

June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Commissioner Dexter McCoy  
Fort Bend County Commissioners' Court  
c/o Fort Bend County Engineering  
301 Jackson Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor,  
Richmond, Texas, 77469

**RE: Lakeview Retreat Casitas – Variance Request**

Dear Commissioner McCoy,

On behalf of D.R. Horton, we, META Planning + Design, respectfully submit this variance request in relation to an 8.4-acre tract located along Horton Vista Drive known as the Lakeview Retreat Casitas within the Lakeview Retreat community. The variance request is for the following items:

1. To allow for a 20-foot front building line instead of the required 25' front building line and 22' garage building line. (Section 5.12.C.1.A)
2. To allow for a 3-foot separation between residential buildings along one side of the property line. (Section 5.12-C.5)
3. To allow for lots less than 5,000 square feet. The average lot size for these 80 lots will be 2,375 square feet. (Section 5.14-E.4)
4. To allow for 28' wide private streets (28' PAE/PUE) instead of the required 50' ROW. (Section 5.9-A.1)

Lakeview Retreat is a 441-acre master planned community that is located in the City of Houston's ETJ in Fort Bend County. Lakeview Retreat is bounded by FM 1093 to the north, SH 99 to the east, and FM 1464 to the west. Additionally, Lakeview Retreat is bisected by Horton Vista Drive, which runs north-south through the tract, and Bellaire Boulevard, which runs east-west through the tract. The Casitas Tract is located on the north part of the Lakeview retreat along FM 1093. As Lakeview Retreat is located within the City of Houston's ETJ, the development of the Lakeview Retreat Casitas has been designed to meet the standards as established in Houston subdivision regulations.

The City of Houston's Chapter 42 dictates that the building line requirement for both habitable structures and garages along the right-of-way of a private street or type 2 permanent access easement shall be five feet. This 5-foot setback along PAE/PUEs is widely used throughout the City of Houston and Fort Bend County. On a public street, the County requirement is a 20' front setback from the R.O.W. and a 22' garage setback from the sidewalk as mentioned above. However, due to the unique layout of the proposed homes, a 20-foot front garage setback from the PAE is needed. To improve the pedestrian realm within the community, there will be 4-foot sidewalks on both sides of the PAE that will comply with the required ADA standards. The sidewalks will overlap the PAE to allow for greater optimization of frontage within the lots and a 5'x5' passing area will be provided within the sidewalks at no greater distance than every 200' along the fronts of the residential lots. This type of sidewalk is commonly used in similar developments. This application proposes a 20-foot building line for both the front of the home and the garage. We have proposed additional parking throughout the development to help with the overflow of parking to ensure the safety of the residents and guests.

This minor deviation from Fort Bend County Subdivision Regulations will not be injurious to the public safety and welfare of those living in or traveling within this subdivision. Building lines will create an area within each lot that will remain unobstructed. The unobstructed portion of the lots will allow for clear visibility and will maintain safe traffic conditions. Developments within the City of Houston have been designed to this standard for many years, and this standard has maintained safe conditions regarding building setbacks.

The International Fire Code (IFC) states that a side building line requirement for habitable structures without fire-rated walls shall be five feet. This 5-foot building separation is widely used throughout the City of Houston and Fort Bend County. Because of the unique design and character of the development, we are proposing to reduce the building separation to 3 feet instead. Due to the fire code, the development will provide adequate firewall protection along both sides of the home structure. This idea of fire wall protection has already been implemented into other designs within Fort Bend. In addition, the County does have a regulation with a building separation of 0-foot on one side and a 10-foot on the other, which utilizes the same IFC standards along the common wall. There will be a 3-foot access/maintenance easement along the open side of each lot line to ensure access to the rear of the lot and allow for maintenance and construction of the property.

The Lakeview Retreat Casitas project contains 80 lots that fall below 5,000 square feet, and the average lot size of these 80 lots is 2,375 square feet. According to Chapter 42, lots within the ETJ that have an average lot size of 2,375 square feet would require 600 square feet of compensating open space (COS) per lot. With this in mind, Lakeview Retreat Casitas is required to provide a minimum of 48,000 square feet of COS, and the section is providing 53,740 square feet of COS. The majority of reserves will be restricted to use for COS only, and these reserves will create an area for residents to spend time outdoors.

The City of Houston's Chapter 42 dictates that COS will create areas that are restricted for and shall be accessible for the use of owners of property within the subdivision. These areas will create communal open spaces for residents to enjoy and will compensate for the smaller lot size and individual yard space. COS is widely used throughout the City of Houston and Fort Bend County.

The proposed design of the Lakeview Retreat Casitas will utilize private streets with a 28-foot paving cross-section throughout the tract. According to Fort Bend County regulations, a local street will be required to have a 28-foot-wide paving as well as a 50-foot right-of-way width. In a typical single-family development, the additional width outside the paving would be utilized for any required public utilities. However, the proposed streets will be private, and all utilities privately maintained and located under the pavement, meaning additional width will not be needed. While this design is self-imposed, it will create a more walkable neighborhood and a safer place to live.

Tamarron West, Retreat at Imperial, and Avalon at Sienna Plantation all within Fort Bend County have developed similar standards as the ones being proposed in this variance request.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Jacob Guerrero