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OLMSTED
PARKS

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Comments of the National Association for Olmsted Parks

The National Association for Olmsted Parks (NAOP) endorses the constructive tone and spirit of the Integrity and Condition Study. NAOP urges Pinehurst to work with the Southeast Region and to benefit from National Park Service expertise and experience as the community grapples with continuing challenges to the historic landscape. The recommendations are reasonable and worthy of full study. NAOP is honored to be mentioned in the report and happy to serve as a resource to this delightful and unique historic community.

NAOP also believes the report raises serious concerns that must be addressed. **Of primary concern: continued intrusion on the Village Green.**

Pinehurst should take steps to end future construction in and around the Village Green lest it lose this critical piece of the Olmsted/Manning design. Going forward, the community should consider internal remodeling of existing buildings and place any new construction outside the historic area.

The Village Green is the centerpiece of this charming community which features an inviting combination of canopied evergreen trees, curvilinear village streets and textured plantings. It is this magical combination that lends character to the village and should be diligently retained.

NAOP agrees that it would be beneficial to reexamine the National Historic Landmark (NHL) District and existing Local Designation to ensure sufficient protection of the historic area. This effort can help eliminate confusion between the two districts. It can also allow for a full review of the initial designation so that it may be possible to include the landscape as a specific resource and contributing factor.

Of additional concern: intrusions on historic circulation patterns and the curvilinear design. Going forward, the community should prioritize alternatives to any proposed alterations that would change historic circulation patterns and the curvilinear design. The addition

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of the roundabout has cut into the landscape considerably, against the recommendations of the NPS, The Cultural Landscape Foundation and others.

As the Report outlines, the integrity of Pinehurst remains. But any future developments have the potential to destroy the landscape features that make Pinehurst a unique and historic landmark. By any reasonable assessment, the landscape integrity of Pinehurst is in danger.

Because Pinehurst is such a unique village, it needs to prioritize its historic landscape character. Rightly known as a golfing community, Pinehurst can and should attract visitors focused on historic landscapes and history. In North Carolina, Pinehurst can become a “must stop” on a landscape heritage trail—joining Biltmore, the Outer Banks and the Smoky Mountains—and it can showcase its unique Olmsted/Manning design, the Arboretum, and rare sandhills ecosystem. The Golfing Community has recognized the importance of historical integrity as it returned Courses No. 2 and 4 to their historical landscape designs. This dedication should be equally strong when it comes to ensuring the integrity of the landscape as a whole.

Pinehurst has an enviable problem: it is attracting a growing number of visitors, and residents, with attendant traffic because of its appeal as a community.

As the report makes clear, Pinehurst can retain its extraordinary character. But to do so, city leaders and residents must herald and protect Pinehurst’s unique landscape and landscape heritage. They must prioritize cultural landscape values in determining new directions for the community. And they must be willing to oppose any future proposals that will alter the Village Green and historic core. Once open space is gone, it is gone forever.

Respectfully submitted,
National Association for Olmsted Parks
Dede Petri, President and CEO