

FARRELL SOUTHERN GROVE

REQUEST FOR LANDSCAPE BUFFER WALL MODIFICATION

JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT

December 9, 2022

REQUEST SUMMARY

Farrell Building Company, Inc. (the "Applicant"), hereby respectfully requests approval by the City of Port St. Lucie of a Landscape Buffer Wall Modification to allow for approximately 290 feet of a landscape buffer to contain enhanced landscaping in lieu of a wall based on extenuating circumstances that preclude the installation of a wall. This request is related to a pending site plan application, Application #P22-121, for the Farrell Southern Grove project (the "Project") currently under review by the City.

BACKGROUND

The Project comprises approximately 172,120 SF of self-storage use and 20,000 SF of retail/commercial use on the west side of SW Village Parkway on the northernmost 11.19 acres of Parcel 27D located at the northwest corner of the intersection of SW Village Parkway and Parr Drive (the "Property"). The west 170 feet of the Property is encumbered by an FPL easement which covers the FPL transmission lines running north/south through Tradition and Southern Grove (the "FPL Easement"). West of the property is a conservation area which has a residential future land use designation. The very north tip of the Property abuts the Del Webb residential community to the west.

Section 154.03 (C)5.a. of the City's Land Development Regulations (LDRs) entitled "Landscape Buffer Strip Abutting Residential or Open Space Land Uses" states that a wall is required in a landscape buffer strip where commercial, industrial, institutional, office, or public facility uses abut property to the side or rear which is designated with a residential or open space land use. Subsection c. thereof entitled "Landscape Material" requires that one tree, at least 14 feet in height, be provided for each 30 linear feet of the landscaped buffer strip, or fractional part thereof.

Sec. 154.12.B. of the LDRs, entitled "Review of Landscape Exemption or Modification Requests" states that requests for landscape exemption or modification to landscape buffer wall

requirements will be based on review of detailed plans identifying the size, quantity, and location of the vegetation to be preserved and installed along the proposed site's boundaries, the use(s) proposed for the property seeking the modification or exemption, and the proposed and existing uses surrounding uses. The plan will address the following criteria:

1. The total area dedicated to a buffer will be greater than what the code would impose without the modification.
2. Outside activities and hours of operation for the proposed use(s).
3. Natural and man-made features of uses that provide distance and separation from those existing uses to be buffered.
4. Other factors that may be important to a decision.

REQUEST DETAILS/JUSTIFICATION

The Applicant is not able to provide a wall within the northernmost approximately 290 feet of the west buffer due to the FPL Easement that encumbers the Property, and the City is requiring that the Applicant obtain approval of a Landscape Buffer Wall Modification request to allow for same. The Applicant has prepared a graphic entitled "Site Plan - Landscape Modification Justification Graphic" included with this submittal that graphically depicts the reasons why a wall is not possible along the northernmost 290 feet of the west buffer. In addition to said graphic, the Applicant's justification for the request is further described below:

- ❖ The north driveway of the Project at SW Village Parkway is required to align with the existing median opening within the roadway. As such, the Project internal driveway leading up to driveway opening meanders into the FPL Easement. The west buffer of the Project, most of which contains an eight (8) foot wall, follows the west line of said Project internal driveway, and FPL has indicated that no vertical structures including walls are allowed within the FPL Easement. Therefore, a wall cannot be provided on the west side of the internal driveway where it meanders into the FPL Easement.
- ❖ FPL required a driveway access into the FPL Easement across which a wall cannot cross.
- ❖ Given the constraints above that are not a result of any action by the Applicant, the installation of a wall in the northernmost 290 feet of the west buffer is not possible.
- ❖ With regard to mitigation of any impacts of not providing a wall within the north 290 feet of the west buffer, the Applicant submits the following:
 - There is 170 feet between the developed portion of the Project and the west property line of the Project which provides substantial additional natural buffering from the adjacent land uses.
 - There is approximately 388 feet between the nearest residential property line and the closest storage building.
 - The Applicant is providing approximately 938 feet of wall around the self storage buildings, and the Applicant has increased the height of said wall to eight (8) feet where only six (6) feet is required by the LDRs.
 - The Applicant has provided significantly enhanced landscaping within the west buffer of the Project including 18-foot-tall Oak Trees, groups of Sabal Palms and Southern Red Cedar trees between the Oaks to further screen the Project from the West.

- The Applicant has provided enhanced landscaping within the 290-foot area where a wall is not being provided including a six (6) foot tall hedge at planting, taller Oak trees than required and Dahoon Holly trees spaced at 25 feet within the FPL Easement where 30-foot spacing is required.
- There are no outside activities associated with the storage use, and there will be very little traffic within the five (5) car parking lot that is east of the area within which no wall will be provided.
- The Applicant is working with the adjacent neighbors within the Del Webb community to provide additional plantings on their property to further screen the project.

CLOSING

As demonstrated above, the Applicant has gone above-and-beyond to screen the Project from the west, which is primarily a conservation area anyway, and the Applicant believes that the request for a landscape modification is well justified. The Applicant respectfully requests the City's consideration of this request.