

Project May Bring New Land-Use Code

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TEMPLE TERRACE - Redevelopment of Temple Terrace's downtown isn't the only game in town. A privately funded, mixed-use project has received an initial thumbs up from the city council to replace a 1960s-era neighborhood along Fletcher Avenue.

Wildwood Acres, a 50-acre, \$200 million live-work-play development, would replace a community of duplexes east of 56th Street.

Developer Lane Florida, a subsidiary of the Atlanta-based multifamily housing real estate firm Lane Co., bills the project as one that's high-end and state-of-the-art.

Planner Ethel Hammer of Englehardt, Hammer and Associates envisions about 1,200 attached residential units and 200,000 square feet of nonresidential space for medical offices and retail businesses such as small groceries, coffeehouses and bookstores.

The property is in unincorporated Hillsborough County, but Lane Florida hopes to have it annexed by the city of Temple Terrace.

To move forward with the project, the city council must amend its land-development code to allow for 'urban mixed use-25' development, which would allow a maximum of 25 dwelling units per acre. The Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission has recommended its approval. 'This new mixed-use category provides the highest density and intensity in the city, with the exception of the 'downtown mixed use-25 category,' said Joe Bell, principal planning commission planner. 'It's very tightly regulated and it's only applicable to key urban nodes.'

Such an amendment would require that the development be on a major transportation corridor; adhere to a pedestrian-friendly, New Urbanism style; and be located where the response time for fire and police services is five minutes or less. 'It will add to the city's unique identity as an urban but livable city,' Bell said.

Final approval of the project also is dependent on the city updating transportation plans for the area, as well as the city's annexation of the land.

'Staff has worked diligently with the planning commission and the developer,' said Ralph Bosek, the city's community services director. 'This is a complicated process, but we feel we can make it work.'

A public hearing on the amendments is scheduled for Oct. 16.

The city also is working with the Ram/Pinnacle partnership to redevelop its urban core. Plans call for resurrecting a 38-acre shopping center at the southeast corner of 56th Street and Bullard Parkway in a pedestrian-friendly mix of retail, office, cultural and residential components.