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### **Scaled-back Palmer Place gets OK**

**SARASOTA COUNTY** The 600-home Palmer Place development east of Interstate 75 narrowly won approval Wednesday following a nearly yearlong fight between neighborhood groups and the builder over the project's size.

Once thought to be the biggest affordable housing project in Florida, Palmer Place originally was proposed as a 1,488-home development with half of the homes, or 744, priced to be affordable to families who made no more than 20 percent above the typical income in Sarasota County.

Neighborhood groups along Bee Ridge Road complained about traffic impact to the area that would be caused by the town-sized development at the end of Palmer Boulevard, about two miles east of the interstate.

In previous meetings, commissioners asked the developer to address traffic concerns by making road improvements in the semi-rural area, extending Iona Road around the north end of the property so it could possibly be extended to Fruitville Road, and adding bike lanes and sidewalks.

The scaled-back version of the project won approval on a 3-2 vote with Commissioners Paul Mercier, Nora Patterson and Shannon Staub voting in favor, and Commissioners Joe Barbetta and Jon Thaxton voting against.

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