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Key Haven development gets zone change

By Alyson Matley amatley@keynoter.com
Posted-Wednesday, September 28, 2005

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But U.S. Navy concerns still are 'out there'

Developers got the OK Thursday for what may become a high-end residential neighborhood at the mouth of Key Haven on Stock Island.

The Monroe County Commission, in special session, approved the second of two readings of an ordinance that would change the zoning on the scarified land from mixed commercial to low-density residential.

The developer, Key Haven Estates Ltd., wanted the zoning change so it can build an eventual total of 43 single-family residences. The plans also include building 10 homes on Enchanted Island, a spit of land just east of Key Haven.

Though the plans have been in the works for years, this zoning change doesn't solve the biggest obstacle to development.

In January, U.S. Navy officials opposed the development, citing their new maps that expand potential noise and accident zones to include the proposed development.

"Those maps are still out there, they haven't gone away," said Monroe County Administrator Tom Willi. "The county still needs to go through the formal adoption of those maps."

When the maps were introduced in January, County Attorney Richard Collins opined that until the maps could go through a lengthy public hearing process, the county is required to follow existing land development regulations based upon an original set of Navy maps drawn up in the 1970s.

The old maps brushed the very tip of Stock Island near Peninsular Marina; they do not take in any of Key Haven.

The new zones take in a number of trailer parks on Stock Island as well. Even the new affordable housing complex of Meridian West is in the boundary

Capt. Jim Scholl, commander of Naval Air Station Key West, told the commission in January that the new maps are in keeping with new flight technology.

"I wish we could go into the zone change with a better feeling for the details," Willi said. "But between the county and the Navy, we can work out our differences."

Most Key Haven residents are in favor of the planned new development, since it removes the potential of a commercial strip at the mouth of the upscale neighborhood.

The plan presented to the Key Haven Neighborhood Association shows a development of 33 oversize lots, mostly waterfront. Another 10 large lots would be developed on nearby Enchanted Island, a small undeveloped island just east of Key Haven.



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