

From: Lori Stetler  
To: Mike Miller, Jeffery A. Moore, Chuck Newson, Rich Cautero, Miltzie Fielder, Helen Moore, Joe Neunder, Nick Pachota  
Cc: PA, My comments...Re: Correctable Flaw in Mike Miller's Rezoning Application  
Subject: Correctable Flaw in Mike Miller's Rezoning Application  
Date: Tuesday, October 27, 2020 8:41:35 AM

See email below received today. Thank you.

From: GARY GREVE <ggreve@tms.com>  
Sent: Tuesday, October 27, 2020 8:37 AM  
To: Lori Stetler <lstetler@venicegov.com>  
Subject: My comments...Fw: Correctable Flaw in Mike Miller's Rezoning Application

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Lori  
Below are the comments sent to the indicated email address on 10-9-20  
gary

From: GARY GREVE  
Sent: Friday, October 9, 2020 11:20 AM  
To: scoonesm@venicegov.com <scoonesm@venicegov.com>  
Subject: Correctable Flaw in Mike Miller's Rezoning Application

Re: Venice City Council October 13, 2020 Public Hearing

On Wednesday I emailed the below Written comments to the Mayor and each other Council member using their individual City email addresses from the City Council web page.

I have since learned if I send these comments to comment they will be distributed to the Mayor and other Council members as well as "appropriate staff" prior to the meeting. Accordingly I am now resubmitting my same remarks via comment.  
Gary Greve  
941-586-8795

From: GARY GREVE <ggreve@tms.com>  
Sent: Wednesday, October 7, 2020 4:08 PM  
To: felmond@venicegov.com <felmond@venicegov.com>, newson@venicegov.com <newson@venicegov.com>, cauterer@venicegov.com <cauterer@venicegov.com>, mfielder@venicegov.com <mfielder@venicegov.com>, hmoore@venicegov.com <hmoore@venicegov.com>, jneunder@venicegov.com <jneunder@venicegov.com>, npachota@venicegov.com <npachota@venicegov.com>, Cc: scoonesm@venicegov.com <scoonesm@venicegov.com>, miltfielder@gmail.com <miltfielder@gmail.com>  
Subject: Correctable Flaw in Mike Miller's Rezoning Application

**To: Venice Mayor Ron Felmond and City Council Members Chuck Newson, Rich Cautero, Miltzie Fielder, Helen Moore, Joe Neunder and Nick Pachota**  
As a City of Venice Resident and property owner I support the request to revise the Comprehensive Plan for 225 The Esplanade N on October 13<sup>th</sup>. Similarly, I do not object to plans to subsequently rezone to the site to Residential Multifamily at a later Public Hearing.

The Beach Mart has been on Venice Beach for almost 50 years. That said when the \$6 Million Project proposed by Mike Miller is complete, the 3-unit residential condominium would represent a far better and higher value use of this extremely small Commercial parcel. Although I am surprised the 3-unit project will extend to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the adjacent 10 story building, if the new building is built as shown, then architecturally the project would represent a major aesthetic improvement over the current Beach Mart.

**HOWEVER, there is a serious but correctable flaw in Miller's rezoning application.** The Beach Mart closed 6 months ago. The abandoned Building is already an eyesore on its way to becoming a nuisance. The building looks bad today. It will look worse tomorrow.

Unfortunately, a Rezoning decision by Council will not automatically result in development.  
The success of this project depends upon Miller finding 3 clients each willing to each pay him \$2M for a unit. That would be difficult in normal times. Given the unprecedented economic uncertainty caused by Covid, it is unclear when, if ever, Miller will have the clients, the financing, and the permits to begin this project.

Before City Council approves Miller's current rezoning application without modification, I urge you to consider the consequences for all of Venice. An unconditional rezoning approval would effectively authorize Miller to leave the abandoned Beach Mart to remain in place for years. Meanwhile, until development actually begins, rezoning will produce NO benefit to the City of Venice or any of our 24,000 residents. In fact, if the current abandoned building moves from eyesore to nuisance while development is delayed then authorizing rezoning could produce a negative value for the City.

As time passes every Venice resident or tourist who drives down Barcelona to visit the Beach or the Jetty, perhaps for a quick trip to enjoy a sunset, will pause at the Stop sign, look across at the abandoned Beach Mart building and wonder, "Why did City Council allow that?"

**Accordingly, at your October 13<sup>th</sup> meeting after approving the Comprehensive Plan change, I urge City Council to separately vote to REJECT Miller's application for rezoning UNLESS he adds a binding commitment--in the form of a bonded contract-- to demolish the building within 30 days of rezoning. The alternative, more direct approach is for City Council to demonstrate good faith by approving the proposed Comprehensive Plan Change on October 13<sup>th</sup> and then inform Miller by a related Council vote there will be no further consideration of his rezoning application until the existing building is actually demolished.**  
I urge Council to use indefinite delay to negotiate a better deal for all City residents. This is an opportunity for Council to rid the City of an ongoing eyesore and, at least until construction begins, give every resident and tourist driving down Barcelona an unobstructed view of the Gulf of Mexico.

**The obvious question: Is immediate demolition a reasonable precondition for rezoning?**  
To answer, consider first Miller's economics.  
According to the County Appraiser the value of the half acre site with an operating Beach Mart is \$545K. According to Miller his project on the rezoned property will be worth \$6Million...10 times the value of the operating Beach Mart.

Compared to the already reduced value of an abandoned Beach Mart, rezoning alone will immediately and materially increase the resale value of the property. That will benefit the Owner and Miller's company.  
But if the new project is delayed for years, what does the Council, City Residents or tourists get in return?  
I urge Council to negotiate a better deal.

Miller's economic interest is to delay spending approximately \$25,000 to raze the building as long as possible.  
The City's interest is to get this eyesore removed as soon as possible.  
The simple deal is Miller agrees to immediate demolition in return for Council approval of rezoning.

Miller gets a more valuable property and authority to move forward with his \$6Million project.  
In return, until construction begins every resident or tourist who stops at the foot of Barcelona gets a direct view of the Gulf of Mexico--not an abandoned Beach Mart with a bright red roof.

In fact, demolition of this eyesore is in Miller's interest as well. The abandoned building is unlikely to excite prospective buyers about his project. A clean site with a direct view to the Gulf of Mexico is the best possible selling point for any buyer.

Finally, it is worth noting that as soon as the property is rezoned it would be unlawful for the Beach Mart to reopen. According to Ordinance 86-82(c), commercial activity is not permitted in a Residential Multifamily Zone. And according to Ordinance 86-82(c), any use not permitted is prohibited. Thus, upon rezoning the Beach Mart building has NO value to Miller.  
As a result, in return for Council's valuable "gift" of rezoning, it is entirely reasonable for Council to insist on a binding commitment to demolish the obsolete, abandoned Beach Mart within 30 days of City Council's final rezoning vote...or insist Miller complete demolition before a rezoning vote.

If Miller is serious about proceeding with this \$6M project, then early demolition of this eyesore in return for rezoning is in the mutual interest of Miller, the Council and all City residents.

**In closing** before the October 13<sup>th</sup> meeting, I hope each Council member has time to personally perform due diligence on Miller's rezoning proposal by driving down Barcelona and considering what every tourist and resident--including each of you--is looking at today and may be looking at for years.

To the left is Venice Beach, one of our premier tourist attractions. To the right is the 1-mile drive to the Jetty, a 2<sup>nd</sup> premier Tourist attraction. In between lies the most valuable stretch of property anywhere in Venice. Many condo buildings are worth well over \$30m each...there is over \$100m along N Esplanade alone. Another \$100M along Tarpon Center Road. Meanwhile straight ahead is a poorly maintained abandoned building.

In the past 6 months Miller has not proven himself a good steward of this important, high visibility site.

I copy this to Mike Miller and Attorney Boone hoping before the Council Meeting, they will voluntarily amend their proposal to include early demolition. Otherwise it will fall to City Council to negotiate a better deal on behalf of all 24,000 residents.

**Gary Greve** 255 The Esplanade N, Apt 1001, Venice Florida  
CC: Attorney Boone, Developer Mike Miller

To: Venice Mayor Ron Feinsod and Venice City Council Members

As President of the 60-unit Gulf Point Condominium across from 225 The Esplanade, many of our owners regret the loss of the convenience mart and the very pleasant proprietor, Sam, who served many Venice residents and tourists along the Beach for the past 10 years.

We realize change is inevitable so we have no strong objections to either the rezoning or the plan to build a 3 unit condominium on the site. The proposed plans seem nice. Although the new building is taller than we would like, when completed the new building should enhance our community. Eliminating the only commercially zoned parcel on the entire Venice beach in favor of the 3-unit complex would probably represent a material site improvement compared to the current use of the property..

**However**, we are concerned that the project as proposed anticipates it will be at least a year before the now abandoned Beach Mart is demolished. In the current environment we doubt the project will proceed as scheduled. As a result we expect to be staring at the abandoned Beach Mart for many years.

When the Market closed six months ago we were shocked when the Developer, Mike Miller, left the huge Beer, Cigarette and Lotto signs in all the windows and secured the site with Yellow Crime scene tape. It looked awful. His recent minor effort in response to pressure from our Gulf Shores neighbors is *"too little, too late"*.

Thus if Council allows the abandoned Beach Mart to remain in place indefinitely, we fear the appearance of the abandoned building will go from bad to worse, not to mention the potential for arson and vagrancy. Numerous homeless sleep on the beach at night. I fear it would not be long before the market would be broken into for sleeping or worse.

Since hundreds, possibly thousands of Venice Residents stop across from the abandoned Beach Mart each day on their way to the Beach or the Jetty, **we believe the right outcome on October 13<sup>th</sup> is for Council vote to DELAY rezoning until the Owner and Developer provide Council with a binding commitment to *demolish* the Beach Mart within 60 days of a rezoning vote.**

The property at 225 The Esplanade N is a unique and important site for all of Venice Residents and tourists. Since this proposed rezoning has been proposed in the dead of summer, during peak hurricane season just weeks before one of the most contentious national elections in history, few Venice residents are aware of either the proposal or the implications of allowing the abandoned building to sit in place for years.

As a result, I make this delay request as Gulf Point President not only on behalf of our 60 Owners but on behalf of the thousands of residents, seasonal residents and tourists who will drive by this abandoned building until or unless City Council insists it be demolished.

*Thank-you,*



Christopher F. Stratton III

President, Gulf Point Condominiums

200 The Esplanade N., Venice Florida 34285

# The Towers Owners Association, Inc.

Managed by KEYS-CALDWELL, INC. 1162 Indian Hills Blvd., Venice, FL 34293  
Telephone: (941) 408-8293 Fax: (941) 408-8664 Email: [kcweb@keys-caldwell.com](mailto:kcweb@keys-caldwell.com)

DATE: October 12, 2020

**TO: Venice Mayor Ron Feinsod and Venice City Council Members**

As President of The Towers Owners Association, Inc. at 1150 Tarpon Center Drive in Venice, we have no objection to the Proposed rezoning of 225 The Esplanade N.

Although I have not personally seen the proposed site plan, I expect the 3-unit, \$6 million condominium would represent a major improvement over the now abandoned Convenience Mart at the site.

**HOWEVER**, we do object to plans to leave the abandoned Convenience Mart in place on the site until construction begins. An abandoned building presents potential problems such as vagrancy and illicit usage of the vacant property. In the current economic environment construction could be many years away. Especially if the Developer decides they must presell one or more of the \$2M units before demolishing the now abandoned building.

Accordingly, on behalf of my 62 Owners, our neighboring Condominiums and thousands of Venice Residents who will be driving past this abandoned building for years, **I ask that on October 13<sup>th</sup> Council vote to DELAY rezoning until the Owner and Developer provide Council with a binding commitment to demolish The Beach Mart and remove the debris within 30 days of a rezoning vote.**

I note by the act of Rezoning Council will confer significant economic value on the Developer and the Owner. But every day the abandoned Convenience Mart remains in place their gain will be at the expense of everyone who drives down Barcelona on the way to enjoy a sunset at the Jetty.

Please use Council's leverage to insist upon immediate demolition and removal of the debris in exchange for rezoning.

Thank You,

Kim L. Whiteman  
President, The Towers Owners Association, Inc.  
1150 Tarpon Center Drive, Unit 707, Venice, Florida