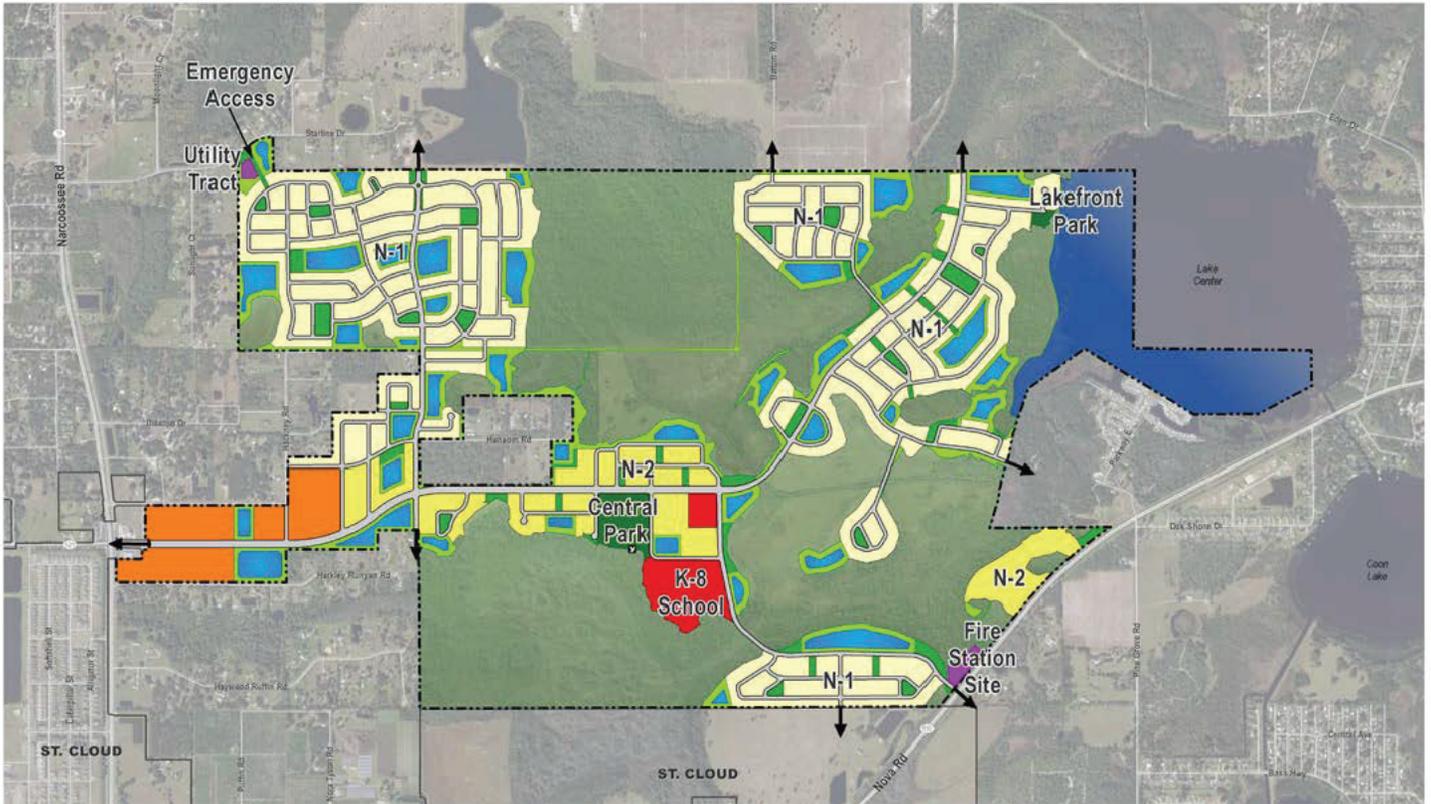


St. Cloud approves 2,020-acre Center Lake Ranch annexation with strict conditions



This conceptual master plan highlights a central park and lakefront park, relocates the K-8 school (red) and concentrates all of the N2 residential development (yellow) along major roadways. Multifamily development is required in community center (orange) and in N2 neighborhoods. (Poulos & Bennett)



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The St. Cloud City Council voted 4-1 on Thursday to annex the 2,020-acre Center Lake Ranch -- a year after denying the annexation -- but they added barriers that could make it difficult for the project to proceed as planned.

The council placed a condition on the annexation vote that would prohibit development of apartment complexes throughout most of the project, even though it would be zoned as a Mixed Use district. A final vote is scheduled for April 11.

Center Lake Ranch has been an approved DRI in Osceola County since 2008 with entitlements for 2,201 single-family homes, 1,172 multifamily units, 170,000 square feet of retail use, 70,000 square feet of office space plus civic and community uses.

Located between Narcoossee Road and the future **Sunbridge development**, Center Lake falls in the city and county's joint planning area. That means the developers can only get water and sewer service from the city of St. Cloud, and they must apply for annexation to the city to get the utilities.

Last year the council voted 3-2 to deny the annexation.

The longtime ranch owner, Orlando-based **Pineloch Management Corp.**, reapplied this year after Mattamy Homes' Keith Trace ousted Councilman Donald Shroyer in November, changing the balance on the council.

Pineloch also revised the application to seek 3,000 single family homes and 1,000 multifamily units, along with other key changes. They upsized the school from a K-5 to a K-8 and moved it to a different location. They also added a reclaim water pumping facility that was requested by the city's utility department.

"Before we reapplied, we took a fresh look at the entire plan," Pineloch Vice President Jimmy Caruso told **GrowthSpotter**. "To date, the plan has been well received from the residents, staff and City Council ... Based on the Council and community feedback from last night, we expect further revisions to the concept plan before our final submittal."

Trace praised Pineloch for the changes, particularly the emphasis on parks and conservation, the 7-plus miles of trails and the new dark sky regulations. "I think this plan looks a whole lot better than the plan that was put forth previously," he said.

Much of the discussion during the hour-long hearing focused on apartments and whether they should be allowed in the Narcoossee Overlay district. Councilwoman Linette Matheny (who voted against the annexation last year) added the condition that multifamily development would only be permitted in commercial areas, and only as part of a mixed-use building with ground-floor commercial or office

uses.

Pineloch's planner, Kathy Hattaway of **Poulos & Bennett**, and the city's own planning director said that such a condition would violate the city's land development code, which requires a variety of different housing types in mixed use zoning districts.

"It's very important to us that we not be restricted to building multifamily over commercial," Hattaway said. "It's not an economically sound decision. Those types of products are a great idea, but they just don't work in the market."

The city's mixed use development standards sets a minimum density of five dwelling units per acre. "It's impossible to achieve the required density without having a variety of housing types, and that requires multifamily apartments," Hattaway said.

Caruso said the conceptual plan calls for apartments in the "community center" as well as in the N2 type residential neighborhoods, which are typically designed with higher densities. He told **GrowthSpotter** he hopes they can resolve the council's concerns before the ordinance comes back for the final vote.

Raleigh Steinhauger, government affairs liaison for the Apartment Association of Greater Orlando, said the council's comments about multifamily housing were troubling.

"To have a blanket condition denying multifamily development just doesn't make sense for the community," he said. "Multifamily housing generates significant revenue for the community. It is in demand, and it's necessary."

Matheny and Councilman Dave Askew indicated that unless the apartment condition was included in the final version of the ordinance, they would likely vote to deny.

"I'm going to vote yes, but I gotta see what's on the final reading," Matheny said.

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