

From: [Karen Wilson](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [City Council](#); rcautero@gmail.com; ebooker@fukblaw.com; [Bruce Fiedler](#); [Rick McCafferty](#); thebraccos@gmail.com; denisepayton@venetianriverclub.com
Subject: Venetian Golf & River Club Pickleball & Dog Park
Date: Wednesday, February 3, 2021 9:15:07 PM

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This morning I sent an email to the Planning Commission about their decision to vote against the plan to create these amenities in our community and my concern about their decision. In brief, it concerned overreach of their mission.

After careful reflection, there is another more serious issue that needs to be addressed.

The chairman of the commission, Mr. Barry Snyder, committed an egregious ethical breach when he publicly stated during the meeting, and I quote, "There is no need for more amenities in The Venetian." He was clearly speaking as a resident who did not want pickleball courts or a dog park in his community. He was clearly no longer representing the mission of the Planning Commission when he made that statement.

Sincerely, Karen Wilson
karenwils@gmail.com

From: [Karen Wilson](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Venice Planning Commission
Date: Wednesday, February 3, 2021 6:26:00 AM

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My name is Karen Wilson and I am a resident of The Venetian Golf & River Club. I am appalled that the members of your unelected body saw fit to override the legal vote of the VCDD. The elected members of the CDD approved the plan for Pickleball and a dog park as the representatives of our community. Their vote of 4 to 1 in favor of the plan clearly reflects the desire of the majority of the residents of the community. It is clear that you have overstepped your reach which certainly happened when an appointed body feels no need to respond to the wishes of the majority.

Sincerely, Karen Wilson
karenwils@gmail.com

From: [Kelly Root](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: FW: Votes against pickleball courts at VG&RC
Date: Thursday, February 4, 2021 4:03:03 PM

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Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: [Kelly Root](#)
Sent: Thursday, February 4, 2021 3:58 PM
To: citycouncil@venicegov.com
Cc: planningcommission@venicegov.com
Subject: Votes against pickleball courts at VG&RC

Venice City Council –

I am a resident of the Venetian Golf and River Club (VG&RC) and attended the Planning Commission meeting Tuesday via Zoom for the approval of installing pickleball courts and a dog park at the VG&RC. Several members of our community have worked for over a year researching and getting permits so that the dog park and pickleball courts could be placed on the Florida Power and Light utility easement. To my extreme disappointment and astonishment, the Planning Commission took it upon themselves to vote against it. They ignored all the work that the CDD has done based on hearing a 2-hour session of complaints by several people that presented untruths, both about the noise level and safety issue associated with the location. The Planning Commission decided to believe what they heard and ignore all the work done by the government body (CDD) that was presented by the engineer. How can 6-7 people override several hundreds that want the pickleball courts and dog park installation to proceed in their community?

I am an avid pickleball player as are others in our community. A development our size (1377 units) is very much in need of this amenity. I have traveled to many of the newer communities (most much smaller than ours) and almost all of them have four or more pickleball courts. And the older communities are either adding pickleball courts or converting tennis courts to pickleball courts and/or making tennis courts dual purpose. The tennis courts at the VG&RC are clay and therefore are not able to be used as dual purpose for tennis and pickleball. Realtors have expressed the need for the VG&RC to add pickleball courts in order to stay competitive with other communities. This is the fastest growing sport in the U.S.

The only dedicated outdoor pickleball courts in Venice are located at Foxworthy Park, which has six courts, no permanent restrooms, and no lights. This is a 14-mile drive round trip from VG&RC. In season, like now, the waiting times to play are very long, sometimes 20 people waiting at a time. As an alternative, I drive 25 miles round trip to play with a friend in Islandwalk in the West Villages,

which by comparison has 12 courts. These new communities are what we're competing with for house sales. If we are not staying current, we will not attract prospective buyers and our house values will reflect that. Here is an excerpt from an Islandwalk pickleball newsletter. ... "Welcome to the IslandWalk Pickleball website! Pickleball was introduced to our community in 2014 with about twenty players and only four courts. We have since grown to over 400 players, twelve courts and formed the Pickleball Activities Group (PAG) which leads, plans & organizes the various activities held annually. "

Englewood, a town much smaller than Venice, has 12 dedicated outdoor pickleball courts. Some have expressed concern over the planned location for pickleball courts in the VG&RC having no restrooms. This is a non-issue. While there is now a port-o-potty at Foxworthy, there wasn't one until recently, and they removed it during the off-season. We all played an entire summer and fall without one. If worst comes to worst, we can hop in our cars or golf carts, or bike or walk home to use the restroom.

Sarasota County has leagues for communities in Sarasota county to compete with one another in pickleball. Because our community doesn't have any pickleball courts, VG&RC residents cannot be part of the league offered by our county.

I strongly urge the Venice City Counsel to move forward with the approval process for installing the pickleball courts and the dog park in the VG&RC. This is what hundreds of residents in our community want and what was being planned up until the Planning Commission voted against it.

Thank you,
Kelly Root
484-574-9682

From: [Michael Seaman](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: Pickleball
Date: Thursday, February 4, 2021 10:03:25 AM

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Dear Venice City Council,

My wife and I recently purchased a home at the Venetian Golf and River Club. The deciding factor (we love Venice & this area) was that they were planning to build pickleball courts. I am so disappointed that the Planning Council turned it down this week. Yes, I was one of the residents who spoke virtually at their meeting and dispelled some of the falsehoods that were told by the “opposers”.

Two of my concerns were that the opposition leaders said large wooden paddles made too much noise. This was true in the past, but virtually nobody uses these paddles anymore. They have been replaced with composite paddles that are lighter and less noisy. Secondly, the opposers made you believe that there would certainly be death to players underneath the electric wires. This is simply not true. The Florida Power and Light Company does a great job making the wires safe under almost all situations. The one exception might be during a hurricane, but I don't see people playing pickleball at that time!

This location is certainly not ideal, but the pickleball committee did a great job in covering all the bases and keeping the sound down to a minimum. The noise barriers on the fence and the landscape design would be a great way to keep the noise down to a livable level.

Yes, the folks living close to the court might hear a bit of extra noise if they are outside. This has to be weighed against the hundreds of players who would benefit from the courts.

There will be opposition to the courts no matter where they are put, so this isolated area certainly seems like the best place to put them.

I hope that your group will allow for either an appeal or will put it up to a vote yourselves. I personally started a pickleball organization in my small town in SW Ohio. We grew from a handful of players to over 225 in just a few years. The benefits of exercise and friendship are unlimited! (There was initial opposition to our courts, but they worked out wonderfully for the neighborhood.)

Thanks for listening to me. Let me know if there is anything that can be done to right this wrong.

Sincerely,

Michael Seaman

282 Mestre Place

dawgbrowns@gmail.com

937-623-5309

From: [Michael Seaman](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Pickleball
Date: Thursday, February 4, 2021 10:31:34 AM

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Dear Planning Commission,

I was one of the virtual speakers at your meeting this week, concerning pickleball. I was not able to watch the end of the meeting as I had a prior commitment. I did not get to hear the reasons for the no vote. Can you share some of them with me?

It is clear to me that the idea that someone might die under the wires was invented to add emotion to the opposition group. Unless there is a hurricane, the wires will NOT be coming down, and everyone knows this.

As for the noise, the pickleball committee did a thorough job in making sure this is kept to a minimum. The committee has included sound barriers on the fence, and the landscape design will be an effective way to make this a "win win" situation. Our pickleball courts in SW Ohio are closer to houses than those at the Venetian, and there are no problems with the neighbors.

I hope you will either reconsider the proposal or allow for an appeal process. I am surprised at the vote. My wife and I are disappointed as we bought our property here at the Venetian with the anticipation of courts being built. I was instrumental in starting our program in Vandalia, Ohio, and we now have 3 courts inside our city recreation center and 8 courts outside. I am willing to discuss this with any members of your group.

Thank you for listening.

Michael Seaman

282 Mestre Place
dawgbrowns@gmail.com
937-623-5309

From: [Sharon George](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [George Keith](#)
Subject: Venetian Golf & River Club - Pickleball and Dog Park
Date: Thursday, February 4, 2021 3:50:21 PM

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We recently moved to Venice to VG&RC last June from Wisconsin. We chose this location due to the beauty of the community and the amenities, including upcoming pickleball courts and a dog park. I am reading that the planning commission chose to override the request of our CDD to build these courts and the dog park. By doing this, our property values and market resale is being severely diminished. We urge you to reconsider this request. Six or seven people should not override the decisions of those representing 1400 households.

Regards,
Sharon George
230 Padova Way

414-526-2555

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: [Debbie Gericke](#)
To: [City Council](#); [Rich bracco](#); rick@schappachereng.com
Subject: Venice Planning Commission / Venetian Golf and River Club Pickle ball and dog park decision
Date: Thursday, February 4, 2021 9:38:18 AM

Caution: This email originated from an external source. **Be Suspicious of Attachments, Links and Requests for Login Information**

Good morning city council members,

Please at your convenience read my email below to the planning board with regard to the Venetian Golf and River Club project you will be voting on in the near future. Thank you

Morning all,

As I sat in the audience on Tuesday and listened to what was said I felt strongly that you either missed the amount of research which has gone into this project or voted based on your emotions in lieu of logic.

This has been a three year project. Time, money and many many meetings with the community to determine the relevance and possibility of the project. I am a real estate broker with 31 years new home sales management working directly for Pat Neal and Bill Pulte during this time. A golf course or dining room is no longer a draw nationally. People are looking for places to gather and the both the dog park and pickle ball would allow for this.

The VGRC is a dated aged population of homeowners who many of the new members in the community fondly call the founding settlers. They originally came to the VGRC in their 60's and now in their 80's are not aware nor concerned about amenities nor property values.

We pay much higher fees than competing communities and are suffering from a real estate bell curve. Your decision on Tuesday did not help that bell curve.

The location site selected is the ONLY location viable for the suggested amenity. I believe you will receive many emails from homeowners who wish you would take another look at our extensive engineers research and current real estate master plan trends. Help the VGRC stay relevant.

Thank you

**Debbie Gericke
146 Bella Vista Terrace
Cell 850-217-5958**

From: [Jack Wilson](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Richard Bracco](#); [Rick McCafferty](#); [David Lusty](#); [Rick Schappacher](#)
Subject: Planning Commission Decision Venetian G&RC 2/02/21
Date: Thursday, February 11, 2021 1:03:02 PM

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Esteemed Council Members,

There is widespread support in the Venetian for pickleball (PB) and a dog park (DP) to be added as two more amenities in the community. Unfortunately, the Planning Commission turned PUD Amendment 20-37Rz down on the following grounds:

1. Incompatible with adjacent residents in the community. Question: On what basis? Other communities around the Venetian have PB & DP. Milano has a DP under the same power lines that we are looking at. There are no homes in close proximity and landscaping and noise abatement will deal with most of the objections voiced. This is the only property owned by the VCDD available for PB and a DP within reason and cost. Also, the VCDD, a duly elected Board of Supervisors passed, by a vote 4 out of 5, on this proposal. Keep in mind the similarities to decisions made by your council as binding after a fair hearing of all concerned residents on an issue. Would you favor a few dissenters to have the power to overrule a decision?
2. Lack of bathrooms and water. One Port-a-John would be adequate for emergencies and there is fresh water and irrigation water supply in the plan offered by the Venetian G&RC to the Planning Commission.
3. Inadequate parking. There are 12 paved parking places in our plan, plus it was explained by our engineer Mr. Rick Schappacher that the entrance road to the parking area will handle many more vehicles, if needed. Also, many folks will have golf carts or will walk to PB or the DP. After all, we are talking only about residents in the neighborhood and the ensuing convenience. Users will know enough to take care of a good pee before coming to the facility.

I find it very interesting that the reasons for denial in this letter were not the reasons given by the Planning Commission board members at the meeting. There is no requirement for bathrooms, parking was briefly discussed, but no one said that the number of spaces was inadequate, and we are extending a water line. The other reason given for denial was incompatibility with nearby residents. It was obvious from their comments that the members that voted against this only said that the location was not a good one, and I don't recall them citing anything about incompatibility. They only seemed to agree that building under the power lines was their concern.

Bottom Line, a few very vocal residents who are not in favor of additional amenities in our community came forward and made many unfair and, even, untrue statements before the Planning Commission. Unfortunately, the Chairman Mr. Barry Snyder who lives in the Venetian stated that we do not need additional amenities and he was a big influence with other commission members. It is well known that Mr. Snyder was against this before it came to the Planning Commission. On that basis he should have recused himself as being biased and unable to give the issue a fair hearing. **Many voting residents would welcome the City Council to overturn a poor decision made by the Planning Commission.**

--

Jack M. Wilson
233 Montelluna Drive
North Venice, FL 34275

941-441-6500

From: [Lori Stelzer](#)
To: [Mercedes Barcia](#)
Subject: FW: Pickleball & Dog Park
Date: Friday, February 19, 2021 4:18:01 PM

Mercedes,

Please add this email to the file for city council when it gets scheduled. Thank you!

Lori Stelzer, MMC
City Clerk
City of Venice
401 W. Venice Avenue
Venice, FL 34285
941-882-7390
941-303-3486 (cell)

From: Bruce Fiedler <goflyn@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 19, 2021 2:59 PM
To: Mitzie Fiedler <MFiedler@Venicegov.com>; Lori Stelzer <LStelzer@Venicegov.com>
Subject: Fwd: Pickleball & Dog Park

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Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jack Wilson <wilsjack@gmail.com>
Date: February 11, 2021 at 1:31:43 PM EST
To: rcautero@gmai.com, Bruce Fiedler <goflyn@gmail.com>
Subject: Pickleball & Dog Park

I e mailed my thoughts on this to the City Council today. This issue is coming up soon for your review. I would like to remind you that the CDD voted 4 of 5 to pass PB and DP in our community. Your support on this issue would be much appreciated. Many of us who are in favor of adding these two amenities voted for you both. We would like your fair vote on this when it comes before the City Council.

--

Jack M. Wilson
233 Montelluna Drive
North Venice, FL 34275

941-441-6500

From: [William Saro](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Lori Stelzer](#)
Subject: Fwd: Denial of request by Venetian Golf and River Club, 20-37RZ and 20-38SP.
Date: Sunday, February 28, 2021 6:36:38 PM

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To; Venice City Council,

Fr; William and Patricia Saro

Ref; Denial of request by Venetian Golf and River Club, 20-37RZ and 20-38SP.

My name is William Saro and my wife, Patricia and I reside at 130 Medici Terrace, within the Venetian Golf and River Club. We have been full time residents for nearly 15 years and love our community and the City of Venice.

I am writing to you as the governing body of the City of Venice to express my opinion in reference to a recent ruling by the Venice Planning Commission on February 2, 2021. In their ruling, they denied a request to amend the PUD Amendment Request 20-37RZ with a vote of 5 to 2 against approval. The Planning Commission also voted on the Site and Development Plan Request 20-38SP. They denied this request by a vote of 6 to 1. In both of these instances they heard public comment both pro and con **for the two request to build 4 pickle ball courts and a dog park under the high tension electrical wires (FP&L right of way)** that traverse through the Venetian Gold and River Club property.

The Commission heard about devaluation of property values for surrounding homes and the possible increase of property values elsewhere in the community but not in the immediate area. No comment was made about

increased property values in the proposed area. Sound mitigation plans, safety concerns of being located under electrical wires in a " Right of Way " for FP&L were also discussed. There were several people who spoke on many subjects and points of view and after listening to public comment, they voted to **deny the application**.

Their findings were in line with the requirements of Section 86-23 (m); (2), (5), (9), and (10) of the City Land Development Code for the following reasons; & the proposed improvements;

a: incompatible with adjacent properties and

b: adequate supporting facilities such as parking, water, and restrooms are not provided.

We are disappointed that the VCDD has decided to not accept the Planning Commission denial. The Planning Commission has attempted to protect our properties and it is unfortunate that the VCDD is filing an appeal.

A statement was made at a recent CDD meeting on February 8th by the engineer, **MR SCHAPPACHER**, that "**he hates to loose**". It was also echoed by Mr Bracco as he commented that "**he felt that the Planning Commission did not treat their request fairly**". Three of the five members of the CDD said that they wanted to protect the Venetian and any other community in the future, from a Planning Commission review that went off the rails and ruled outside of their parameters in dealing with such request.

It's not a competition to see who wins or loses but an

effort to plan for an amenity that will serve the needs of the community while protecting people and their property values. Just because the VCDD had a pickle ball committee work on this project for two years does not mean that it should be a **SLAM DUNK** and automatically be approved to move forward. The two years of work was in preparation to go before the Planning Commission with a plan and ask for approval. Mr Schappacher did that and was turned down by an overwhelming vote of 5 to 2 denial for request 20-37RZ and 6 to 1 for request 20-38 SP which should be taken as a opportunity to go back to the drawing board and find a better solution. One that will be within the zoning rules and regulations of the City of Venice as outlined in our Land and Development Code, Section 86-23 (m), 2, 5, 9, and 10 as pointed out by the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission saw the important issues and voted correctly to deny the proposed request as it stood.

I implore the Venice City Council to uphold the decision of the Planning Commission rendered on February 2, 2021 and ask the VCDD board and committee to revise their expectations and move to place the pickle ball courts in the immediate area of the fitness complex where everyone can have access to all of the amenities we are fortunate enough to have in this beautiful community.

However, there will have to be a compromise to reduce the number of courts from 4 to 3. Mr Schappacher has presented an alternate plan which would facilitate such

an arrangement at a fraction of the cost initially proposed for the plan and site that was denied. He has detailed that the plan is doable, but the committee wanted 4 courts instead of 3. Hence, the application to change the PUD and get approval to build in a right of way.

There needs to be a compromise so that the people who wish to play pickle ball will have the same access to lighting, restrooms, Tiki Bar, restaurant, pool and fitness center and all that this central location has to offer to all of the residents of the Venetian. The community was designed in this manner 18 years ago when WCI came before the Planning Commission to start construction of the Venetian Golf and River Club.

The desires of a few should not outweigh the need to protect residents and property values in the community.

Most Respectfully

William and Patricia Saro
130 Medici Terrace
No. Venice, Fl, 34275
908-763-1777
oras18@aol.com

From: [Maryann Regal](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Lori Stelzer](#)
Subject: Pickleball courts at Venetian Golf and River Club
Date: Wednesday, March 10, 2021 7:45:28 AM

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To the Council,

I was asked to evaluate the proposed pickleball courts at the Venetian Golf and River Club from a real estate perspective.

From my professional point of view, the location under the power lines that is being considered would not be a good choice for a few reasons. But from a real estate view, it would have a big negative impact on the value of the properties that are within the immediate area. I would estimate the value would change by about 10%.

Please consider this for the current homeowners when making your decision regarding the approval of the site.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you.

Maryann G Regal, Broker Associate
Gulf Shores Realty
maryannregal@gmail.com
<http://gulfshoresrealty.com/agents/maryann-regal/>
203.330.1233 Cell
941.488.6644 Office
Licensed in FL, NY, CT

Click on this link to view 3D Showcase tour of 13817 Rinuccio St, Venice, FL
<https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=1V9qSeGxvyu>

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From: [Lori Stelzer](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Kelly Fernandez](#); [Edward Lavallee](#)
Subject: FW: Venetian River Club. Proposed Pickle ball facility
Date: Monday, March 15, 2021 3:39:22 PM

Please see email received below. Thanks.

Lori Stelzer, MMC
City Clerk
City of Venice
401 W. Venice Avenue
Venice, FL 34285
941-882-7390
941-303-3486 (cell)

-----Original Message-----

From: Lake geneva <wveselsky@charter.net>
Sent: Monday, March 15, 2021 3:31 PM
To: Lori Stelzer <LStelzer@Venicegov.com>
Cc: rmcafferty@vcdd.org; ebooker@vcdd.org; rdbacco@vcdd.org
Subject: Venetian River Club. Proposed Pickle ball facility

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Councilmen:

I live in the Venetian Golf and River Club, and it has just has come to my attention of a proposed pickle ball facility adjacent to my property at 126 South Savona. Needless to say, I am opposed to this facility.

Pickle ball courts do not belong in the backyards of residences. Do you realize the noise that comes from these facilities? Not only the battling of the balls but the noise from the individual players. These courts should be built next to neighboring club houses where the noise level is a common occurrence. Councilmen, I do not believe you would want a pickle ball court in your back yard.

I bought my house 3 years ago in September, however if I had known then I was going to have a pickle ball court in my backyard, I would have not bought it. It is as simple as that! I treasure my peace and tranquillity and am hopeful of keeping it. Gentlemen, please turn down the proposed request for a pickle ball court at this location.

Please let me know of how I can be of service to you and thank you for hearing me out.

Wayne Veselsky

Sent from my iPad