

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Chairman and Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Herbert W.A. Thiele, County Attorney 

DATE: October 23, 2018

SUBJECT: Additional Attachment for Agenda Item # 26 – Ex Parte Communications

Enclosed please find an additional attachment to Agenda Item # 26, First and Only Public Hearing to Consider an Amendment to the Southwood Development of Regional Impact Integrated Development Order.

This attachment is Attachment #4, Ex Parte Communications.

The attached documents disclose oral and written *ex parte* communications and are being included in the Agenda Item so they may be considered and reviewed by all interested parties. Should you receive additional *ex parte* communications, please continue to send same to my office so they may be placed on the record.

Enclosure

cc: Vincent S. Long, County Administrator
David McDevitt, Director, Development Support and Environmental Management

**LEON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS'
EX PARTE COMMUNICATION DISCLOSURE FORM**

(Relating to Quasi-Judicial Proceedings Pursuant Chapter 10 of the Leon County Code of Laws)

COMMISSIONER'S NAME:

Kristin Dozier

ITEM/ISSUE:

First and only public hearing to consider an amendment to the Southwood Development of Regional Impact Integrated Development Order

NAME OF PERSON, GROUP OR ENTITY WITH WHOM COMMUNICATION TOOK PLACE AND DATES OF SUCH COMMUNICATIONS:

In-person discussion with Allison Tant on August 1, 2018

SUBJECT MATTER OF COMMUNICATION:

Ms. Tant provided an overview of Independence Landing Project.

**LEON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS'
EX PARTE COMMUNICATION DISCLOSURE FORM**

(Relating to Quasi-Judicial Proceedings Pursuant Chapter 10 of the Leon County Code of Laws)

COMMISSIONER'S NAME:

Mary Ann Lindley

ITEM/ISSUE:

First and only public hearing to consider an amendment to the Southwood Development of Regional Impact Integrated Development Order

NAME OF PERSON, GROUP OR ENTITY WITH WHOM COMMUNICATION TOOK PLACE AND DATES OF SUCH COMMUNICATIONS:

Telephone discussion with Allison Tant on July 20, 2018

SUBJECT MATTER OF COMMUNICATION:

Ms. Tant said that she was told by officials for the City, which owns land in Southwood, that to proceed with the Independence Landing project, a separate DRI and PUD would be needed.

She said, "this is 20 acres across from Florida High. It's open space the City owns, and that 43 acres would be public park."

"It's a time to crunch because the Affordable Housing agency just takes applications once a year, and the next time will be March of 2019. We need control of the land and will have the money we have to raise before then. It's a \$45 million project," she continued.

"The Legislature has money for such projects, about \$10 million, and there is only one other entity trying to do what I'm Not doing, and it is in Miami. (She added something about thinking Independence Landing would have a good chance to get some or all of that \$10 million.)

"(Ours) is essentially an affordable housing project so people who can live there on their Social Security. These aren't Baker Acted or dangerous folks at all; just the sweetest kids," she said.

I essentially listened to her comments and at the time didn't know it was to be on our Oct. 23rd agenda, or on any agenda at all. She told me she anticipated it coming before us on Oct. 23.

Jessica Icerman - Re: Fwd: DRI/PUD amendment request for Independence Landing

From: Gary Zirin
To: Thiele, Herb
Date: 10/22/2018 8:59 AM
Subject: Re: Fwd: DRI/PUD amendment request for Independence Landing
Cc: Icerman, Jessica
Attachments: Zirin, Gary.vcf

Herb- Passing along the only communication Commissioner Dozier has received on the DRI/PUD for Independence Landing issue.

Gary Zirin

Aide to Leon County Commissioner Kristin Dozier, District 5

[\(850\) 606-5375](tel:(850)606-5375) - Office

[\(850\) 264-5857](tel:(850)264-5857) - Cell

ZirinG@leoncountyfl.gov



www.leoncountyfl.gov

Please note: Under Florida's Public Records laws, most written communications to or from county staff or officials regarding county business are public records available to the public and media upon request. Your email communications may therefore be subject to public disclosure.

>>> Kristin Dozier 10/22/2018 8:52 AM >>>

>>> Allison Tant <allisontant@gmail.com> 10/16/2018 8:10 PM >>>

Dear County Commissioner Dozier:

We, the board of Independence Landing, a not-for-profit corporation, ask for your support for the Southwood DRI and PUD Amendments that will come before you on October 23, 2018 as recommended by the Planning Commission on Oct 2, 2018. The purpose of these changes is to meet a significant and growing housing need for persons with disabilities.

Experts estimate that between 70-80,000 adult Floridians with varying degrees of cognitive disabilities are living at home with aging parents. Many of these adults could live successful independent lives, with a modicum of support, in the appropriate setting. These people and their families are faced with limited, unsuitable options, because they fall into a gap in the system where no residential choices are available to meet their needs. They must live with the last parent until that parent dies or is incapacitated. They are then housed with relatives, placed in a group home, or transferred to a nursing home that is better suited for medically fragile individuals or those who need 24-hour, 7 day a week care and supervision - an option that is vastly more expensive for families and society.

This generation of people with disabilities is living longer and is capable of doing more than previous generations. This is due to advances in medical care, access to the now 33 year old “early intervention” program, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the inclusion in public and private education along with widespread vocational educational training opportunities. This is also the first generation of people with disabilities who routinely outlive their parents’ ability to provide for them, creating a societal problem that must be addressed.

In recent years, parents, concerned citizens, local, state and federal government officials have come together and have begun developing residential communities that are specifically designed to serve this group. There are currently five “intentional” communities operating in Florida that provide exactly the model of housing that Independence Landing would like to replicate. These communities provide an affordable and safe residential campus with amenities for people with differing cognitive abilities that allow residents to successfully lead independent and fulfilled lives. Most residents need only a modicum of support by way of reminders, prompts, and limited supervision. Many go to work, continue their education or vocational training, or attend day treatment services with the provider of their choice off campus. All residents have the opportunity to avail themselves of community dining, and the many social and recreational activities that occur on the thriving residential campuses of these communities. Rent is paid by residents and their families along with “life enrichment fees” for social activities.

You can learn more about these communities on their websites:

The Landing at Noah's Ark in Lakeland (noahsarkflorida.org/residential-options/the-villages-at-noahs-landing/);

Jacksonville ARC Village (<https://www.arcjacksonville.org/the-village/>) ;

Loveland Village Detert Residence in Sarasota (www.lovelandcenter.org/);

Promise in Brevard (promiseinbrevard.com/);

Orlando Quest Village (www.questinc.org/qvillage.html).

The state of Florida has recognized the need for this model of housing, and specific state funding has been made available through housing grant applications for people with cognitive disabilities. The grant process is arduous and transparent, but it also provides access to federal tax credits that generate equity for the building of these communities. Further, SHIP and SAIL funds are utilized and finally, a key piece of the funding comes from private donations by individuals, businesses, and granting authorities secured by the volunteer board. At least four of the communities were built on gifted public land, either by fee title or long-term nominal cost leases. The fifth was sold land at a deeply discounted price.

It is our understanding that the City of Tallahassee owns 63 unimproved acres of land across from Florida High in Southwood, and that this land was obtained by the City for recreational purposes as a condition of the development. Further, it is our understanding that the City’s preliminary plan for a park in this area proposes to use around 40 of the 63 acres.

We are requesting your support to approve the Planning Commission’s recommended DRI and PUD amendments which would position the remaining 20 acres of this parcel to provide the opportunity for Independence Landing, Inc. to work with the City to create a residential community for people with a range of cognitive disabilities.

The project's development plan will be prepared in a collaborative manner including working with City staff, Southwood residents and representative from Florida State University High School. All CDD assessments for the 20-acre project will be paid by residents of Independence Landing to ensure there is no financial burden imposed on the residents of Southwood or tax burden placed on residents of Tallahassee.

The Independence Landing board is comprised of 16 volunteers who live and work in Tallahassee and who are dedicated to bringing the project to fruition. Board members include persons who bring special knowledge and experience to the table including:

a not-for-profit CPA, a commercial realtor, a banker, an insurance executive, an expert on developmental disability regulations, health care policy and Medicaid law; a leading educator, a corporate president and CFO, an assisted living expert, a construction company President, a land use and regulatory attorney; and a major medical association CEO. There are persons on the board who have children with disabilities and others who do not.

Independence Landing Board members have spent the past year researching this housing model, visiting the other communities in this state, meeting with officials from the Florida Housing Finance Corporation, with regulators, and land use experts as well as working with the Southwood neighborhood, the Community Development District supervisors and members of the public to bring awareness to this project, address any concerns, answer questions and take suggestions about the project. To date, the feedback has been widely positive. Approximately 135 parents have completed a needs assessment survey indicating their support of this housing option, with people from all over Florida as well as other states contacting us regularly. We have been approved for predevelopment activities by the Florida Housing Finance Corporation and have been assigned a technical advisor who recently led the board through the interview and selection process of a developer to build this community. The selected developer is Southport, which meets the rigorous eligibility of Florida Housing Finance Corporation.

Independence Landing was granted its 501(c)(3) designation in March, 2018, and subsequently raised nearly all of the requisite set-aside funding for operations that is a financial requirement for eligibility. Once land use changes occur, we will be in posture to proceed. Please see two attachments, one which is the proposed DRAFT site plan for the acreage we are discussing. And the second which is a brochure about our project we share with donors, members of the public and interested parties. All of the individuals featured in the brochure are residents of Tallahassee/ Leon County. We humbly ask for your support in approving the proposed Southwood DRI and PUD Amendments, so that we can enter into a long-term lease with the city in order to take the steps necessary for our area to be a leader in addressing this societal need. We humbly ask for your support in approving the proposed Southwood DRI and PUD Amendments, so that we can enter into a long-term lease with the city in order to take the steps necessary for our area to be a leader in addressing this societal need.

Below is a link to a 3-minute video which will further illustrate why this is so important to our community and the families who call Tallahassee home. Everyone in the video lives in our community.

<https://vimeo.com/240154670>

Thank you for your time and attention to this request.

Allison Tant Richard,
Independence Landing
www.independencelandingfl.com
allisontant@gmail.com; [850-251-6040](tel:850-251-6040)

On behalf of fellow Independence Landing board members
Brice Barnes, Scott Brewer, Virginia Dailey, Liz Dudek, Cindi Goodson, Bart Gunter, Shad Haston, Fed Ingram, Brett Ketcham, John Leace, Deborah Leonard, Toni McCoy, Terry Mendicino, Tim Stapleton, and Denise Wilson

Jessica Icerman - Fwd: DRI/PUD amendment request for Independence Landing

From: Nick Maddox
To: Thiele, Herb
Date: 10/22/2018 8:39 AM
Subject: Fwd: DRI/PUD amendment request for Independence Landing
Attachments: ind landing DRAFT v3.pdf; 4-8(2)IL Donor Brochure.pdf

>>> Allison Tant <allisontant@gmail.com> 10/16/2018 8:13 PM >>>

Dear County Commissioner Maddox

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The Independence Landing board is comprised of 16 volunteers who live and work in Tallahassee and who are dedicated to bringing the project to fruition. Board members include persons who bring special knowledge and experience to the table including: a not-for-profit CPA, a commercial realtor, a banker, an insurance executive, an expert on developmental disability regulations, health care policy and Medicaid law; a leading educator, a corporate president and CFO, an assisted living expert, a construction company President, a land use and regulatory attorney; and a major medical association CEO. There are persons on the board who have children with disabilities and others who do not.

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Independence Landing Potential Concept



1" = 100'

Note: This draft work is conceptual and prepared solely to demonstrate an idea. It is not to scale nor intended to replace final detailed design documentation and necessary permits or other approvals.



DESIGNWORKS

PLACE
435 N. Macomb St. • Tallahassee, FL 32301 • 850 891 6400

INDEPENDENCE LANDING

Who We Are

Independence Landing is a citizen-driven, grassroots, non-profit organization whose vision is to build a planned, affordable, and safe residential community for people with a range of disabilities, most of whom will need a minimum of support in order to live happy, productive and independent lives. The Board of Independence Landing Inc, is made up of compassionate community leaders and parents of children with disabilities. Working closely with the City of Tallahassee and with residents of Southwood, we have identified a 20 acre parcel of city-owned land suitable for building Independence Landing. The acreage is across from Florida High on Old School Road and Four Oaks Boulevard, and we are pursuing land use changes that will result in a long term lease.



*Let's make
this happen together!*

To get involved, to donate,
or for additional information, contact:

ALLISON TANT RICHARD
(850) 251-6040
AllisonTant@gmail.com

2910 Kerry Forest Parkway, Suite D4, # 231
Tallahassee, Florida 32309

INDEPENDENCELANDINGFL.COM



**A SAFE AND AFFORDABLE
PLANNED RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY
FOR ADULTS WITH DIFFERING
COGNITIVE ABILITIES**

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

INDEPENDENCELANDINGFL.COM

WHY WE NEED *Independence Landing*

The current generation of people with disabilities is the first to routinely outlive the ability of their parents to take care of them. This is also the first generation to benefit from the Murdoch Early Intervention Program (1991), full inclusion in public and private schools, and full integration into every sector of society thanks to the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990). With advances in medical care and innovations in technology and equipment, people with disabilities can do more than ever before.

While societal gains have been made in so many areas, housing options for people with

disabilities are woefully limited. Most live at home with their parents until their parent(s) become incapacitated or die. When this happens, too often people with disabilities who are not capable of living independently with occasional staff support are displaced to group or nursing homes, which are a necessary part of the continuum of care but should not be the only options.

The State of Florida has recognized the need for an affordable housing option for persons with disabilities and has identified a dedicated funding stream to that end. This State initiative has led to the creation of five residential communities with amenities throughout Florida for people with a range of abilities. These are well-designed, successful, joyous communities with plenty of social, educational and life enhancing activities for the residents. There are supports in place such as reminders, prompts and coaching, and many residents have jobs, volunteer in the neighborhoods in which they live, and give back to society. They are good people - and good neighbors.



Progress AND Planning



The Board of Independence Landing has spent the last year researching housing options for people with disabilities and visiting the existing residential communities that have been built throughout Florida using the affordable housing funds.

We are fortunate to have the support of the Tallahassee City Commission and the residents of Southwood, and it is our intention to keep all

interested parties fully informed as we go through the rezoning and planning process. Community support is essential to the successful development of Independence Landing.

As a charitable, tax exempt organization, we are eligible to apply for state funding and federal tax credit dollars for construction of Independence Landing. We must also generate significant tax deductible charitable donations to demonstrate the long term viability and sustainability of Independence Landing.

You can help by reaching out to your friends, neighbors, and colleagues and sharing your support and enthusiasm for Independence Landing. For more information and to make a donation, go to independencelandingfl.com