

Land Development Division
Drawer GM03, PO Box 9005
Bartow, FL 33831
Case# LDCU-2024-34

Dear Land Development Division,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed development, on the property directly adjacent to my residence in the back, at 4440 Academy Dr, Mulberry, FL 33860. As a homeowner who chose this rural area for its tranquility, wooded view, and safety, I have significant concerns regarding the potential impacts of this project on our community.

Traffic and Safety Concerns

The proposed development's proximity to US 60 raises serious traffic and safety issues. Currently, our neighborhood has only one ingress and egress point on a treacherous curve, lacking a traffic signal. This stretch of road already presents challenges with visibility and speeding vehicles, and introducing additional traffic from the new development could exacerbate congestion, impede emergency vehicle access, and increase the risk of accidents, particularly involving children who play in the area or pedestrians walking to nearby amenities. These risks are unacceptable and need to be addressed before considering such a development.

Noise and Nuisance

The anticipated increase in vehicular and human activity from the development is likely to elevate noise levels significantly, disrupting the peace that residents currently enjoy. Bright lights from parking lots, businesses, or new streetlights may also contribute to light pollution, further eroding the quiet rural atmosphere. This change contradicts the rural character of our neighborhood, which was a primary factor in my decision to reside here.

Impact on Community Character

The introduction of commercial activities in a predominantly residential and rural setting threatens to fundamentally alter the character of the community. A shift toward commercial development could lead to a decline in property values, diminish the quality of life for existing residents, and potentially discourage others from moving to the area. Moreover, such a development would create a precedent for further commercialization, compounding these impacts in the long term.

Environmental Concerns

Developing this land may result in the loss of green spaces and local wildlife habitats, which are integral to our community's environment. This area has already suffered ecological disruption due to the installation of the TECO solar farm. Deer no longer run through the area, and other wildlife is now noticeably absent. Preserving what remains is essential for maintaining the ecological balance and natural beauty of our surroundings. Furthermore, any additional impervious surfaces, such as parking lots or buildings, could lead to increased stormwater runoff, exacerbating potential flooding issues and degrading nearby water quality.

I do have some other concerns as well:

1. **Lack of Infrastructure Support:** The existing infrastructure, including roads, utilities, and public services, may not be adequate to support the demands of the proposed development, leading to potential strain on the broader community.
2. **Increased Crime Potential:** With increased activity and population density, there is often a correlation with higher crime rates. This potential risk should be carefully considered, especially in a quiet, family-oriented neighborhood.
3. **Cumulative Impact on Quality of Life:** The combined effects of increased traffic, noise, environmental disruption, and infrastructure strain are likely to have a compounding negative impact on the overall quality of life for current residents.

In light of these concerns, I strongly urge you to reconsider the proposed development. The safety, tranquility, and character of our community are at stake, and this project poses risks that far outweigh any perceived benefits. I respectfully request that the land currently unused, remains untouched and if changes need to be made, that those changes align with the existing rural and residential nature of our neighborhood.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my perspective on this matter.



Paul Wichert

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