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**ABERDEEN TOWN COMMISSIONERS APPROVE REZONING REQUEST FOR BLAKE VILLAGE,
THE FIRST MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT IN MOORE COUNTY**

**Blake Village Exemplifies the Type of Development Called for in Aberdeen's New
Comprehensive Land Development Plan Adopted by Town Commissioners in January 2019**

ABERDEEN, NC – Riley & Walker Homes, a Pinehurst, NC based construction and development firm, received approval from Aberdeen Town Commissioners on Monday, June 24 for a rezoning request for Blake Village, a proposed, \$70 million mixed-use development that fronts onto the east side of NC Highway 5 South in Aberdeen. Blake Village will be the first traditional neighborhood mixed-use property ever constructed in Moore County, and is the first to request a rezoning to PUD-R (Planned Unit Development-Residential) since the Town of Aberdeen formally adopted its new *Comprehensive Land Development Plan* earlier this year. The approval will allow the property to be rezoned from HC (Highway Commercial) and R20-16 (20,000 sf residential lot) to PUD-R.

Blake Village is located on 119 acres at the intersection of Hwy 5 and Linden Road and will feature up to 120,000 square feet of office and retail space; 370 residences; and nearly 9 acres of parks and recreational areas available for public use. Construction is anticipated to start on Blake Village in Fall 2019.

"This tract of land is one of the best pieces of undeveloped property in Moore County," said Braden Riley, co-owner of Riley & Walker Homes with his wife Morgan. "Rezoning this property to PUD-R is a 'down-zoning' that reduces the density and enables us to develop the land in a manner that is in the best interest of the Aberdeen community. Now we can create the type of mixed-use project called for in the new Land Development Plan. We look forward to working with the Town of Aberdeen on this project and to creating a walkable community where residents can live, work and play."

If developed in its original zoning status of HC and R20-16, Blake Village could include up to 825,000 square feet of commercial space and up to 79 residences by right. "Developing Blake Village in its current zoning would be a much more intense development that would create significantly more traffic and not be in the community's best interest," said Riley.

SITE HISTORY

The property on which Blake Village will be developed was owned for many years by the Country Club of North Carolina and then purchased in 1982 by BBL and Associates, a real estate holding company in which the late NC State Senator and Pinehurst resident Harris Blake was a principal partner.

"Sen. Blake's original vision for this property was that it be developed as a mixed-use center that would create homes and services for Aberdeen, while also creating a beautiful gateway between the Pinehurst and Aberdeen communities," said Joy Blake Donat, a partner in BBL and Associates and the daughter of the late Sen. Blake. "Riley & Walker's plan for Blake Village fulfills my father's original vision." Riley & Walker Homes is under contract to purchase the property from BBL and Associates.

According to Donat, the last time this property was under contract was in 2001 when Club Corp planned to build two 18-hole golf courses -- Pinehurst #9 and #10 -- on the adjacent 1,000-acre tract (owned today by Pinehurst Resort), and to create a mix of commercial and residential on the Blake Village tract.

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“The 2001 development was widely lauded by the community and approved by the Town, but unfortunately came to a halt due to 9/11,” said Donat. “Riley & Walker Homes’ current plans for Blake Village pay homage to the original mixed-use concept and align with the goals and objectives outlined in the Town’s recently adopted Land Plan.”

In the *Comprehensive Land Development Plan* adopted by the Town on January 28, 2019, the Blake Village property is included in Planning Area 3: Commercial Cores and Surrounds, which includes the commercial corridors along US Hwy 1, NC Hwy 5, NC Hwy 211 and the northwest area of Aberdeen. One of the objectives for Planning Area 3 as stated in the Plan is to *reorganize retail development patterns from linear to nodal and provide for mixed use with a conditional use permit* (Strategy 3.02-A on page 85).

ACCESSIBILITY AND TRAFFIC

Blake Village will have three points of ingress and egress, with the main entrance via a new street on Hwy 5 across from the Sandhills Bowling Center entry. Two additional entries will be on Olivia Lane, which will be paved and improved at the developer’s expense. A fourth potential entry dead-ends at the southern edge of the property, adjacent to the 1000-acre undeveloped site owned by Pinehurst Resort. If this property is ever developed, this road stub could potentially connect to additional ingress and egress points.

Riley & Walker Homes retained Kimley-Horn, a Raleigh-based planning, engineering and design consulting firm, to conduct a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) for Blake Village, which it submitted to the Town of Aberdeen on April 18. According to the TIA, Blake Village has the potential to increase traffic on Hwy 5 by 25 to 35 percent. But because the build-out of the project will be phased over a 10-year period and the impact of traffic will be gradual, Hwy 5 will be able to accommodate the additional traffic created by Blake Village both now and in the future -- when it is widened to a 3-lane roadway (north of Linden Road) and 4-lane roadway (south of Linden Road) by NCDOT. The road widening is scheduled to begin in 2022 and be completed in 2024. Riley & Walker Homes is scheduled to begin construction on Blake Village this fall.

According to Travis Fluitt, Associate at Kimley-Horn and author of the TIA, Hwy 5 will be able to accommodate 25,000 vehicle trips per day when the 4-lane expansion is complete. “When Blake Village is fully built-out, NC Hwy 5 will see up to 17,000 vehicle trips per day, so this is well below what the roadway can accommodate,” said Fluitt. “In addition, the property’s mixed-use configuration will create an environment where residents can live work and play in one location, which should reduce the number of times they access area roadways each day. Also, by providing more shopping and dining options to the community, Blake Village will keep area residents from travelling so far for services, which will help reduce traffic on other area roadways like US Hwy 1 and 15-501.”

Added Riley, “Reducing traffic and improving accessibility is a top priority for us and our intent with Blake Village is to create a walkable environment that is easily accessible by foot, bike or car,” said Riley. “We are confident that the various roadway improvements detailed in the TIA will be a great benefit to both Blake Village and the entire Aberdeen community.” One of these roadway improvements is the installation of a traffic light at the main entry at Hwy 5 at build-out, if approved by NCDOT.

UTILITIES

Another significant benefit that Blake Village will bring to the Town of Aberdeen is the extension of sewer service to Hwy 5. Riley & Walker Homes will assume the cost of installing a force main to connect into the Aberdeen sewer system, which will enable future developers to more easily tap into sewer in this area at a reduced rate. In addition, Riley & Walker is donating property to the Town for the installation of a new municipal well site to better meet the water needs of both Blake Village and adjacent residents and businesses.

LIVE, WORK AND PLAY

“One of the most unique aspects of Blake Village is that people can live, work and play here,” said Bob Koontz, principal with KoontzJones Design, a Southern Pines land planning and architectural firm and designer of Blake Village. “This type of mixed-use development is exactly what the Aberdeen Land Development Plan is asking for because it creates attractive, walkable communities characterized by traditional architecture, green space and a great quality of life.”

Plans for Blake Village call for a mix of compatible uses configured in a manner similar to the traditional neighborhoods of Moore County and downtown Aberdeen. Key features will include:

- A vibrant, traditional neighborhood accented with street trees, sidewalks, on-street parking, traditional architecture and front porches that encourage residents to interact with their neighbors.
- A 30' undisturbed, wooded buffer borders the entire eastern property line, with an additional 20' setback, for a total of a 50' buffer between the back of Blake Village residences and the property line that abuts eight private lots within the Country Club of North Carolina (CCNC) neighborhood. (See Illustration)
- Up to 120,000 square feet of office, retail, and restaurants, with the potential for a new grocery store.
- One to three-story buildings with a maximum height of 35'.
- Up to 370 residences, including single-family homes, cottages, townhomes and multi-family units with a mix of alley access and on-street parking to maintain an appealing streetscape.
- 18 acres of open space with 9 of those acres characterized as "usable" open space, such as parks, performance areas, a central plaza and linear parks along roadways.
- Landscaped retention pond to provide recreation and walking opportunities for residents and the public
- Extensive landscaping to include mature trees, street trees, shrubs and seasonal plantings.
- The development team is following the Aberdeen Tree-Save Ordinance and working with Planning staff to retain as many mature trees as possible during development.
- Pool and clubhouse for residents - easily accessible by foot and bicycle.
- Additional recreational opportunities may include a dog park, children's play areas and community gardens.
- All residences are within a 5-minute walk of an open space or recreation area.

DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Founded by Braden and Morgan Riley in 2016, Riley & Walker Homes is a privately-owned construction and development firm headquartered in Pinehurst, NC. Recent projects include Wilder Farms and Langdon Chase, new home communities in Johnston County, NC. In addition to Riley & Walker, the Blake Village project team includes local firms KoontzJones Design of Southern Pines as Project Planners and Landscape Architects, and LKC Engineers of Aberdeen as Project Engineer.

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