



City of Port St. Lucie-Intermodal Transit Facility
Landscape Modification
Project No. P24-142



SUMMARY

Applicant's Request:	To provide landscaping in lieu of an architectural buffer wall on the northern portion of the property per Section 154.12 of the City of Port St. Lucie Code of Ordinances.
Applicant:	Adolfo Covelli, St. Lucie County Transit Department
Property Owner:	City of Port St. Lucie
Location:	West side of SE Belvedere Street between Deacon and Thanksgiving Avenues.
Application Type:	Landscape Modification, Quasi-Judicial
Project Planner:	Marissa Da Breo-Latchman, Environmental Planner II

Project Description

The applicant is requesting to provide landscaping in lieu of a wall as per Section 154.12 of the Landscape and Land Clearing Code. A wall is required in a landscape buffer strip where institutional or office uses abut property to the side or rear which is designated with an open space or residential land use or has a residential use per Section 154.03(C)(5) of the Landscape and Land Clearing Code. Residential zoning and uses are located adjacent to the north and east of the subject property. City facilities and offices are located to the south. The property has a future land use designation of High Density Residential (RH).

The subject property, approximately 1.89 acres in size, is currently developed with a transit center that includes a bus shelter, bus stops for 4 buses, and associated parking. There is a Site Plan amendment currently in process for this facility (P11-106-A1). The applicant is requesting to waive the requirement for a 6-foot-high masonry wall to provide a clear line-of-sight to enable proper law enforcement in the area and to enhance neighborhood safety. The applicant proposes the use of a mix of low trees and shrubs in lieu of the wall requirement.

Review Criteria

An application for a landscape modification is reviewed for consistency with Article I of the Landscape and Land Clearing Code, Section 154.12. Pursuant to Section 154.12(F)1, the exemption or modification to landscape buffer wall requirement is exempted from City Council review.

Review by Planning and Zoning Board: Requests to substitute landscaping for an architectural wall that is a required feature of a landscape buffer strip shall be considered by the Planning and Zoning Board at a public hearing. The procedures outlined in section 154.12(B)-(E) shall be utilized for such hearings. Final action on the application (approval or denial) is in the form of an Order of the Planning and Zoning Board following a quasi-judicial public hearing.

Public Notice Requirements (Section 158.298 (B))

Public notice was mailed to owners within 750 feet and the file was included in the ad for the Planning & Zoning Board’s agenda.

Neighborhood Meeting

A neighborhood meeting has been scheduled by the applicant for October 29, 2024, from 6-8 PM at the City of Port St. Lucie Community Center at 2195 SE Airoso Blvd to inform residents in the area about the proposed landscape buffer and to garner any input.

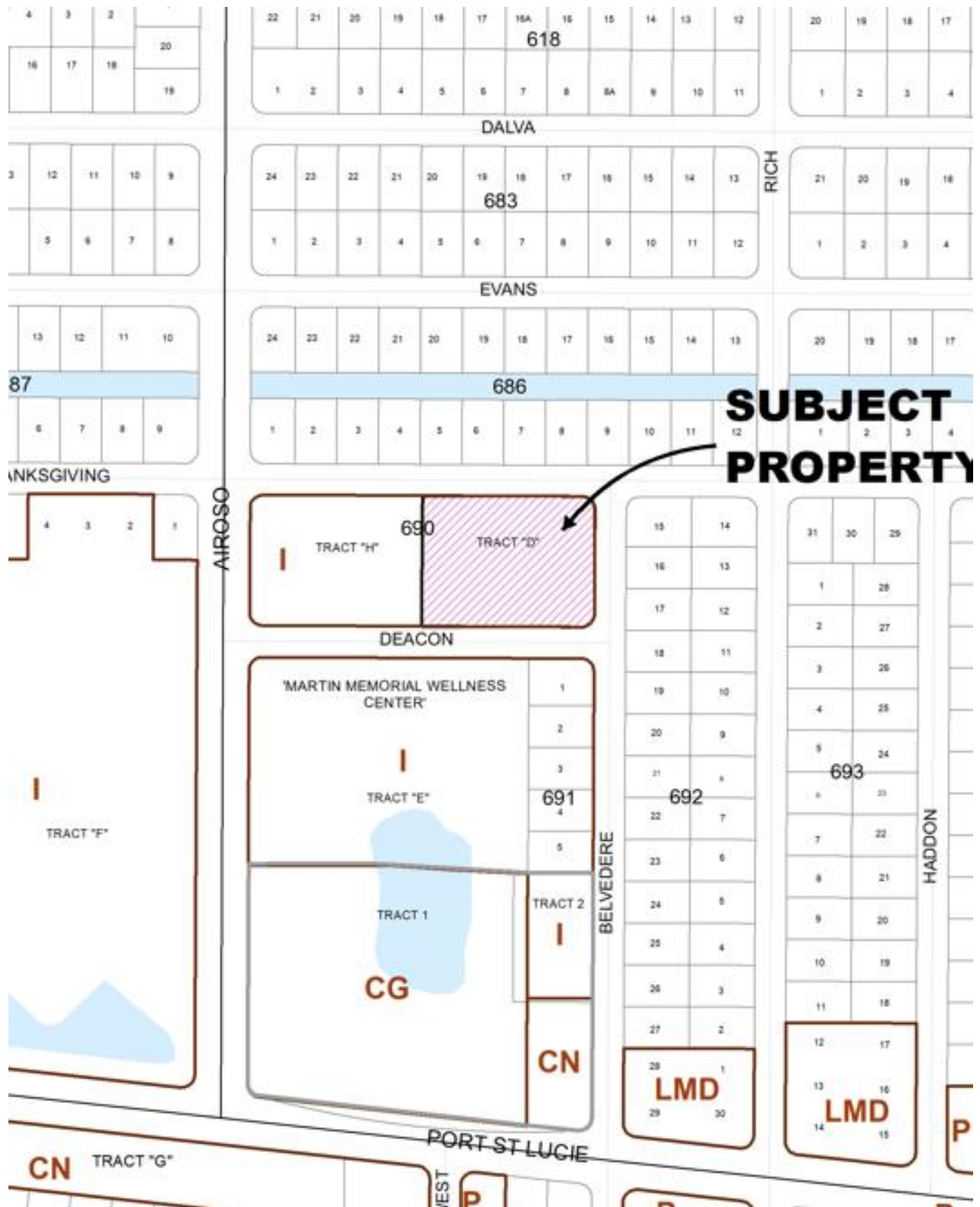
Location and Site Information

Parcel Number:	3420-585-0003-000-8
Property Size:	1.89 acres
Legal Description:	Port St. Lucie Section 18- Tract D
Address:	395 SE Deacon Ave
Future Land Use:	High Density Residential (RH)
Existing Zoning:	Institutional (I)
Existing Use:	Intermodal Transit Facility

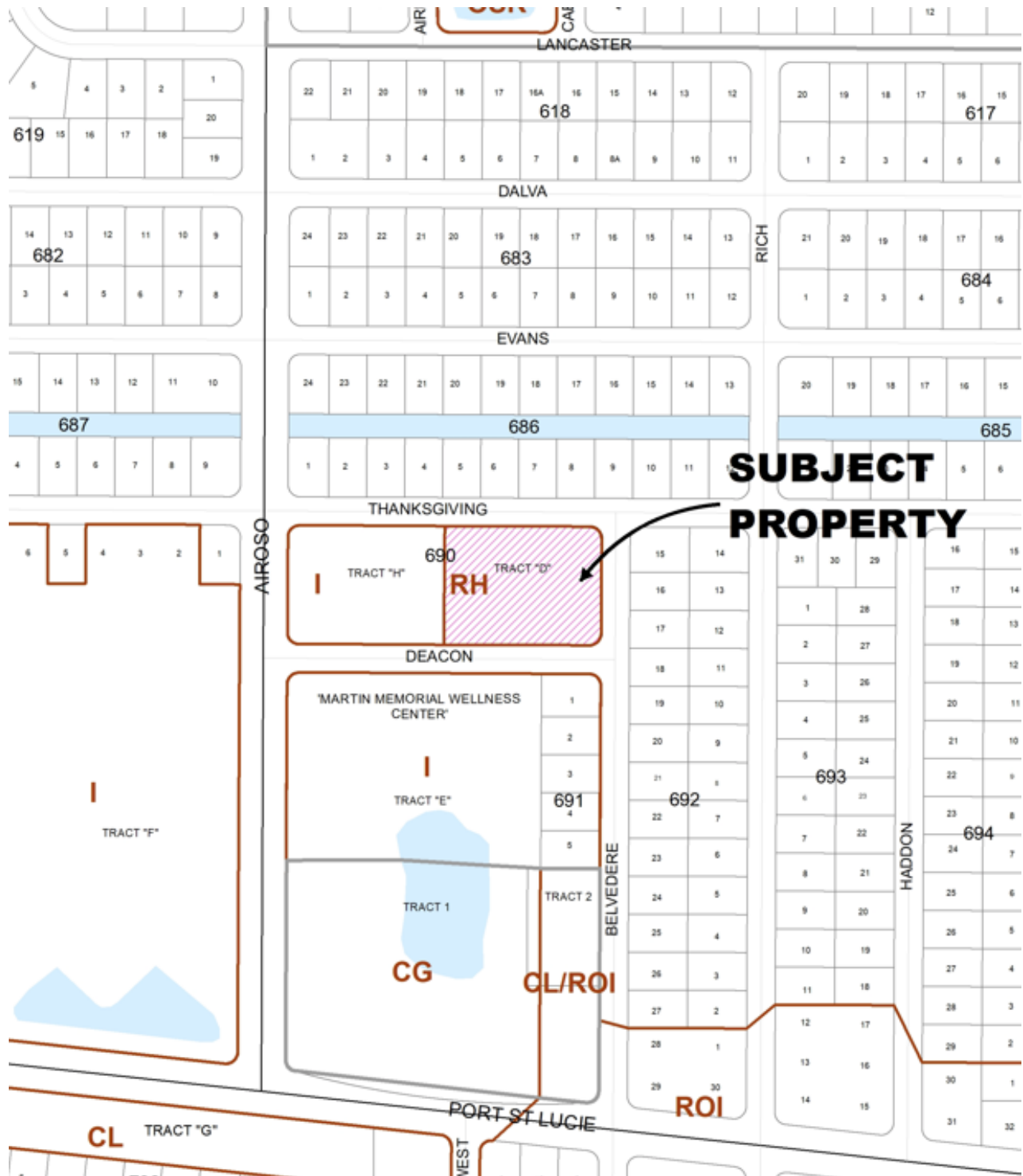
Surrounding Uses

Direction	Future Land Use	Zoning	Existing Use
North	RL	RS-2	Tesoro Community
South	I	I	SFWMD C-23 Canal
East	RL	RS-2	Single-Family Residential
West	I	I	St James Orthodox Church

RL-Low Density Residential, I-Institutional, RS-2-Single-Family Residential



Zoning Map



Future Land Use Map

IMPACTS AND FINDINGS

Section 154.12 (B) of the Landscape and Land Clearing Code establishes the duties of the Planning and Zoning Board in authorizing a landscape modification. The Planning and Zoning Board may authorize a landscape modification from the provisions of the Landscape and Land Clearing Code. 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 Planning and Zoning Board should consider the criteria listed under Section 154.12 (B) of the Landscape and Clearing Code. The applicant's response to this criterion is attached to the application. Staff's review is provided below:

Compatibility with exemption or modification to landscape buffer wall criteria Section 154.12 (B).

- 1) The total area dedicated to a buffer will be greater than what the code would impose without the modification.
 - *Staff Findings: The total area dedicated to a buffer will exceed what is required by the code. The proposed buffer would be 20' at widest point.*
- 2) Outside activities and hours of operation for the proposed use(s).
 - *Staff Findings: The subject property is developed with an Intermodal Transit Facility that includes a shade structure with seating, parking and bus stops. The facility typically operates between the hours of 6AM and 8PM on weekdays and on Saturdays from 8AM to 4PM for fixed-route buses. Microtransit vehicles utilize the facility intermittently.*
- 3) Natural and man-made features or uses that provide distance and separation from those existing uses to be buffered.
 - *Staff Findings: Existing native vegetation will be preserved as part of the proposed plan and supplemented with low shrubs and ground cover. Paved pathways will meander throughout the vegetation and connect to the existing sidewalk along Thanksgiving Avenue.*
- 4) Other factors that may be important to a decision.
 - *Staff Findings: The proposed landscape plan (attached) will provide groundcover, grasses and low shrubs in addition to the existing mature trees. It is the desire to maintain low vegetation to maintain a line of sight through the site to enhance law enforcement. A buffer wall could provide cover for persons wishing to evade detection.*

PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD ACTION OPTIONS

The Board may choose to approve, deny or table the proposed landscape modification. If the Board finds that the application is consistent with the criteria as listed in Section 154.12 (B) of the City code (listed above), then the Board may:

- Motion to approve.

If the Board finds that the landscape modification application is inconsistent with the criteria as listed in Section 154.12 (B) of the City code, then the Board may:

- Motion to deny

Should the Board need further clarification or information from either the applicant and/or staff, the Board may:

- Motion to table or continue the hearing or review to a future meeting

(NOTE TO APPLICANTS: Any request that is denied by the Planning and Zoning Board may be appealed to the Board of Zoning Appeals. Appeal applications are made through the City Clerk's office and must be submitted within 15 days after the Planning and Zoning Board hearing).