

May 8, 2018

Honorable City Council Members and Others Present:

My name is Elaine Lawson. My husband Roger and I are Florida residents living at 1350 Lucaya Avenue, the second property in from Pinebrook Road on the north side. Given our location, this makes us perhaps the most directly affected parties, along with 5 others on our side of Lucaya and 3 on Sleepy Hollow Road, in Mr. Boone's Petition, which seeks to amend the current zoning of 1220 Pinebrook

Road to include residential.

Of course Mr. Boone's client wants, with your permission, high-density apartment rentals to squeeze the last possible dollar out of what could be 18 rental units per acre, looking down on our home within 8 feet of our patio. And somehow or other, the recent references to the 2.39 acres have been cited as 2.5 acres in recent communication from Mr. Boone to Mr. Shrum, the same communication which refers to Pinebrook Rd. as "Pinebrook Boulevard," perhaps to make the width and amenability to his proposal sound encouraging?

Quite honestly, Roger and I and others on our liaison committee, have been living under what we feel to be a "threat" for two years now. This is a completely new and extremely upsetting situation for us, and it has cast a real shadow over our lives here as retirees for the past two years. I realize this is an emotional statement, but it is the truth. Committee members email each other about the loss of sleep and the proverbial nightmares we have had preparing to come in front of both your Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission. I understand that this decision

is for you, at least in part, business as usual, but for us it is a visceral and very real emotional situation.

Yes, we bought our property knowing that the lot in back of us was for sale, but we were assured its use would be institutional or professional. We have enjoyed the luxury of living with the beautiful mature pines, palmettos, and oak trees and with the clear view over to the Genesis Nursing Home. Neither of us ever believed the lot would stay that way! However, we respect other property owners and welcome development the like of the Genesis institution, a home for the aged, or a related facility.

For over eight years now, we have seen across the 209.63 - foot span to the Genesis facility and have experienced the comings and goings of visitors and staff, as well as occasional ambulance or other attendant traffic and do not consider this an invasion of our privacy.

I quote Planning Board Chairman Timothy Gaus from his statement on Sept. 6, 1988, in saying, "housing for the aged produces less impact on roads and utilities and other types of infrastructures ... than does multifamily housing."

A nursing home does not operate on a 24/7 basis other than staffing. During visiting hours, there can be lots of parking overflow, and that winds up along Pinebrook Road, which is slated, to my understanding, to be widened within the next few years. Talk about density! Imagine what a high density apartment complex between us and Genesis would necessitate in terms of dense parking .. resident parking, visitor parking, moving vans and truck, any emergency traffic, etc.! Without a doubt, people would begin parking along Sleepy Hollow Road,

Sleepy Hollow Court, etc. Would this be fair to our Pinebrook HOA residents and properties? The proposed high-density apartment complex would loom over one of Venice's nicest long-standing family residential neighborhoods and clog our current pleasant walkability.

I have been referencing and envisioning the plan submitted originally by Mr. Boone's office, which would put some 93 + parking spaces within the 2.39 acres, many lined up along our back fence, again, only 8 feet from our pool patio! The plan would have 7 two-story apartment buildings overlooking our single-story homes on Lucaya, with all their attendant lights, noise, turnover in residential population, 24/7 comings and goings of a workforce and family population, starting of engines and the noise attendant with the locking and unlocking of vehicles, etc.

In a very real sense, Roger and I stumbled onto this plan via communication with our next-door neighbors the Rouffs, who had been given it, and who emailed it to us within perhaps a day or a bit more of the first informational meeting at City Hall concerning it! Letters supposedly warning of that first informational meeting had never reached affected parties along Lucaya or Sleepy Hollow, aside from one neighbor other than Steve and Jackie Rouff. Roger and I were the only ones representing the neighborhood in that first meeting and were like deer in the headlights, so to speak, feeling shocked to hear that indeed, it was true, and that this plan or proposal was exactly what Mr. Boone's client wanted on that 2.39 acre parcel. Early in the meeting, I distinctly heard Mr. Jim Collins say to Mr. Boone that he guessed not many affected parties really cared, given the turnout. Some of what has gone on in the past two years might truly be the snowballing of

misunderstandings and miscommunications, but there has been plenty of time for those to have been smoothed over, in my opinion.

HOA resident James Martin's email to the Planning Commission on April 3rd refers to the zoning change request as just the beginning of a LONG list of exceptions that Mr Boone's client is, he is sure, prepared to request for this property. Next will come requests for exceptions and exemptions for density and compatibility, then exemptions for setbacks and buffers, then exemptions for green space requirements. Mr. Martin feels that when you amass such a long list of exceptions, you are trying to fit a square peg into a round hole. It's just a bad fit.

Our neighbors Jackie and Steve Rouff, at 1354 Lucaya, remind us that "The Venice City Comprehensive Plan calls for the "protection of single family neighborhoods from the intrusion of incompatible uses" and for consideration of "densities and intensities of proposed uses as compared to the densities and intensities of existing uses" (Elements – Land Use, Section III, Policy 8.2 E and H). and that placing multi-story rental units in the middle of a long-established single-family neighborhood would clearly present an incompatible intrusion.

The Rouffs, the Martins, and all of us⁴ in the Pinebrook South HOA have the Planning Commission to thank for unanimously refusing to endorse this petition at the April meeting.

Jackie and Steve Rouff cite Mark Twain, who noted, "There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics," and point out that it may be possible to mathematically manipulate the figures to give the appearance that a change to greater density is justified. However, these manipulations do not reflect the reality of the situation. The simple reality is that the change in density requested in the

Petition is too abrupt a transition to constitute responsible zoning. In addition, it will most certainly decrease the property value of existing homes in Pinebrook South.”

The proposal as we know it is, frankly, an affront to the lives of the mainly older, retired population of the long-established Pinebrook HOA. It is an attempt to squeeze the last possible dollar out of a property which was never suited to or intended for such high-density. It is simply incompatible, and I request that, as was the recommendation of your own Planning Council, you deny Petition Number 16-04RZ. Please help the Pinebrook South HOA protect the integrity of our beautiful neighborhood. Thank you so much for hearing me and considering my concerns.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine F. Lawson

1350 Lucaya Avenue

Venice, FL 34285