

Hayden Homes pulls Bachtold application

A proposal to develop the Bachtold property south of the city and annex it into the city faced strong opposition by many residents.

By **DIAN VER VALEN**
of the Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

Hayden Homes has officially withdrawn its application to develop a 105-acre, 372-home subdivision on Cottonwood Road.

The proposal to develop this land south

of the city and annex it into city limits was met with strong opposition by many residents.

Deborah Flagan, vice-president of community engagement for Hayden Homes, confirmed the news this morning in an email to the Union-Bulletin.

No additional information was provided other than this statement: "We have officially withdrawn our application from the city of Walla Walla for the Cottonwood Development Agreement and annexation."

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U-B file photo

A sign at the corner of Cottonwood and Ranch roads expresses opposition to the proposed development agreement and annexation of the 105-acre Bachtold property, shown across the road in the background.

✓Development had been headed for autumn vote

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Hayden Homes remains committed to continuing to provide housing affordability for years to come."

Jon and Mary Christine Bachtold planned to sell the property to Hayden Homes. Jon Bachtold declined to comment when reached by phone this morning.

Hayden Homes and the Bachtolds finished the process of filing a development agreement application with the city in mid-July. The property is outside city limits but is in the Urban Growth Area, and a petition for annexation was

started two years ago.

Walla Walla City Council members, however, paused the normal process for annexation last year when it became clear concerns were surfacing about flooding, traffic, safety, and other issues. They required that a development agreement be reached first.

Public comments were sought through mid-August, and city staff processed the application and reviewed comments.

Requested modifications to the application were sent back to Hayden Homes on Aug. 20, according to a timeline on the city's

website.

They partially resubmitted their plans to the city on Oct. 3, according to the document online, and the city was waiting for the traffic analysis to come in from a Hayden Homes consultant, said Elizabeth Chamberlain, the city's Development Services director.

Next on the timeline were drafting of the Development Agreement, a State Environmental Policy Act determination and at least one public hearing.

Chamberlain said in earlier reports that the application was likely to go before

City Council for a vote in late October or November.

She told the U-B this morning that she received an official, one sentence email from Hayden Homes at just after 4 a.m. today asking for the application to be withdrawn.

"They verbally told us earlier, but we don't consider it official until it's written," Chamberlain said.

She said that her office had no further information about why the application was withdrawn, but she said that if more information becomes available, that will be shared.