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DECLARATION OF COVENANTS,  
CONDITIONS AND RESTRICTIONS  
FOR  
ABBNEY OAKS

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DECLARATION OF COVENANTS, CONDITIONS  
AND RESTRICTIONS FOR ABBEY OAKS

Table of Contents

	PAGE
Article I DEFINITIONS	5
Section 1. Definitions.	5
Section 2. Interpretation.	8
Article II PROPERTY SUBJECT TO THIS DECLARATION	9
Section 1. Phase 1 Property	9
Section 2. Additional Property.	9
Section 3. Method of Annexation.	9
Section 4. Withdrawal.	9
Article III THE ASSOCIATION	10
Section 1. The Association.	10
Section 2. Membership.	10
Section 3. Voting Rights.	10
Section 4. Multiple Owners.	12
Article IV PROPERTY RIGHTS IN THE COMMON PROPERTIES	12
Section 1. Easements.	12
Section 2. Easement for Access and Drainage.	12
Section 3. Title to Common Property.	13
Section 4. Extent of Easements.	13
Section 5. Additional Easements over Common Property.	13
Section 6. Delegation.	14
Article V INSURANCE	14
Article VI COVENANT FOR MAINTENANCE ASSESSMENTS	14
Section 1. Lien and Personal Obligation Nonpayment.	14
Section 2. Purpose.	16
Section 3. Determination of Annual Assessments.	16
Section 4. Special Assessments.	17
Section 5. Commencement Dates; Start-Up Assessment; Initial Annual Assessment; Due Dates.	18
Section 6. Certificate.	18
Section 7. Subordination.	18
Section 8. Funding by Declarant.	19
Article VII ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL	19
Section 1. Architectural Control; ARB.	19
Section 2. Membership of ARB.	20
Section 3. Approvals.	20
Section 4. Violations.	21
Section 5. Variances.	21

Section 6.	Waiver of Liability.	21
Section 7.	Enforcement.	22
Section 8.	Exemption.	22
Section 9.	No Waiver of Future Approvals.	22
Section 10.	ARB Rules.	22
Article VIII EXTERIOR MAINTENANCE		23
Section 1.	Owner's Responsibility.	23
Section 2.	Assessment of Cost.	24
Section 3.	Access.	24
Section 4.	Association's Responsibility.	25
Article IX RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS		25
Section 1.	Wells.	25
Section 2.	Obnoxious or Offensive Activity.	25
Section 3.	Rules and Regulations.	26
Section 4.	Animals.	26
Section 5.	Garbage and Trash.	26
Section 6.	Storage Receptacles.	26
Section 7.	Vehicles.	27
Section 8.	Visibility of Intersections.	26
Section 9.	Temporary Structures.	27
Section 10.	Signs.	27
Section 11.	Air Conditioning Equipment.	28
Section 12.	Drainage Structures.	28
Section 13.	Exterior Electronic or Electric Devices.	28
Section 14.	Subdivision.	28
Section 15.	Completion.	28
Section 16.	Excavation.	29
Section 17.	Sidewalks.	29
Section 18.	Fences and Walls.	29
Section 19.	Yard Accessories and Play Structures.	29
Section 20.	Use; Rentals.	30
Section 21.	Pools.	30
Section 22.	Dwellings.	30
Section 23.	Landscaping.	31
Section 24.	Collection.	31
Section 25.	Pumping or Draining.	31
Section 26.	Ramps.	31
Section 27.	Declarant Reservation.	31
Section 28.	Conservation Tracts.	32
Section 29.	Mailboxes.	33
Section 30.	Security Bars.	33
Section 31.	Variances.	33
Article X ADDITIONAL COVENANTS AND RESTRICTIONS		33
Article XI AMENDMENT		33
Article XII HUD/FHA/VA AND DISTRICT APPROVAL RIGHTS		34
Article XIII DURATION AND TERMINATION		34
Article XIV ENFORCEMENT		35
Section 1.	Compliance by Owners.	35
Section 2.	Enforcement.	35
Section 3.	Fines.	36

Article XV	DAMAGE OR DESTRUCTION TO COMMON PROPERTY	37
Section 1.	Sufficient Insurance Proceeds.	37
Section 2.	Insufficient Insurance Proceeds.	37
Section 3.	Negligence or Willful Misconduct.	37
Article XVI	MORTGAGEE PROTECTION	37
Section 1.	Records and Notices.	37
Section 2.	Adverse Events.	38
Section 3.	Taxes and Other Charges.	38
Section 4.	Insurance Premiums.	38
Article XVII	GENERAL PROVISIONS	38
Section 1.	Notice.	38
Section 2.	Enforcement.	39
Section 3.	Interpretation.	39
Section 4.	Severability.	39
Section 5.	Effective Date.	39
Section 6.	Conflict.	39
Section 7.	Cooperation.	39
Section 8.	Easements.	40
Section 9.	No Public Right or Dedication.	40
Section 10.	Constructive Notice and Acceptance.	40
Section 11.	Execution of Documents Required by the County or City.	40
Article XVIII	DISCLAIMERS	41
Section 1.	Disclaimer of Representations or Warranties.	41
Section 2.	General.	41
EXHIBIT "A"	- PHASE 1 PROPERTY	
EXHIBIT "B"	- ARTICLES	
EXHIBIT "C"	- BYLAWS	
EXHIBIT "D"	- POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL PROPERTY	

**DECLARATION OF COVENANTS, CONDITIONS  
AND RESTRICTIONS FOR ABBEY OAKS**

THIS DECLARATION OF COVENANTS, CONDITIONS AND RESTRICTIONS FOR ABBEY OAKS is made this 27<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2007, by Hulsaum Properties, LLC, a Florida Limited Liability Company, whose address is 4030 S. Pipkin Road, Suite 100, Lakeland, Florida 33811 and Matthew Johnson and Kerry Johnson, his wife, whose address is 403 Hibriten Way, Lakeland, FL 33803 (hereafter referred to as "Johnson").

**RECITALS:**

A. Declarant and Johnson own the real property described in the plat for Abbey Oaks Phase One as recorded in Plat Book \_\_\_\_\_, Pages \_\_\_\_\_, of the Public Records of Polk County, Florida and which is also more particularly described on Exhibit "A" attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference (the "Phase 1 Property").

B. The Phase 1 Property is the first phase of a proposed two (2) phase residential community known as "Abbey Oaks".

C. Declarant desires to preserve and enhance the values and quality of life in the Phase 1 Property and the health, safety and welfare of the residents thereof, and to provide for the maintenance of certain areas and improvements for the benefit of the Property.

D. Declarant intends to form a non-profit corporation to which will be conveyed title to certain property, and to which will be delegated the powers of and responsibility for maintaining and administering certain property and improvements, administering and enforcing this Declaration, and collecting and disbursing the monies derived from the assessments hereafter levied.

**DECLARATIONS:**

NOW, THEREFORE, Declarant and Johnson declares that the Property is and shall be owned, improved, transferred and occupied subject to this Declaration.

**Article I**

**DEFINITIONS**

Section 1. Definitions.

When used in this Declaration, the following words shall have the following meanings:

(a) "Additional Property" shall mean and refer to those lands, together with any improvements thereon, which are made subject to this Declaration by annexation pursuant to Article II.

(b) "Area(s) of Common Responsibility" shall mean and refer to any land or improvement located in or near the Property which is not intended to be owned by the Association but which is intended to be improved, maintained or operated by the Association in the manner and to the extent determined from time to time by the Board. Areas of Common Responsibility may be designated by this Declaration, any Supplemental Declaration, a contract entered into by the Association, or by a decision of the Board. The following are hereby designated as Areas of Common Responsibility:

(i) Rights of Way and Entrance Area. Subject to limitations imposed by governmental authority, the Association shall maintain, repair and replace to the extent determined by the Board the signs, lighting fixtures, electrical equipment, drainage improvements (in accordance with the Surface Water Management System Facilities permit issued by the District), irrigation lines and equipment, landscape materials and features, and other improvements from time to time located within the unpaved rights-of-way.

(ii) Street Lighting. The Association may arrange for and assess the Owners for the fixture rental, electrical usage and other costs of street lighting for the Property and any Area of Common Responsibility;

(iii) Drainage Improvements within Easements. The Association shall maintain, repair and replace all drainage improvements within the Property, including without limitation within all platted drainage easements, all in accordance with the Surface Water Management System Facilities permit issued by the District. The foregoing to the contrary notwithstanding, each Owner shall provide routine landscape maintenance, mowing and removal of trash and debris within the portions of the Surface Water Management System Facilities lying within that Owner's Lot, failing which the Association shall perform the required maintenance and levy an individual assessment to cover the costs thereof;

(iv) Easements. The Association shall maintain, repair and replace any walls, signs, lighting fixtures, electrical equipment, drainage improvements (in accordance with the Surface Water Management System Facilities permit issued by the District), irrigation lines and equipment, landscape materials and features, and other improvements from time to time located within all wall and landscape easements created in favor of the Association on any plat of the Property. The preceding sentence is subject to the limitations that the Owner of each Lot encumbered by a wall easement shall maintain all landscaping lying between the wall and that Owner's Dwelling, and said Owner shall maintain the paint or other surface finish, if any, on the vertical surface of the wall which faces his or her Dwelling.

(c) "Articles" shall mean and refer to the Articles of Incorporation of the Association. A copy of the initial Articles are attached as Exhibit "B" to this Declaration. The Articles may

be amended as provided therein and it shall not be necessary to amend this Declaration in order to amend the Articles.

(d) "Association" shall mean and refer to the Abbey Oaks Homeowners Association, Inc., a Florida corporation not for profit, and its successors and assigns.

(e) "Board" or "Board of Directors" shall mean and refer to the Board of Directors of the Association.

(f) "Bylaws" shall mean and refer to the Bylaws of the Association. A copy of the initial Bylaws are attached as Exhibit "C" to this Declaration. The Bylaws may be amended as provided therein and it shall not be necessary to amend this Declaration in order to amend the Bylaws.

(g) "Common Expense" shall mean and refer to the actual and estimated expense of operating the Association and meeting the costs to be incurred by the Association in performing its duties and in exercising its prerogatives, including without limitation costs incurred for operation, maintenance, insurance and improvement of the Common Property and Areas of Common Responsibility, and for any reserves from time to time established by the Board.

(h) "Common Property" shall mean and refer to the real and personal property from time to time owned or intended to be owned by the Association and devoted to the use and enjoyment of all Members of the Association, all at Common Expense. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, Tract "A," and private roads, if any, depicted on the plat of the Phase 1 Property shall be Common Property. Common Property shall include, but not be limited to, easement areas which are held by the Association as grantee. No commitment is made that any Additional Property will contain Common Property.

(i) "Wetlands Preservation Easement Area(s)" shall mean and refer to all of such areas so designated upon any recorded subdivision plat or plats of the Property.

(j) "County" shall mean and refer to Polk County, Florida.

(k) "Declarant" shall mean and refer to Hulsaum Properties, L.L.C., a Florida Limited Liability Company, its successors and assigns. No successor or assignee of Declarant shall have any rights or obligations of Declarant hereunder unless such rights and obligations are specifically set forth in the instrument of succession or assignment, or unless such rights pass by operation of law.

(l) "Declaration" shall mean and refer to this Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions for Abbey Oaks as amended or supplemented.

(m) "District" shall mean and refer to the Southwest Florida Water Management District, an agency created pursuant to Chapter

373, Florida Statutes.

(n) "Dwelling" shall mean and refer to a single family residence located on a Lot.

(o) "Lot" shall mean and refer to each residential building site created by any recorded plat of the Property, including any Dwelling located thereon once constructed.

(p) "Member" shall mean and refer to each Member of the Association as provided in Article III, Section 2.

(q) "Owner" shall mean and refer to the record holder, whether one or more persons or entities, of fee simple title to each Lot in the Property, but, notwithstanding any applicable theory of the law of mortgages, Owner shall not mean or refer to any mortgagee unless and until such mortgagee has acquired title to a Lot pursuant to foreclosure proceeding or a conveyance in lieu of foreclosure. All owners of a single Lot shall be treated for all purposes as a single Owner, irrespective of whether such ownership is joint, in common, or tenancy by the entirety.

(r) "Permit" shall mean Permit No. 46029892.000 issued by the District.

(s) "Phase 1 Property" shall mean and refer to the real property described in the plat for Abbey Oaks Phase One as recorded in the Public Records of Polk County, Florida, which is also more particularly described on Exhibit "A" to this Declaration.

(t) "Phase 1 Property" shall mean and refer to the lands described on Exhibit "A" to this Declaration.

(u) "Property" shall mean and refer to the Phase 1 Property, together with any Additional Property hereafter annexed to this Declaration pursuant to Article II.

(v) "Supplemental Declaration" shall mean and refer to any instrument which extends the effect of this Declaration to Additional Property pursuant to Article II.

(w) "Surface Water Management System Facilities" shall include but not be limited to: all inlets, ditches, swales, culverts, water control structures, retention and detention areas, ponds, lakes, floodplane compensation areas, wetlands and any associated buffer areas, and wetland mitigation area.

## Section 2. Interpretation.

The provisions of this Declaration and the Articles, Bylaws and any rules and regulations of the Association shall be liberally construed so as to effectuate the purposes herein expressed with respect to the efficient operation of the Association and the Property, the preservation of the value of the Lots and the protection of Declarant's rights, benefits and privileges herein contemplated. Notwithstanding that this Declaration was prepared,

initially, at the direction of the Declarant, and notwithstanding any rule of construction to the contrary, this Declaration shall not be more strictly construed against the Declarant and/or any of its affiliates than against any other person or entity.

## Article II

### PROPERTY SUBJECT TO THIS DECLARATION

#### Section 1. Phase 1 Property.

The Phase 1 Property is and shall be improved, held, transferred and occupied subject to this Declaration.

#### Section 2. Additional Property.

Declarant shall have the right but not the obligation to bring within the scope of this Declaration, as Additional Property, additional lands lying in the vicinity of the Phase 1 Property, at any time and from time to time within twenty (20) years from the date on which this Declaration is recorded. Unless and until annexed, this Declaration shall not encumber or bind in any way any other land proposed to be annexed. Except as provided in Article XII, annexation may be accomplished by Declarant without the consent of the Association, the Owners, any mortgagee or other lien holder, or anyone else.

#### Section 3. Method of Annexation.

Additions authorized under Article II shall be made, if at all, by recording a Supplemental Declaration extending this Declaration to Additional Property. The Supplemental Declaration shall describe the real property to be annexed and shall state that it is being made pursuant to the terms of this Declaration for the purpose of annexing property to this Declaration and extending the jurisdiction of the Association to the Additional Property. The Supplemental Declaration may contain additional terms not inconsistent with this Declaration to reflect the different character, if any, of the real property being annexed or of the housing or development approaches being implemented. Upon the recordation of any Supplemental Declaration, the Owners shall also have a right and non-exclusive easement of use and enjoyment in and to the Common Property, if any, within the Additional Property and an obligation to contribute to the cost of operating, maintaining and insuring the additional Common Property and any additional Areas of Common Responsibility. Any Supplemental Declaration recorded in accordance with the terms hereof shall be conclusive in favor of all persons who rely thereon in good faith. From and after recordation of any Supplemental Declaration, the Additional Property described therein shall be subject to the provisions of this Declaration and to the jurisdiction of the Association.

#### Section 4. Withdrawal.

Declarant reserves the right to amend this Declaration unilaterally at any time for the purpose of removing any portion of

the Property (including, without limitation Lots and Common Property) without notice and without the consent of any person or entity other than the owner of the portion of the Property to be withdrawn; provided, however, no such withdrawal may impair access to any Lot.

### **Article III**

#### **THE ASSOCIATION**

##### **Section 1. The Association.**

The Association shall be a nonprofit corporation. The Association shall have the power to do all lawful things which may be authorized, assigned, required or permitted to be done by this Declaration, the Articles, or the Bylaws, and to do and perform any and all acts which may be necessary or proper for, or incidental to, the exercise of any of the duties or powers of the Association for the benefit of the Owners and for the maintenance, administration and improvement of the Property and Areas of Common Responsibility. Neither the Articles nor the Bylaws shall be amended or interpreted so as to be inconsistent with this Declaration. In the event of any such inconsistency, the provisions of this Declaration shall prevail. The officers and directors of the Association shall be required to be either (1) a Member of the Association, or (2) an agent of Declarant. The Board, and such officers as the Board may appoint, shall conduct the affairs of the Association.

##### **Section 2. Membership.**

Each Owner (including Declarant) shall be a Member of the Association. The Association membership of each Owner shall be appurtenant to and inseparable from the Lot giving rise to such membership, and any transfer of title to a Lot shall operate automatically to transfer to the new Owner the membership in the Association appurtenant to that Lot. No person convicted or listed as a sexual predator, sexual offender, or who has been convicted of a sexual crime, shall be allowed to reside in Abbey Oaks or be a member of the Association. All potential residents/owners hereby consent to a background check by the Association.

##### **Section 3. Voting Rights.**

The Association shall have two (2) classes of voting membership:

(a) Class "A". Class "A" Members shall be all Owners, with the exception of Declarant for so long as Declarant retains Class "B" voting rights. Each Class "A" Member shall have one (1) vote for each Lot owned by that Member.

(b) Class "B". The sole Class "B" Member shall be Declarant. Declarant shall be entitled to three (3) votes for each Lot in the Property owned by Declarant, plus three (3) votes for each potential subdivision lot that has not yet been annexed but which

could be developed upon the lands eligible for annexation to the Property under the terms of the Declaration. Upon the execution of this Declaration, Declarant shall have Seventy Eight (78) Class "B" votes representing three (3) votes for each of the Eleven (11) Lots in the Phase 1 Property plus three (3) votes for each of the Fifteen (15) potential residential subdivision lots not yet included in the Property but which could be developed and annexed to the Property. In all, Declarant expects but shall not be required to develop and submit a total of Twenty Six (26) residential lots to this Declaration and to the jurisdiction of the Association. In the event Declarant elects at any time or from time to time, for any reason whatsoever, not to develop and annex any one or more of the Fifteen (15) potential subdivision lots not included in the Property, then Declarant will give written notice to the Association of that election and Declarant's Class "B" votes shall be reduced by three (3) votes for each one of the potential residential subdivision lots so excluded from eligibility for annexation by Declarant. The Class "B" Member shall be entitled to cast all of its votes in any vote or election held by the Association.

(c) Termination of Class "B" Membership. As each Lot in the Property is conveyed by Declarant to a Class "A" Member, Declarant's votes for that Lot shall lapse. The Class "B" membership shall terminate and become converted to Class "A" membership upon the earlier of the following:

(i) When the total outstanding Class "A" votes in the Association equals or exceeds the total outstanding Class "B" votes; or

(ii) Ten (10) years from the date of recording this Declaration; or

(iii) At such earlier time as Declarant, in its sole discretion, may so elect.

Upon the happening of any one of these events, Declarant shall call a special meeting of the Members to advise of the termination of Class "B" membership.

(d) Transition of Control. Any other provision of this Article III to the contrary notwithstanding, Owners other than Declarant shall be entitled to elect at least a majority of the members of the Board of Directors not later than three (3) months after ninety percent (90%) of the Lots in all phases of Abbey Oaks that will or may ultimately be operated by the Association have been conveyed to Owners. Declarant shall be entitled to elect at least one member of the Board of Directors as long as Declarant holds for sale in the ordinary course of business at least five percent (5%) of the Lots in all phases of Abbey Oaks. After Declarant relinquishes control of the Association, Declarant may exercise the right to vote any Declarant-owned voting interests in the same manner as any other Owner, except for purposes of reacquiring control of the Association or selecting the majority of the members of the Board of Directors.

Section 4. Multiple Owners.

Each vote in the Association must be cast as a single vote, and fractional votes shall not be allowed. If joint or multiple Owners are unable to agree among themselves as to how their vote is to be cast, or if more than one (1) Class "A" vote is cast for any Lot, none of the votes for that Lot shall be counted. If any Owner casts a vote on behalf of a Lot, it shall be conclusively presumed that Owner was acting with the authority and consent of all other Owners of that Lot.

**Article IV**

**PROPERTY RIGHTS IN THE COMMON PROPERTIES**

Section 1. Easements.

The Association and each Owner (including Declarant) shall have a non-exclusive right and easement of use and enjoyment in and to the Common Property. Said right and easement shall be appurtenant to and pass with the title to each Lot, and shall include, without limitation, the following:

(a) Right-of-way for ingress and egress by vehicles and on foot through and across any streets, roads or walks in the Common Property for all lawful purposes; and

(b) Rights and easements to drain across the Surface Water Management System Facilities in accordance with the Permit and District rules; and

(c) Rights to connect to, maintain and make use of utility lines, wires, pipes, conduits, cable television lines, telephone lines and equipment, sewers and drainage lines which may from time to time be in or along areas of the Common Property, but only in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and the requirements of the applicable entities which regulate said utilities; and

(d) Rights and easement to use and enjoy the Common Property for any purpose not inconsistent with this Declaration, the Articles, the Bylaws, the rules and regulations of the Association, or law.

Section 2. Easement for Access and Drainage.

The Association shall have a perpetual non-exclusive easement over all areas of the Surface Water Management System Facilities for access to operate, maintain or repair the system. By this easement, the Association shall have the right to enter upon any portion of any lot which is a part of the Surface Water Management System Facilities, at a reasonable time and in a reasonable manner, to operate, maintain or repair the Surface Water Management System Facilities as required by the Permit. Additionally, the Association shall have a perpetual non-exclusive easement for drainage over the entire Surface Water Management System

Facilities. No person shall alter the drainage flow of the Surface Water Management System Facilities, including buffer areas or swales, without the prior written approval of the District.

Section 3. Title to Common Property.

Declarant shall convey to the Association, for the uses and purposes set forth in this Declaration or in any subdivision plat of the Property, fee simple title in and to the Common Property. Once conveyed to the Association, the Common Property may not be mortgaged or further conveyed without the consent of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Owners (excluding Declarant).

Section 4. Extent of Easements.

The rights and easements created in this Article IV shall be governed by the following:

(a) Subject to any rights of Declarant and the Owners set forth in this Declaration, the Association shall be responsible for the exclusive management, control and maintenance of the Common Property.

(b) Declarant, until conveyance of title to the Association, and the Association thereafter, may reserve to itself or to grant or dedicate (subject to the terms of Article XII) to Declarant, any Owner, any governmental agencies and/or to any utility companies, easements and rights-of-way, over, under or through the Common Property for installation, use, maintenance and inspection of lines and appurtenances for public or private utilities, surface water drainage improvements and areas, or completion of the development. No improvement or material may be placed upon any such easement which may damage or interfere with the installation or maintenance of utilities or the easement area or that may alter or impede the direction or flow of drainage.

(c) Declarant's rights reserved in this Declaration.

(d) Matters shown on any plat(s) of the Property.

Section 5. Additional Easements over Common Property.

Declarant hereby creates, reserves and declares to exist the following licenses, rights, privileges and easements over, under and through the Common Property subject at all times to the terms and conditions of the Permit and subject to receiving prior written approval of the District as to any activities that may affect or may occur on or within the Surface Water Management System Facilities and Wetlands Preservation Easement Area, including any upland buffers: (i) rights-of-way and easements to install, maintain and use electric, lighting, telecommunications, cable television, telephone, gas, water, sewer, drainage and utility poles, wires, cables, conduits, fixtures, pipes, meters, equipment, facilities, ponds, swales, berms or ditches, and other equipment and improvements necessary or convenient for the completion, marketing, use and enjoyment of the Property, (ii) the right to cut

trees, bushes or shrubbery, make any gradings of the soil, and take any similar action reasonably necessary to provide economical and safe utility and drainage installation or to maintain reasonable standards of health, convenience, safety and appearance, (iii) the right to locate thereon wells, pumping stations and irrigation systems and lines, (iv) easement of ingress and egress for purposes of development, construction and marketing, and (v) such other rights as may be reasonably necessary to complete in an orderly and economic manner the development and sale of the Property including, without limitation, the maintenance of temporary signage and trailers used in such development and sales efforts; provided, however, that said reservation and right shall not be considered an obligation of Declarant to provide or maintain any such easement, utility, equipment or service. Declarant also reserves the right to connect with and make use of the utility lines and drainage improvements which may from time to time be in or along the streets and roads, or within the Common Property or platted easements. The easements and rights-of-way herein reserved shall continue in existence in favor of Declarant after conveyance of the Common Property to the Association or dedication to the County until such time as Declarant has sold all Lots in the Property and in any lands separately developed by Declarant and located adjacent to the Property.

Section 6. Delegation.

Any Owner (including Declarant) may grant the benefit of any easement, right or privilege to tenants and guests for the duration of their tenancies or visits, but same shall not be construed to create any rights in the general public.

**Article V**

**INSURANCE**

The Board may obtain fidelity bond coverage in its discretion. In addition, the Board may obtain insurance for insurable improvements on the Common Property, any Area of Common Responsibility, or on any easement benefiting the Owners or the Association, public liability policies covering the Association and Members for damage or injury caused by the negligence of the Association or any of its Members, guests or agents, directors' and officers' liability insurance, and any other types of insurance coverage as the Board may deem appropriate, with such insureds, deductibles provisions and coverage types and amounts as shall be determined by the Board. Premiums for insurance so obtained shall be a Common Expense. The Association may self-insure against any risk.

**Article VI**

**COVENANT FOR MAINTENANCE ASSESSMENTS**

Section 1. Lien and Personal Obligation Nonpayment.

(a) Declarant, for each Lot owned by it in the Property, and

each Owner other than Declarant by acceptance of title to any Lot, whether or not it shall be so expressed in any deed or other conveyance, covenants and agrees to pay to the Association: (1) annual assessments or charges, (2) special assessments, (3) individual assessments, and (4) a one-time only start-up assessment. Said assessments shall be fixed, established and assessed as herein provided. Assessments, together with such interest and late charges as shall be imposed by the Board at its discretion, and the cost of collection thereof, including without limitation court costs and reasonable attorneys' and paralegals' fees before trial, at trial and on appeal, shall be a charge and a continuing lien upon the Lot against which such assessment is made, and upon any Dwelling located on said Lot, from and after the date on which such assessment is due. Each assessment, together with said interest, late charges, costs and fees, shall also be the personal obligation of each person who was an Owner of the Lot at the time the assessment fell due.

If any assessment or installment thereon is not paid when due, then such assessment shall be delinquent and the delinquent assessment, together with interest, late charges, and collection costs, shall be secured by a continuing lien on the Lot as to which the assessment accrued, and upon any Dwelling located thereon. Such lien shall be prior to all other liens hereinafter created except taxes or assessments levied by governmental authority, and except as to the lien of any mortgage. The lien shall be prior to and superior in dignity to homestead status. The lien shall bind the Lot and any Dwelling located thereon in the hands of the then Owner and of each subsequent Owner. The personal obligation of the Owner to pay such delinquent assessment shall remain that Owner's personal obligation for the statutory limitations period and personal liability shall not pass to successors in title unless expressly assumed by them.

If the delinquent assessment or installment thereon is not paid within thirty (30) days after the due date, same shall bear interest from the date due at the highest lawful rate in Florida, or at such lesser rate as may be determined by the Board and uniformly applied, and the Association may bring an action for collection against the Owner personally obligated to pay the same and to foreclose the lien against the Lot and any Dwelling located thereon by judicial foreclosure in the same manner as foreclosure of a mortgage, and there shall be added to the amount of such assessment the aforesaid interest, late charges, collection costs and attorneys' and paralegals' fees, and fees and collection costs shall be recoverable whether or not suit be brought. The Owner shall also be required to pay the Association any assessments against the Lot which become due during the period of foreclosure. The Association shall have the right and power to bid at the foreclosure sale and to own sell, lease, encumber, use and otherwise deal with the Lot and any Dwelling thereon as owner thereof.

(b) Exempt Property. The following property shall be exempt from the assessments, charges and liens created herein: (1) Common Property; (2) lands owned by Declarant which have not been annexed

to the Property by this Declaration or any Supplemental Declaration; (3) lands dedicated to the County or other governmental authority, any utility company or the public; and (4) Lots owned by Declarant during the period of time that Declarant subsidizes the Common Expenses of the Association pursuant to Section 8 of this Article. No other land or improvements in the Property shall be exempt from these assessments, charges or liens. No Owner may avoid assessment obligations by virtue of non-use or abandonment of the Common Property.

Section 2. Purpose.

The assessments levied by the Association may be used to promote the recreation, health, safety and welfare of the Owners, to perform the Association's duties and to exercise the powers conferred on it, to improve, operate, insure and maintain the Common Property and the Areas of Common Responsibility, and to pursue any other purpose deemed desirable or appropriate by the Board, including without limitation any one or more of the following: (a) payment of Association operating expenses; (b) lighting, irrigation, maintenance, improvement and beautification of streets and easement areas, and acquisition, maintenance, repair and replacement of community identification signs and traffic control devices, and control and regulation of traffic in the Property; (c) payment, contest or compromise of real and personal property taxes and assessments separately levied upon or assessed against the Association or the Common Property; (d) operation, management, insurance, replacement, maintenance, repair, beautification and improvement of the Common Property, Areas of Common Responsibility, and easement areas benefiting the Association; (e) repayment of any deficits previously incurred by the Association; (f) funding of reserves for future Common Expenses, (g) procurement and maintenance of insurance, (h) employment of accountant attorneys and other professionals to represent or advise the Association; (i) operation, maintenance and repair of the Surface Water Management System Facilities for the Property in accordance with the terms of this Declaration and the requirements of the District; (j) monitoring of protected wetlands as required by the District; and (k) doing anything necessary or desirable in the judgment of the Board to keep the Property neat and attractive, to preserve or enhance the value thereof, to eliminate fire, health or safety hazards, or otherwise to benefit the Owners.

Section 3. Determination of Annual Assessments.

(a) Operating Budget. At least thirty (30) days prior to the end of the Association's fiscal year, the Board shall prepare a budget of the estimated costs of operating the Association during the coming year, including but not limited to operational items such as overhead and indirect costs, insurance, utilities, taxes, professional fees, repairs, reserves, maintenance and other operating expenses, as well as charges to cover any deficits from prior years, and capital improvement budget items approved by the Board under Subsection (b), below. Also, the Association shall be required to allocate sufficient funds in its budget for monitoring

and maintenance of any wetland mitigation areas each year until the District determines that any such area(s) are successful in accordance with any Environmental Resource Permit.

(b) Capital Budget. Each year, the Board shall approve a capital budget taking into account the number, type, useful life and expected replacement cost of replaceable assets. The Board shall then set the required annual capital contribution in an amount sufficient to meet the projected capital needs of the Association on a timely basis. The annual capital contribution fixed by the Board shall then be included in the annual operating budget and annual assessments described in Subsection (a), above.

(c) Adoption of Operating Budget. The Association shall mail to each Member a copy of the capital budget, operating budget and projected annual assessments approved by the Board to be levied for the next fiscal year at least thirty (30) days prior to the end of the Association's current fiscal year. The operating budget and annual assessments shall become effective unless disapproved at a special meeting of the Members held not later than sixty (60) days after the proposed budget and assessments are mailed to the Members. To be effective, the disapproval must be by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the membership of the Association, without regard to class. If the membership so disapproves the operating budget for the succeeding year, or if the Board fails to propose a budget, then the budget and annual assessments for the preceding year shall continue in effect until a new budget is determined.

(d) Allocation of Annual Assessments Among Lots. The operating budget of the Association shall be assessed against all Owners and Lots in the Property in an equal amount per Lot.

#### Section 4. Special Assessments.

(a) Special Assessments. In addition to annual assessments, the Board may levy at any time a special assessment for the purpose of defraying the cost of any construction, repair or replacement of any improvement on the Common Property or Areas of Common Responsibility, or on any easement benefiting the Association, for the purpose of covering any budget deficits of the Association, or for any other purpose deemed desirable or appropriate by the Board; provided, however, that any such special assessment shall have the approval of a majority of the votes of the Members of each class who are in attendance and voting in person or by proxy at a meeting duly called for said purpose.

(b) Individual Assessment. The Board may levy an individual assessment against any Owner and that Owner's Lot and any Dwelling located thereon in order to cover costs incurred by the Association due to that Owner's failure to maintain its Lot or Dwelling pursuant to the standards set forth in this Declaration, or to reimburse the Association for loss or damage to the Association or to any Common Property, Area of Common Responsibility or easement area caused by that Owner or his lessee, agent, contractor or guest, and not covered by insurance, or for any other purpose expressly permitted by this Declaration.

Section 5. Commencement Dates; Start-Up Assessment; Initial Annual Assessment; Due Dates.

Annual assessments on the Lots in the Phase 1 Property shall commence upon the closing of the first Lot in the Phase 1 Property to a bona fide third party purchaser. The annual assessment for the Phase 1 Property for the calendar year 2007 shall be Four Hundred Seventy Five Dollars (\$475.00) per Lot. At the closing of the sale of each Lot in the Property by Declarant to the first purchaser from Declarant, the purchaser shall pay to the Association (i) a one time Start-Up Assessment in the amount of Four Hundred Seventy Five Dollars (\$475.00), and (ii) the entire annual assessment for the calendar year of closing, prorated on a per diem basis from the date of closing through the end of that calendar year. Thereafter, annual assessments shall be due, in advance, on or before the commencement of the Association fiscal year for which imposed; but the Board may elect to collect annual assessments in monthly, quarterly or semi-annual installments. In the event of such deferred payments, the Board may but shall not be required to charge a uniform, lawful rate of interest on the unpaid balance. The Board may accelerate the balance of any annual assessment upon default in the payment of any installment thereon.

Annual assessments which commence to accrue as to any Lot other than on the first day of the year shall be prorated for the balance of that year. After the one time Start-Up Assessment has been paid as to a Lot in the Property, subsequent purchasers of said Lot shall not be required to pay said Start-Up Assessment.

The annual assessment for each Additional Property shall commence upon the closing of the first sale by Declarant or any Lot in the Additional Property. The initial annual assessment for the Lots in each Additional Property shall be the same as the then current annual assessment for the remainder of the Property, or as otherwise set forth in the relevant Supplemental Declaration.

Section 6. Certificate.

Upon request, the Association shall furnish to any Owner a certificate setting forth whether required assessments have been paid. Such certificate shall be conclusive evidence in favor of third parties relying thereon of the payment of any assessment therein stated to have been paid.

Section 7. Subordination.

The assessment lien shall be subordinate to the lien of any mortgage. Any mortgagee which obtains title to a Lot by foreclosure of a mortgage, or by voluntary conveyance in lieu of such foreclosure, shall not be liable for the uncollected assessments or interest, late charges or collection costs pertaining to such Lot or chargeable to the former Owner thereof which became due prior to the acquisition of title by said mortgagee. Such unpaid amounts shall be deemed a Common Expense collectible from all Owners, including the acquiring mortgagee, on a pro-rata basis. Any such transfer to or by a mortgagee shall not relieve the transferee of responsibility nor the Lot from the lien for assessments thereafter falling due.

Section 8. Funding by Declarant.

Notwithstanding anything contained in this Declaration to the contrary, Declarant shall not be obligated to pay any annual or special assessment as to any Lot owned by it during any period of time that Declarant pays the Common Expense actually incurred over and above the income derived from annual, special and individual assessments collectible from the Class "A" Members. For purposes of this subsidy arrangement, Declarant need not subsidize or pay replacement reserves or capital expenditures. Declarant, at its option, may elect by written notice delivered to the Association at any time to abandon the subsidy approach and commence payment of the assessments thereafter falling due for the Lots then owned by Declarant, prorated as of the date of such notice. Declarant shall never be obligated to pay any individual assessment.

**Article VII**

**ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL**

Section 1. Architectural Control; ARB.

All Lots and Dwellings in the Property are subject to architectural review in accordance with this Article and the Planning, Construction and Development Criteria ("the Planning Criteria") if adopted, and revised from time to time by the Architectural Review Board (the "ARB"). The Planning Criteria, if adopted, shall be written and made available to all builders in the Property and to all Owners or prospective Owners. The Planning Criteria may include any matters considered appropriate by the ARB not inconsistent with this Declaration.

No site work, landscaping, utility extension, drainage improvement, paving, driveway, swimming pool, pool enclosure, building, fence, wall, sidewalk, dock, mailbox, or any other physical or structural improvement, or change or alteration to the exterior of any existing structure or improvement, or to any existing landscaping, shall be commenced, erected or maintained until the plans showing such details as the size, design, shape, finished grade elevation, height, materials and color of the same, together with a landscape plan and a plot plan showing the location relative to boundaries and adjacent improvements of such proposed improvements or changes, have been approved in writing by the ARB. All such improvements must further conform to the Planning Criteria, if adopted, and no plans shall be approved by the ARB if they are not in conformity with same. All improvements, changes and alterations shall also comply with all applicable governmental laws, statutes, ordinances, rules, regulations, orders and decrees. Until such time as any improvements, changes and/or alterations have been submitted to and approved by the ARB, no Owner (and/or designee thereof) shall make application for a building permit from the applicable governmental agency. Nothing herein shall limit the right of an Owner to finish or alter the interior of that Owner's Dwelling as that Owner desires.

Each property owner within the subdivision at the time of

construction of a building, residence, or structure shall comply with the construction plans for the surface water management system approved and on file with the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD).

No owner of property within the subdivision may construct or maintain any building, residence, or structure, or undertake or perform any activity in the wetlands, wetland mitigation areas, buffer areas, upland conservation areas and drainage easements described in the approved permit and recorded plat of the subdivision, unless prior approval is received from the Southwest Florida Water management District, Bartow Regulation Department.

#### Section 2. Membership of ARB.

So long as Declarant owns any Lots subject to this Declaration, Declarant shall be entitled to appoint all members of the ARB. Thereafter, the membership of the ARB shall be determined by the Board. The ARB shall consist of no less than three (3) members, none of whom shall be required to be Owners or occupants of the Property. No member of the ARB shall be entitled to compensation for services performed, but the ARB may employ professional advisors and pay reasonable compensation to such advisors at Common Expense. Members of the ARB (other than those appointed or designated by the Declarant) may be removed by the Board of Directors at any time without cause. Members of the ARB appointed or designated by the Declarant may only be removed by the Declarant.

#### Section 3. Approvals.

Decisions of the ARB shall be by majority action. Unless waived by the ARB, all plans shall be prepared by an architect or engineer, said person to be employed by and at the expense of the Owner. If for any reason, including purely aesthetic reasons, the ARB should determine that a proposed improvement or alteration is not consistent with the Planning Criteria or Declarant's development plan, or in the best interest of the Association and its Members, such improvement or alteration shall not be made. Approval of plans may be withheld not only because of noncompliance with any of the specific conditions, covenants and restrictions contained in this Declaration, but also by virtue of the dissatisfaction of the ARB with the location of the structure on the Lot, the elevation, color scheme, finish, design, proportions, architecture, drainage plan, shape, height, style and appropriateness of the proposed structures or altered structures, the materials used therein, the planting, landscaping, size, height or location of vegetation on the Lot, or because of its reasonable dissatisfaction with any other matter or thing which, in the judgment of the ARB, will render the proposed improvement or alteration inharmonious with the general development plan or the Planning Criteria. Two (2) sets of plans, specifications and plot plans shall be submitted to the ARB by the Owner prior to applying for a building permit. Submittals and re-submittals of plans shall be approved or disapproved within thirty (30) days after receipt by the ARB. Failure of the ARB to respond in writing to a submittal

or re-submittal of plans within such period shall be deemed to be approval of the plans as submitted or resubmitted. The ARB approval or disapproval shall be written and shall be accompanied by one (1) copy of the plans, etc., to be returned to the Owner. Whenever the ARB disapproves plans, the ARB shall specify the reason or reasons for such disapproval.

Section 4. Violations.

The work must be performed strictly in accordance with the plans as approved. If after plans have been approved, the improvements are altered, erected, or maintained upon the Lot other than as approved, same shall be deemed to have been undertaken without ARB approval. After one (1) year from completion of any improvement, addition or alteration, said improvement shall, in favor of purchasers and encumbrances in good faith and for value, be deemed to comply with the provisions hereof unless a notice of such noncompliance executed by any member of the ARB shall appear in the public records of the County, or legal proceedings shall have been instituted to enjoin the noncompliance or to enforce compliance with these provisions.

Section 5. Variances.

The ARB may grant variances from compliance with the architectural provisions of this Declaration or the Planning Criteria, including without limitation restrictions upon height, size or placement of structures, or similar restrictions, when circumstances such as topography, natural obstructions, hardship, aesthetic or environmental considerations may reasonably require. The granting of any variance shall not operate to waive any of the terms and provisions of this Declaration or the Planning Criteria for any purpose except as to the particular Lot and the particular provision covered by the variance, nor shall it affect the Owner's obligation to comply with governmental requirements. Such variances may only be granted when unique circumstances dictate and no variance shall (i) be effective unless in writing, (ii) be contrary to the restrictions set forth in this Declaration, or (iii) estop the ARB from denying a variance in other circumstances.

Section 6. Waiver of Liability.

None of Declarant, the ARB, the Directors or the Association, or any agent or employee thereof, shall be liable to anyone submitting plans for approval or to any Owner, occupant or guest of the Property by reason of or in connection with approval or disapproval of any plans, or for any defect in any plans submitted, revised or approved in accordance with the requirements of the ARB, or for any structural or other defect in any work done according to such plans. Approval of plans, or any other approvals, variances or consents, are given solely to protect the aesthetics of the Property in the judgment of the ARB and shall not be deemed a warranty, representation or covenant that any action taken in reliance thereon complies with applicable laws, codes, rules or regulations, nor shall ARB approval be deemed approval of any plan or design from the standpoint of structural safety or conformity

with building or other codes. Every person who submits plans for approval agrees, by submission of such plans, and every Owner or occupant of any Lot agrees, by acquiring title thereto or an interest therein, that it will not bring any action, proceeding or suit to recover any such damages and shall be deemed to have automatically agreed to hold harmless and indemnify the aforesaid parties from and for any loss, claim or damages connected with the aforesaid aspects of the improvements or alterations.

Section 7. Enforcement.

Declarant and the Association shall have standing and authority on behalf of the Association to enforce in courts of competent jurisdiction the Planning Criteria and the decisions of the ARB. Should Declarant or the Association be required to enforce the provisions hereof by legal action, the reasonable attorneys' fees and costs incurred, whether or not judicial proceedings are involved, including the attorneys' fees and costs incurred on appeal from judicial proceedings, shall be collectible from the violating Owner. Should any Owner fail to comply with the requirements hereof after thirty (30) days' written notice, Declarant and the Association shall have the right but not the obligation to enter upon the Owner's property, make such corrections or modifications as are necessary, or remove anything in violation of the provisions hereof or the Planning Criteria, and charge the cost thereof to the Owner as an individual assessment. Declarant and the Association, or their agents or employees, shall not be liable to the Owner or to any occupant or invitee of any Lot for any trespass or damages or injury to property or person for any action taken hereunder unless caused by gross negligence or intentional wrongdoing. Neither Declarant or the Association shall be liable to any owner for failure to enforce the ARB rules and requirements.

Section 8. Exemption.

Declarant shall be exempt from the architectural control provisions of this Article VII. Declarant shall be entitled to construct or install any new improvement, and to alter or change any existing improvement, without submitting plans to or obtaining the approval of the ARB.

Section 9. No Waiver of Future Approvals.

The approval of the ARB of any proposals or plans and specifications or drawings for any work done or proposed, or in connection with any other matter requiring the approval and consent of the ARB, shall not be deemed to constitute a waiver of any right to withhold approval or consent as to any similar proposals, plans and specifications, drawings or matters subsequently or additionally submitted for approval or consent.

Section 10. ARB Rules.

The ARB may adopt reasonable rules of procedure and standards for the submission and review of any matter to be brought before it

and the inspection and final approval of any completed work done pursuant to an approval of the ARB. Such rules, if adopted, shall be (i) subject to the prior approval of the Board of Directors, (ii) consistent with the covenants and restrictions set forth in this Declaration and (iii) published or otherwise made available to all Owners and their contractors, subcontractors and other appropriate designees. All rules of the ARB shall be adopted and/or amended by a majority vote thereof.

## **Article VIII**

### **EXTERIOR MAINTENANCE**

#### **Section 1. Owner's Responsibility.**

Each Owner shall keep and maintain that Owner's Lot and all building and other improvements and landscaping located on that Owner's Lot in good repair and in a neat and attractive condition. The minimum but not exclusive standard for maintenance of improvements shall be consistency with the approved plans therefor and with the general appearance of the other occupied improvements in the Property as a whole when initially constructed and improved (taking into account, however, normal weathering and fading of exterior finishes, but not to the point of unsightliness). The maintenance obligation of each Owner as to building improvements shall include, without limitation, maintenance of all exterior surfaces and roofs, facias and soffits, awnings, trellises, decorative facades, screens, windows and doors. Owners shall clean, repaint or re-stain, as appropriate, the exterior portions of the building improvements (with the same colors as initially approved), including exterior surfaces of garage doors, as often as is necessary to comply with the foregoing standards. Each Owner shall also keep, maintain and irrigate the trees, shrubbery, grass and other landscape material located on that Owner's Lot in good repair and in a neat and attractive condition. The minimum but not exclusive standard for maintenance of landscaping shall be consistency with the approved plans therefor and with the general appearance of the other occupied Lots in the Property as a whole when initially landscaped (taking into account, however, the natural and orderly growth and maturation of applicable landscaping, as properly trimmed and maintained). Landscape maintenance shall include, without limitation, irrigation, fertilization, weeding, mowing, trimming, spraying for insects and disease, and periodic replacement of dead, damaged or diseased plantings. To the extent not included in the areas required to be maintained by the Association pursuant to Section 4 of this Article, each Owner shall, at that Owner's expense, grass over (with sod approved by the ARB), mow and keep free of trash and debris, on a routine basis, those portions of the Surface Water Management System Facilities located on that Owner's Lot (whether or not included in a platted drainage easement). When required, major repairs to, and major maintenance and reconstruction of, components of the Surface Water Management System Facilities will be performed by the Association, at Common Expense. Each Owner shall grass over (with sod approved by the ARB), mow and keep free of trash and debris, on a routine basis, the unpaved portion of any

platted street(s) abutting the Owner's Lot. Each Owner shall be responsible for the maintenance, operation and repair of the swales, if any, on the Owner's Lot. Maintenance, operation and repair shall mean the exercise of practices, such as mowing and erosion repair, which allow the swales to provide drainage, water storage, conveyance or other stormwater management capabilities as permitted by the District. Filling, excavation, construction of fences or otherwise obstructing the surface water flow in the swales is prohibited. No alteration of the swale shall be authorized and any damage to any swale, whether caused by natural or human-induced phenomena, shall be repaired and the swale returned to its proper condition as soon as possible by the Owner(s) of the Lot(s) upon which the swale is located. The Association shall have the right but not the obligation to provide exterior repair and maintenance on any Lot or any improvement thereon in the event of default by any Owner in the duties hereby imposed. Prior to performing repair or maintenance on any Lot, the Board shall determine that there is need of repair or maintenance and such need detracts from the overall appearance of the Property. Except in emergency situations, prior to commencement of any work, the Board must furnish written notice to the Owner to the effect that, unless specified repairs or maintenance are commenced within fifteen (15) days after the mailing of the notice, and thereafter diligently pursued to completion, the Association may procure said repairs. Upon the Owner's failure to commence timely and to diligently pursue the repairs or maintenance, the Association and its agents or employees shall have the right to enter in or upon the Lot and the exterior of any improvement thereon to perform the repairs or maintenance specified in the notice. In this regard, the Association shall have the right to do such things as, but limited to, paint, repair, replace and care for pools, pool enclosures, roofs, gutters, down spouts and exterior building surfaces, clean or resurface paved access ways and parking areas, trim and care for trees, shrubs, grass, walks, swales, berms and other landscaping and drainage improvements, as well as to provide general cleanup, shoreline maintenance, and removal of debris which in the opinion of the Board detracts from the overall beauty and setting of the Property. Declarant, the Association, and their respective agents and employees, shall have no liability to the Owner or any occupant or guest for trespass, or damage or injury to property or person as the result of actions taken hereunder unless caused by gross negligence or intentional wrongdoing.

#### Section 2. Assessment of Cost.

The cost of any work performed by or at the request of the Association pursuant to Section 1 shall be assessed as an individual assessment against the Owner of the Lot upon which such work is done.

#### Section 3. Access.

In order to perform the repairs or maintenance authorized by this Article, the agents or employees of the Association may enter upon any Lot and the exterior of any improvement thereon during reasonable hours on any day except Sundays and holidays, except

that in an emergency situation, as determined by the Board, entry may be made at any time.

Section 4. Association's Responsibility.

The Association shall maintain and keep in good repair the Common Property and the Areas of Common Responsibility and the wall, landscaping, lighting, irrigation, sign, drainage and other improvements from time to time located thereon. It is the responsibility of the Association, at Common Expense, to operate, maintain and repair the Surface Water Management System Facilities and to enforce, or to take such appropriate action as may be necessary to cure violations of, the routine maintenance and non-interference covenants of the Owners under this Declaration, and, when appropriate, to levy special assessments or individual assessments therefor. Maintenance of the Surface Water Management System Facilities shall include the exercise of practices which allow the system to provide drainage, water storage, conveyance and other surface water or stormwater management capabilities as permitted by the District. Any repair or reconstruction of the Surface Water Management System Facilities shall be as originally permitted or, if modified, as approved by the District.

In the event the Association is dissolved or ceases to exist for any reason, each Member of the Association, lot owner, parcel owner, or unit owner shall be jointly and severally liable for the operation and maintenance of the Surface Water Management System Facilities in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Resource Permit, unless and until an alternate entity assumes responsibility for such operation and maintenance in accordance with the requirements of the Southwest Florida Water Management District.

**Article IX**  
**RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS**

The Property shall be subject to the following covenants and restrictions which shall bind each Owner and Lot:

Section 1. Wells.

No individual water supply system shall be permitted on any Lot without the approval of the ARB.

Section 2. Obnoxious or Offensive Activity.

No activity or use shall be allowed upon the Property which is a source of annoyance, embarrassment or discomfort to Owners or their tenants or invitees, or which interferes with the peaceful possession and proper use and enjoyment of the Property, nor shall any improper, unsightly, offensive or unlawful use be made of any Lot, Dwelling or the Common Property, and all laws and regulations of applicable governmental bodies shall be observed. The Property shall be used, enjoyed and occupied in such manner as not to cause or produce any of the following effects discernible outside any Dwelling: noise or sound that is objectionable because of its volume, duration, beat, frequency or shrillness; smoke; noxious,