

Linkous Consulting

Evangeline Linkous, PhD, AICP

TO

March 3, 2026

Chuck Varadin
Marion County Growth Services
Chuck.Varadin@marionfl.org
2710 E. Silver Springs Boulevard
Ocala, FL 34470

Dear Mr. Varadin:

I am writing to provide a position statement on the failure of the county attorney and planning department to comply with the County plan and administrative rules regarding the rezoning of parcel 02781-000-00 (Case 260207ZP).

- Marion County Land Development Code 4.2.31(B) on Permitted Uses in a Planned Unit Development (PUD) requires that a PUD establish all permitted and special uses by one of the following 1) reference to one or more zoning classifications; 2) an independent list of specific uses for the PUD; or 3) an independent specific list of prohibited uses for the PUD. The PUD for Parcel 02781-0000-00 was approved for Permitted Uses associated with the Recreational Resort zoning designation, as evidenced by 1) the reference to the Recreational Resort zoning classification; and 2) listed uses, which all align with Permitted Uses allowed in the Recreational Resort zoning classification.
- The identified intent and character, including amenities, of the approved PUD is Recreational Resort. The approved PUD does not include public amenities and, to the degree that amenities are identified, these are private and small-scale and align with Recreational Resort.
- The Development Review Committee (DRC) approved Site Plans that include changes that are specified for review and approval before the Board per LDC Section 4.2.31.K(2), raising issues of application of correct law and legal delegation of authority. The changes include changes to PUD amenities including size and location, which are central to PUD intent and character.
- Adjacent landowners were unaware of the DRC's decision to change the use of the property because it was not a public process or notified with a legal advertisement.

- The Staff Report indicates, “The PUD proposes text changes that will enable non-RV user day-use operations of the RV Park amenities (themed recreation area – pool, bar/restaurant, play facilities, etc.) at the determination of the developer/operator.” These identified amenities (a themed water park with bar and restaurant facilities for which day passes will be sold) dramatically change the uses, intent, and character from the approved PUD.
- Per FLUE Policy 5.1.2., the burden is on the Applicant to demonstrate that this zoning change is compatible with surrounding development and consistent with the plan through evaluation of factors such as: potential need for improvements to public facilities or services; impacts to environmentally sensitive areas, agricultural activities, and rural character; consistency with the urban growth boundary; consistency with the LDC and Comprehensive Plan; compatibility with surrounding land uses; and evaluation of water supply. These conditions are not met.
- The change to public amenities for a themed water park with bar and restaurant facilities for which day passes will be sold is inconsistent with Policy 3.3.1 of the Future Land Use element, which specifies that “all Zoning Changes and Special Use Permits within the Farmland Preservation Area be consistent with and preserve, protect, support, and enhance the rural, equestrian, and farmland character of the Farmland Preservation Area.”
- The change to public amenities is not compatible with surrounding properties that are predominately rural, agricultural, and low-density residential in character.
- Adjacent landowners were unaware that the Board’s decision on February 17, 2026 provides for a change in use at the property because it was not notified as such.

My analysis is based on public information including Municode and the Marion County website as well as consultation with County Staff. I possess the requisite specialized knowledge, skills, experience, and training as evidenced by my PhD and Master degrees in Urban and Regional Planning, record of peer-reviewed research publications on land use planning and more than 20 years of experience in the urban planning profession.

Sincerely,

Evangeline Linkous

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