

May 16, 2022

To: Venice City Planning Commission via email

Re: 1) Opposition to Change Residential Planned Unit Development (PUD) for developer Mr. Neal to build a regional shopping center at the corner of Laurel Road and Jacaranda Boulevard

2) Opposition to 3 pickle ball courts within the Venetian Golf and River Club

From: Anne R. and Hudson C. Smith

16-year permanent residents in VGRC, 101 Medici Court,
North Venice, FL 34275

We are in total OPPOSITION to both above referenced proposals currently being considered by the Venice City Planning Commission.

We are NOT willing to make any negotiations with Mr. Neal on Item 1. We do not need a commercial development in-between quiet neighborhoods in this area along county roads. The proposal is larger in total development than the existing commercial development now at the corner of Laurel Road and Pinebrook Road, where there exists a Publix, of less square feet than what this proposal proposes. We have plenty of grocery stores nearby, including two Publix stores each approximately 1-1/2 miles away. Mr. Neal clearly stated there would be NO commercial development on that corner as recently as his sales began at his nearby Milano development. Negotiations with Mr. Neal have suggested the possibility of a round about at our VGRC main entrance, perhaps moving our entrance or making entry/exit changes to our existing main entrance and the exit only for residents onto Laurel Road. It is Mr. Neal's intention to have no light at our entrance but add one at Laurel Road and Jacaranda Boulevard. Traffic nightmares!!

For many obvious reasons as you have clearly heard from many residents, it is I-N-S-A-N-E to "slam upon" our 18-year, established community as well as surrounding new communities which are mostly developed by Mr. Neal, to even consider this proposed commercial corner!!! There is currently a commercial strip-mall property

at the corner of Knights Trail and Laurel Road and is **still 90% vacant after approximately 10 years!!!** Really!!!! Plus, commercial property is currently being developed at the east corner of Knights Trail and Laurel Road. There seem to be PLENTY OF COMMERCIAL FACILITIES available to VGRC and other new community residents, nearby!

Mr. Neal currently has TEN developments on-going as is shown in the Sarasota Herald Tribune most weeks, advertising all housing developments in our area. He needs to be responsible enough to guarantee more open space and wetlands in all, rather than stuffing more in his pockets!!!!

Regarding **Item 2**, we are in total OPPOSITION of our community building three pickle ball courts which would also eliminate an existing River Club parking lot. We are currently budgeting costly upgrades to our outdoor spaces and function around our tiki bar area. We are currently experiencing very difficult operations at our River Club, consistent with the results of pandemic and employee availability. Residents are not supporting our River Club dining opportunities and until, and when, "the world environment" corrects itself, **it would be unwise to budget further monies for much of anything beyond what we currently are committed.** Additionally, there are plans to build a small park on Laurel Road which is planned to include pickle ball courts.

Thank you for reading our OPPOSITION to both items currently being considered by the Venice City Planning Commission.



Hudson C. Smith



Anne R. Smith

First Baptist

V E N I C E

May 23, 2022

MAY 23 '22 PM 2:17

Thomas M. Hodge
Senior Pastor

**First Baptist
Church**
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TO: VENICE MAYOR RON FEINSOD
VENICE CITY COUNCIL

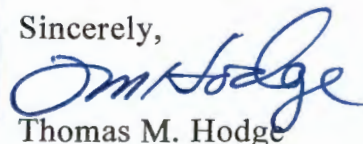
RE: DOWNTOWN VENICE AREA BUILDING HEIGHT

This letter is to request the Venice City Council Members to keep the downtown Venice building height regulations as it has been for the last 50 years:

- First Baptist Church ("FBC") has been located in downtown Venice on Miami Ave. since 1934.
- FBC's Worship Center is taller than 35 ft.
- FBC is aware that the City has discussed changing the building height regulations for the downtown area, which would impact its property, so to remove the ability to request additional height beyond 35 ft.
- The current regulations, which have been in effect for the past 50 years have worked well for FBC and from FBC's perspective.
- Without the ability to request additional height, FBC would not have been able to build its Worship Center.
- FBC is concerned that, should it need to voluntarily address something for its building, the change in regulations would prevent it from being able to do so (or even ask to do so).
- Please keep the current regulations in place for the downtown Venice area.
- FBC is very proud to be located in downtown Venice and believes it is one of the most, if not the most, beautiful Cities in southwest Florida.
- FBC would hate to see a change to the regulations that have produced and maintained the character and sense of community that downtown Venice provides.
- FBC has been a vital partner in the growth and development of the Venice Community. Maintaining the current regulations will continue to serve the Venice Community for years to come.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Thomas M. Hodge

Senior Pastor