

Originally appeared on News-Journal Online at

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/NewsJournalOnline/News/Neighbors/North/evlNN01082709.htm>

[| Print This Page](#)
[| Close This Page](#)

August 27, 2009

Hospital move clears way for housing project

By RAY WEISS
Staff Writer

ORMOND BEACH -- City officials are moving closer to approving 96 affordable housing units for older people that are expected to be built near the old Florida Hospital facility.

Now that the hospital has moved just southwest of the city, many of the former medical offices are vacant, with doctors relocating closer to the new facility on the Daytona Beach line.

At its meeting last week, the City Commission unanimously approved rezoning more than 8 acres -- at 570 and 592 Sterthaus Drive off North Old Kings Road -- for the Madison Glen Apartments. The site is next to the YMCA.

The development was selected by the Florida Housing Financing Corporation, which oversees the state's affordable housing program. The apartments would be rented at lower than market rates to older people who qualify based on their income.

The two parcels are separated by Florida Power & Light high-power transmission lines. Commissioner Ed Kelley raised concerns if the city might someday be held responsible if it's ever proven that prolonged exposure to high-voltage electrical lines pose a health risk.

"People are claiming all types of illnesses, cancer and everything else," he said. "It probably will come up at some point."

Mayor Fred Costello requested that the city's legal staff look into the matter to avoid future problems.

"I don't want the city to be liable because we approved something next to them," he said of the lines.

On the site, one of the nine historic trees now standing will be removed. The city's planning board previously approved the rezoning request unanimously from Paramount Community Development Corp.

No one attending the Aug. 18 commission meeting opposed the rezoning change. A second reading of the ordinance for the apartment project is set for Sept. 8.

"I am very pleased this was successful for funding," Commissioner Lori Gillooly said. "I think it will be a good program for our community."

In other commission action:

· City officials agreed to a new five-year contract with a 10 percent increase with Waste Management of

Florida Inc. The contract allows for another five-year extension with mutual consent. The company picks up solid waste, yard waste and recycling materials.

"They get 10 percent and we get five years," Costello said. "I think it's fair."

A monthly increase in residential customer rates from \$12.40 to \$13.59 as of Oct. 1 is being considered. The company has provided service with the city since 1997.

· After some discussion, officials agreed to give \$8,000 to the Daytona Beach International Festival, down from \$10,000 last year. They followed the Budget Advisory Board's recommendation of reducing requests for contributions to outside groups by 20 percent. Several of last year's festival events were in Ormond Beach, and travel magazine ads aimed at tourists ran promoting the city. The commission viewed the money as well spent.

Commissioner Troy Kent voted against allocating the money.

ray.weiss@news-jrnl.com

© 2009 News-Journal Corporation. ® www.news-journalonline.com. Do not republish or distribute without permission.