



**Sympatico Landscape Buffer Wall
Landscape Modification
Project Number: P23-156**



Project Aerial Map

SUMMARY

Applicant's Request:	To waive the requirement for an architectural buffer wall on the north and east side of the site along the drainage canal and preserve.
Applicant:	Derrick Phillips, Lucido & Associates
Property Owner:	Port St. Lucie Properties, LLC
Location:	North of SW Darwin Blvd. & east of SW Port St. Lucie Blvd.
Application Type:	Landscape Modification, Quasi-Judicial
Project Planner:	Francis Forman

Project Description

The applicant is requesting a waiver to the architectural buffer wall requirement as per Section 154.12 of the Landscape and Land Clearing Code. A wall is required in a landscape buffer strip where residential uses abut the property to the side or rear per Section 154.03(C)(5) of the Landscape and Land Clearing Code. The property is located north of SW Darwin Blvd. & east of SW Port St. Lucie Blvd. The subject property, approximately 22 acres in size, is zoned PUD and as depicted on the approved Planned Unit Development master plan (PUD) (P21-201) for the construction of a 324-unit multifamily apartment complex. As also depicted on the PUD master plan, the proposed development contains a 4.55-acre upland preserve that is located along the northern and eastern portions of the PUD, which would provide a greater distance separation from the existing single-family residential along these areas. Based on these separations, the applicant is requesting the substitution of enhanced landscaping in lieu of providing a six (6) foot buffer wall.

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.

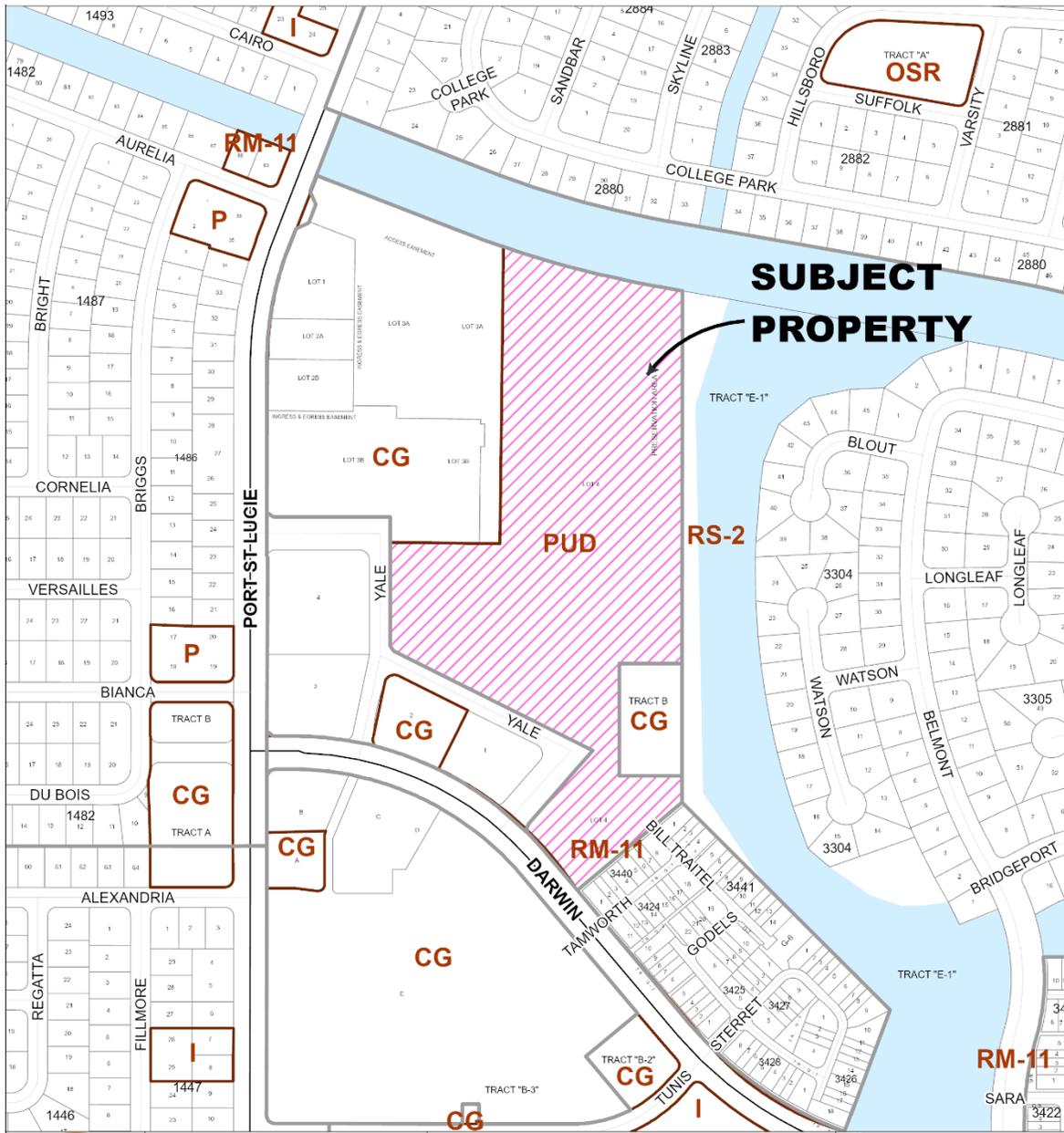
Location and Site Information

Parcel Number:	4418-702-0004-000-8
Property Size:	22 AC
Legal Description:	Sympatico Plaza, Lot 4
Address:	SE Port St. Lucie Blvd
Future Land Use:	High Residential (RH)
Existing Zoning:	Planned Unit Development (PUD)
Existing Use:	Vacant

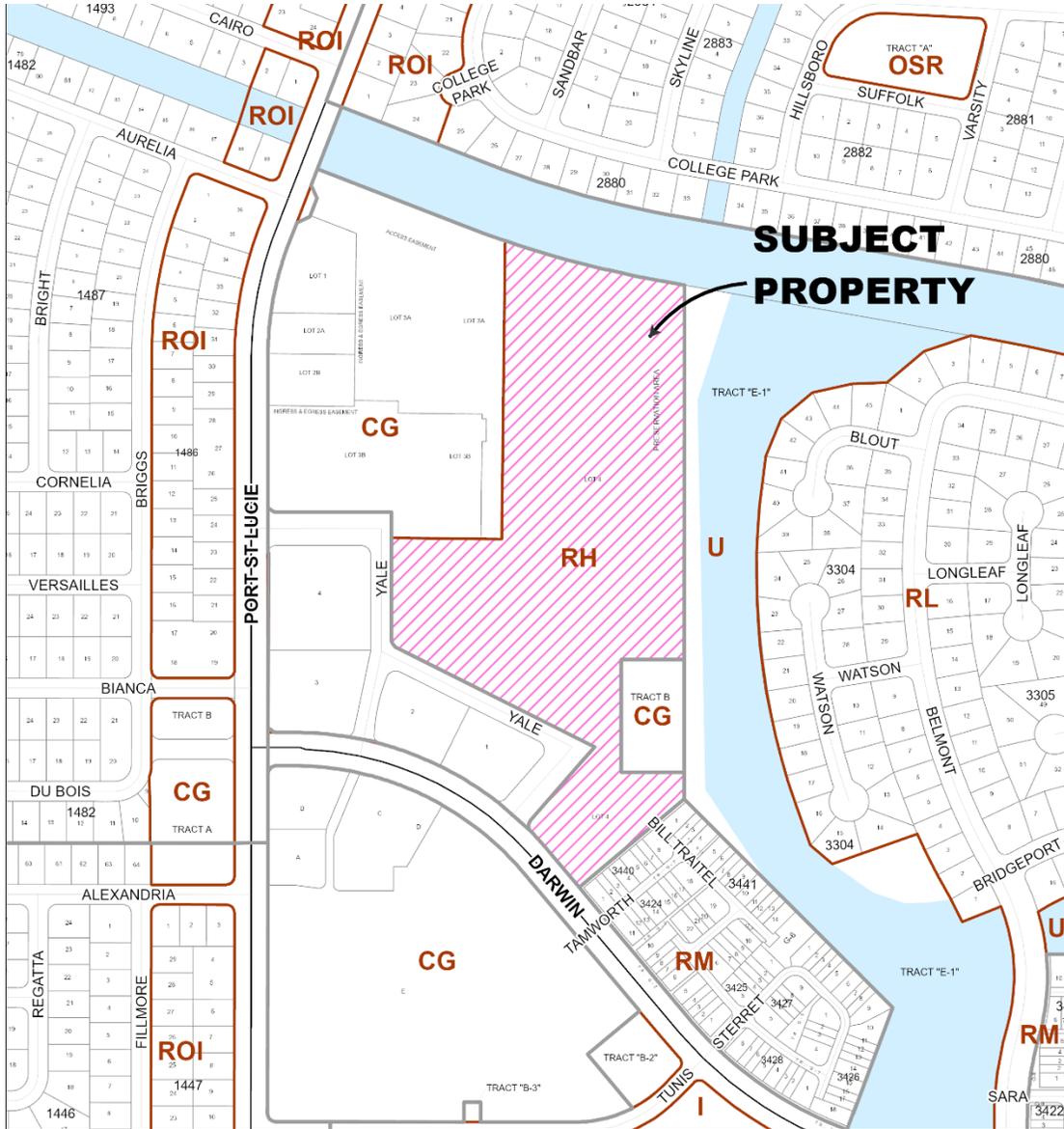
Surrounding Uses

Direction	Future Land Use	Zoning	Existing Use
North	RL	RS-2	Residential
South	CG	CG	Shopping Center
East	RL	RS-2	Residential
West	CG	CG	Shopping Center/Commercial Uses

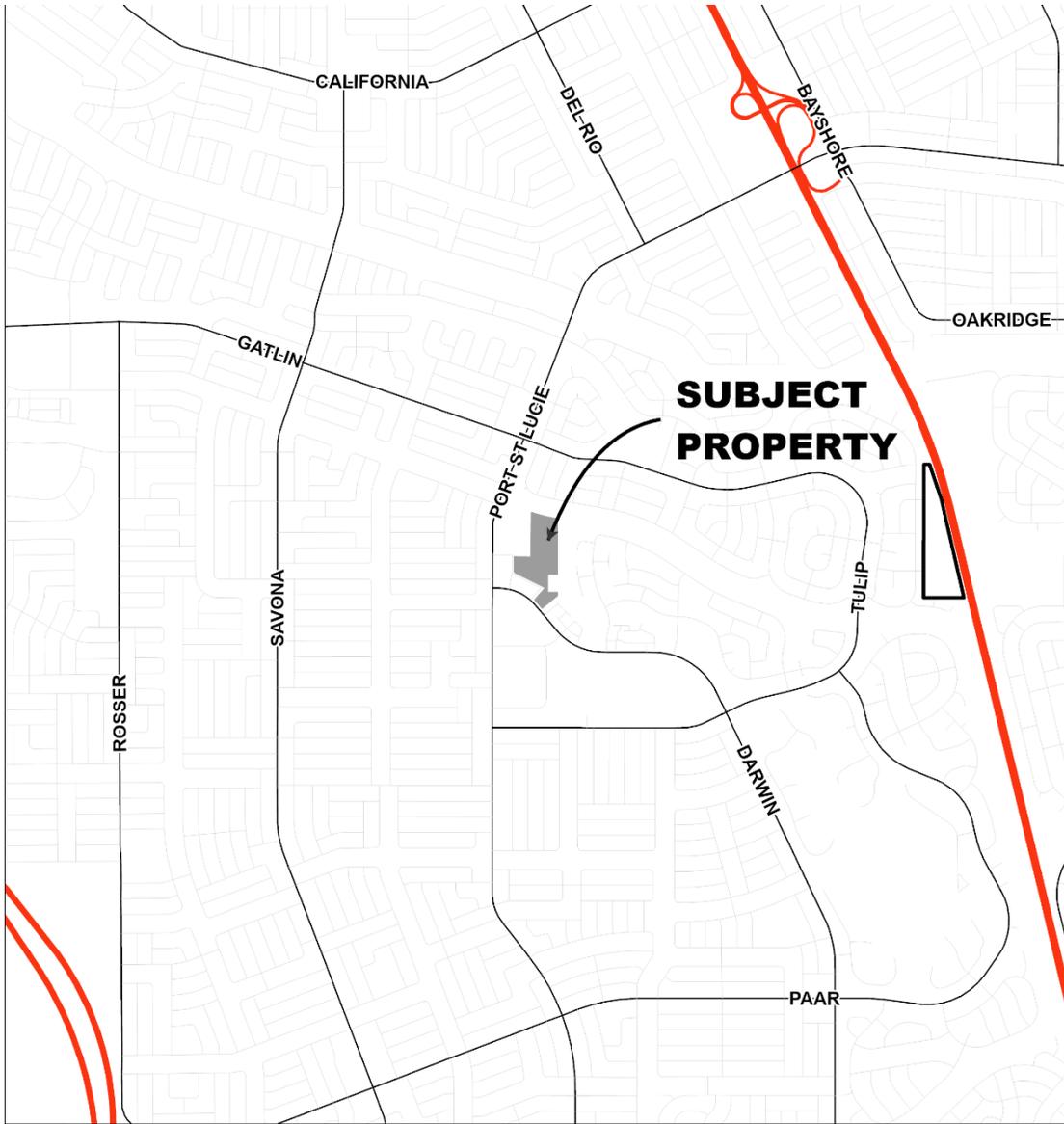
RL-Low Density Residential, RS-2- Single-Family Residential, and CG- General Commercial



Zoning Map



Project Land Use Map



Location 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.
 - *Applicant Response: The preserve area dedicated on the approved PUD master plan will provide a greater buffer 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 as the 4.55-acre upland preserve will be required due to the approved master plan. The applicant has also stated that the landscaping within the upland preserve area will be enhanced with the removal of any exotic plant life and the inclusion of additional native plant life.*
- 2) Outside activities and hours of operation for the proposed use(s).
 - *Applicant Response: The landscape buffer wall's intent is to provide a separation between commercial and residential zones, without compromising the health or lifestyle of the existing uses. The proposed project is for an apartment complex that would provide as a buffer between the existing commercial and residential uses.*
 - *Staff Findings: The proposed request is associated to a planned unit development for an apartment complex. The surrounding uses consist of a mixture of single-family uses to the north and east, with commercial to the south and west. Since the proposed use consists of high residential, the hours of operation would be consistent with both uses and provide a buffer between the existing commercial and single-family uses.*
- 3) Natural and man-made features or uses that provide distance and separation from those existing uses to be buffered.
 - *Applicant Response: The 4.55-acre preserve area dedicated on the approved PUD master plan will provide a greater public engagement, visual appreciation and education of the conservation area from the public trail being provided within the PUD.*
 - *Staff Findings: The subject property abuts drainage canals to the northern and eastern portions of the site. In addition, the 4.45-acre upland preserve as depicted in the approve PUD master plan will provide for greater separation to the existing single-family residential uses.*

4) Other factors that may be important to a decision.

- *Applicant Response: The 4.55-acre preserve area dedicated on the approved PUD master plan will provide a greater separation from the existing single-family uses to the north and east than would be required by the code.*
- *Staff Findings: The City's landscape architect reviewed the landscape plan for Sympatico PUD subdivision and identified no issues with the landscape modification request. The perimeter landscaping on both projects and the spatial separation should be sufficient in lieu of the wall.*

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).