

Citizen Comments for the  
December 8, 2020 Meeting Agenda

The following Citizen Comments  
were received for Non-Agendaed Items

## Board of County Commissioners, December 8, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Feng Ji
	Address: 2555 Carthage Lane
	Date Submitted: 12/7/2020 8:13:52 PM

covid-19 urgent:new case is 10,430 on 12/5

Dear Sir/Madam:

Sorry that I made mistake in the previous message sent on yesterday that I wrote "florida state wide", actually, I want to say "in Leon County". I hope this re-send message doesn't waste too much your time. Sorry again.

I am working and living in Tallahassee, Florida.

The Covid-19 new cases are increased very sharply in Florida recently, on 12/5, new cases is 10,430 for Florida and 130 for Leon county. The medical system is under extremely pressure.

There is a new study published in Nature Science, indicates that restriction on in-door occupancy to 20% will reduce Covid-19 spread by 80%.

This is an urgent, should we implement the following restrictions in Leon County?

1. reducing restaurants/bars and gyms in-door occupany to 20%
2. encouraging restaurants to do deliver/curbside pickup

--reference-1, US medical system is under extreme pressure,

Hospitals have reached breaking point: Rate of COVID patients being admitted is dropping because beds are full and mild cases are being turned away as US reports a third of the world's new infections and families beg for ICU space on social media

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9021045/Hospitals-admitting-fewer-COVID-patients-beds-run-out.html>

References-2: Nature Science research

"Our model predicts that capping points-of-interest at 20% of maximum occupancy can reduce the infections by more than 80%, but we only lose around 40% of the visits when compared to a fully reopening with usual maximum occupancy," Jure Leskovec, an author of the study and associate professor of computer science at Stanford University, said during a press briefing on Tuesday."

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/10/health/covid-19-modeling-high-risk-places-study-wellness/index.html>

thank you very much,

Feng Ji

## Board of County Commissioners, December 8, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Feng Ji
	Address: 2555 Carthage Lane
	Date Submitted: 12/6/2020 10:56:39 AM

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am working and living in Tallahassee, Florida.

The Covid-19 new cases are increased very sharply in Florida recently, on 12/5, new cases is 10,4300 for Florida and 130 for Leon county. The medical system is under extremely pressure.

There is a new study published in Nature Science, indicates that restriction on in-door occupancy to 20% will reduce Covid-19 spread by 80%.

This is an urgent, should we implement the following restrictions in florida state wide?

1. reducing restaurants/bars and gyms in-door occupany to 20%

2. encouraging restaurants to do deliver/curbside pickup

--reference-1, US medical system is under extreme pressure,

Hospitals have reached breaking point: Rate of COVID patients being admitted is dropping because beds are full and mild cases are being turned away as US reports a third of the world's new infections and families beg for ICU space on social media

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9021045/Hospitals-admitting-fewer-COVID-patients-beds-run-out.html>

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"Our model predicts that capping points-of-interest at 20% of maximum occupancy can reduce the infections by more than 80%, but we only lose around 40% of the visits when compared to a fully reopening with usual maximum occupancy," Jure Leskovec, an author of the study and associate professor of computer science at Stanford University, said during a press briefing on Tuesday."

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/10/health/covid-19-modeling-high-risk-places-study-wellness/index.html>

thank you very much,

Feng Ji

## Board of County Commissioners, December 8, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Michael McLaughlin
	Address: 100 Cadiz Street Apt 205
	Date Submitted: 12/7/2020 6:00:07 PM

Recent news reports indicate that Commission Chairman Rick Minor will propose creating a task force at today's county meeting that will look at "revamping" a portion of North Monroe street. The reporting showed that Minor considers people experiencing houselessness to be a problem, and a threat to the image of Tallahassee that he seeks to promote. Rather than framing people experiencing houselessness as a problem requiring the intervention of police, the County Board of Commissioners should work to create a community with universal affordable housing. Furthermore, the Board of Commissioners should not increase law enforcement patrols along North Monroe. Such patrols will only further marginalize an already marginalized population by forcing them into the prison system. Police are not the solution to "crime and blight." An equitable distribution of wealth, affordable housing, and accessible mental health resources are. Rather than seeking to "beautify" the so-called "gateway to Tallahassee" so that visitors feel at home here, this commission should work to make sure that everyone who lives in Leon County has a safe place to call home.

## Board of County Commissioners, December 8, 2020 Citizen Comments

Non-Agenda	Name: Kate White
	Address: 24072 Lanier
	Date Submitted: 12/7/2020 9:47:37 AM

Will someone address the blatant disregard for community health and safety as well as disregard for the county wide mask mandate that Espositos displayed by allowing families to take photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus indoors, unmasked, and not socially distanced. While I understand they made the decision to stop on 12/6 after community backlash I would like to hear the commissions opinion on business owners who are disregarding the mask mandate and putting public health in danger.

The following Citizen Comments  
were received for Agenda Item #24

Leon CARES Program Budgets and Projected Expenditures and  
Acceptance of Additional Coronavirus Relief Funds

## Board of County Commissioners, December 8, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 24	Name: Lydia Bell
	Address: 6344 Bird Dog Point
	Date Submitted: 12/7/2020 6:47:59 PM

Dear Commissioners,

As a lifelong resident of Leon County and for the last ten years also a small business owner in my hometown, I want to take this opportunity to thank you and the agencies responsible for tirelessly working to provide relief to our citizens during this unprecedented economic hardship and tragic health crisis brought about by COVID-19.

I would also like to respectfully ask that you take a moment to reflect upon the letter I submitted to each of you on October 28 in which I outlined a number of concerns that undoubtedly are not unique to my business regarding the Leon CARES Grant Funding Program. This funding has been a saving grace for many operations in our county, and for that we are all grateful. However, it is the small local businesses that we need to survive and thrive to make this place I was raised in and chose to stay and raise my own daughter in.

With so many looming issues as the state capital, creative, entrepreneurial opportunities are paramount to foster as a means of building new business revenue and tourism. These businesses are the excited and philanthropic businesses that are critical to keeping our universities and young professionals building upon their educations while benefiting our community.

In my experience as an educated, double degree, successful entrepreneur who works hands-on with these businesses, this pandemic has crippled so many and while this grant may seem small to some, it's a huge opportunity for our local businesses. Please understand that applicants to this small business grant are also applying for individual support, as many are single employee entities and this loss of revenue is really loss of a personal paycheck. This is food on the table. Roof over our heads. Lights and running water for our families.

In my case, I wasn't able to take advantage of the city's utility break. I live in the county and our utility provider didn't offer these benefits, nor did our internet providers. Our children, however, still attend school from home. There are many considerations to make and I'm understanding that it's impossible to cater to each.

However, the heart of the community is its local business owners. In every way we are contributing every day solely to our town. Please keep this in mind when thinking about allocation of these funds for Leon CARES. Please disburse funds to the many struggling small businesses of Leon County.

## Board of County Commissioners, December 8, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 24	Name: Deborah Novak
	Address: 297 East Highway 50; Suite 1; Claremont, FL 34711
	Date Submitted: 12/7/2020 6:24:36 PM

Dear Sirs and Madames:

I represent Oakwood Reserve Apartments (previously known as Mission Grove Apartments) located at 2616 Mission Road in Tallahassee.

We bought this property in March of 2019. The property is low-income workforce housing with LURA constraints. These restrictions require that 20% (19 units) of the property must be leased to individuals with incomes at 50% or less of the county's median income. Additionally, 50% of the units (91 units) must be leased to individuals with incomes less than 80% of the county's median income. As a result 110 and of the 192 units are reserved for low and lower income tenants.

Further, as of this writing, the property has approximately 20 tenants (10%) who receive support from Tallahassee Housing Authorities.

When the COVID-19 shutdown was implemented in mid-March 2020, the property was in the midst of a renovation project that completely rehabbed the unit interiors, as well as modernizing and rehabbing many of the property amenities. While this renovation project was designed to substantially improve the property, the units continue to be workforce housing.

Throughout the pandemic, property management has been working with delinquent tenants to assist each individual with identifying and applying for assistance. By the end of October, management had assisted 18 delinquent tenants in their application for Leon Cares. (Management has also assisted tenants in applying for other programs.)

As you know, at the beginning of the LEON Cares program, once approved, tenant rental assistance was provided directly to the property on behalf of the tenant. This process helped both tenant and management to work through the detrimental impact of COVID on the workforce and therefore their housing providers.

The programmatic change recently implemented, which provides assistance checks directly to the tenant, has strained the ability of housing providers to stave off potential evictions. Specifically, the current program allows the tenant to accept and keep housing assistance without paying delinquent rents. This has the very real potential of ultimately resulting in the eviction of non-paying tenants. It was our understanding that LEON Cares was specifically designed to minimize the impact of potential eviction for tenant non-payment.

Specifically, we would respectfully ask the Commissioners the following:

What is the potential that this programmatic change will be reversed? Reversal would allow management, once they have received payment, to work directly with tenants on future rents and payments.

If not, is there a process by which management can be notified of LEON Cares of tenant assistance approval? If management knows about approved assistance they can work with delinquent tenants to bring their rents current.

Will there be negative repercussions for landlords who are forced to evict for non-payment from tenants assisted by LEON Cares? Landlords commit to non-eviction for 30 days after the receipt of payment. If the payments go directly to the tenant, and the tenant does NOT pay, the landlord will have little recourse other than starting the eviction process.

Is there an expectation that this program will be extended?

Will the current assistance cap will be raised above the \$5,000 level?

If the cap is raised will tenants who have previously received assistance be able to apply for additional assistance?

Thank you for your consideration of our comments and questions.

Respectfully,

Deborah G Novak, PhD

Representative

Oakwood Reserve Apartments

The following Citizen Comments  
were received for Agenda Item #25

Use of County Parks During COVID-19 and the County's  
Sponsorship of Visitor-Generating Community and Athletic Events

## Board of County Commissioners, December 8, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 25	Name: Elizabeth Emmanuel
	Address: 300 S. Duval St. Unit 504
	Date Submitted: 12/7/2020 5:25:13 PM

Commissioners, Firstly, and most importantly, thank you all so much for your leadership in trying times. I know no decision you all have made in 2020 has been an easy one. These are extremely complicated issues. Commissioners Cummings and Welch, welcome. I look forward to your leadership, and Commissioner Cummings, your appointment to our board. Thank you to county staff for putting together a very comprehensive write up of this complex issue.

I would also like to thank you all for your support of the Tourist Development Council Funding. That funding has been enormously helpful to our organization as we put on free community events, aimed at providing a safe and fun environment to bring our community together into it's heart, downtown. A Downtown that has struggled during the pandemic, due to the high rate of the most vulnerable employers, hotels & restaurants; most employees working from home; and continued street closures due to Civil unrest; along with football season cancellations and no large scale events. In addition, just within our own organization, the 86 events that make up 40% of our revenue were reduced to 48. We are very proud to be one of the few- if not one of the only- public organizations to hold continuous outdoor events during the pandemic. While for 17 weeks we did not operate events, we were able to bring out downtown market back with very strict guidelines to ensure public safety- this brought much needed revenue to our vendors who were left without streams of their income.

We were also able to shift our Sundown Concert Series to a Sundown Drive-in. Offering our community the ability to experience nostalgia and fun with a free, family- friendly movie in the Civic Center's parking lot. We are so grateful for the support provided by Visit Tallahassee for these events. We could not have done these events without that support! We shifted off public spaces to private parking lot- but still had a free, public event. As an event organizer, the cost of doing events on private property versus City property is exponentially higher. It proves the value of the City and County's support in ensuring events for our community can happen safely in a pandemic, They can continue in a way that benefits the public on private property- but in order for them to continue, the grant funding is absolutely imperative.

The most important key to this is creating a case-by-case plan for safety. In 2020 our organization has created evolving safety plans- we've written them into grants with three different scenarios for each event, we've stayed plugged in to CDC recommendations and continued to pivot to ensure we're providing the safest environment possible. This takes additional staff, additional manpower and additional funding- but it's absolutely necessary. I have great faith that organizations that plan to hold out door events like Word Of South and LeMoyné Art can provide Covid-safe plans that ensure the guests they are bringing into our downtown will be done safely- but still to the benefit of our community. I have been on zoom calls with them already planning for COVID safe procedures.

More than ever, we need unity. We need free community events to bring people together, reminding them of how much they love living in Tallahassee, the beauty that exists in our outdoors. Our common, shared interests, like music- to build back that respect for our neighbors. 2020 has worn us down. We need the chance to build each other back up, celebrate Tallahassee, support our local businesses and provide revenue for citizens.

If we're able to have gun shows at the fairgrounds, we can and should have Art Shows in our beautiful parks. Deferring this decision to February puts event organizers for Spring in a tough space. We want to ensure they have ample time to create safe events- allowing them the opportunity to receive funding on a case by case basis with no more delay. With gratitude, Elizabeth Emmanuel, CEO, TDIA

The following Citizen Comments  
were received for Agenda Item #31

First and Only Public Hearing on a Proposed Ordinance Amending the  
Official Zoning Map to Add the Lake Hall Schoolhouse to the Local  
Register of Historic Places and to Change the Zoning Classification from  
the Residential Preservation (RP) Zoning District to the Residential  
Preservation (RP) Zoning District with Historic Preservation Overlay  
(HPO)

## Board of County Commissioners, December 8, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 31	Name: Wendy Grey
	Address: 1047 Myers Park Drive, Tallahassee 32301
	Date Submitted: 12/4/2020 5:53:53 PM

I encourage you to add the Lake Hall school to the local register of historic places. The school is an important cultural and educational resource. This designation will help preserve it.

Thank you.

Wendy Grey

## Board of County Commissioners, December 8, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 31	Name: Brian Lupiani
	Address: 607 McDaniel St
	Date Submitted: 12/8/2020 2:11:04 PM

Commissioners:

Please add the Lake Hall Schoolhouse to the Local Register of Historic Places and approve its zoning change to include the historic preservation overlay. It's important to remember and preserve places of importance to all segments of our community.

Thank you!

Brian Lupiani

## Board of County Commissioners, December 8, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 31	Name: Lucia Sommer
	Address: 1611 Milton Street
	Date Submitted: 12/8/2020 4:02:55 PM

Dear Commissioners,

I'm writing to express my support for adding the Lake Hall School to the Local Register of Historic Places and changing the zoning classification from Residential Preservation (RP) to Residential Preservation (RP) with Historic Preservation Overlay (HPO).

Not only is the school one of only six African American school houses left in the state, it's an important connection to the past that reflects the Reconstruction era agency of the members of the community.

This is exactly the sort of community resource that could help put Leon County on the map as an historic tourism destination.

We should honor the hard work of the citizens who have invested so much time and effort into this project already, and share the neighbors' responsibility to protect this unique and rare piece of Leon County history.

Sincerely,

Lucia Sommer

The following Citizen Comments  
were received for Agenda Item #34

First and Only Public Hearing to Consider Adopting an  
Ordinance Amending Chapter 5 of the Leon County  
Code of Laws Currently Entitled  
“Building and Construction Regulations”

## Board of County Commissioners, December 8, 2020 Citizen Comments

Agenda Item 34	Name: Robert Watson
	Address: 2773 Vassar Rd.
	Date Submitted: 12/7/2020 6:52:41 PM

It is the opinion of the Tallahassee Builders Association (TBA) that agenda item #34, "Proposed Ordinance amending Chapter 5 of the Leon County Code of Laws" (Chapter 5), be tabled and not brought to vote before the Leon County Commission at this time.

The TBA feels that more time is required to examine, analyze, and collaborate on Chapter 5 given the gravity of the document and the important issues that are still of concern to the TBA membership.

Issue 1: (Existing)  
 Sec.5-1.02 (a) R309.3 Flood hazard areas. And Sec.5-1.02 (b) R322.2.1 (1)  
 The wording "or in close proximity to" is vague and non-descript.  
 Staff has supplied a viable replacement and definition for this language in their answer to TBA comments (see agenda item #34, attachment #3, page 5, second item), "The intent of the phrase 'or in close proximity to' represents those areas that are above the base flood elevation but are below the flood protection elevation." The TBA would like this definition (see previous underlined) or an agreed to version, to replace the wording "in close proximity to" in all section where appropriate.  
 The TBA believes that the vague language will result in an unknown condition for property owners or those looking to purchase property by not providing a known formula for the acceptance of what constitutes a flood hazard area until the determinacy is made arbitrarily by a county employee. This will affect property costs, development costs, and building costs and could leave property that was not considered in a flood hazard location unbuildable.

Issue 2: (New)  
 Sec. 5-1.07 - Inspections.  
 "All construction work shall receive approval for each phase by a county inspector before the work is concealed or covered. Any additions, changes and/or repairs in and to existing construction shall also receive approval by a county inspector upon the completion of such work."  
 TBA feels 'county inspector' should be changed to 'approved inspector' to include third party inspectors as required by the Florida Building Code.

Issue 3: (New)  
 Sec.5-4.11(a), (b) and (c)  
 Due to the amount of information contained in Chapter 5, this section was added mid-way through the process and was unfortunately not noticed by the TBA until the final review.  
 This section contains very significant environmental and community concerns, as well as conditions and requirements for residential and commercial contractors. The TBA has serious concerns on the practicality and that certain requirements are literally impossible to comply with. This section, above all else, requires additional work and conversations that were missed earlier, and that the amount of issues and concerns are too many to share here.  
 The TBA feels that the importance of Chapter 5 warrants additional time to improve and develop a standard that all parties can agree to and that will work for Leon County and all its residents for years to come.