.
May 18, 2021

Attn: Polk County Zoning Commission
c/o Brian McDonough
Polk County Public Works
5885 NE 14th Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50313

RE: Woodland Hills East – Waiver Request

Dear Zoning Commission members:

On behalf of Hubbell Realty Company, we respectfully request a waiver of the typical street section from 31' wide pavement in a 70' ROW to be 26' wide pavement in a 60' ROW. This is the same typical section that was used on The Greens At Woodland Hills Plat 1, a plat which this project, Woodland Hills East, connects to at NE 64th Avenue. The 26' wide pavement is the same width allowed by SUDAS for local streets. This project will also have 2' wide granular shoulders because there are no curbs.

Woodland Hills East is a Conservation Development, maximizing open space and reducing impervious surfaces. The incorporation of storm lines with intakes on both sides of the street in a rural cross-section eliminates the need for driveway culverts and thus the ditch section does not need to be as deep, which reduces the ROW required.

Sincerely,

CIVIL DESIGN ADVANTAGE, LLC

Emily Harding, Project Manager