

Two controversial proposals push Wellington meeting to 2:21 a.m.

LOCAL By **Kristina Webb** - Palm Beach Post Staff Writer



1



Wellington residents packed into the Village Hall council chambers as the Planning, Zoning and Adjustment Board heard three controversial proposals Wednesday, Oct. 11, 2017. (Kristina Webb / The Palm Beach Post)

Posted: 6:04 p.m. Thursday, October 12, 2017

WELLINGTON — A pair of controversial development applications in Wellington could face an uphill battle as they head to the village council after a board voted to recommend largely denying **one application and completely denying another** during a contentious seven-hour night meeting that ended close to 2:30 a.m., Thursday.

The recommendations of the village's Planning, Zoning and Adjustment Board came amid hours of presentations and public comment, with dozens weighing in on the two applications submitted by developer Glenn Straub.

In the first, Straub wants to change the village's master plan so Palm Beach Polo Golf and Country Club can include field and equestrian sports for the club's golf courses and Straub's property that runs along Stribling Way under the Florida Power & Light Co. power lines.

RELATED: Shouting, tension mark meeting on controversial Wellington proposals

He also wants several new access points to his Palm Beach Polo properties, including:

- Two entrance-and-exit points from Stribling to the power line property.
- Service access to the north end of Palm Beach Polo's defunct north course from Birkdale Drive.
- An exit from the north course behind the Palm Beach County Library's Wellington branch onto Royal Fern Drive.
- Right-in-right-out only access from Forest Hill Boulevard to the north course.
- An entrance and exit from Palm Beach Polo's Polo Club Road to the golf course just south of Forest Hill Boulevard.

Straub withdrew a request for access from his course just south of Forest Hill Boulevard to Sunnydale Drive, also known as Sunny Drive, within Palm Beach Polo because village staff said it did not need to be on the master plan. If Straub wants that access point, staff said he would have to come to an agreement with the property owners association.

In the second application, Straub wants the master plan to include field and equine sports for his Polo West golf course, along with adding an access point

from Greenview Shores Boulevard — at the traffic signal for Wellington High School — to his property.

The pair of applications **went before Wellington's Equestrian Preserve Committee last week**, with committee members denying most of each petition, and only approving Straub's requests for the power line property on the Palm Beach Polo application, and adding equine sports to the master plan for Polo West's golf course.

READ: Controversy in Wellington: Developer plans changes at golf courses

The board Wednesday night went even further, agreeing with the Equestrian Preserve Committee on the power line property portion of the Palm Beach Polo application, but recommending full denial of the Polo West changes.

The village and Straub recently have sparred in court about weekly soccer games at Palm Beach Polo without Straub obtaining special-use permits through the village for the matches. Straub's attorney, Alexander Domb, told the Equestrian Preserve Committee the goal of the applications was to allow events at Palm Beach Polo and Polo West that are not golf, so Straub does not face similar fines and litigation.

But residents of Palm Beach Polo, Polo West and nearby neighborhoods argued there would be no way to regulate the number of people allowed at each event if Straub didn't obtain special-use permits. Some board members agreed.

When Wellington planning and zoning staff members said Straub would have to come back for a permit if he were to have an event with spectators, vendors, food and bleachers, board chair Kenneth Kopp questioned what the difference is between an event and an activity. In voting to deny most of the Palm Beach Polo application, Kopp cited that lack of definition as part of his decision.

"I think a better plan would be to provide those definitions, define clearly what constitutes an event, have a list of what field sports are ... before we just let loose and allow the applicant to do whatever they want on the property," he said.

Other board members also said the term “field sports” was too broad, and should be narrowed to more specifically list potential activities that could be held on the land.

“I think that if the applicant wants soccer, the applicant should ask for soccer,” board member Stephen Levin said.

Several residents also had concerns.

Stephen Stack, whose home is along the Polo West golf course, said traffic increases at Village Park when baseball, soccer and football games are held there. The number of cars, he said, is far greater than what residents see now with the golf course.

“That will be my backyard,” he said.

About the Author



KRISTINA WEBB



ADVERTISER CONTENT: The Palm Beach Post
**BallenIsles Country Club - A Palm Beach club with
all the luxuries**

Reader Comments 1
