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TOWN HOMES OK'D HABITAT TO BUILD DUPLEX-TYPES ON 17 LOTS *J.R. WELSH, jrwelsh@sunherald.com*

A green light has finally been given for a **Habitat for Humanity** development that should help further ease the city's shortage of affordable housing.

The City Council gave approval last week for a **Habitat** townhouse development at the corner of Union Street in the area of Old Spanish Trail and St. Francis Street. The city's Planning and Zoning Commission had already cleared the development, but the **Habitat** request had been pending for months. **Habitat** had proposed developing the land into 20 lots, but later reduced the request to 17 lots. No zoning variances were necessary because the property already lies in areas zoned for two-family and multifamily housing.

Unlike most other single-family **Habitat** housing to be built here since Hurricane Katrina, this development consists of duplex-type houses the city considers town homes. They qualify under the recently created town-house ordinance.

The development will consist of 16 town homes with two units each. Each homeowner will own half of each building.

The development will have fewer units than allowed under city ordinances. "They could have made them more dense under the new ordinance," City Council Clerk Jane Carrow said.

The council passed and approved a special subdivision plat allowing the development, subject to drainage improvements by **Habitat** that will include another culvert.

The only resistance to the development at a recent council workshop came from former Councilwoman Connie Lampley, who said she feared it would exacerbate drainage problems in the area.

"Since the storm, we have not had any drainage work done by the city," Lampley said. However, Councilman Jeff Reed said work has been done in the area.

The houses will be placed on lots measuring 20 by 79 feet. Each unit will have 1,035 square feet.

Habitat's new development will be located near a new public housing development at the site of the old Bay Pines, also off Old Spanish Trail. The Bay Waveland Housing Authority proposed that development, for 129 new units.

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Artist's rendering of a proposed **Habitat for Humanity** duplex designed by Home Harbor.



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