

March 2, 2021

BY EMAIL DELIVERY

Mayor Philipps and Members of Council  
Town of Sunset Beach  
700 Sunset Beach Blvd.  
Sunset Beach, NC 28468

Re: Interim Project Report Ocean Ridge Phase VI

Dear Mayor Phillips and Members of Council:

In accordance with the Subdivision Improvements Agreement between Coastal Communities at Ocean Ridge Plantation, LLC (the “Developer”) and the Town of Sunset Beach, following is an interim report to the Town regarding the progress on the subject project.

The Developer has continued installation of extensive stormwater piping, curb inlet and junction boxes in Section 2 of Phase VI, along with filling of historical ditches and grading. We also continue with survey and engineering work as needed -- ahead of construction and in cases where redesign is necessary to accommodate unknown pre-existing infrastructure. Erosion control work is always ongoing: after installation of concrete boxes, after ground disturbing activity such as pipe installation, and of course to establish permanent grassing of sloped areas, which requires re-seeding after continuous rainfall.

Almost incessant rainfall since our last report has hampered progress, but contractors have been doing their best to finalize stormwater infrastructure installation. Ground conditions were already saturated entering into this quarter, and at least another 25” of rain has fallen during this timeframe, with only a few days in the entire three-month period not having some precipitation. Obviously, dewatering (i.e., pumping water out of excavated trenches so pipes and boxes can be stabilized and to avoid settling of other components) has added time and cost to the project and remains a challenge. Waiting for dirt to dry enough to handle and grade has also been a formidable obstacle. To call most site dirt “slop” would not be an overstatement. Whenever possible, though, contractors have done their best to focus work where conditions were the best of the worst.

Unanticipated delays have also occurred when working around existing utilities.

---- In one situation, the depth of an existing sewer line and three phase electric line conflicted with the designed elevation of a concrete junction box (connecting stormwater pipe) we were installing. Correcting the interference was not a simple matter. Coordination among the contractor, project engineers, county agencies and BEMC was required. The approved stormwater design had to be evaluated to see if any change could be made to avoid the interference. Ultimately, it was determined from all relevant input that it could not, and BEMC allowed its existing infrastructure to be lowered. Brunswick County also evaluated and allowed lowering of the sewer line.

----At another location, we encountered a similar issue when installing curb inlets. The County allowed its sewer main line to be lowered, but, in that process, an existing 3 phase electric line and water main line (not identified on the plans nor marked by 811) were discovered. Construction was stopped and coordination among project personnel and agencies was again required. These primary utility lines could not be moved, but project engineers evaluated and re-designed locations of four (4) curb inlets.

Excessive rains also caused a pre-existing water control structure to collapse, resulting in failure and collapse of the existing roadway. The piping and structure (which connects two existing ponds with a pipe underneath the existing roadway) had planned to be replaced in a controlled manner, which would mean plugging the high end of water flow to stop the water during installation of replacement pipe. The roadway collapse, however, revealed existing 3 phase electric lines located at a depth that would have interfered with the designed elevation of the replacement pipe and outlet structure. After evaluation, engineers designed a change in the structure, and recently BEMC visited the site to perform its own assessment and ultimately allowed a minor depth level modification. We can now proceed with installation of re-connection of the two ponds, although blocking water movement for installation of the replacement pipe will be more challenging.

The current and future ramifications of the F-3 tornado that hit just before midnight on February 15 cannot be overstated. Loss of life and catastrophic damage was the result in Ocean Ridge neighborhoods. Massive amounts of debris from mature trees and from houses ripped apart are being handled on an emergency basis. Concrete power poles were left leaning across roadways, vehicles were flipped over, many families were left homeless, and golf course greens were destroyed. From recent ordering of materials for this Phase VI Ocean Ridge project, we understand that supply chains already strained due to the pandemic will be further delayed. Contractor availability is also impacted, as they have been diverted to emergency assistance and to alleviate safety hazards. Staff resources have been stretched precariously thin. On that note, we so appreciate various groups and individuals from Sunset Beach that voluntarily provided welcome support and manpower in the wake of the devastation.

We will continue to keep you advised about construction progress, and we sincerely appreciate the cooperation of the Town as we continue to move forward with the development of Ocean Ridge Phase VI. We invited the town for a project tour after the holidays, which may have been delayed in recognition of the amount of rainfall this quarter. We remain willing to host another staff visit when convenient for the Town.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Becky K. Noble". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'B'.

Becky K. Noble  
Coastal Communities at Ocean Ridge Plantation, LLC