

From: [Sherry Greenfield](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] !! Density Increase Project!!
Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 3:11:15 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

PLEASE Vote NO on Vistera Height and Density Increase Request...

I am writing as a resident of the Vistera community in North Venice to respectfully ask that you vote NO on any request from developer Pat Neal to increase the building height and density for the Vistera development.

When we purchased our home in Vistera, we did so based on the approved development plan, including the originally proposed Phase Two layout. Like many residents, we made a significant financial and personal investment in this community with the understanding that the neighborhood would develop according to that approved plan.

Allowing a height and density increase now would fundamentally change the character of the community and significantly impact the residents who chose to live here based on the existing development agreement. Increased density would mean greater traffic, strain on infrastructure, and a level of congestion that is incompatible with the thoughtful planning that drew many of us to Vistera in the first place.

The City Council has already determined twice that the proposed increase was incompatible with the surrounding neighborhoods, and I respectfully ask that you stand by those decisions again.

Vistera is a beautiful, well-planned community, and many of us purchased homes here specifically because of that thoughtful design and scale. Changing the development parameters after residents have already invested their lives and resources here would be deeply disappointing and detrimental to the character of the neighborhood.

Please protect the integrity of the approved plan and the residents who trusted it by voting NO on any request to increase building height or density for the Vistera development.

Thank you for your time and for your continued service to the residents of Venice.

Sincerely,
Sherry Oberhaus
Vistera Resident

From: [Julia Lester](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 10:18:14 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

I am opposed to increasing the allowed height on new builds. Venice is unique in that we don't have massive high-rise buildings obstructing the skyline. Why take away from our charm. Some might say, well, it's only a story or two, but that's how these things always seem to start. Soon, they'll be asking for "just one more" floor. It should stop now.

Also, the amount of new development is concerning as the influx of new residence creates more traffic, more noise, less parking, less tables available in restaurants, less personal space at the beach, etc. I moved here for the quiet charm and I see that slowly eroding away with allowing more (and bigger) buildings. As someone who has lived with a 4 story building being built in my back yard for the past year (plus), I can attest to the dirt, the noise, the pounding, the unauthorized vehicles on our property, etc. (The dirt is the worst. I cannot keep my own home clean while this construction is going on. It just keep blowing my way, day after day.) Please take into consideration ALL the people of Venice. Thank you.

From: [Roz](#)
To: [City Council](#); [Nicholas Pachota](#); [Jim Boldt](#); [Rachel Frank](#); [Rick Howard](#); [Kevin Engelke](#); [Ronald Smith](#); [Lloyd Weed](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera Development in North Venice
Date: Saturday, March 7, 2026 8:36:17 AM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Dear City Council Members,

Thank you for the time and effort for serving on the Council for our wonderful city of Venice.

I am writing regarding the upcoming vote to change the master plan for Vistera development. The height exception and density increase are not in keeping with the standards of our community.

I applaud your efforts in voting down the changes to the master plan twice before and ask you to do it again. Please keep developers from making the changes to the master plan and keep our community from being over developed.

Sincerely,

Thomas and Rosaline Bova

From: [LORRAINE BEST](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera
Date: Friday, March 6, 2026 3:44:39 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Please do not approve the height or density exception for Vistera.

Thank You !
Lorraine Best
EDG Realty
732-547-9447 cell

Sent from my iPhone

From: [lschell2](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fw: Vistera Density
Date: Sunday, March 8, 2026 9:29:42 AM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender
You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

March 8, 2026

Dear City Council:

I am against adding 310 units proposed by Neal. You made the RIGHT decision twice before; please make the right decision again.

Neal's proposal is not in Venice's best interests. I have lived here since 1990. By the way, our infrastructure cannot handle the over-building that is going on.

Linda Schell

Please encourage everyone you know to write to city council against this additional 310 units proposed by Neal.

The best thing if convenient would be to show up at city hall on the 10th.

Neal is first up so you can see him in person! Starts at 9:00am but he should present around 10:00.

Best,

Venice Thrives

Venice City Council Meeting - Vistera Height & Density Proposal
City Hall, 401 West Venice Avenue, Venice, Florida
March 10, 2026 @ 9AM
CityCouncil@venicefl.gov
[Agenda Link](#) | [Vistera Packet](#)

The [Venice City Council Meeting agenda](#) for March 10, 2026 – 9:00 AM has been published and, as we previously communicated, lists an item for the [Vistera development in North Venice](#).

The [agenda packet](#) proposes a height exception to 55 feet (5 stories) and increased density to allow a total of 1,607 dwelling units. That total equals the 1,300 units approved under the original Vistera Master Plan plus 307 additional units. Although the [agenda packet](#) compares decreases from 317 units to 307 units and 65 feet to 55 feet, the net effect of the proposal is increased height and an increase of 307 units above the originally approved baseline. The developer will likely describe these decreases as a "concession" on their part, but this does not change that the proposal seeks increases relative to original approvals. The developer is not entitled to any increase. Venice City Council has twice voted NO on Pat Neal's proposals to change the Vistera Master Plan. Any change to height, density, or use from the original plans is incompatible with Vistera and surrounding communities.

Venice Thrives, representing a large, citywide coalition of residents and stakeholders, stands united with the Vistera and North Venice communities in urging the City Council to again vote NO on any proposal to increase building height or density for the Vistera development.

Please let [Venice City Council](#) know that they made the right choice TWICE before and thank them for not giving in to developer proposals that are incompatible with our community and are not in the best interest of the residents.

Please take this opportunity to express your concerns in any of the following ways:

- In person at the council meeting - 3/10/2026 @ 9AM
- By email to CityCouncil@venicefl.gov.
- By mail to City Clerk Kelly Michaels, 401 W. Venice Avenue, Venice, FL 34285

Written comments received by March 10, 2026 at 8:00 AM will be distributed to council members and staff prior to the start of the meeting.

From: [SUE CHAPMAN](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: Info@venicethrives.com; [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Growth
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 9:21:47 AM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Please vote NO on the Visteria plan to increase height and density, as you have twice before.
Thank you,
Sue Chapman and Robert Brooke

From: [Harvey Greene](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Height of Buildings
Date: Friday, March 6, 2026 4:46:10 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Please vote NO to increase the height of buildings and also future development of living space within our city. Venice it appears may soon look like its neighbor Sarasota if we continue to let developers have their way.

Sincerely,
Harvey Greene
147 Sevilla Place
North Venice,fl.

From: [Commercial](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Hold the line on density and height restrictions
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 8:26:07 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

I understand that once again, developers are requesting to waive the existing building guidelines. Please continue to vote down these requests. Nothing has changed to make this a good idea. Our roads and services are already struggling to keep up with the increased density of residents.

Thank you.

Marcia Smith

Guild Drive

Venice

From: [Nancy Thompson](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] latest request for vistera
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 9:20:32 AM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Please call a halt to exemptions/variances to the Venice Master Plan that was drawn and put into effect for a reason..Mayor concerns about drought conditions and traffic and sprawl should be addressed!!! Stick to the original submission or even scale back from the original submission would be preferable. Bigger is not always better. Call a halt while you still can!!

From: champ12127@aol.com
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Neal Development
Date: Sunday, March 8, 2026 10:14:12 AM

This Message Is From an External Sender

This message came from outside your organization.

Dear City Council Members:

I am against adding 310 units proposed by Neal. You made the RIGHT decision twice before; please make the right decision again.

Neal's proposal is not in Venice's best interests. I have lived here since 1957. Unfortunately for too long the county and City of Venice has pandered to the big developers and their attorneys who push and push to destroy our area. We are there now - thanks to the powers that be.

Our roads, water, and other infrastructure cannot handle the over-building that is going on. Stop IT.

Christina Midlam Hampson

From: [Jeff Ernst](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Neal Request to Increase Density at Vistera
Date: Saturday, March 7, 2026 7:37:32 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

City Council Members,

Please vote NO on Neal's request to increase height/density at Vistera. My wife and I currently live in Grand Palm (a Neal Community) and are currently having a new home built in Vistera. Increased density is not what residents want. You already voted NO twice before, so I cannot imagine what would make it a good idea this time. Growth is fine, but overcrowding for our schools, stores, and other facilities is not wanted. Thanks in advance for representing the will of the people.

Regards,

Jeff Ernst
508-294-0714

From: [Sue Ulrey](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposed to Vistersa
Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 9:58:37 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Honorable members of the Venice City Council:

My husband and I are residents of Venice. We urge you to again vote NO on any proposal to increase building height or density for the Vistera development.

We appreciate your service to our community. We will support you in future elections if you simply uphold the already agreed to plans for our community.

Stephen and Sue Ulrey

From: [Amherst Ale House](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposition to Vistera Height & Density Proposal
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 11:23:30 AM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Dear Venice City Council,

As a homeowner in Venice, I'm writing to express my opposition to the proposed changes to the Vistera development scheduled for discussion on March 10.

Increasing the building height to 55 feet and raising the total number of units to 1,607 goes beyond what was originally approved and changes the scale and density of the project in a way that is not consistent with the surrounding community. The Council has already reviewed similar requests and voted twice to reject changes to the Vistera Master Plan. I respectfully encourage you to stand by those decisions.

Thank you for your service to the residents of Venice.

Sincerely,

John Bona III
716-510-2662-cell

From: [Debbie Gericke](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Pat Neal/ Additional Vistera Units/ March 10th
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 11:01:47 AM

This Message Is From an External Sender

This message came from outside your organization.

All,

Many others and I were opposed to Neals request for the 317 additional units in Visteria in August of 2025. Now he's back again playing bully and pushing you away from doing the job the people voted you in to do. I have heard Jim Boldt say he's concerned about a lawsuit against the city.

I believe you all voted correctly regarding the compatibility issue and believe an attorney would feel the same. Please do not allow him to cause you to do the wrong thing by turning over your decision against the additional units.

Thank you

Debbie Gericke
13176 Rinella St

From: [Nancy Plotkin](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Pat Neal's request
Date: Saturday, March 7, 2026 1:50:44 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

I am opposed to the city councils approving Neal's request. You have denied him twice.
Please do it again

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: mlanderson55@att.net
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Pat Neal's request for increasing height and density at Vistera
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 6:27:36 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Dear City Council,

Thank you for twice not giving in to developer proposals that are incompatible with our community and are not in the best interest of the residents.

The additional density and height is above and beyond the original request. Mr. Neal now proposes a height exception to 55 feet (5 stories) and increased density to allow a total of 1,607 dwelling units. That total equals the 1,300 units approved under the original Vistera Master Plan plus 307 additional units. Although the agenda packet compares decreases from 317 units to 307 units and 65 feet to 55 feet, the net effect of the proposal is increased height and an increase of 307 units above the originally approved baseline. The developer will likely describe these decreases as a "concession" on their part, but this does not change that the proposal seeks increases relative to original approvals. The developer is not entitled to any increase. Venice City Council has twice voted NO on Pat Neal's proposals to change the Vistera Master Plan. Any change to height, density, or use from the original plans is incompatible with Vistera and surrounding communities.

Thank you,
Michael Anderson
113 Cohosh Rd
Nokomis, FL

From: [Harvey Greene](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Pat Neil-Developer
Date: Friday, March 6, 2026 4:32:03 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Please be aware that again this developer always wants to build more, and does not only wish to make money but line his pockets at the cost of crowding the city of Venice. It is no longer the quaint city, and may start to look like Sarasota with tall buildings and over crowded development.

Please vote no.

Sincerely,

Harvey Greene

147 Sevilla Place

North Venice, Fl. 34275

From: [Marisa Voorhis](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PLAN CHANGE VISTERA
Date: Friday, March 6, 2026 4:59:25 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Dear Council Memeber,

Please Vote NO on Vistera Height and Density Increase Request

I am writing as a resident of the Vistera community in North Venice to respectfully ask that you vote NO on any request from developer Pat Neal to increase the building height and density for the Vistera development.

When I purchased my home in Vistera, I did so based on the approved development plan, including the originally proposed Phase Two layout. Like many residents, I made a significant financial and personal investment in this community with the understanding that the neighborhood would develop according to that approved plan.

Allowing a height and density increase now would fundamentally change the character of the community and significantly impact the residents who chose to live here based on the existing development agreement. Increased density would mean greater traffic, strain on infrastructure, and a level of congestion that is incompatible with the thoughtful planning that drew many of us to Vistera in the first place.

The City Council has already determined twice that the proposed increase was incompatible with the surrounding neighborhoods, and I respectfully ask that you stand by those decisions again.

Vistera is a beautiful, well-planned community, and many of us purchased homes here specifically because of that thoughtful design and scale. Changing the development parameters after residents have already invested their lives and resources here would be deeply disappointing and detrimental to the character of the neighborhood.

Please protect the integrity of the approved plan and the residents who trusted it by voting NO on any request to increase building height or density for the Vistera development.

Thank you for your time and for your continued service to the residents of Venice.

Sincerely,
Kevin and Marisa Voorhis
Visterra Resident
North Venice, FL

From: [Karen Tate](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please Vote NO on Vistera Height and Density Increase Request
Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 4:52:50 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

I am writing as a resident of the Vistera community in North Venice to respectfully ask that you vote NO on any request from developer Pat Neal to increase the building height and density for the Vistera development.

When I purchased my home in Vistera, I did so based on the approved development plan, including the originally proposed Phase Two layout. Like many residents, I made a significant financial and personal investment in this community with the understanding that the neighborhood would develop according to that approved plan.

Allowing a height and density increase now would fundamentally change the character of the community and significantly impact the residents who chose to live here based on the existing development agreement. Increased density would mean greater traffic, strain on infrastructure, and a level of congestion that is incompatible with the thoughtful planning that drew many of us to Vistera in the first place.

The City Council has already determined twice that the proposed increase was incompatible with the surrounding neighborhoods, and I respectfully ask that you stand by those decisions again.

Vistera is a beautiful, well-planned community, and many of us purchased homes here specifically because of that thoughtful design and scale. Changing the development parameters after residents have already invested their lives and resources here would be deeply disappointing and detrimental to the character of the neighborhood.

Please protect the integrity of the approved plan and the residents who trusted it by voting NO on any request to increase building height or density for the Vistera development.

Thank you for your time and for your continued service to the residents of Venice.

Sincerely,
Karen Tate
Vistera Resident
257 Vistera Blvd
North Venice, FL

From: [Eric Kuhn](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Vistera Addendum - Mar10
Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 10:25:37 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

After hearing about the proposed changes that Pat Neal is bringing for review on March 10, I felt compelled to reach out. My wife and I were born and raised in Sarasota and saw what unchecked development turned that area into. When searching for where we wanted to raise our children, we chose Nokomis since it felt similar to the Sarasota of the early 2000s. It's our hope that you continue to make decisions with the best interest of the community in mind and deny this request for this higher density dwelling.

Thanks,

Eric Kuhn

From: [John G. Singer](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Say NO to Pat Neal
Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 6:49:13 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Honorable Councilperson;

My wife and I strongly urge you vote against the height and density expansion being requested by Pat Neal for the Vistera community.

This expansion is totally incompatible with the nature of the North Venice community.

Please vote to keep Venice the quiet gem that it is.

John

John & Gloria Singer
1182 Cielo Court
North Venice, FL 34275
(732) 236-0559 - Cell
jgs@PoBox.com

From: [Nancy Daniels](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Tuesday Meeting
Date: Sunday, March 8, 2026 1:16:34 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Dear Council,

Thank you for your work and voting no on the density and height issues for two times! Council needs to hear and listen to their constituents. The increased height to 10 feet and density to 5 units per acre is NOT what the voters want. Neighborhoods will be less desirable and changes are not compatible with present conditions. Continue to follow the comprehensive plan and do not allow these exceptions. Venice needs to stay true to it and keep Venice charming.

Mayor, I commend you for being the deciding vote last time. I know you are seeking higher political horizons but please keep your voters and supporters here happy and vote NO! I was impressed that Siesta Key had a victory with its council. I want our Council to follow this agenda and do what their voters and supporters want. Be true to your City and vote No to both of these issues. Thank you for your efforts and work in keeping Venice the City I love.

Respectfully, Nancy Daniels

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Lisa Marcotte](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Viscera
Date: Saturday, March 7, 2026 12:29:21 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Please vote no on any additional height or density increases on this development.

Thank you

Lisa Marcotte

Riviera St. Venice

From: cmattinen@yahoo.com
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera Development Project
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 7:14:22 AM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Dear City Council,

I live at Aria, a community next to Vistera. I am opposed to allowing Neal Property Management to increase the density of the development. I also an opposition to the Publix, and the storage unit that will behind my home.

Thank you for your support.

Cheryl Davis

389 Bocelli Drive

Nokomis, FL 34275

From: [Liz](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera Development
Date: Saturday, March 7, 2026 12:34:24 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

To City Council:

Please remain firm and consistent in your actions considering the height limit and number of units which you have agreed to in the past for this proposed development.

Thank you in advance for maintaining zoning laws.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth B. Mavis
701 Barcelona Ave. unit 103
34285

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

From: [Dennis Sica](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera changes
Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 9:17:09 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Please continue to vote against Neal Properties plan to change the height and number of units in Vistera. We have an abundance of unleased property and do not want more apartments.

Dennis Sica
137 Bella Vista Ter
N Venice 34275

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: [Robert Tutko](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera Community
Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 3:47:08 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Council

Please Vote NO on Vistera Height and Density Increase Request

I am writing as a resident of the Vistera community in North Venice to respectfully ask that you vote NO on any request from developer Pat Neal to increase the building height and density for the Vistera development.

When I purchased my home in Vistera, I did so based on the approved development plan, including the originally proposed Phase Two layout. Like many residents, I made a significant financial and personal investment in this community with the understanding that the neighborhood would develop according to that approved plan.

Allowing a height and density increase now would fundamentally change the character of the community and significantly impact the residents who chose to live here based on the existing development agreement. Increased density would mean greater traffic, strain on infrastructure, and a level of congestion that is incompatible with the thoughtful planning that drew many of us to Vistera in the first place.

The City Council has already determined twice that the proposed increase was incompatible with the surrounding neighborhoods, and I respectfully ask that you stand by those decisions again.

Vistera is a beautiful, well-planned community, and many of us purchased homes here specifically because of that thoughtful design and scale. Changing the development parameters after residents have already invested their lives and resources here would be deeply disappointing and detrimental to the character of the neighborhood.

Please protect the integrity of the approved plan and the residents who trusted it by voting NO on any request to increase building height or density for the Vistera development.

Thank you for your time and for your continued service to the residents of Venice.

Sincerely,
Robert and Michelle Tutko
Vistera Resident

North Venice, FL
Sent from my iPhone

From: [James L. Blackburn](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera development
Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 9:22:49 PM
Attachments: [Tear 18-06-21 Land Boom part 3.pdf](#)

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Sir/Madam:

Please include my protest against the proposed height exception on the Vistera development project. I have witnessed the gradual decline of Venice since first arriving in 2014. I wrote a four-part series on the Florida land boom of the 1920s for the Venice Gondolier. Part III was about the birth of Venice (attached). What began as a lovely preplanned community has deteriorated over the years into a cash machine for developers. Venice is losing its charm.

Sincerely,

James L. Blackburn
410.206.2738 cell

Early Venice bloomed and then wilted

Editor's note: Part one looked at the myriad imaginative methods used to bait land buyers following World War I. Part two denoted what happened when the buyers bit the bait, plus the growth and culmination of The Big Boom. Part three discusses Venice's role in the boom and bust.

Venice participated in Florida's land boom and bust of the 1920s, but its story was slightly different than other cities. Its development was more methodical than maniacal, and its heyday lasted a little longer. It was, as author Gregg M. Turner puts it, a "ready-made city." A lot of thought went into Venice, not just a lot of money, and that is arguably the biggest reason the city has survived intact. If one were to time travel back to 1927, one could walk the streets of Old Venice and feel at home, so much would be familiar. What distinguishes Venice's birth and development during the Boom and makes its story so interesting, is that everything happened so quickly. It was like the night-blooming cereus found in its gardens; an explosion of short-lived beauty.

The aforementioned author Turner has an excellent book, *The Florida Land Boom of the 1920s*, to be found at our library, along with others on the subject. Most of the information in this series comes from Turner.



James Blackburn
Guest Columnist

Prior to the 1920s, not much was shaking here. Venice was a place, not a city. In 1915, Chicago millionaire Bertha Palmer, whose family already had significant holdings in what is now Sarasota County, hired an urban planner to design a resort here. His proposal was too costly, however, and Palmer did not pursue it.

Nothing significant happened again until August of 1925 when Dr. Fred Albee, a well-known New York surgeon who had already been buying land piecemeal in the area, bought 1,468 acres

1. The Bait: The selling of the state
2. The Bite: The build-up and population explosion
3. The City: The role of Venice in the boom
4. The Crash: The unwinding in 1926

Paid Advertisement

Which of These Costly Homeseller Mistakes Will You Make When You Sell Your Venice Area Home?

Venice Area - A new report has just been released which reveals 7 costly mistakes that most homeowners make when selling their home, and a 9 Step System that can help you sell your home fast and for the most amount of money.

This industry report shows clearly how the traditional ways of selling homes have become increasingly less and less effective in today's market. The fact of the matter is that fully three quarters of homesellers don't get what they want for their homes and become disillusioned and - worse - financially disadvantaged when they put their homes on the market. As this report uncovers, most

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adno=54537227



PHOTO COURTESY OF VENICE MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES

An aerial view of Venice circa 1928-1930, shows Venice Avenue shops in the foreground, the Centennial Park land between Nassau and North Nokomis avenues (from left to right) and the former Hotel Venice (Summit Retirement Center) middle left, the old San Marco Hotel, now Venice Center Mall, site of present Luna Ristorante and, right middle, the site of today's Venice Theatre, along Tampa Avenue.

that would eventually become the City on the Gulf. He paid \$130 an acre ... and it wasn't underwater. Such a deal!

Albee then hired urban planner John Nolen of Cambridge, Massachusetts to come up with a plan for developing the area of Venice and Nokomis. Nolen produced a design that included a boulevard similar to our current Venice Avenue. He called his model community "Venice-Nokomis: The White City on the Gulf." Something tells me that wouldn't fly today. Albee was an extremely busy doctor who not only had patients but gave lectures and wrote books. He had not the time to devote and soon abandoned the idea. Nolen's plan never left paper.

Meanwhile, something of significance had been playing out in faraway Cleveland. The nation's largest and most powerful labor union, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, had been audited earlier in the year and found a little short in the books — to the tune of \$4 million. Casey Jones and the boys needed fast cash. (Jones was actually a real person and a union member.) Florida's land boom was, well, booming, and it was decided to buy land, a lot of land, and flip it.

Thus it came about that in September of 1925, only a few weeks after Albee had bought the 1,468 acres, he turned around and sold his land to the Brotherhood. Along with Albee's land they bought more until their holdings totaled 30,000 acres.

While the original intent was to hold, plat and sell the land within three months, that's not what happened.

A rather slippery character at the Brotherhood was George T. Webb. It was Webb who convinced the executives to flip Florida land, but once purchase had been made, Webb immediately steered his colleagues toward making a development, a "community ready-made" as Turner calls it. The pretense was that it would serve as a retirement community for Brotherhood members.

The undertaking was shady from the beginning as was revealed two years later when an investigational committee looked into it. Although the union's directors vocally opposed Webb's plan, no one stopped him from proceeding and official authority to do so was never given. The BLE Realty Corporation was created with Webb at its head. Webb hired Nolen on Dr. Albee's recommendation. Early in 1926 Nolen submitted his general plan, which is little different than the Venice you know today, and the game was afoot.

The great majority of what we see today from that period was built in the year 1926. An army of laborers, skilled craftsmen, landscapers et al. were brought in. Wooden dormitories and a tent city were erected to house them, mess halls to feed them. The pace was furious. To the credit of Webb, Nolen and all, and to our benefit, the first thing they did was build a quality infrastructure. This was certainly not the norm during the Boom, and is another reason for Venice's survival and later success. Turner tells us that streets had concrete bases, water mains of cast-iron, underground lighting conduits, concrete sidewalks and storm sewers lined with vitrified tiles. Developers in other areas of the state were not so generous and forward thinking.

The first subdivision was called Gulf View and ran from the Seaboard train line to the beach. It was opened to public view in February of that year. The second neighborhood was Venezia Park, with lots surrounding a park bordered by Nassau, Salerno and Sorrento streets. It opened later the same year. Both neighborhoods offered splendid houses, deed restrictions and amenities. These were built to price for and marketed to middle- and upper-middle class buyers. Eventually it was pointed out that the presumably intended occupiers, retired railroad engineers, could not afford to live there. So much for pretensions; no money in low-income housing. Webb and Nolen therefore created a neighborhood called Edgewood east of the Seaboard line, i.e.

"on the other side of the tracks", with moderately-priced homes.

In the second half of 1926 all three of the city's grand hotels were opened: Hotel Venice (\$500,000), now Summit at Venice Assisted Living; Hotel Park View, where the Post Office now stands; and the San Marco Hotel (\$350,000), now the Venice Centre Mall. To give you a sense of the frenetic pace in 1926, in July the city had only one permanent building: Hotel Venice. Six months later there were 185 buildings either finished or under construction, and \$3 million invested. Imagine how it looked then: an ant colony, a beehive of humans scurrying about building. How exciting and inspirational it must have been. Oh, that we had this optimism and industrious spirit today.

But, alas, the bubble was to burst. As we will see in the fourth and final installment of this series, Florida's fast buck was an even faster bust. There was a domino effect on these highly speculative "investments." Venice was a little different, however, and was pulled down not so much by the whirlpool of Miami, Coral Gables and the rest, but was instead undone from within. In the same month of 1927 that the wonderful Seaboard Airline Railway Depot opened in Venice, March, Brotherhood executives were warned of their "dangerous financial condition."

By 1927, Miami, Coral Gables et al. were already on a scary slippery slope to the sea, but Venice held on a little longer. Homes and lots were still selling briskly. But behind the scenes the Brotherhood was in trouble. Enormous capital had been spent on Venice and there were sour investments elsewhere. A committee was formed to investigate, and its results were made known to the press at the union's convention in June in Cleveland. The fallout from discoveries of incompetence, corruption, misjudgment, nepotism and more resulted in the firing of the union's senior executives. Creditors descended, a \$5 million assessment against the union was made, and union members saw pensions vanish. Litigation went on long after Venice became a ghost town. The cereus had bloomed and gone.

George Webb's own splendid house can be seen today at 605 West Venice Avenue. The father of Venice, who imagined, proposed and oversaw the creation of the city, spending \$16 million in the process, died in a Miami hospital in 1956 flat broke. A collection had to be taken to bury him.

James Blackburn may be reached at gringoviajero@hotmail.com

From: [PX Glass](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera Development
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 4:36:34 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Thank you for voting NO to allowing the development go beyond what was originally agreed to. Please continue to vote against further development.

Regards.

Peter Glass, 228 Salerno Street, Venice FL, 34285

From: [Barbara Gundy](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera development in North Venice Agenda item March 10, 2026
Date: Friday, March 6, 2026 11:58:08 AM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Please vote NO on the proposed height and increased density requested by Vistera development in North Venice. The developer is not entitled to any increases. Any change to height, density, or use from the original plans is incompatible with Vistera and surrounding communities.

You have twice voted NO on this developer's proposals and yet he feels entitled to again waste your time with the same request.

I urge you to again vote NO on any proposal to increase building height or density for the Vistera development.

Barbara Gundy
821 Guild Dr Venice 343285

From: [ANNE HARRISON](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera Development in North Venice
Date: Friday, March 6, 2026 9:52:56 AM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Dear Council Members,

I have owned property in Venice for 20 years and been a resident for the past 10. I believe it is your responsibility to ensure that Venice remains the charming and "livable" city it was designed to be.

The proposed expansion of the Vistera development would further damage an already over-crowded Venice landscape. Please vote "NO" to any increase in height or density at Vistera.

Travel on US 41 and I75 already is a nightmare. A 15-mile trip to Sarasota can take over 2 hours, and drivers weaving in-and-out make the trip perilous. Heading south isn't much better.

Our roadways are clogged. Hospitals full. Water scarce. Natural habitats lost. Municipal services (police, fire, EMT, trash) taxed.

The development cannot be allowed to continue unchecked. Please, please, please vote "NO."

Sincerely,

Anne Harrison
860 White Cap Circle
Venice, FL 34285

(413) 219-8772

From: [Ferris Rinko](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera development
Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 9:50:23 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Dear City Council members,

Please continue to vote NO to any proposal to change the Vistera master plan. You made the right choice twice, please do so again.

The developer, Pat Neal, is not entitled to any increase. Any change to height, density, or use from the original plans is incompatible with Vistera and surrounding communities.

Thank you,
Ferris Rinko
Venice, FL

From: [Cathie Tiemeyer](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera Height & Density Issue
Date: Saturday, March 7, 2026 5:37:32 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

To Venice City Council Members:

What does Pat Neal not understand about objection to Height & Density in North Venice. Citizens do not support this mania of Mr. Neal and his colleagues. This part of Florida is not modeled on a citified notion of BIG is beautiful.....Think John Nolan!

Sincerely, Catherine Tiemeyer
Venice Resident - Thirty One Years

From: [John Condon](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera Height & Density Proposal
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 7:37:35 AM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

I vote "NO!"

John K Condon
456 Bayshore Drive
Venice, FL 34285

From: mdsand98@aol.com
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera Height and Density Change Request
Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 2:51:38 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

My wife and I are new homeowners in Vistera of Venice, having moved in on January 1st. The news of this proposed change has come as a complete shock to us. At no point during the home-buying process was any potential alteration to the community plan communicated to us. We purchased our home—one we hoped would be our forever home—with the understanding that the community design was established, thoughtful, and consistent with what was presented.

Like all of our neighbors, we have invested a tremendous amount of our hard-earned resources to become part of this wonderful community. Allowing such a significant change after so many families have made major financial and personal commitments would be deeply unfair.

We strongly believe that a drastic alteration to the original plan would diminish the beauty of our surroundings and negatively impact property values. Every resident here chose Vistera of Venice because of its well-planned layout, cohesive design, and the promise of a stable, well-managed community.

We respectfully ask that you consider the concerns of the many residents who call Vistera of Venice home. We urge you to vote no on this proposal in order to preserve the quality, integrity, and long-term value of our community.

Thank you for your time and for your service.

Kind regards,
Michael & Michelle DiNatale
Vistera of Venice Residents
North Venice FL

From: [bttboysen](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera Height and Density Proposal, please do not approve a change
Date: Friday, March 6, 2026 11:03:31 AM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

City Council of Venice,
Please do not approve a change in the height or density of Vistera. An increase in density is not compatible with the surrounding area.

Thank you

Bette Boysen
341 Mestre Place
Venetian Golf and River Club

Sent from my iPad

From: [John Thackray](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera Height and Density
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 12:29:46 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Nothing has changed since Vistera's last attempt to have the current height and density codes modified was denied, there is NO reason why this new attempt should not also be denied. The City Council must NOT kowtow to pat neal again!

John Thackray

124 Sevilla Pl, North Venice FL 34275

From: [Dan R Ezell](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera height exception
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 8:18:04 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Please vote against this exception once and for all. Local officials need to continue to stand up to the many money hungry developers that attempt to increase height and density, once there initial project is approved.

Thank you,
Dan R Ezell
381 Otter Creek Drive
Venice, FL 34292
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Jackie Patterson](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera height exception for developer
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 8:07:37 AM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Please do not approve a height exception for the Vistera development as the 307 additional units will just add more traffic to Laurel Rd which is already intolerable due to excessive density. Thank you for your consideration. Jacqueline Patterson, 145 Rimini Way, N. Venice 34275

From: [Tom Rosenthal](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera Height/Density Proposal
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 10:46:38 AM

This Message Is From an External Sender

This message came from outside your organization.

To the Venice City Council:

We are urging you to vote no on the developers request for height and density increases in Vistera. There are already multifamily buildings that have been completed for years that are not fully occupied, and there are hundreds more units currently in progress. Approving density and height variances benefits only the developer, not the city or its residents. Please represent your constituents, as elected officials should, and vote no on this proposal.

Thank you,

Tom and Linda Rosenthal
141 Cohosh Rd
Nokomis

From: [rich giangregorio](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera Master Plan
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 5:49:35 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Third times a charm???

Why is this even being discussed, again?

There is no wordly need for an additional 310 units!

We are already so overdeveloped...please just say "no."

Regards,

Richard Giangregorio
500 The Esplanade N
Venice, FL 34285

From: [Debbie Sidell](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera packet
Date: Friday, March 6, 2026 1:43:43 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Thank you for voting No on the height for this project. If we allow one developer to do this, others will follow; then our view and our beautiful city will be destroyed.

[Sent from AOL on Android](#)

From: [William Partak](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera zoning hearing
Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 10:07:42 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Dear City of Venice council members,

As a 25 year resident of Venice I appreciate the way our leadership has for the most part tried to keep Venice as beautiful and appealing as possible. I would urge all members of try he city council to please vote NO on allowing density and height restrictions to be changed.

Thank you for listening to your community and for your continued work to keep Venice as wonderful as it can be.

Sincerely ,
William Partak
110 Calle Del Paradiso
Venice

[Sent from AT&T Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [John Michaelsen](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 6:27:53 AM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Please do not allow a change to this project we YOU need to not change what is already approved. Respectfully request you not consider this application. John Michaelsen 130 Martellago dr N. Venice, Fl
Sent from my iPhone

From: [James Fullerton](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vistera/ Pat Neal request
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 8:56:08 AM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Twice voted "no" to expansion and height adjustment. Continue "no" voting.

Jim Fullerton
117 Tiziano Way
North Venice, FL 34275
203-610-5506

From: [Linda Baker](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Visteria
Date: Sunday, March 8, 2026 9:48:17 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Dear Council members,

So many of us appreciate your firm stance in insisting that the project not be allowed to bait and switch on the number of dwellings and the height restrictions.

Please know we are behind you in your efforts to keep Venice, Venice.

Thank you,

Linda Baker

963 Jacinto East

Venice

802 578 0382

From: [Venice Thrives](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote NO (again) on Vistera Height and Density Increase Request
Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 6:31:56 PM

This Message Is From an External Sender

This message came from outside your organization.

Mayor and City Council Members,

Venice Thrives, representing a large, citywide coalition of residents and stakeholders, stands united with the Vistera and North Venice communities in urging the City Council to again vote **NO** on any proposal to increase building height or density for the Vistera development.

Please protect the character, infrastructure, and quality of life of our neighborhoods.

From: [Janet Weitzner](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] vote NO on Vistera Height & Density Increase Request
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 2:22:18 PM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Email city council: citycouncil@venicefl.gov

Please Vote NO on Vistera Height and Density Increase Request

I am writing as a resident of the Vistera community in North Venice to respectfully ask that you vote NO on any request from developer Pat Neal to increase the building height and density for the Vistera development.

When I purchased my home in Vistera, I did so based on the approved development plan, including the originally proposed Phase Two layout. Like many residents, I made a significant financial and personal investment in this community with the understanding that the neighborhood would develop according to that approved plan.

Allowing a height and density increase now would fundamentally change the character of the community and significantly impact the residents who chose to live here based on the existing development agreement. Increased density would mean greater traffic, strain on infrastructure, and a level of congestion that is incompatible with the thoughtful planning that drew many of us to Vistera in the first place.

The City Council has already determined twice that the proposed increase was incompatible with the surrounding neighborhoods, and I respectfully ask that you stand by those decisions again.

Vistera is a beautiful, well-planned community, and many of us purchased homes here specifically because of that thoughtful design and scale. Changing the development parameters after residents have already invested their lives and resources here would be deeply disappointing and detrimental to the character of the neighborhood.

Please protect the integrity of the approved plan and the residents who trusted it by voting NO on any request to increase building height or density for the Vistera development.

Thank you for your time and for your continued service to the residents of Venice.

Sincerely,
Janet Weitzner
Vistera Resident

North Venice, FL

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Kathleen Waton](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote NO on Vistera Increased Density and Heights Proposal!!
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 5:22:15 AM

This Message Is From an External Sender

This message came from outside your organization.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPad](#)

From: maidaatkins2103@gmail.com
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote no on Visteria
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 8:22:36 AM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Please continue to vote no to the proposed increases in height and density to Neal's Visteria project. Hold the line on rampant growth and disregard to the interest of the neighborhoods it's impacting.

Maida Atkins

From: [Sarah Wilson](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] VOTE NO to increase in Vistera Height
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 9:35:59 AM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

*Dear Venice Planning Committee,
I write to you from a hospital bed, this is so important to my husband and I.
You made the right choice TWICE before to not increase the height of the Vistera
development. Thank you for not giving in to the developer proposals that are
incompatible with our community and are not in the best interest of the residents.
Sincerely,
William & Sarah Wilson
305 Montelluna Drive
North Venice, Fl*

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Karl Gericke](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Board and Council Messages](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No to Neal on March 10
Date: Friday, March 6, 2026 11:41:41 AM

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

I do not agree with Pat Neals request for Visteria as it is NOT compatible to the surrounding area.

Thank you

Karl Gericke