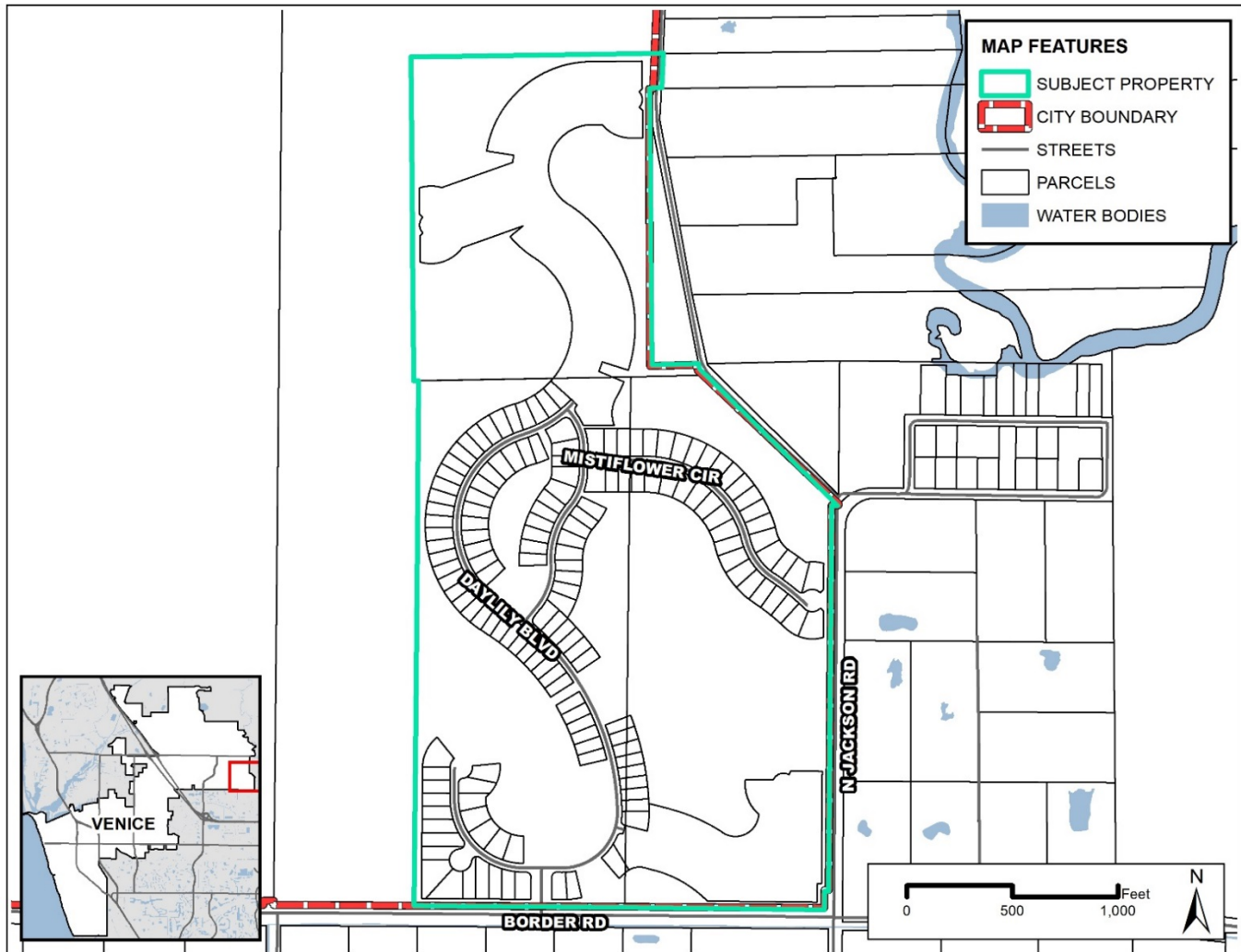




PRELIMINARY PLAT AMENDMENT STAFF REPORT WOODS AT VENICE

November 5, 2019

19-33PP



PETITION NO.: 19-33PP

REQUEST: Preliminary plat amendment petition to request modification of the landscape plan that was approved with the original subdivision for the Woods at Venice, now known as Venice Woodlands.

GENERAL DATA

Owner: Meritage Homes of Florida, Inc.

Agent: Bill Conerly, P.E., Kimley-Horn & Associates

Location: North of Border Rd. and West of N. Jackson Rd. **Property ID:** 0393002000, 0394003040, 0394003020

Property Size: 151± acres

Future Land Use: Mixed Use Residential (MUR)

Neighborhood: Northeast Neighborhood

Zoning: Planned Unit Development (PUD)

Application Date: June 21, 2019

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- A. Application Information (completed petition)
- B. Two Sets of Plan Sheets
 - 2018 Approved Landscape Plans
 - 2019 Proposed Landscape Plans
- C. Tree Save Areas Map
- D. Comparison of Approved vs. Proposed

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Based on a review of city records, the following is an outline of the past development activity on the subject property.

- The property was annexed into the City on May 13, 2008 through the adoption of Ordinance No. 2008-10. The property was eligible for annexation due to its inclusion in the Joint Planning and Interlocal Service Boundary Agreement JPA/ILSBA.
- The property was rezoned from Sarasota County Open Use Estate to City of Venice Planned Unit Development on June 23, 2015 through the adoption of Ordinance No. 2015-15.
- On March 27, 2018, Preliminary Plat Petition No. 17-01PP was approved through the issuance of Development Order No. 17-01PP for the subdivision of the property into 263 single-family lots. The approval included a landscape plan for the entire subdivision that is the subject of the subject preliminary plat amendment that was submitted on June 21, 2019.

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The subject property is the Woods at Venice, now known as Venice Woodlands residential subdivision consisting of 263 single-family lots along with an amenity center and other common area. The applicant is proposing revisions to the landscape plan that was approved with the preliminary plat. The main focus of the amendment is to maintain existing mature trees, especially along the perimeter of the project to provide for the required 80% opacity to be achieved sooner. Also, many planting areas located interior to the site will be relocated to the perimeter. In addition to the maintenance of mature trees where possible, some tree species will be revised due to changes in the master stormwater plan that have necessitated the use of more water tolerant species. These changes are designed to achieve a more substantial buffer sooner. It is important to note that the only aspect of the Venice Woodlands Preliminary Plat that is under consideration in the subject petition is the landscape plan associated with the approved plat. All other aspects of the approved Preliminary Plat remain in full effect.

Based on the submitted application materials, staff data and analysis, and conclusions of this staff report, staff provides the following summary findings on the subject petition:

1. Conclusions / Findings of Fact (Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan):

Due to minimal Strategies in the Comprehensive Plan relating to trees, the subject petition may be found consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

2. Conclusions / Findings of Fact (Compliance with the PUD and the Land Development Code):

The proposed modifications to the preliminary plat landscape plan is in compliance with the approved PUD and no inconsistencies have been identified with the LDC.

3. Conclusions / Findings of Fact (Concurrency/Mobility):

Not applicable as there is no impact on concurrency or mobility.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Venice Woodlands project is requesting approval of a modification to the landscape plan that was approved with the preliminary plat in March of 2018. The applicant indicates the proposed modification is basically as follows:

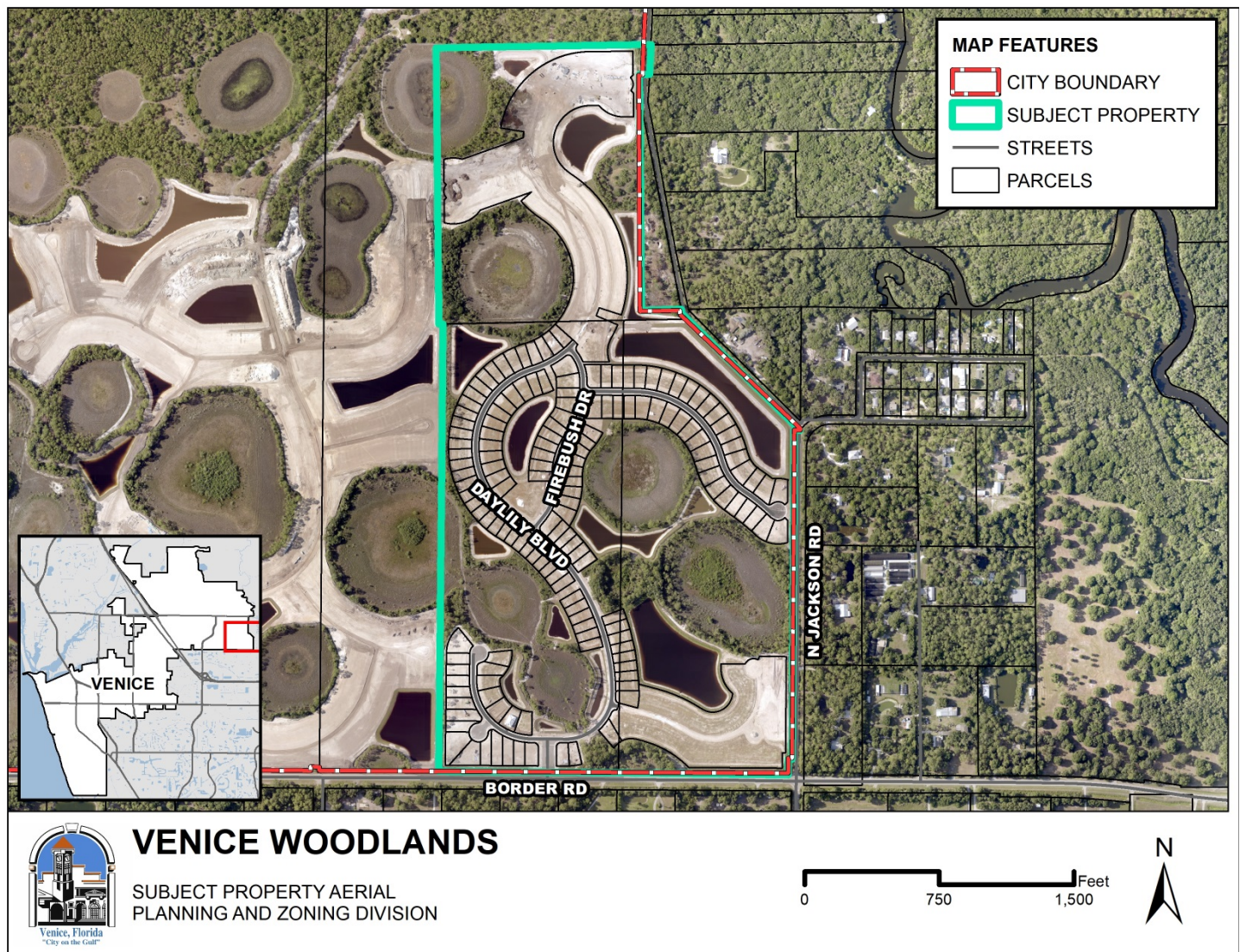
1. The maintenance of existing mature trees where possible to provide a more substantial buffer.
2. The relocation of proposed planting areas from the interior of the site to perimeter locations.
3. Changes to some of the approved species to more water tolerant species due to revisions to the stormwater management plan.

The applicant has provided with their submittal, a “tree save areas map” (see page 6) that depicts the areas of the project where mature trees will be maintained. These areas are mostly along the perimeter of the project and along the interior boundaries of wetlands to provide a larger, more mature buffer. There are no trees required along the perimeter adjacent to wetlands. Therefore, the existing trees interior to these wetland areas will provide visual screening from offsite. The aerial graphic provided by Eco Consultants, Inc. indicates maintaining 328 pine trees, 97 oaks and 134 palm trees.

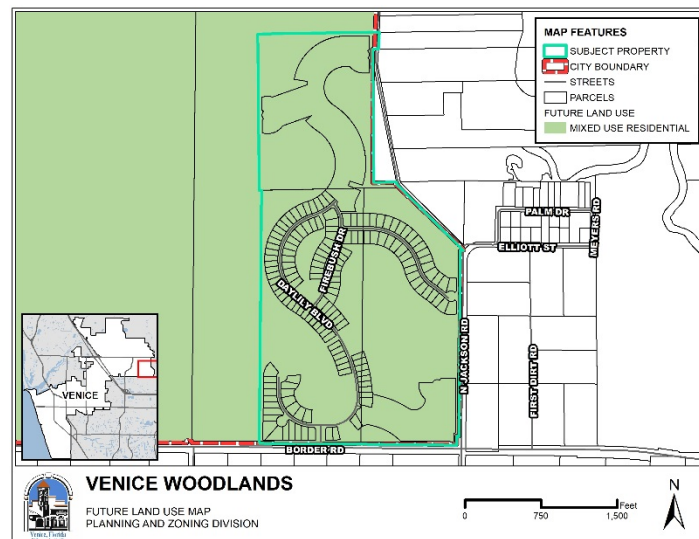
The proposed plan also identifies areas to be planted interior to the development that will now be relocated to the perimeter buffer areas. Relocation of these planting areas will provide for a more significant buffer to achieve the required 80% opacity. There is a graphic depiction on page 5 of this report of the approved vs. proposed landscape plans that was also included in the agenda packet.

Subsequent to preliminary plat approval and during the course of construction plan review and implementation for the horizontal improvements associated with the development, the applicant determined that, due to changes in the stormwater design to include increased stormwater management facilities, changes to a more aquatic tree and plant species was necessitated. As a result, winged elm trees and viburnum shrubs have been eliminated from the plan and replaced with green buttonwood trees and wax myrtle shrubs. Total tree counts with the revised plans have been maintained consistent with the approved plan and is in compliance with the tree numbers required by the Sarasota County tree code.

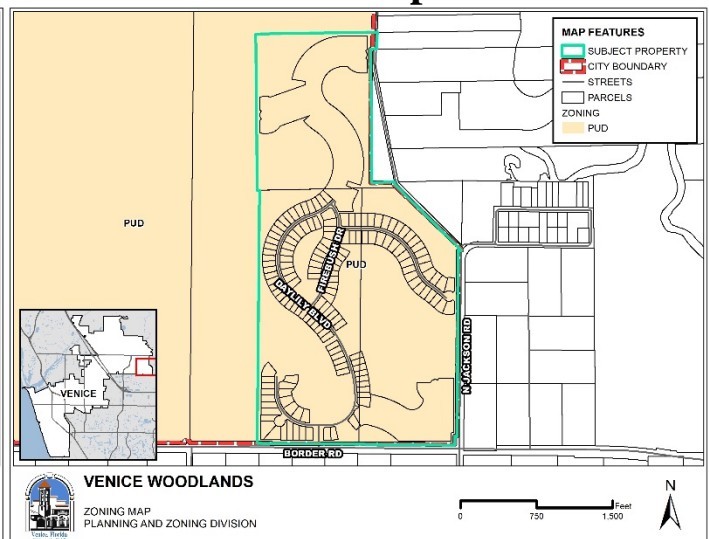
Finally, to confirm compliance and memorialize the proposed changes to the originally approved landscape plan, the applicant has proposed the submitted modified plan for consideration by the City. The plan has been reviewed by both City and County staff and no compliance issues have been identified. The newly proposed landscape plan will memorialize existing landscape material along with the proposed modifications and will be confirmed for compliance upon final platting of the development. All required landscape material has been included in a performance bond to confirm installation upon completion of the project.

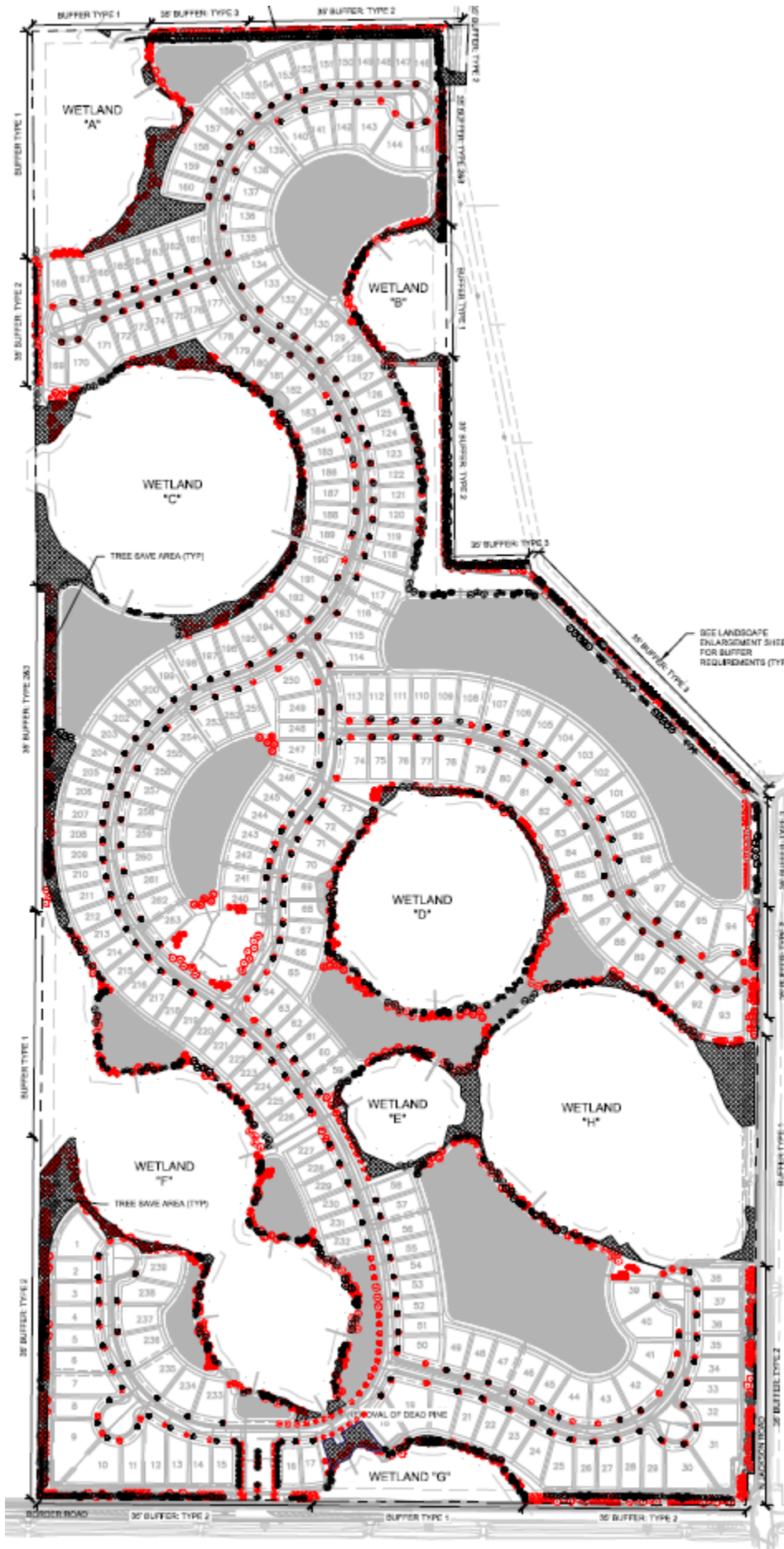


Mixed Use Residential



Planned Unit Development





Approved

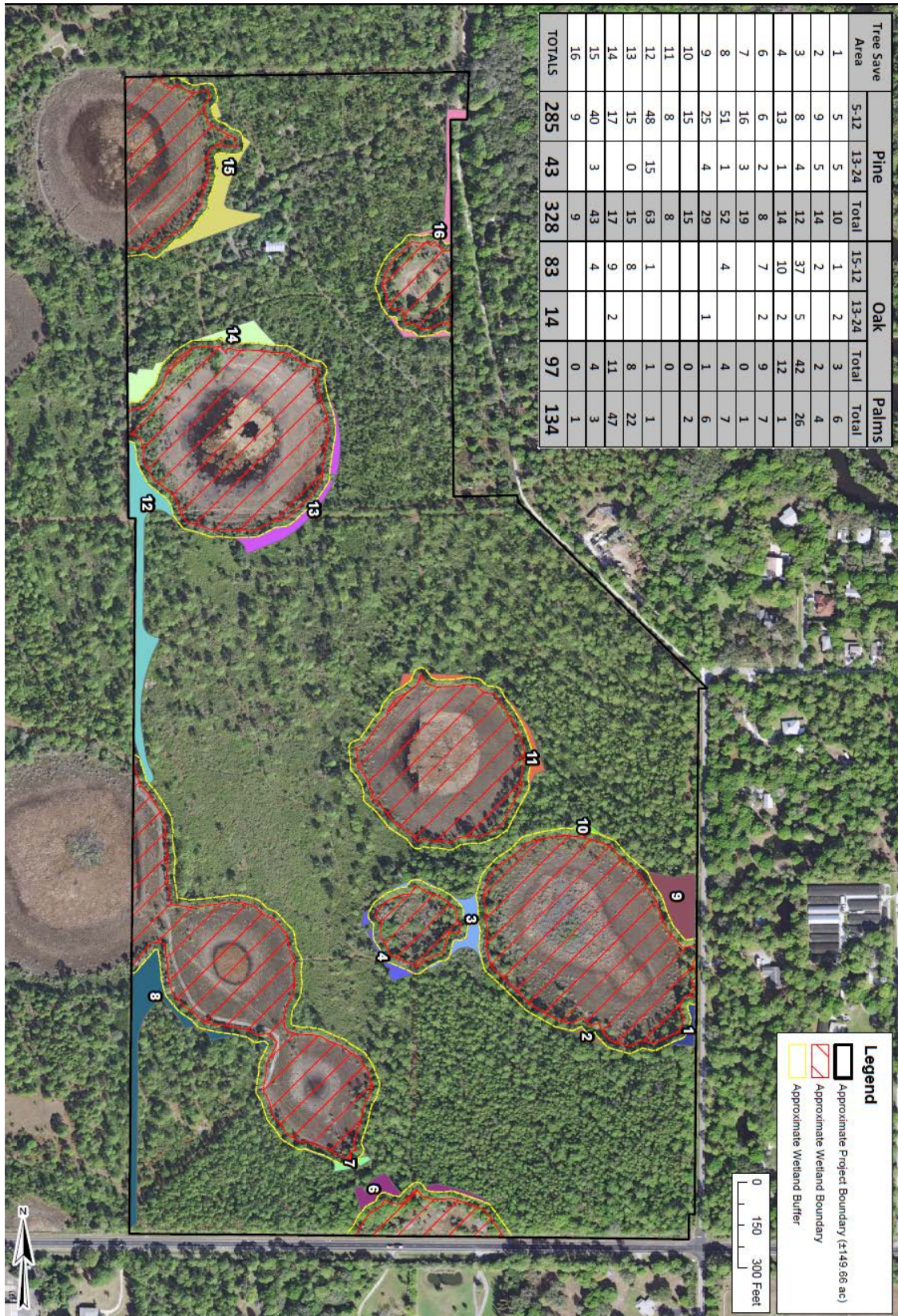
vs

Proposed



Tree Save Area

Tree Save Areas Map





Existing trees onsite.



View looking west along Border Road

IV. PLANNING ANALYSIS

In this section of the report, analysis of the subject preliminary plat amendment petition evaluates 1) consistency with the comprehensive plan, and 2) compliance with the approve PUD and the City's Land Development Code (LDC), and 3) compliance with requirements for Concurrency/Mobility.

A. Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

The Venice Woodlands subdivision is located within the 2,827 acre Northeast Neighborhood that contains mostly residential development. The Comprehensive Plan provides minimal Strategies related to the subject petition. A review of the Comprehensive Plan does not indicate any Intents, Visions or Strategies that the proposed petition would be in conflict with. Although Policy 8.2 regarding compatibility is typically applicable to preliminary plats, in this case, the intent of the proposed petition is to increase compatibility with the surrounding properties by maintaining existing mature trees where possible to provide a more substantial buffer and to substitute material that is better suited to onsite conditions. The same amount of material is being proposed, and in many cases, material has been increased in both numbers and size under the revised plan.

B. Compliance with the Venice Woodlands PUD and the Land Development Code

PUD Compliance

The proposed landscape plan has been reviewed for consistency with the approved PUD and found to be in compliance. The plan sheets remain consistent with the originally approved plans that were found consistent with the PUD. The same requirements regarding buffering including typical cross sections have been included on the proposed plans and the only changes to the plans are those identified above in the project description. In many cases, the resulting buffer material has been increased and enhanced through the inclusion of mature existing material.

LDC Compliance

The subject petition has been processed with the procedural requirements to consider an amendment to a preliminary plat. In addition, the petition has been reviewed by the Technical Review Committee and no issues regarding compliance with the Land Development Code were identified.

It is important to note that although an applicant is required to submit a landscape plan as part of a preliminary plat, there are no general code standards specific to the provided plan. There are no requirements for landscape elements such as street trees, buffers or common area plantings. The only code standards applicable are those of the PUD and compliance has been confirmed. Therefore, no inconsistencies have been identified with the LDC.

C. Compliance with the City's Concurrency/Mobility Requirements

Concurrency/Mobility review is not applicable to the subject petition, as landscaping has no impact on concurrency or mobility.

V. CONCLUSION

Planning Commission Report and Recommendation to City Council

Upon review of the petition and associated documents, comprehensive plan, land development code, staff report and analysis, and testimony provided during the public hearing, there is sufficient information on the record for the Planning Commission to take action on Preliminary Plat Amendment Petition No. 19-33PP.