

July 31, 2024

Russell Colby
Director of Community Development
City of St. Charles
2 E. Main Street,
St. Charles, Illinois, 60174-1984
rcolby@stcharlesil.gov

RE: Concept Plan Review - Charles Farm

Dear Mr. Colby,

As you know, Pulte Home Company, LLC (“Pulte”) is the contract purchaser of the approximately 960 acre property generally located between Lincoln Highway (Route 38) and Keslinger Road, and Brundige Road and Harley Road, said property being located in Kane County, Illinois (the “Property”). Pulte hereby seeks Concept Review for the proposed development of the Property pursuant to Section 17.04.140 of the Municipal Code of the City of St. Charles.

The proposed development, to be known as Charles Farm, would expand the boundaries of the City of St. Charles to include a new mixed-use community consisting of approximately 15 acres of commercial space, seven different series of single-family homes, dedications for new public infrastructure, and significant new dedicated open space. The residential community that is core to the project will be a collaborative effort, featuring homes built under both the Pulte Homes and Del Webb nameplates.

Pulte is the nation’s third largest homebuilder. Pulte has been building homes in the Chicago region for over fifty years and is currently selling homes in twenty different communities throughout the Chicagoland region. Pulte has had the top selling community in the Chicago region for the last seven years running- a testament to both its community planning and housing product.

Del Webb is the nation’s leading builder of active adult communities for those 55 and older. Lincoln Prairie by Del Webb is the only active new construction Del Webb community in Illinois. Lincoln Prairie grand opened to significant fanfare in the fall 2022. Despite interest rate pressure, homes have sold at a brisk pace and development in Phase 3 of the five-phase project is expected to commence yet this year.

In addition to this letter, please find the following materials which comprise our Concept Review application for Charles Farm:

1. Concept Plan Application form;
2. Letter of Authorization(s) from owner the Property;
3. Disclosure of Beneficiaries (owner and petitioner);
4. Proof of Ownership (vesting deeds)
5. Legal Description of the Property;
6. Plat of Survey for the Property;

7. Park and School Land/Cash Worksheets;
8. Inclusionary Housing Worksheet;
9. List of Property owners within 250' of the Property;
10. Aerial Photo of the Property;
11. Concept Plan for Charles Farm;
12. Phasing Plan for Charles Farm;
13. Proposed Building Elevations for Charles Farm;

Charles Farm represents a large-scale development. As depicted on the Concept Plan, the development effectively consists of three primary components: i) a new residential community consisting of 2,011 single-family homes; ii) a new commercial center that will support the associated residential community; and iii) significant new dedicated open space.

i. Charles Farm Residential Development

New residential development is the core of the proposed Charles Farm development. The proposed residential development can be divided into two core communities: i) a Pulte Homes single-family residential community; and ii) a Del Webb age-restricted active-adult community. Each of the residential communities is discussed in greater detail below.

Pulte Homes Single-Family Residential Community.

The Pulte Homes Single Family Residential Community will consist of 1,044 new single-family homes. The homes are arranged in distinct neighborhoods and clustered around common open space. Each neighborhood is based on one of four different single-family homes types: Townhome, Springs Series, Meadows Series, or Estate Series. Each of the home types were programmed based on Pulte's demographic segmentation of prospective homebuyers in the Kane County market.

Entry-level units are located in the Townhomes and the Springs Series. The Concept Plan includes two neighborhoods of 2-story front-load townhomes. Individual townhome units range from 2-bedroom and 1,800 square feet to 4-bedroom and 2,500 square feet. These two townhome neighborhoods comprise a total of 198 dwelling units, representing the only single-family attached units in the plan.

Pulte's smallest detached single-family homes are located in the Springs Series. There are three neighborhoods designated for Spring Series homes, comprising a total of 224 dwelling units. All Springs Series homes are base 3-bedroom homes, with certain floor plans offering options of four- and five-bedroom layouts. Homes will range in size from 1,700 to 2,600 square feet.

Pulte's most prevalent homes are located in the Meadows Series and the Estate Series. The Concept Plan contemplates five neighborhoods of Meadows Series homes and another five neighborhoods of Estate Series homes. In total, Pulte plans 396 Meadows Series homes and 226 Estate Series homes. In the Meadows Series, homes will range from approximately 1,700 to 3,200 square feet. Homes in the Estate Series range from 2,900 to 3,900 square feet.

Del Webb Age-Restricted Active-Adult Community.

The Del Webb Age-Restricted Active-Adult Community will consist of 967 new single-family homes oriented around an Amenity Center that will act as a social hub for the community. The Del Webb community is a direct response to demographic trends in St. Charles and the broader Kane County Region. With over 34% of the population over the age of 50, new housing supply is essential to both retain long-term residents and meet their evolving needs.

The homes in the Del Webb community can be divided between three different unit types: Scenic, Distinctive, and Echelon. While the community is loosely divided into neighborhoods, there is generally a combination of unit types within each neighborhood. All of the homes are designed as base 2-bedroom ranch homes, with homes in the Scenic Series starting at 1,500 to 1,600 square feet, homes in the Distinctive Series starting at 1,600 to 2,100 square feet, and homes in the Echelon Series starting at 2,200 to 2,800 square feet. Homebuyer will have a plethora of upgrade options available. Upgrades may increase square footage (i.e. sunroom, additional bedrooms, or second floor) or be purely aesthetic (i.e. upgraded elevation, designer kitchen, or custom master bathroom). The goal is to offer a diverse set of floor plans that meet buyers' basic needs but to provide upgrade options to fulfill the desires of each unique homebuyer.

Core to a Del Webb community is the active-adult lifestyle and world-class amenities. The Del Webb homeowners association will be responsible for not only common area maintenance, but will provide snow removal and landscape maintenance for all homes in the community. The centrally located Amenity Center will include a large clubhouse with pools and sports courts. The Amenity Center will employ an activities director and be a year-round hub of social activity for residents of the community. As an age-restricted community, the goal of a Del Webb community is to provide an active and engaging community of peers that leads to a healthier lifestyle for members of the community.

ii. Commercial Center

The Concept Plan for Charles Farm envisions a new commercial center built around the County's planned extension of Bunker Road. The County's Bunker Road improvement will utilize the Union Pacific underpass that was constructed in 2006 to alleviate north-south congestion in central Kane County. Pulte's plan builds upon the Bunker Road improvements to incorporate a second roundabout that incorporates commercial development on three legs of the new intersection. Pulte envisions a neighborhood-oriented commercial center that will serve both increased traffic on Bunker Road and new Charles Farm residents. Pulte will not develop the commercial center, but has a history of working with experienced third-party commercial developers to provide commercial space in and around Pulte's residential projects.

iii. Open Space

Charles Farm utilizes principles of cluster design, strategically grouping smaller lots into compact neighborhoods to maximize dedicated open space. This design concept is consistent with prevailing industry trends whereby natural features are preserved and consolidated common open space is prioritized over large private yards. Utilizing these principles of cluster design, approximately 390 acres or over 40% of the total land area in Charles Farm is dedicated as common open space.

The common open space in Charles Farm takes a variety of different forms, be it preservation of existing natural resources, creation of new wetlands, stormwater ponds, landscape buffers, or new



neighborhood park sites. These different open spaces are spread across the community and are integral to the lifestyle that will be afforded to residents of Charles Farm.

Mill Creek is a natural community resource, the preservation and protection of which was identified as a key development priority. The Concept Plan incorporates large setbacks from the creek bed to minimize disturbance of the creek and surrounding buffers. Recognizing public ownership of Mill Creek north and south of the subject property, Pulte has initiated conversations with public bodies regarding the dedication of this area for public ownership and operation.

New park sites are located throughout Charles Farm. Pulte has a long history of working with park districts to program and improve new public park spaces based on the needs of the community. In addition to public park spaces, other large open spaces and recreational amenities will be owned and operated by homeowners associations. These private open spaces will include preserved floodplain and wetland areas, stormwater basins, substantial landscape buffer yards, and the Del Webb Amenity Center.

The development of Charles Farm will comply with applicable Kane County stormwater regulations. The Concept Plan depicts a large number of blue water stormwater basins. While a number of basins will be strategically maintained as blue water ponds, many of the basins will ultimately become created wetlands. Whether blue water or wetland, these areas are important components of the open space network, providing buffers or land use transitions, creating premium lots with open vistas, fulfilling open space goals, and creating new ecological habitat.

The common open space, accounting for 390 acres or 40% of the Charles Farm land area, provides a unique and tangible public benefit associated with the proposed development of Charles Farm. As development plans progress, we look forward to developing additional detail around preservation efforts and how open space will be a key component of Charles Farm.

We appreciate the City's time and consideration of what we believe is an exciting development project. With Charles Farm, the City has an opportunity to expand its borders, provide needed housing supply, and establish new residential population that will support the City's retail and employment base. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Russell G. Whitaker
Rosanova & Whitaker Ltd.
Attorney for Petitioner