

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF Environmental Protection

Southeast District Office 3301 Gun Club Road, MSC 7210-1 West Palm Beach, FL 33406 561-681-6600 Ron DeSantis Governor

Jeanette Nuñez Lt. Governor

Shawn Hamilton Secretary

February 18, 2022

## STATE 404 PROGRAM PUBLIC NOTICE

Permit Application No. 13-396357-001-SFI

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: The Department of Environmental Protection has received an application for a State 404 Program permit pursuant to 62-331, Florida Administrative Code, as described below:

APPLICANT: D.R. Horton, Inc.

C/o Karl Alberston 6123 Lyons Rd., Suite 100 Coconut Creek, FL. 33073 kkalberston@drhorton.com

LOCATION: Aquarela or Baywood II development site is located just east of the terminus of Florida's Turnpike/S Dixie Highway, immediately north of Palm Dr. and east of SW 172<sup>nd</sup> Ave, Florida City, in Miami-Dade, Florida, Section 19, Township 57E, Range 39S.

APPROXIMATE CENTRAL COORDINATES: Latitude N 25° 26' 58.61", Longitude W-80° 28' 04.85".

PROJECT PURPOSE: The Applicant seeks to develop a single-family residential subdivision near the southern terminus of the Florida Turnpike in the City of Florida City ("the City"), in Miami-Dade County, Florida area. The City, and Miami-Dade County overall, have experienced a significant amount of population growth in the last few years which has intensified with the increased migration throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The unforeseen population growth has exacerbated the housing affordability and availability crisis through-out Miami-Dade County. South Florida continues to encounter an influx of residents relocating from other states seeking warmer weather, larger homes with space for teleworking, as well as outdoor-oriented areas for their children to play. Florida City is an area experiencing strong growth. The local need has shown demand currently exists for the development of moderately priced single-family homes and the proposed project will meet the needs of middle-class families who are seeking

home ownership in this area. Additionally, the project will advance the quality of life of the City's residents by the development of quality homes, cultivating the aesthetic character of surrounding neighborhoods and fostering economic growth in the City.

PROPOSED WORK: The applicant seeks authorization to fill approximately 18.91 acres of wetlands for the construction of residential development, associated drainage, and road right of ways.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: The property proposed for development is former cropland that has succeeded into an exotic-dominated disturbed wet prairie with little wetland understory. Dominant vegetation on-site is Brazilian pepper, elephant grass and bishopwood, all listed as Category 1 invasive exotics by the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council. The mostly closed canopy does not allow for a diverse wetland understory. Scattered saltbush and leather fern are the rare wetland plants observed in the mid-canopy and understory. The soils on-site were confirmed to be Perrine marl, drained. Functional assessments approved by Florida Department of Environmental Protection, South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and Miami-Dade DERM.

AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION INFORMATION: The applicant explored nineteen possible alternatives and the proposed project was identified as the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative.

COMPENSATORY MITIGATION: The applicant proposes to impact 18.91 acres of freshwater herbaceous wetlands dominated by exotic vegetation, resulting in the loss of 7.35 herbaceous wetland functional units. The applicant has mitigated for impacts to wetlands through the purchase of 7.72 palustrine mitigation credits from the Everglades National Park Hole-in-the-Donut Mitigation Bank.

CULTURAL RESOURCES: Coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) resulted in no comments. By copy of this public notice, the Department is providing information for review. Our final determination relative to historic resource impacts is subject to review by and coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office and those federally recognized tribes with concerns in Florida and the permit area.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: The Department, in coordination with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, has yet to determine the potential effects to listed species. By copy of this public notice, the Department is providing information for review. Our final determination relative to historic resource impacts is subject to review by and coordination with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation.

COMMENTS regarding the potential authorization of the work proposed should be submitted in writing to David White at 3301 Gun Club Rd, MSC 7210-1. West Palm Beach, FL. 33406, or by electronic mail at <u>David.N.White@FloridaDEP.gov</u>, within 30 days from the date of this notice. Written comments will be made part of the record and should reference the above permit application number. Objections must be factual, specific, and fully describe the reasons upon which any objection is founded. Any comments received will be considered by the Department to determine whether to issue, modify, condition, or deny a permit for this proposal. Unless a written request is filed with the Department within the 30-day public comment period, the Department may decide on the application without a public meeting.

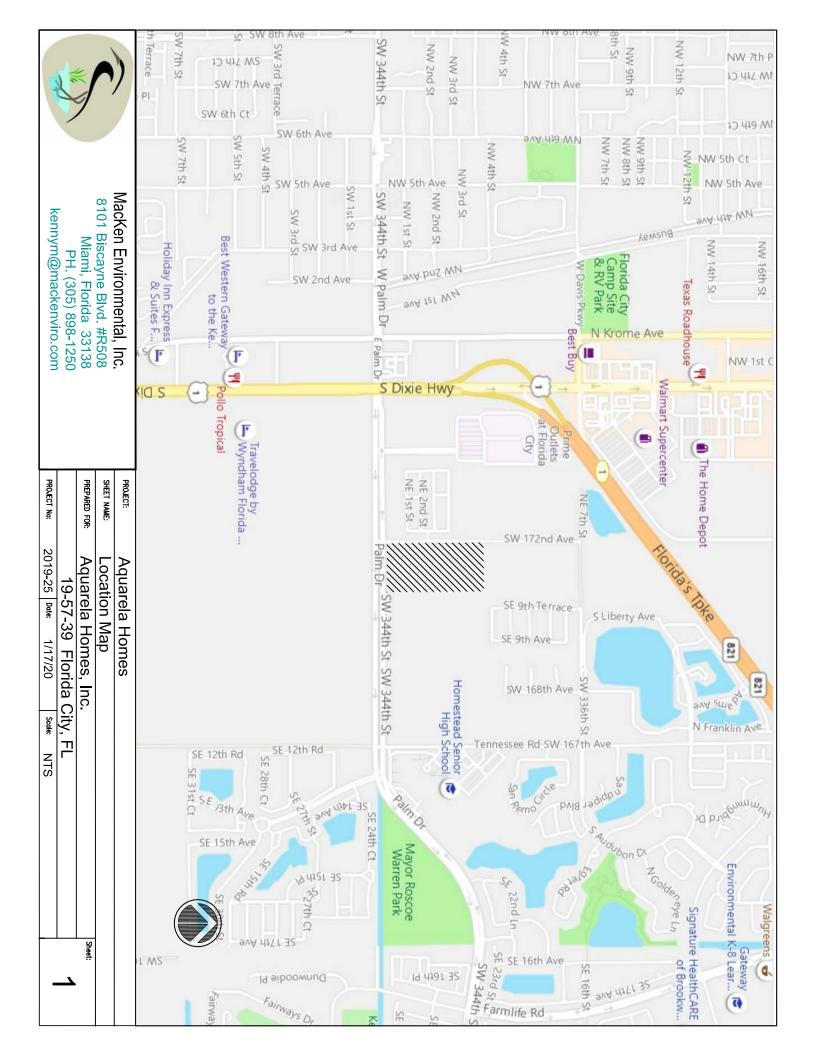
EVALUATION: The determination as to whether a permit will be issued, or a public meeting held, will be based on an evaluation of all relevant factors, including the public comments received and the effect of the proposed work on the public interest, including, but not limited to, fish, wildlife, historical resources, and pollution. The specific permit decision criteria can be found in Chapter 62-331, Florida Administrative Code.

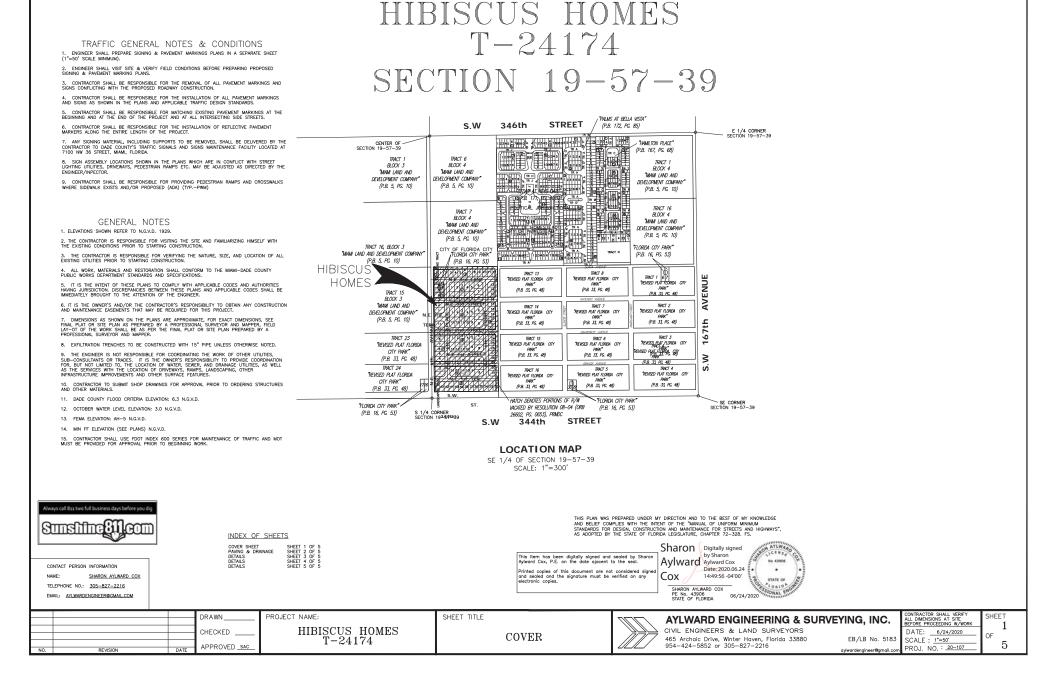
The Department is soliciting comments from the public; federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. To make this consideration, comments are used to assess impacts to endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and other public interest factors. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public meeting and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

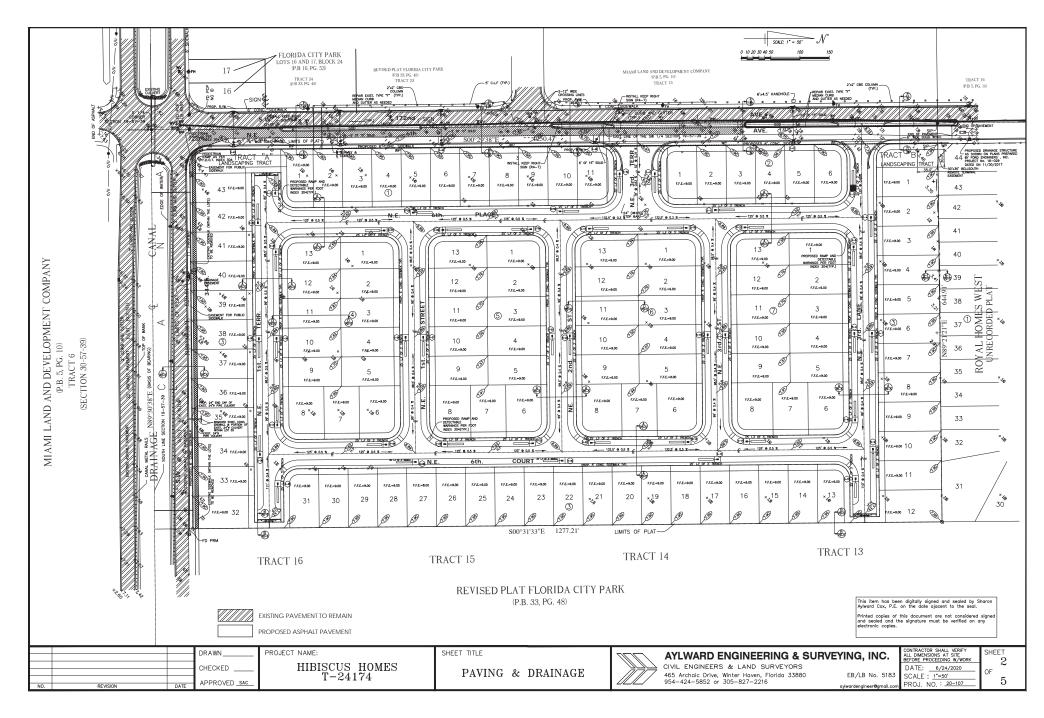
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION regarding this application, contact the project manager, David White at 3301 Gun Club Rd, MSC 7210-1. West Palm Beach, FL. 33406, or by electronic mail at <u>David.N.White@FloridaDEP.gov</u> or by phone at (561 681-6649.

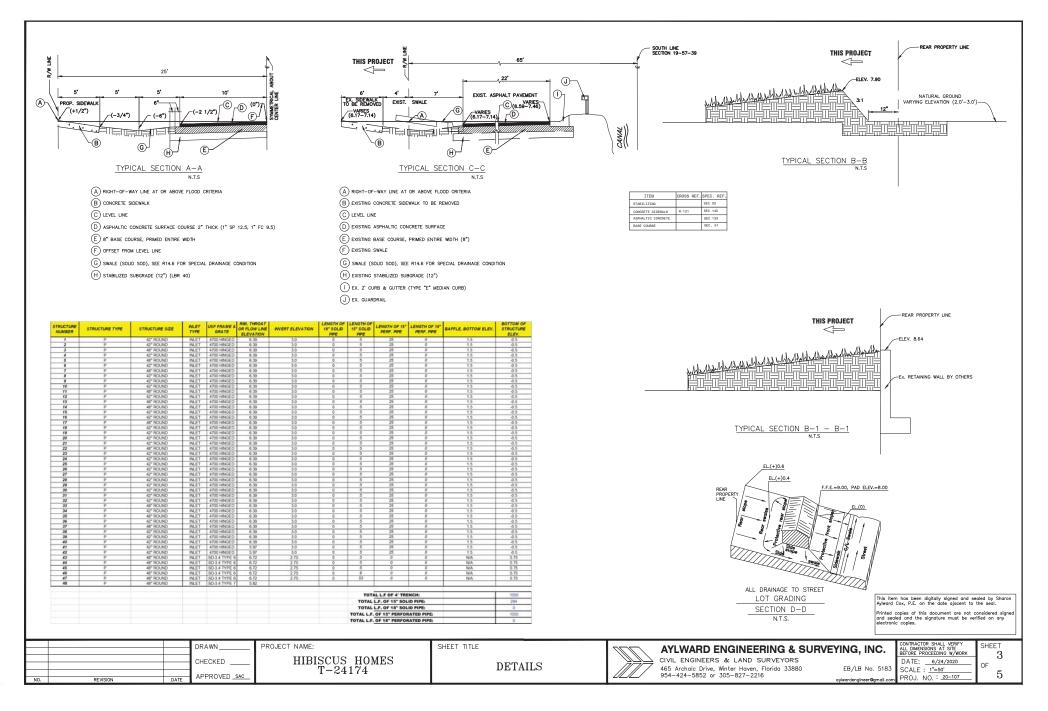
REQUEST FOR PUBLIC MEETING: Any person may request a public meeting. The request must be submitted to David White within the designated comment period of the notice and must state the specific reasons for requesting the public meeting.

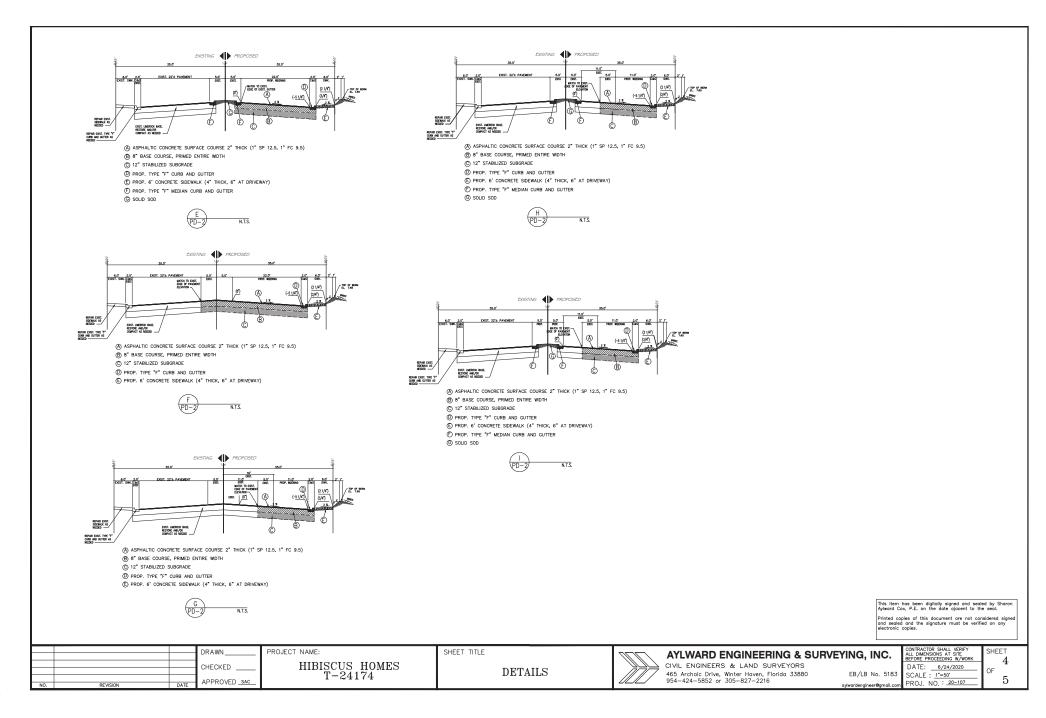
Attachments to be included: (plan and elevation drawing showing the general and specific site location and character of all proposed activities, including the size relationship of the proposed structures to the size of the impacted waterway and depth of water in the area)





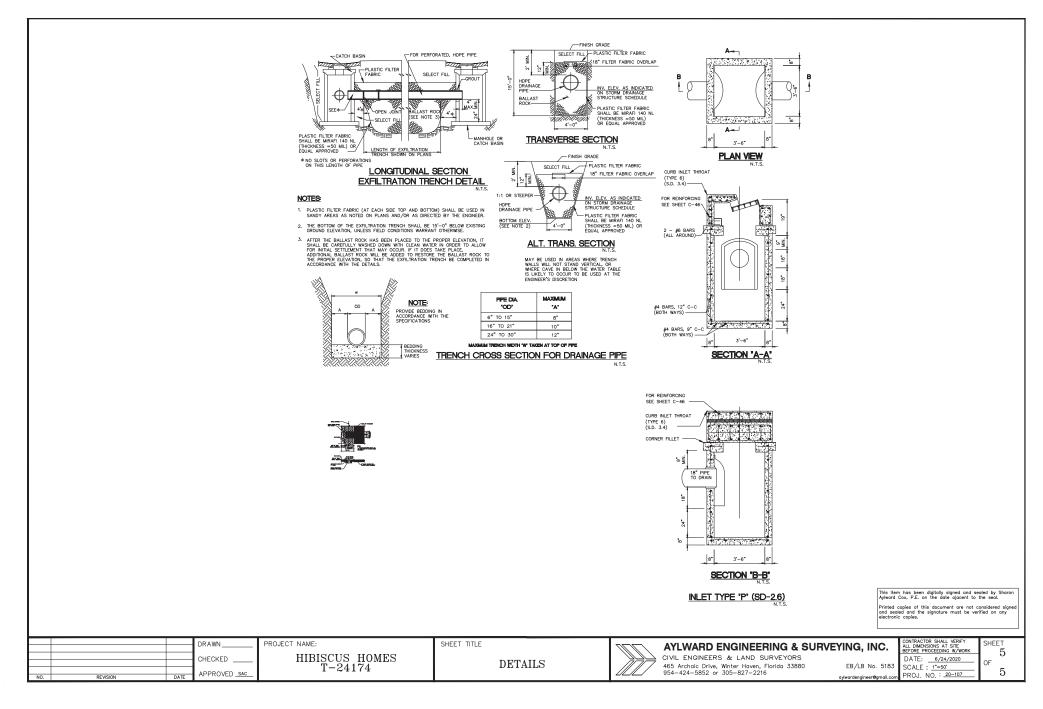


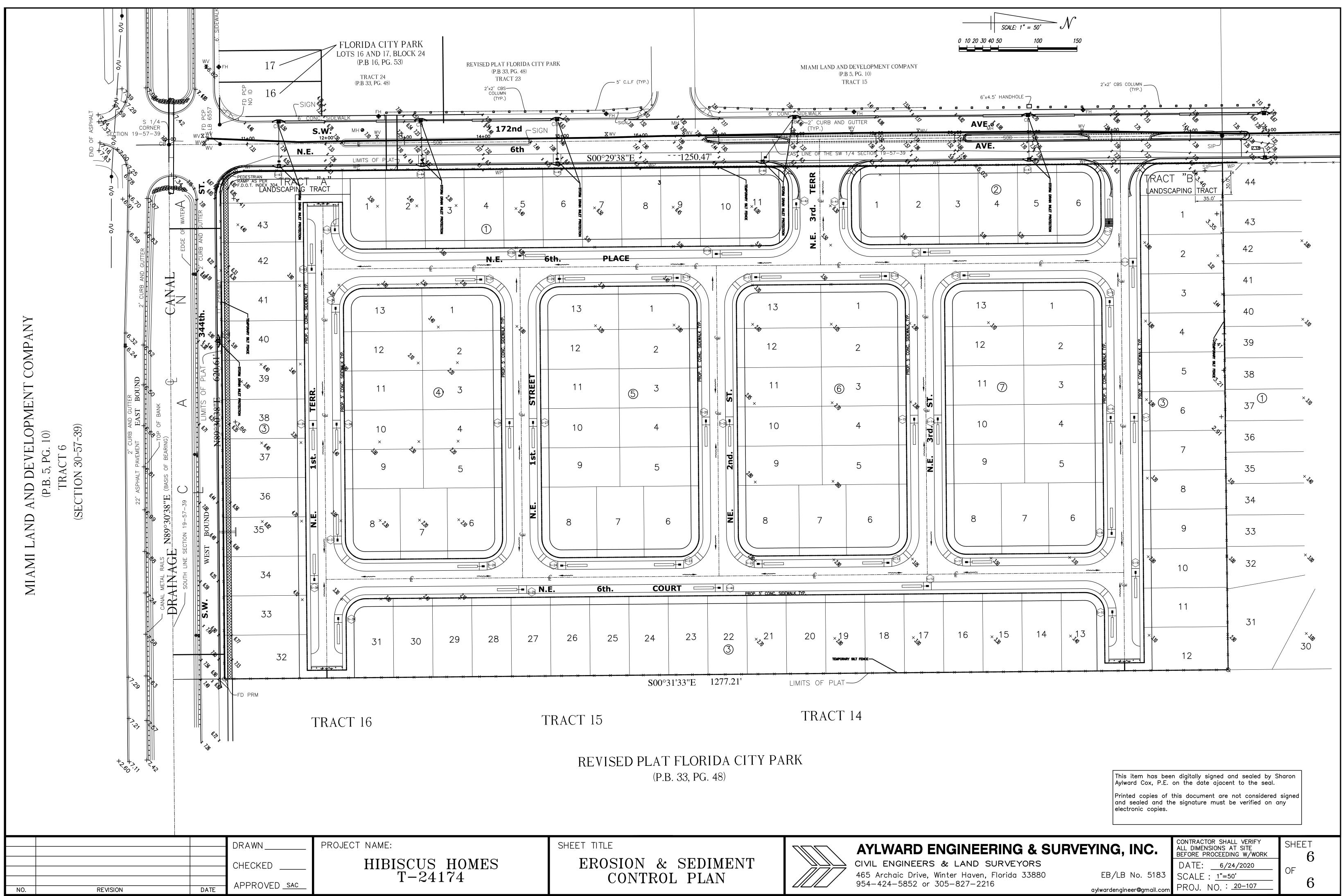




### Exhibit No. 2.0

#### Permit No. 13-103639-P





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