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Via US MAIL/email – aroddy@scgov.net

Alan W. Roddy, Esq.
Office of the County Attorney
1660 Ringling Blvd Fl 2
Sarasota, FL 34236

Re: Siesta Promenade/Public Hearing Procedures

Dear Alan:

This firm represents the Best Western Plus Siesta Key Gateway Hotel located at 6600 S. Tamiami Trail. I am writing today on what are usually housekeeping matters but, in this case, may be much more important both from a procedural standpoint and substantively for the parties involved.

At the Neighborhood Workshop on August 23, Staff indicated that the CAP Boundary, the Scope of Work review, the CAP itself, the rezonings that may arise out of the CAP, two Special Exceptions (height and density) and one street vacation are all going to be heard as one hearing. While it often makes some sense to do similar requests all at once, here I submit that procedure will cause more, rather than fewer, problems.

To start, the Commission has not yet adopted the CAP Boundary. If they choose to expand the Boundary (as we believe they should), then the rest of the issues become moot. Moreover, that discussion alone could take substantial time as there are arguments to be made on both sides of the issue and undoubtedly many people will want to be heard on that alone.

Further, to make that decision, the Commission will necessarily need to review the responses to the Scope of Work it approved on January 25, 2017. It has not seen those responses as yet, much less determined if the responses are satisfactory. Again, that discussion alone could take (and deserves) substantial time.

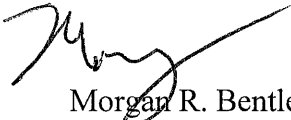
Given the procedural posture, it seems the better procedure would be to follow the CAP Ordinance and approve the Boundary after reviewing the response to the Scope of Work, then at a separate hearing, consider whatever rezonings the Applicant (or Applicants, if the Boundary expands) may seek inside the CAP.

Beyond that, there are some due process issues in placing all the potential changes in as one item. Three minutes to cover what are at least four major substantive issues (CAP Boundary, Rezoning, Height Special Exception and Density Special Exception) seems patently unfair to the public. It even seems unfair to restrict the Applicant to allow only 20 minutes to cover all these items. And it seems really unfair to force the Commission to try and sift through this mountain of information in one sitting. It will be like trying to drink from a fire hose.

I urge you to advise the Commission to take this in a more orderly process. My suggestion is to first take up the CAP Boundary and Scope of Work responses. Once that is approved, then the Rezoning and Special Exceptions can be heard at a separate hearing. This will give everyone the best chance to make the right decision on what is, after all, the gateway to Siesta Key and will be in place for years to come. None of us want a repeat of the old Quay project at such a premier location.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please feel free to call if you have any questions at all.

Sincerely,



Morgan R. Bentley
For the Firm

- cc: Mike Lepore
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