

BUSINESS

Woodhaven developer gets green light on preliminary plans for former country club

By Scott Nishimura and Doug Wilhelm
October 1, 2025 8:31 pm



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Woodhaven Country Club and golf course has been closed for several years. (Camilo Diaz | Fort Worth Report)

The owner of Woodhaven Country Club and golf course [won city approval Wednesday](#) for a preliminary plan to create mixed-use development at the east Fort Worth site.

After another contentious debate, members of the City Plan Commission voted 6-2 to find the proposed redevelopment posed “no material adverse effect” on single-family property values and 7-1 to approve two related zoning waivers and its plat — a preliminary plan laying out dimensions and locations of parcels, streets and other features.

In order to allow a replat of a golf course, state law requires a city to find the plan will have “no material adverse effect” on existing single-family property values.

Nearby resident Erika Graham said a group of opponents wants to take the matter to court. Graham, whose house backs up to one of the fairways, said plans to extend **Country Club Lane** through Woodhaven to Randol Mill Road would hurt her property, meaning she’d then likely need to sell her home at a discount.

“We’re going to talk to attorneys and move for an injunction,” she said, questioning whether the city intended to give opponents a fair hearing.

“The fix is in,” she said.

The city’s preliminary plat approval frees Crescendo Development to market parcels of land on the property to other developers. Crescendo owner Will Northern has said he will likely build out infrastructure such as streets, sidewalks and the like before selling parcels to developers who’d then build out a mix of uses, ranging from multi- and single-family to retail and other commercial. Opponents have zeroed in on the planned multi-family part of Northern’s plan, saying more multi-family will continue to hurt Woodhaven, which has a number of aging apartment complexes.

The City Plan Commission has the final say on a preliminary plat. But once Crescendo sells parcels, those developers then must seek approval of their site plans from the Fort Worth Zoning Commission and Fort Worth City Council — giving opponents more opportunity to weigh in.

The hearing was the third since August as the commissioners urged nearby homeowners and Northern to reach a consensus. The commission’s work is usually routine with little controversy.

The Fort Worth Zoning Commission **earlier this year approved various land uses** for the Woodhaven project. Opponents focused on planned multi-family in the development. Northern has said “cottage”-style uses are the most likely multi-family to develop on the property.

Several speakers spoke against the plans. Former Fort Worth council member Becky Haskin said Northern’s plan would “dismember” the neighborhood.

Northern stressed to commissioners again that bringing new life to the empty golf course would buoy property values in Woodhaven, which hasn't seen new development in decades.

The area's growth "comes with tremendous demand," which typically increases values, he told commissioners.

The company, at the city's request, had an economic analysis done that looked at the redevelopment of two Texas golf courses. Single-family property values rose around those projects, according to the study at the September city plan meeting.

Crescendo also hired Jeremy Stone of [Stone Hospitality and Real Estate](#) to perform an assessment.

In his testimony to the commission, Stone summarized that typical causes of materially adverse effects — such as heavy manufacturing, wastewater treatment, hazardous material storage, energy production, power lines and wind farms — were not present in this case.

He echoed that values typically increase as a result of developments like the one being proposed.

Several speakers spoke for approval of the preliminary plat, saying Woodhaven needs the investment.

Commissioner CJ Johnson, representing City Council District 5, where the club property is, made both motions Wednesday. The dissenting votes on the finding of no material adverse effect were Commissioner John Reed and Vice Chair Jim Tidwell. Reed was the lone no vote on the motion to approve the waivers and preliminary plat.

Tidwell led the meeting after Chairman Don Boren recused himself at the commission's previous meeting Sept. 17 due to his presidency of the East Fort Worth Business Association, which previously endorsed Northern's plans. Boren was not present at Wednesday's meeting.

Crescendo purchased the property for \$8.5 million at a foreclosure auction in May 2024 after Woodhaven Country Club LLC defaulted on a \$12 million loan.

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