



AFTER ELEVATION CODE VIOLATION, BRYAN COUNTY IMPLEMENTS NEW PREVENTION MEASURES

BRYAN COUNTY, GA – June 21, 2019 – Recently, Bryan County’s Community Development Department, which oversees planning and zoning, observed that the elevation of 17 houses in the new Water Grass planned unit development in South Bryan County is not in accordance with current codes.

According to the Interim Development Ordinance passed last year, the homes in this development were supposed to be built on elevated concrete slabs for aesthetic purposes. The developer was made aware of this condition at the time permits were approved. Yet, upon building review, it was found that the condition was not followed and the houses were not elevated as required.

“We’re unsure if this is a case of the developer flipping the property to the builder and not telling him about the elevation conditions, or if the builder knew but just didn’t follow codes,” Community Development Director Audra Miller said.

The elevation required by the conditions was purely for aesthetic value, and not for safety concerns. The violation of the code will have no impact on the quality or sturdiness of the homes.

To prevent code violations of this nature from occurring in the future, the Community Development Department is phasing in a special new computer tracking system over the course of the next year. The technology will track projects as they move along, ensuring every facet of a build is up to code and on par with conditions issued as part of the permit approval process.

Technology upgrades and providing better and more accurate information has been and will continue to be a focus for the department. All meetings are now posted on the county calendar, including meeting packets and materials. The website is being changed to better reflect the services offered and make it easier for the public to find information and resources in a more efficient and timely manner. Miller hopes to transition into a digital submittal program for permits and plans in 2019, and potential vendors to handle this project are already being evaluated.

“Now that the staff is aware of it, we’re going to be more diligent and will force compliance of the conditions through our system,” Miller said. “This will help us make sure that codes are being followed. We’ll be reaching out to builders along the way and reminding them that you must comply with these conditions, or there will be a penalty.”

If issues of this nature are discovered again, now that prevention measures are in place, the builder would be issued a “stop work order.” The company would be required to correct the violation before work on a structure could begin again.

The Water Grass community is in South Bryan County, between the intersections of Belfast River/Belfast Keller and Harris Trail/Belfast River. Ultimately, it will contain 143 lots. Clearing and grading on the property began over a year ago, and the building permits were issued in the past few months, according to Miller.

For more information about Bryan County, please visit www.bryancountyga.org.

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