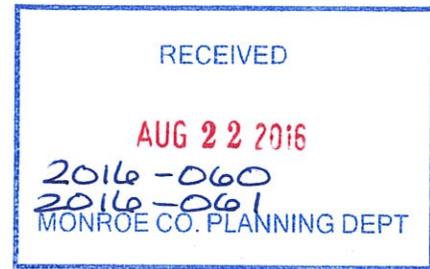


August 19, 2016

County of Monroe  
Planning and Environmental Resources  
2798 Overseas Highway, Suite 410  
Marathon, Florida 33050



Attention: Mayte Santamaria, Senior Director and Planning & Environmental Resources

RE: Variance Request, Gulf Drive, Lot 12, Block 28, Amended Plat of Key Largo Park  
(PB 3, PP 62) Real Estate No.: 00529300 (File#2016-060)

Variance Request, Gulf Drive, Lot 13, Block 28, Amended Plat of Key Largo Park  
(PB 3, PP 62) Real Estate No.: 00529310 (File#2016-061)

Dear Ms. Santamaria,

First, when I saw the gentleman posting the notice for what is now 16 Gulf Drive, I inquired as to what was being built. He assured me that it would be a small house. I had no reason to doubt that, and in hind sight, I should have researched the matter myself.

Although there are no architectural design guidelines, it was suggested on the Key Largo Master Plan in 2004. There are multiple causal factors to be considered when building large homes on small lots in close proximity to existing homes. One is the architecture of the new home being built in in-fill or Tier III lots and how it impacts an older established community. The Key Largo Park subdivision was platted in 1952 and amended in 1954. Some homes were built in the 1950s, on ground level according to the Building Code of 1954. With a boon in the 70s, multiple homes were built, again on ground level and/or stilted. Those homes pale in height and size to the newly developed homes in this sub division. "New Homes Built Within Existing Established Neighborhood", (<http://www.vujovich.com/all-blogs/articles/new-homes-built-within-existing-established-neighborhood/>)

The development of homes on lots of 2,500 square feet with variances creates crowding, which creates stress and depression. "Densityarchitecture, social and architectural implications of high density" (<https://densityarchitecture.wordpress.com/2013/09/28/social-and-architectural-implications-of-high-density/>); "Encyclopedia of Human Behavior, 2nd Edition, Crowding: Effects on Health and Behavior Abstract" (<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/B9780123750006001178>). These issues may also be mitigated by architectural design guidelines, and the purchase of these small lots by the County, to create passive parks within the community for cohesiveness and a better sense of community.

In addition to reduced quality of life, these homes create a "Heat Island Effect". As stated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency: "Heat islands can affect communities by

increasing summertime peak energy demand, air conditioning costs, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, heat-related illness and mortality, and water quality." (<https://www.epa.gov/heat-islands>) Some of the plans for mitigation are listed in the Key Largo Master Plan of 2004. The model I'll use is 16 Gulf Drive, and after reviewing the building permit, found that only one eight foot tree would be placed on the property.

The United States Census shows a 2010 population at 10,433 with a population in 2014 of 10,781 in Key Largo. As to ownership versus vacant homes, (A housing unit is vacant if no one is living in it at the time of enumeration, unless its occupants are only temporarily absent. Units temporarily occupied at the time of enumeration entirely by people who have a usual residence elsewhere are also classified as vacant.) the United States Census reports from 2007-2011, showed an estimated total housing units in Key Largo at 8,479, with ownership at occupied 4,672 and vacant at 3,807. During that same period in 2010-2014, there was a slight increase in housing to 8,692 with occupied at 4,395 and vacant at 4,297, showing an increase in vacant units of nearly 50% of the total ownership.

([http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community\\_facts.xhtml](http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml))

Left up to interpretation, we see a substantial increase in second or rental homes. With that increase, we have increased traffic, and an increased need for parking. Just a quick review of the neighboring homes, show they are owned by corporations, LLC, and persons outside of Monroe County. The properties listed above are currently used as overflow parking for neighboring homes. Once the homes are built, there will be overflow parking into the streets, along with the new owners need to park in front of their own home. Once again, the parking at these homes is for compact cars, with full size trucks and SUVs hanging in to the street.

With increased traffic, urban sprawl, i.e. McDonalds, crowding, overheating, and stress, there shows an increase in crime. Although from 2014 to 2015 there shows an overall decrease of -9.8% from 2014, according to Florida Department of Law Enforcement, there has been an increase from 2011 to 2015 in aggravated assaults, burglary, and larceny.

(<http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/cms/FSAC/County-Profiles/Monroe.aspx>)

We can mitigate the negative effects on our community. I believe an updated Key Largo Master plan, including architectural design guidelines, with community involvement is necessary, as the demographics have changed since 2004, be incorporated into and compliant with the Monroe County Comprehensive Plan as updated. That the community feels that they are an important part of their neighborhood and that it's not pointless to voice their opinion, that it is their First Amendment right to freedom of speech. That the community be validated and encouraged as part of the collective.

As to the builder(s) in our sub division, and there are many, they appear to have utilized the Code to the fullest extent allowable, and as much as I disagree the row house style, and their massive size, the closeness to the property line, and the lack of property, parking, lack of landscaping, increased heat, and stress, it was approved, and I respect their right to build. I hope they will self-regulate by placing privacy shutters on tall windows, buffer hedges, and privacy fences, and utilize some of these lots for overflow parking (if allowed). That the construction noise follow the noise ordinances, as there are persons with disabilities, children, families who work at night,

and others who work in early mornings in close proximity to the construction. Not only will the new buyers appreciate that bit of privacy and savings on electricity, the long term, permanent residents would be less stressed and more comfortable in their own homes. That this County purchase some of these small 50 x 50 lots, and create passive parks within the sub division. This has to be about the whole.

Thank you to my neighbors, who stood up and were counted, and those who supported the cause, as well as to those Government employees who spoke to me with kindness. Again, classes held during peak availability of community members on building and zoning policy, Key Largo Master Plan, and Monroe County Comprehensive Plan would be an absolute plus towards better community peace.

I will not attend the meeting, because certain variables may prevent me; including my husband's request that I do not go alone. With modern technology, it would benefit the collective members of the community by having Video conferences at Key Largo and Key West government center, while you stay stationary in Marathon. This type of communication is already utilized in the 16th Judicial Circuit, as well as the Key Largo Master Plan for certain circumstances. This will also meet the concerns of the community, as well as provide videos of the meetings versus the added expenditure of a court reporter.

Very truly,

Mrs. June Vander Wyden

/jvw