

From: [Richard Albright](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Sawgrass PUD
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2023 5:51:29 PM

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We have learned the second and final reading and vote on the "Sawgrass PUD" is not on the Council Meeting Schedule for November 28, 2023, and will be postponed again. This issue has arisen due to an error made by the city when this community was annexed over twenty (20) years ago. We were informed, by the planning commission, about the error about four years ago and were told it was an administrative error that would be quickly resolved by a vote of the city council. Shortly after that, Covid-19 came along and everything was postponed again.

On March 16, 2023, Roger Clark, Planning and Zoning Director, met with Sawgrass residents, at our clubhouse, and explained the issue and told us that we would be rezoned exactly as we are. The issue was to be brought to the attention of the city council immediately. There was no problem until the golf course was sold and the new owners believe that they have the right to develop the open space in our community as they see fit. Redeveloping the open space to add more housing will lead to increased traffic issues, additional water and sewer demands and increased schooling needs for our community and the surrounding area. In addition it will do irreparable harm to our community and its property values.

My wife and I have been Sawgrass Residents since January 2013, What attracted us to this community were its single family homes and open spaces. In addition to the lot price of \$77,000, we paid a premium of \$97,000 for a lot with a golf, water and preserve view. We like Venice, our community and life as it is. We implore you to decide that the rights of your resident citizens has value. We ask that you do the right thing, stop these delaying actions, and move the Sawgrass PUD zoning application forward for a final vote.

Vote "YES" for the Sawgrass PUD!!

Respectfully,

Carol A. and Richard G. Albright
494 Sawgrass Bridge Road
Venice, FL 34292

From: [Jeffrey Bachand](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: board@sawgrassvenice.org; ralongo46@gmail.com; [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Sawgrass PUD Rezoning
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2023 10:10:08 AM

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Council Members,

My wife and I fully support the views of Mr. Dick Longo expressed in his recent letter requesting that the Council vote "Yes" on November 28 for the Sawgrass PUD zoning application.

When my wife and I purchased our lot (#261) from Neal Communities, we paid a \$65,000 premium due to the golf course view of hole number 4. This hole is between our lot and North Auburn Road. The brochure from Neal highlights that Sawgrass is "Home to 54 acres of lakes and natural preserves, Sawgrass homesites are strategically positioned for residents to enjoy the surrounding beauty of the area as well as golf course views." The brochure contains a map indicating that the boundary of the Sawgrass PUD runs along North Auburn Road, encompassing the golf course. We were told by the Neal representative, that while the golf course was not owned by the community, it was part of the open space and could not be used for any purpose other than recreational open space. While I recognize that the City is not responsible for how Neal represented (or misrepresented) the property, I point to these facts to support the belief that to not pass the rezoning application would represent a gross failure by the board by not supporting the open space requirement for land development.

We agree with Mr. Longo that failure to pass the rezoning application will expose the City to a lawsuit. My wife and I would be willing to contribute financially to such a suit as well as to lawsuits against Neal Communities should the property ever be developed by the golf course owner.

Respectfully,

Jeffrey Bachand
530 Sawgrass Bridge Rd.
Phone number 518-232-8568
Sent from my iPad

From: [DENNIS SUZANNE BUNDAY](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Sawgrass PUD approval
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 9:19:02 AM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from dennisnsue93@msn.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Venice City Council members,

We reside in the Sawgrass development and are extremely dismayed and disappointed to learn that the second reading and approval of the long-awaited Sawgrass Planned Unit Development vote may not occur at the November 28th meeting of the City Council.

Approval of this PUD is exceptionally important to us and the other homeowners in Sawgrass for the various reasons that have been previously presented to the council, including home values and quality of life, which is the reason we call Venice our home. We are not asking for anything more than completing the process that would and should have been implemented 20 years ago except for a city error and to maintain the open space requirements that Sawgrass was founded on.

We implore you in the strongest way possible to conduct the second reading and vote in the affirmative to approve the Sawgrass PUD as intended 20 years ago and currently submitted at this November 28, 2023 meeting of the Venice City council. The time for delay is long past.

Thank you,

Dennis and Suzanne Bunday
700 Egret Walk Lane
Venice Fl.

From: [Ronald Cairo](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Sawgrass PUD Vote
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2023 10:08:05 AM

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My name is Ron Cairo and my wife and I have been a resident of Sawgrass for over 20 years. Originally the City Council was scheduled to vote on the second reading to approve the Sawgrass PUD at the November 28th meeting, but we are now hearing rumors that the members will be voting in private on Monday, November 27th to remove this item from your agenda. Keep in mind that Sawgrass has 567 homeowners who are expecting this item to remain on the agenda, and if it is removed they are not going to be silent on the matter. This "house keeping" vote was brought up to correct prior errors by the city. We do not expect the city to cave into the attorney who is representing the golf course. Remember also that hopefully the Gondolier will be closely monitoring the outcome of your meeting on Monday, and will most likely be asking for an explanation if the vote is removed from the agenda.

From: [Susan Cairo](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Sawgrass PUD issue
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2023 7:34:01 AM

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One more thing because I don't want Coral group coming after me because of my comment about the damage they have done our community roads and trees. We have submitted bills to the company and are awaiting payment. Susan Cairo

On Thursday, November 23, 2023, 07:09:21 AM EST, Susan Cairo <scairo2@yahoo.com> wrote:

As residents of Sawgrass we are very disappointed that the Sawgrass Planned Unit Development (PUD) is not on the agenda on November 28th. Evidentially this is not an important issue on your part, but it is something that is keeping us up at night in the community of Sawgrass.

Imagine you have enjoyed the view of the golf course for 20 years, built your home here specifically to be able to calmly see both the golf course and the preserve every morning. Imagine the big, bad corporate entity Coral group keeping their options open to build condos on your small piece of heaven in Sawgrass.

Imagine the City Council that you trusted for 20 years agreeing with the Corporation to delay a simple blunder that the City of Venice created 30 years ago.

We intend to live in Sawgrass and pass our home onto our children to enjoy. This is our legacy.

Do not destroy it by caving into the greedy law firm that intends to stretch their fees by delaying. Or the Corporation that is buying up all golf courses and raising the fees so high that the retiree's are unable to pay without a membership.

Coral group is not a good neighbor. They won't repair. damage when they create it on our roads. They won't replace trees in our preserve that have been oversprayed with poisonous chemicals.

This Christmas do a charitable thing by approving and voting YES. Don't let the Big Corporation or the Greedy lawyers bully you into submission. Ten years from now when you no longer can recognize our little town you might say "I should have done at least one thing to stop this," This is the one thing.

Susan Cairo, 548 Marsh Creek Road, Venice Florida

From: [Susan Cairo](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Sawgrass PUD issue
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2023 7:09:52 AM

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As residents of Sawgrass we are very disappointed that the Sawgrass Planned Unit Development (PUD) is not on the agenda on November 28th. Evidently this is not an important issue on your part, but it is something that is keeping us up at night in the community of Sawgrass.

Imagine you have enjoyed the view of the golf course for 20 years, built your home here specifically to be able to calmly see both the golf course and the preserve every morning. Imagine the big, bad corporate entity Coral group keeping their options open to build condos on your small piece of heaven in Sawgrass.

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Or the Corporation that is buying up all golf courses and raising the fees so high that the retiree's are unable to pay without a membership.

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They won't replace trees in our preserve that have been oversprayed with poisonous chemicals.

This Christmas do a charitable thing by approving and voting YES. Don't let the Big Corporation or the Greedy lawyers bully you into submission. Ten years from now when you no longer can recognize our little town you might say "I should have done at least one thing to stop this," This is the one thing.

Susan Cairo, 548 Marsh Creek Road, Venice Florida

November 25, 2023

Venice City Council Members:

I am contacting you at this time to comment regarding the Withdrawal of Sawgrass Zoning Map Amendment Petition No. 23-13RZ from the November 28, 2023 City of Venice City Council meeting agenda. My comments are probably very similar to what you have already heard from others or have realized yourselves, however I do think it is important to offer them in writing for the record on behalf of the Central Venice Coalition.

I believe it is accurate to state that by all accounts, approving the Zoning Map Amendment designating Sawgrass as a PUD is an action to correct a longstanding error and would bring the community into compliance with the City of Venice as it should have been in the first place.

At the First Reading of the Amendment at the October 24, 2023 City Council meeting, the Petition was portrayed in the staff presentation as a “housekeeping issue” that has been “a long time coming and needed to be addressed.” It was also stated that “there are no actual changes to Sawgrass. Everything stays exactly the same.”

When a question was asked whether GF-Waterford, LLC, owners of the Sawgrass Golf Course, had an option to develop their land into something other than a golf course, City of Venice staff and City Attorney responded that the golf course was considered part of the Open Space within Sawgrass and as such, no development was possible as per City of Venice regulations. The golf course would continue to be Open Space once the Amendment was approved.

Based on the supportive staff report and assurances the current Open Spaces such as the ponds, wetlands and golf course would remain as is, it was no surprise that the City Council voted to approve the Zoning Amendment at the First Reading and agreed to include the Final Reading on the November 28, 2023 City Council Meeting Agenda.

At that point, everything seemed to be on track for approval of the Amendment at the Final Reading at the November 28, 2023 City Council Meeting. So, what happened? What happened between the First Reading Approval on October 24 and the time the Item was withdrawn? What caused the City of Venice, applicant in this case, to withdraw the item from the agenda? Why was the Item withdrawn and not postponed? Will Sawgrass now stay the same with a County Zoning designation? These and more are very legitimate questions and probably have very legitimate answers. However, instead of providing the general community with information surrounding the withdrawal decision, no information was listed on the meeting agenda except for *WITHDRAWN BY APPLICANT*.

This lack of information has left a void regarding the reasons for the Withdrawal that has been filled with rumors and unsubstantiated facts. People, especially those living in the Sawgrass Community, deserve to know the details of the decisions being made about this topic. To that end, I respectfully request that City Council leave Item 23-6322, Ordinance 2023-14: Sawgrass Zoning Map Amendment on the November 28, 2023 City Council meeting agenda and use this time to inform City of Venice residents of the relevant actions taken between the First Reading Approval and the point of applicant withdrawal of this Amendment. Furthermore, I respectfully request that a new date for a Final Reading of Petition No. 23-13RZ be made to take place as soon as possible in order to correct this long-standing zoning issue.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Steve Carr

Member of the Central Venice Coalition Steering Committee

From: [Trish Conley](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Upcoming Vote on the Sawgrass PUD
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2023 1:50:25 PM

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Dear City Council Members,

I am a resident of Venice living in the Sawgrass Community. I am urging you to vote in favor of the Sawgrass PUD as originally written. The fact that this was missed years ago was obviously an oversight and needs to be corrected with your favorable vote.

Thank you, and Happy Thanksgiving.

Trish Conley
597 Mossy Creek Drive
Venice, FL

From: [Julie](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: SAWGRASS
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2023 11:48:46 AM

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Dear Venice City Council

Please don't allow yet another developer to destroy the beauty and future of Venice and Sawgrass in particular.

Let's preserve what we have.
It is truly paradise.

To allow these 'golf course owners' to develop the land serves only to fill their bank accounts.

Respectfully,
Julie Ditmarsen
332 Otter Creek Drive
Sawgrass resident since 2017

Sent from my iPhone

From: [david emmons](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Your Role as Our Elected Representative
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2023 9:48:52 PM
Attachments: [Venice City Council 2 .docx](#)

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Dear City Council Members,

As a concerned voter from Venice and a resident of the Sawgrass community, I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the upcoming decision on the Sawgrass PUD. This issue holds significant importance for me and my fellow residents.

Enclosed is my letter, detailing our collective perspective and the legal foundations that underpin our stance. Your decision in this matter will not only impact our daily lives but also shape the future of our neighborhood. We trust you will consider our voices with the gravity they deserve.

Thank you for your commitment to serving our community.

Sincerely,

David Emmons

313 Marsh Creek Rd, Venice, FL 34292

Feel free to call
David Emmons
Cell- 802-236-2566

From: [david emmons](mailto:david.emmons)
To: kfernandez@floridagovlaw.com; [Edward Lavalley](#); [Roger Clark](#); [Kelly Michaels](#); [Joan Farrell](#); [Rachel Frank](#); [Rick Howard](#); [Ronald Smith](#); [Helen Moore](#); [City Council](#); [James Clinch](#)
Cc: [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Important: Sawgrass Community's Position on the Upcoming Zoning Decision
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2023 3:07:04 PM
Attachments: [Venice JAO .docx](#)

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Dear Members of the City Council,

As a resident of the Sawgrass community, I join over 500 of my neighbors in expressing our deep concern regarding the impending decision scheduled for November 28, 2023. **We have compiled and attached a detailed letter, which presents our collective stance on this critical matter.**

Additionally, the document references pertinent Florida case law, underscoring the importance of responsible and community-focused decision making in matters of zoning and urban development.

It is with this understanding that we urge you to consider the perspectives and voices of our community, as detailed in the letter, before making a final decision; not just doing what is right, but courageously fulfilling your legal obligation to protect the interests of those you serve.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to your careful review of our letter and to a decision that respects the integrity and future of the Sawgrass community.

Sincerely,

David Emmons

313 Marsh Creek Rd, Venice Florida
Concerned Resident, Sawgrass Community

From: [janet emmons](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Action Required: Sawgrass Community's Fate in Your Hands
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2023 9:51:10 PM

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Dear City Council Members,

As a concerned voter from Venice and a resident of the Sawgrass community, I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the upcoming decision on the Sawgrass PUD. This issue holds significant importance for me and my fellow residents.

Enclosed is my letter, detailing our collective perspective and the legal foundations that underpin our stance. Your decision in this matter will not only impact our daily lives but also shape the future of our neighborhood. We trust you will consider our voices with the gravity they deserve.

Thank you for your commitment to serving our community.

Sincerely,

David Emmons

313 Marsh Creek Rd, Venice, FL 34292

Feel free to call
David Emmons
Cell- 802-236-2566

From: [Richard Fink](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Vote on Sawgrass PUD
Date: Friday, November 24, 2023 1:09:14 PM

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Dear City Council members,

My wife and I have lived in the Sawgrass Community for 17 years. We believe it to be one of the premier gated Communities in the City of Venice. Now we are hearing that the City Council may not vote at the November 28 meeting to approve Sawgrass as a PUD as originally submitted when Sawgrass was started. As you know there was a clerical error by the City over 20 years ago. This was an error brought to the attention of the City 5 years ago but was never resolved.

Delaying the vote could have a negative impact to homeowners not only in selling their home but also causing depreciation in the value of their property. This should have been taken care of by the City years ago. The City is responsible.

We ask that you perform your fiduciary duty to vote YES to approve Sawgrass as a PUD which it has been since inception but never properly recorded by the City.

Thank you,

Richard and Barbara Fink
448 Arborview Lane, Venice, FL 34292

From: [Rick Frost](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Request to approve Sawgrass PUD
Date: Friday, November 24, 2023 12:07:28 PM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from richarddfrost@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Council Members,

I was alarmed to learn that the Council may not vote on the Sawgrass PUD at the Nov. 28th meeting. I respectfully request that you vote to approve the PUD, as it is in the best interests of the City of Venice and its citizens.

It would be unconscionable for the Council to consider permanently devaluing the homes of the more than 1,000 Sawgrass homeowners in order to reward an outside business trying to make a quick profit on a baseless claim. Further, eliminating the 50% open space requirement for developments with golf courses would be disastrous for all of Venice.

The golf course owners may be threatening litigation, which can be intimidating. Please consider who you think will be a more determined litigant – an outside business hoping to seize a quick profit with nothing to lose, or thousands of Venice residents fighting for their very homes. Better to consider the merits of each side, the precedent you'd be setting, and who the Council represents.

Please vote to approve the Sawgrass PUD on Nov. 28th. It is more than 20 years past due.

Respectfully,

Richard Frost
476 Arborview Lane
Venice

From: [Mike Herlihy](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Sawgrass PUD
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2023 10:35:02 AM

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I am writing to you to request that you vote to approve the Sawgrass PUD without any further delays. I am a homeowner in Sawgrass at 669 Misty Pine Drive and do not want to see the value of my home diminished due to an error many years ago.

Please vote to approve.

Thank you.

From: [Paul LaBarre](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Sawgrass PUD 2nd Reading
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2023 11:27:15 AM

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I'm writing as a resident of Venice, more specifically in the Sawgrass development. My understanding from Mr Clark at our community meeting last spring, this was an issue that should have been addressed 20+ years ago and yet it hasn't. I was encouraged that it would be after the 1st reading & vote, then only to recently read (in yesterday's edition of the Venice Gondolier), that the 2nd reading/vote has been pulled. Any development on the Sawgrass course would ruin our neighborhood, destroy property values etc. I'm so angered that the "developers" around here get what seems as carte blanc to do as they wish, w/o regard for existing citizens. Two new council members were voted in because of this & I hope they have some influence to get the reading reinstated ! Please reconsider your recent decision & do what's right for this community by voting to approve the PUD & put this issue to bed. Thanks for hearing me out....
Paul LaBarre
724 Egret Walk Lane
Venice, FL

From: joyce2104@verizon.net
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Sawgrass PUD
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2023 1:00:26 PM

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Venice City Council Members,

Please support the Sawgrass PUD with your "YES" vote. This is long overdue.

We are truly confused by the fact that you are delaying this yes vote. It is our hope that we do not have a corrupt Venice City Council and Planning Department.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Dr. Will & Joyce Lyons

From: [Joanne Marcario](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Bob](#); [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Urgent! Approval of Sawgrass PUD
Date: Friday, November 24, 2023 7:25:24 PM

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Hello: My husband Frank and I purchased a lot in the Sawgrass community in 2012; building commenced the following year and we moved from New York as full-time residents to Venice in June 2014. We love the Venice community and are very happy with this decision. We have voted in every city council election since moving here and welcome the newest city council members.

We also love the Sawgrass community. It is well situated close to the island, beach and Rte 75. When we attended a meeting re: the Sawgrass PUD over the Summer facilitated by then City Council member Dick Longo, we were assured (and re-assured) that the Sawgrass PUD was a mere formality; a "house-cleaning" detail that had been ignored over the years. When brought to the Council's attention 4 years ago it was not acted on in a timely manner.

Now we are faced with an outside developer claiming "rights" to the 50% open spaces that were guaranteed when Sawgrass was developed over 20 years ago. **PLEASE** do not delay in approving the Sawgrass PUD, as it could very well affect the ambience of our beautiful community as well as home resale value and prices.

We are confident that the Venice City Council will listen to its residents and quickly approve the Sawgrass PUD.

Sincerely,

Joanne and Frank Marcario
336 Otter Creek Drive
Venice, 34292

--

Best Regards,

Joanne

From: [GARY MEHL](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Sawgrass PUD
Date: Friday, November 24, 2023 9:07:40 AM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from lumehl53@msn.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Venice City Council Members

As residents of Sawgrass my wife and I are deeply upset that you have not approved the PUD for our community. This was the responsibility of the Venice City Council to have been done years ago.

We spent a lifetime of saving for our retirement home in Florida. Now, we stand to lose substantial value because the golf course wants the ability to develop in the spaces adjacent to our homes. Venice is being overrun by large new developments. Do we need to allow a greedy developer to shoehorn in more building into an existing beautiful development?

Please consider what it would mean to you and your families if you lived here in Sawgrass. Please vote to ratify the PUD for Sawgrass as soon as possible so that we can put this concern (that is hanging over our heads) to rest.

Gary and Luann Mehl
480 Arborview Lane
Sawgrass

November 26, 2023

Via email to: The Honorable Members of the Venice City Council,

Subject: Urgent Appeal to Reconsider the Withdrawal of the Rezoning Application for Sawgrass Community

As a concerned resident of the Sawgrass community and an active registered voter in the city of Venice, I am addressing the recent developments regarding the withdrawal of the rezoning application for our community. This letter serves to express not only my concerns but also those of many fellow residents whose interests and rights are directly impacted by this decision.

As you are aware, the City, as the applicant, holds the right to withdraw the application. However, this decision has profound implications, not just for the Sawgrass community, but also for the integrity and transparency of the city's governance.

The Sawgrass community, while recognized as an "affected party," acknowledges its limitations in directly influencing the withdrawal or modification of the application. Nevertheless, it is incumbent upon me to highlight the broader legal and ethical ramifications of this withdrawal, which appear to be influenced by factors external to the merits of the case.

Two decades have passed since the city annexed the Sawgrass community, heralding a promise of a brighter future under its stewardship. Yet, this promise remains unfulfilled due to a significant oversight in rezoning. This oversight, initially identified five years ago, has yet to be rectified, casting a shadow of uncertainty and vulnerability over our citizens. This situation, if left unaddressed, edges dangerously close to what can be perceived as maladministration, the failure of the city to discharge its duties efficiently and effectively.

Considering these circumstances, I appeal to the City Council to exercise its authority and prerogative in this matter. The Council, as the elected representative body of the citizens, has the power to reject the recent withdrawal request and to proceed with a fair and transparent evaluation of the original application and vote on this matter on November 28th, as originally scheduled.

It is imperative to understand that this situation transcends the immediate legalities of zoning laws. It touches upon the foundational principles of governance, including accountability, transparency, and the equitable representation of all citizens' interests. Voting on November 28th and approving the application, as initially filed, would not only serve the immediate interests of the Sawgrass community but also reinforce public trust in the Council's commitment to fair governance. Failure to do is a potential violation of the trust and expectations our community has in your stewardship.

It also becomes a question of upholding the legally protected interests of 563 families. Their peace of mind, their sense of security in their investments and homes, rests upon your decision.

To disregard this responsibility could be construed as a form of maladministration, an abdication of the city's legal and moral obligations to its citizens.

As representatives of the people, the Council has a moral and legal obligation to ensure that decisions, especially those with far-reaching impacts, are made based on merit and without undue influence. The decision to proceed with the application and vote to affirm it will confirm the Council's dedication to these principles.

In conclusion, I urge the Council to carefully consider the implications of allowing the withdrawal to stand unchallenged. I respectfully request that the Council take immediate action to reject the withdrawal and vote on November 28th to process the application in a manner that upholds the best interests of the entire community, thereby reinforcing the integrity of our city's governance.

As you stand at this legal and ethical crossroads, remember that your choice will indelibly impact the Sawgrass community and the broader governance of our city. One path is fraught with uncertainty and the shadows of potential legal repercussions – a path that may be interpreted as a continuation of past errors and an embodiment of maladministration. The other path leads to stability, assurance, and the upholding of your fiduciary duties to our community. In the spirit of judicial prudence, I strongly urge you to choose the path of rectitude.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. I trust that the Council will act in the best interests of all parties involved and in the spirit of justice and fair governance.

One Final Thought:

In your hands lies not just the ink of a pen, but the weight of an oath, a solemn vow to serve with integrity and uphold the law. As you deliberate and subsequently vote on the Sawgrass PUD November 28th, let courage be your compass and responsibility your guide. Remember, the legacy of your tenure is defined not by the ease of your decisions, but by the courage and responsibility with which you make them. Let your choice resonate with the integrity of your office, echoing a steadfast dedication to justice and the welfare of our community.

Respectfully,

Joseph Occhino
317 Marsh Creek Rd, Venice, Florida
Sawgrass Community
Florida Resident and Active Voter

The cases listed below represent significant Florida legal precedents where courts have favored decisions upholding community welfare and public interest:

Sarasota Citizens for Responsible Government v. City of Sarasota, 48 So. 3d 755 (Fla. 2010): In this case, the Florida Supreme Court addressed issues related to local government and public referendums. The court emphasized the duty of elected officials to respect and implement the will of the voters, highlighting the democratic principle of accountability to the electorate.

Martin County Conservation Alliance v. Martin County, 73 So. 3d 856 (Fla. 1st DCA 2011): This case involved a challenge to comprehensive plan amendments adopted by a county. The Florida First District Court of Appeal emphasized the importance of local governments adhering to state growth management laws, reflecting the necessity of balancing development with environmental and community welfare.

Concerned Citizens of Tarpon Springs, Inc. v. City of Tarpon Springs, 919 So. 2d 612 (Fla. 2d DCA 2006): This case addressed the approval of a large-scale development by the city. The Florida Second District Court of Appeal highlighted the need for local government decisions to be consistent with the city's comprehensive plan, underscoring the importance of transparency and adherence to established planning principles.

Hollywood, Inc. v. Broward County, 431 So. 2d 606 (Fla. 4th DCA 1983): In this case, the issue was the rezoning of land for development. The Florida Fourth District Court of Appeal discussed the responsibility of county officials to make zoning decisions that are not arbitrary and are in the best interest of the public, emphasizing the need for rational and fair land-use decisions.

1000 Friends of Florida, Inc. v. Palm Beach County, 820 So. 2d 187 (Fla. 4th DCA 2002): This case focused on the county's approval of amendments to its comprehensive plan. The Florida Fourth District Court of Appeal stressed the importance of local government decisions being consistent with the principles of sustainable development and public interest, particularly in the context of urban sprawl and environmental protection.

D.R. Horton, Inc. v. Peyton, 959 So. 2d 390 (Fla. 1st DCA 2007): In this case, the issue was the denial of a development permit by the city. The Florida First District Court of Appeal examined the obligations of city officials to base their decisions on appropriate standards and criteria, underlining the principle that land-use decisions must be made fairly and in accordance with established policies.

City of Miami v. St. John's Baptist Church, 998 So. 2d 1136 (Fla. 3d DCA 2008): In this case, the issue was the rezoning of church property. The Florida Third District Court of Appeal emphasized the need for local government officials to make decisions that align with the community's best interests and comply with legal standards, highlighting the balance between administrative discretion and public interest.

Board of County Commissioners of Brevard County v. Snyder, 627 So. 2d 469 (Fla. 1993): This case dealt with the issue of zoning and the powers of a county commission. The Florida Supreme Court held that local government decisions on zoning must be consistent with the comprehensive plan and based on substantial competent evidence, emphasizing the importance of lawful and rational decision-making in zoning matters.

Machado v. Musgrove, 519 So. 2d 629 (Fla. 3d DCA 1987): This case involved a zoning dispute where the local government's decision was challenged. The Florida Third District Court of Appeal highlighted the necessity for city councils to adhere to legal standards in zoning decisions and the importance of ensuring that such decisions are not arbitrary or capricious.

DeGroot v. Sheffield, 95 So. 2d 912 (Fla. 1957): In this landmark case, the Florida Supreme Court addressed the issue of zoning and the scope of authority of municipal bodies. The court underscored the need for zoning decisions to be made in accordance with the law and in the best interest of public welfare.

Askew v. Cross Key Waterways, 372 So. 2d 913 (Fla. 1978): This case examined a conflict between local and state interests in land use planning and zoning. The Florida Supreme Court emphasized the need for local government decisions in zoning to align with broader state policies and the public's interest.

From: jocchino1@gmail.com
To: kfernandez@floridagovlaw.com; [Edward Lavalley](#); [Roger Clark](#); [Kelly Michaels](#); [Joan Farrell](#); [Rachel Frank](#); [Rick Howard](#); [Ronald Smith](#); [Helen Moore](#); [City Council](#); [James Clinch](#); [Jim Boldt](#); [Nicholas Pachota](#)
Cc: [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Sawgrass Community's Position on the Upcoming Zoning Decision
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2023 9:45:08 PM
Attachments: [VCC - Sawgrass.pdf](#)

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Dear Members of the City Council,

I'm a resident of the Sawgrass community and join over 550 of my neighbors in expressing our deep concern regarding the pending decision scheduled for November 28, 2023. Attached is a letter detailing our collective stance on this.

The document also references pertinent Florida case law, and the importance of responsible and community-focused decision making in matters of zoning and urban development.

It is with this understanding that we urge you to consider the perspectives and voices of our community, as detailed in the letter, before deciding on any action this Tuesday November 28th; not just doing what is right, but fulfilling your legal obligation to protect the interests of those you serve.

Thank you for your time and consideration in reviewing this. We look forward to your decision that respects the integrity and future of the Sawgrass community.

Sincerely,

Joseph Occhino
317 Marsh Creek Rd
Venice, Florida 34292

From: [Susan O'Guin, SPHR, SHRM-SCP](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: FW: Sawgrass PUD
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2023 4:20:23 PM

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Dear Council Members,

I was very sorry to learn that the 2nd and final reading and vote on the Sawgrass PUD may be postponed again. I very strongly encourage you to hear the final reading and vote "Yes". Most of you know that this reading and vote is necessary due to an oversight by the city 20+ years ago. It surfaced again 4 years ago and should have been resolved at that time but was once again not addressed.

The only reason there has been any controversy is because the new owners of the golf course believe they have some rights that would allow development of the open space. Are you willing to rule against the longtime Venice residents and jeopardize the value of their homes within Sawgrass, Waterford, Colusa Lakes, and multiple neighborhoods along Capri Isles?

Surely you don't want your legacy as a Council to be that you eliminated the requirement for 50% open space in all new developments or any developments with a golf course as part of their open space?

The residents in Sawgrass feel strongly that there needs to be a vote on the PUD, and it needs to be positive. If the council fails to take action to support our housing development, then we won't have any option other than filing a lawsuit. Please take the right action to support your constituents and allow us to avoid the expense, manhours and publicity associated with a lawsuit.

Don't be intimidated by a spurious claim by a capitalistic outsider. Think about who you represent and what is best for the citizens, the city, and the Council. Have the reading and vote "YES" on November 28 for the Sawgrass PUD zoning application.

Respectfully,

Rebecca O'Guin
644 Misty Pine Drive
Venice, FL 34292

From: [Jack R Oros](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: SAWGRASS PUD
Date: Friday, November 24, 2023 4:54:13 PM

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PLEASE STOP postponing the final Reading and VOTE YES. I have lived here for 23 years and we still have not corrected the error. These new owners care about no one in our community or Venice. You need to correct this error as soon as possible.

VOTE YES FOR THE SAWGRASS PUD ZONING APPLICATION.

Thank you. Jack R.Oros.

From: phylron@aol.com
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Sawgrass pud
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2023 3:02:54 PM

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Dear Council Members, Re: Sawgrass PUD

My wife and I live 6 houses down the street from the four lots that the golf course owns. When we built our house 21 years ago we looked forward to the beautiful open spaces that the developer used for its' sales pitch. At that time we thought that this was a done deal because the developer had to provide approved plans to the proper authorities to finish the build out of the community, Sawgrass. We all understand how things can get "fouled-up" because we lived it when we had to transfer the deed to the sewer system and ground water to the City of Venice. It took us six months to chase down Woodward-Taylor the developer to get the deed.

Five years ago my then neighbor built a house on a vacant lot across the street from our house. Jim Courtright ended up going to two different engineering offices to get approved plans to build his house. At that time we thought that now that the city was aware of the transfer from the county was flawed that it would be taken care of in short order. Now much surprise it was not only not taken care of, but our new neighbor golf course wants " options" for that open ground. Do you think that maybe it wants the ability to sell the ground to a builder to construct structures on it? Our concerns are valid because now you have canceled the second reading from your own staff to placate one of your members who said "it is personal real estate property" and as such some sort of compromise should be worked out.

Please alleviate our fears of ruining our property values and degrading our wonderful community by voting for the PUD.

**Phyllis and Ronald Pedersen
505 Marsh Creek Road**

From: [James Perry](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: SAWGRASS PUD ORD. NO. 2023-14
Date: Friday, November 24, 2023 4:55:17 PM

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Venice City Council Members,

As Sawgrass residents we are deeply distressed and now completely confused to learn that the proposal to update Sawgrass zoning has suddenly been scheduled for withdrawal with no explanation.

The Venice Planning Department held a public meeting on the Sawgrass property months ago, telling us that the City was greatly remiss in not having incorporated Sawgrass into its current zoning plan years ago and that this update should take place with alacrity. No party, including any representative from new golf course owners, made the slightest objection.

Months later, at the very last moment, Boone and Boone filed an objection on behalf of the new owners who seek to rip out the golf course. Now the proposed PUD is to be WITHDRAWN!?

In the quarter century of the existence of Sawgrass, NO ONE has ever suggested that a right to tear out the golf course and build additional housing existed.

Can it be that for months the City tells us of the great need to adopt a PUD and the next month the PUD totally disappears from the agenda??

As two of approximately 1,000 Sawgrass homeowners, we expect the Venice City Counsel to reject this singularly greedy and very recently invented (Boone and Boone) claim by the golf course owners and proceed to do what the City admits should have been done a decade ago, adopt the proposed Sawgrass PUD without change.

Jim and Fabienne Perry 577 Misty Pine Dr. Venice

From: [Grace Reeber](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Sawgrass
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2023 2:26:10 PM

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We recently bought our dream home in sawgrass. It backs up to the golf course. Absolutely beautiful. We lived in another part of Florida but, have always loved Venice. We paid a premium price for our home, this will be our forever home. I now find out the new owners of the golf course are considering redeveloping the course. How can this be possible? What a nightmare this would be! Building or closing this course would be terrible, not just for me but, our neighbors, community, and golf community as well. Please don't let this happen.

Sincerely,
Grace & Dan Reeber

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Patricia Ridlon](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Sawgrass PUD
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2023 2:00:51 PM

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As a 15 year resident of Sawgrass I feel the Council should definitely do the honest and fair thing in reference to our PUD.

WHY would you allow this to happen to people who have paid their taxes and supported Venice through the years. It's an oversight on the council's part and this is an opportunity for you to set it right.

Please do the right thing. Thank for your consideration. Patricia Ridlon, Venice and Sawgrass resident.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Frank Riley](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Sawgrass PUD
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 2:04:58 PM

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Members Venice City Counsel,

As a resident of Sawgrass I strongly encourage you to support and vote YES after the second and final reading of the Sawgrass PUD.

Thank you,

Frank Riley
441 Arborview Lanne
Venice, FL 34292

From: [Yahoo Mail](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Sawgrass PUD
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 2:15:32 PM

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Dear Council Members,

I am writing to you today in support of the Sawgrass PUD. It is my understanding that the second and final reading of this PUD may come as early as tomorrow. That said, whether it be tomorrow or at a future council meeting I strongly encourage you to vote YES in support of the Sawgrass PUD.

Thank you,

Patricia Riley
441 Arborview Lane
Venice, FL 34292

From: [Thomas Rued](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Sawgrass PUD
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 2:33:51 PM

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Dear council members,

I am a Florida resident living in the Sawgrass development on 304 Marsh Creek Road, Venice. I strongly urge you to stop putting off the vote on the Sawgrass PUD and vote YES to clean up this issue that should have been resolved years ago. A YES vote is in the best interest of all area homeowners, your constituents. An outside development company's request goes against the 50% open areas in developments and building over current golf courses. Please do the right thing for our community and vote YES asap.

Thank you,

Dr. Thomas Rued

From: [Tonya Sauppe](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Sawgrass PUD
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2023 6:03:04 AM

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Dear City Council Members,

I understand That you have decided not to vote on the PUD on the 29th of November. I am very disappointed and hope that you will reconsider. I strongly encourage you to hear the final reading and vote "YES". Most of you know that this is basically a housekeeping issue due to an error 20+ years ago. Please don't let a "bully" run your show. Do the right thing!

Thank you,

Tonya Sauppe
Sawgrass resident.

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From: [Ruth Siedman](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Waterford golf owners
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2023 7:03:33 PM

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You need to make the right decision and not let the Waterford golf course owners and their bully lawyers get their way.

Why should the Sawgrass residents have their community ruin because it was not zoned properly 20 plus years ago?

How can housing be built? Would it be tiny houses? Or do they shut down the Sawgrass course so they can build. How are they going to get construction vehicles to the course? Sawgrass owns the roads.

I would not believe they have no intention of building houses. I bet if you look at their other ventures, I am sure they did shady deals. Do not trust them. Again do what is right. Do not delay your decision.

As a side note...

We need to place a hold on new building permits for a couple of years. Next Venice will place restrictions on water usage.

Ruth Siedman
Sawgrass resident

From: [G&G Spargo](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Gwen Spargo](#); [G&G Spargo](#); [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Subj Sawgrass PUD
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 6:18:36 AM

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Venice City Council members:

We are writing to let you know we **strongly support** the **PROMPT APPROVAL of the Sawgrass PUD AS ORIGINALLY WRITTEN.**

It's the right thing to do. For many people. For many reasons.

We have many concerns and questions the council should consider. Below are just a few:

1. Why was the second and final reading and vote on the Sawgrass PUD withdrawn? What is going to happen next? When? Is there no transparency for residents as to what the city is doing? What else is happening that we are not aware of? Why was no explanation given to the people who live here? This type of behavior causes confusion and distress in our community – *it begets mistrust of the government leaders that we voted for.*

We plan on attending the November 28th city council meeting in the hope you will address this issue so we are informed.

2. Why is this even an issue? The failure by the city to rezone Sawgrass as a PUD after annexing it into the city has been known about for many years. Five years ago we were promised it would be fixed. Why hasn't it been? And, why should the residents of Sawgrass be plagued with detriment to our community for something that was the city's

responsibility? The fact that the Waterford golf course was sold recently should have no bearing on this situation. The city is liable to fix its own delinquency in completing the PUD as written years ago.

3. Why (by not approving the Sawgrass PUD) would the city risk setting a precedence for elimination of the 50% open space requirement that stands in Venice today? How many other developers will come in and take advantage of this loophole? Our city is already being over-ridden with developments, and not approving the Sawgrass PUD would only add to that problem. Our streets are filled with traffic jams, there are hospital bed and medical and police staff shortages, and our infrastructure is not built to handle the quickly expanding load.

4. We, like many of our neighbors, worked hard most of our lives and carefully planned our retirement. Living in Sawgrass (as it was established) and Venice was an unbelievable dream for us. We looked at many communities before selecting this one. Please don't allow the new golf course owners/greedy outsiders destroy its tranquility, beauty and property values - only to line their pockets.

Please don't delay this urgent and necessary correction. APPROVE the Sawgrass PUD AS ORIGINALLY WRITTEN promptly.

It's the right thing to do.

Thank you!

George and Gwen Spargo

Sawgrass residents

From: [Glenda Tibaldi](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Sawgrass PUD
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2023 3:23:03 PM

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As a Sawgrass resident, I am deeply distressed and now completely confused to learn that the proposal to update Sawgrass zoning has suddenly been scheduled for withdrawal with no explanation.

As a Sawgrass resident, I insist that you hear the final reading and vote 'Yes'. The issue is due to an error by the City 20 plus years ago that came to the surface 4 years ago and should have been resolved then but was ignored again. When City staff brought this to the attention of the council, it should have been dealt with quickly and decisively. But now again, an unnecessary delay gave the new golf course owners an opportunity to raise a dispute.

What happened to listening to the City's own Planning Department?

What happened to the requirement of 50% open space?

What happened to strong, decisive, responsible leadership? What happened to protecting the value of the homes within Sawgrass and rights of those citizens?

Pass the City's rezoning application without changes and without further delays.

Don't be intimidated by the golf course owner's last-minute claim. Think about who you represent. Think about the long-term repercussions of your actions for residents, for the City and for the Council.

Respectfully,
Glenda Tibaldi
Sawgrass Resident

|

From: [Tim Tierney](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Michaels](#); [Mercedes Barcia](#); [Toni Cone](#); [Amanda Hawkins-Brown](#)
Subject: Sawgrass PUD
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2023 7:08:39 AM

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Dear City Council,

I am a current resident of the Sawgrass community and want to urge you to finalize our PUD status expeditiously. The longer the delay the more uncertainty and damages the value of our homes and community.

Sincerely,

Tim Tierney
704 Sawgrass Bridge Road
Venice, FL 34292