

More houses coming to Orange City's east side

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More housing is on the drawing board for Orange City.

This latest development of 170 homes is aimed at newcomers and rental families who are trading upward.

An Orlando developer proposes to create the neighborhood at the busy intersection of East Graves Avenue and Veterans Memorial Parkway.

The project, a planned-unit development (PUD) known as Liberty Station, would put 98 single-family houses and 72 town houses on 50 acres in the southeast corner of the intersection.

The Orange City Council will act on the rezoning for Liberty Station at its meeting Tuesday, Oct. 13.

Liberty Station, as planned, follows the trend toward smaller lot sizes. The single-family homes will be built on lots with a width or street frontage of 40 feet, and 120 feet deep. The town houses will be built on lots that are 20 feet wide.

The developer, Elevation Development LLC, proposes to set aside 27 acres — more than half of the parcel — as green space. Some of the green space is part of an old golf course.

Access to Liberty Station will be from East Graves Avenue, Veterans Memorial Parkway and Kentucky Avenue. The segment of Kentucky Avenue south of East Graves Avenue is actually a private road that may be upgraded.

Orange City earlier this year spent about \$50,000 on temporary repairs for the safety of those using the road, and a study on the future of the roadway is now underway. One suggestion is to establish a special-assessment district for the repair, improvement and maintenance of the roadway, but the City Council is awaiting a consultant's study.

Liberty Station will also have its electrical, telephone and cable-TV lines placed underground.

Before development may occur, the property will be checked for endangered, threatened or protected species of wildlife, such as gopher tortoises.

Orange City's planning staff included in their report for Liberty Station a notation that "no wetlands or scrub jay habitat [were] detected." However, gopher tortoises were seen.

"Gopher tortoise burrows were detected on site, and the upland habitat is suitable for their burrows. A 100 percent gopher tortoise survey will be required 90 days prior to construction and permitting. If more than 25 burrows are found onsite during the survey, the applicant may need to survey the site for the Eastern indigo snake," the planning staff noted.

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Al Everson

Born in Virginia, Al spent his youth in Tennessee, North Carolina and Virginia, and first moved to DeLand in 1969. He graduated from Stetson University in 1971, and returned to West Volusia in 1985. Al began working for The Beacon as a stringer in 1999, contributing articles on county and municipal government and, when he left his job as the one-man news department at Radio Station WXVQ, began working at The Beacon full time.