

Date: March 30, 2023  
To: Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Board  
From: Ellen Hardgrove, City Planning Consultant  
XC: Brett Sollazzo, Administrative & Permitting Manager  
Sandy Riffle, City Clerk  
Drew Smith, City Attorney  
Allen Lane, CPH Engineering, City Engineering Consultant  
Jim Winter, CPH Engineering, City Landscape Architect Consultant  
Re: Suncoast Special Exception Amendment

**I. Background**

This is a request for an amendment to a special exception that was approved in 2016 for property located on the north side of Mary Jess Road, west of the railroad; i.e., the Suncoast Materials property. A railroad spur separates the property into two areas; the proposed amendment relates to the portion north of the spur as outlined in Exhibit 1.

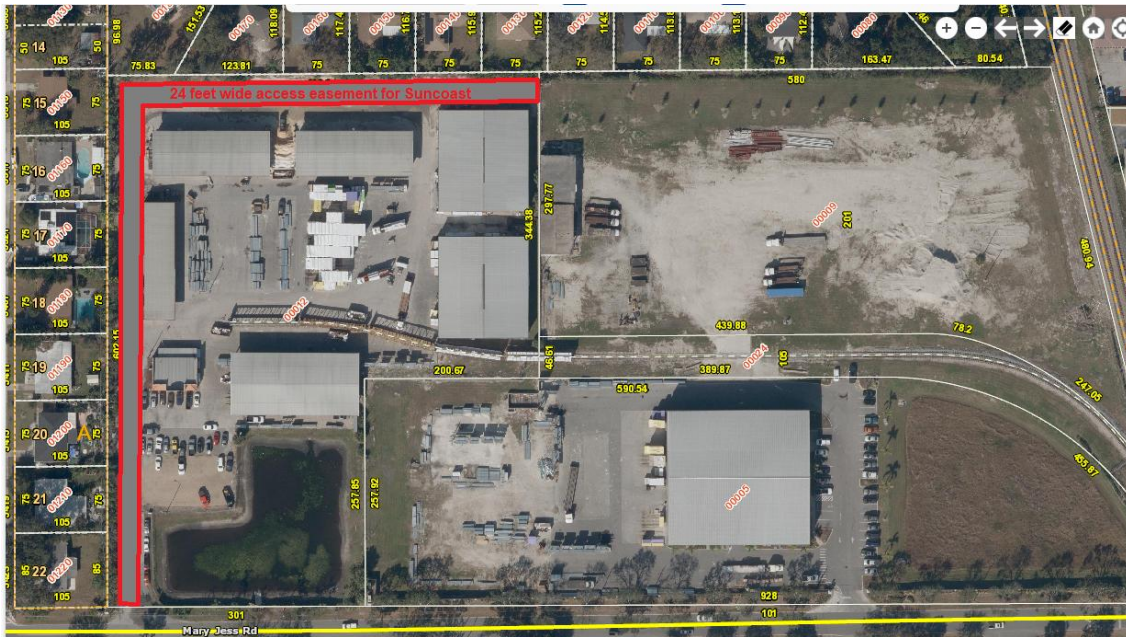
**Exhibit 1 – Subject Property**



Access to the northern portion is not through the southern portion as the property owner does not have the legal right to cross the spur. Legal access to the northern portion is, according to the applicant, by a 24 foot wide access easement that extends ±450 feet from the northwest corner of the property along the north property line of the adjacent property (Rosen Materials) and then turns south for ±542 feet along that adjacent property’s west property line, connecting

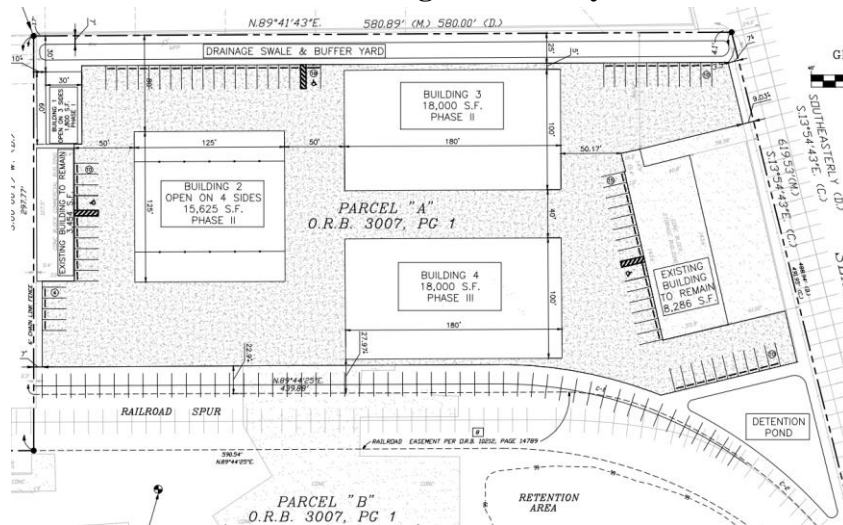
in this location to Mary Jess Road. Exhibit 2 highlights the location of the access easement.

### Exhibit 2 - Access Easement



The special exception that was approved in 2016 was for outdoor storage of merchandise, parts or other equipment; building material storage and sales (new, no junk or used material), and a storage and wholesale distribution warehouse adjacent to a residential zoning/residential future land use. As is required for an application for a special exception, a site plan was submitted with the 2016 request, which is copied to Exhibit 3. That plan included five buildings on the north side of the railroad spur ranging from 1,800 to 18,000 square feet, with the proposed access via across the existing access spur

### Exhibit 3 – Original Site Layout



The approval included 13 conditions to ensure land use compatibility with nearby residential uses, including the following; the complete list of conditions is included in the appendix of this report.

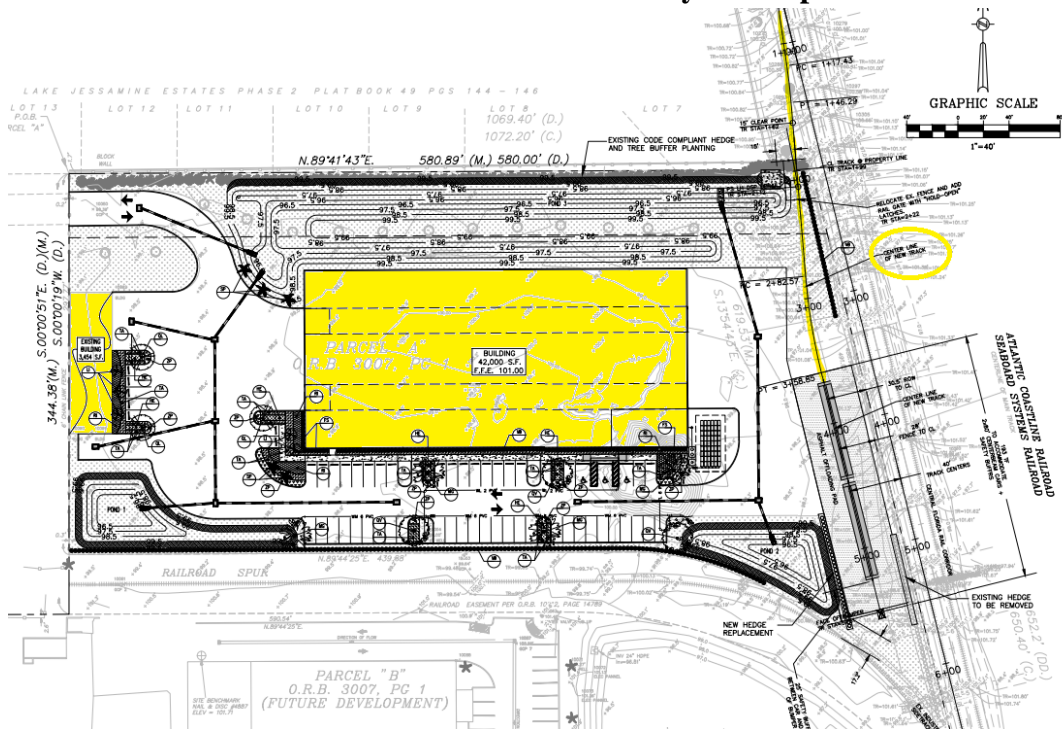
- A minimum 50 feet wide buffer along the northern property line, adjacent to lots of Lake Jessamine Estates, Phase 2 to be completely opaque from the ground up to a height of at least eight feet and a masonry wall.
- Vehicular use areas, storage of materials, and accessory structures are prohibited within the buffer area.
- Buildings onsite shall be limited to one story and a maximum of 35 feet in height.
- Stacked material and equipment stored onsite shall be limited to a maximum height of 25 feet.
- Storage located within 50 feet of the north and south lines of the property shall be limited to 10 feet in height.
- Applicant shall install appropriate signage on the property to indicate no truck traffic west bound on Mary Jess Road.
- Hours of operations shall be limited to 6 a.m. to 6p.m.; Monday through Saturday.

Although the site plan shows the approved use was on the north side of the railroad spur, Council allowed its construction on the southern portion of the property due to legal issues with crossing the spur. Since the layout of the currently proposed use is substantially different than that considered during the 2016 special exception public hearings, the new development proposal requires re-analysis.

## II. Characteristics of Proposed New Site Plan

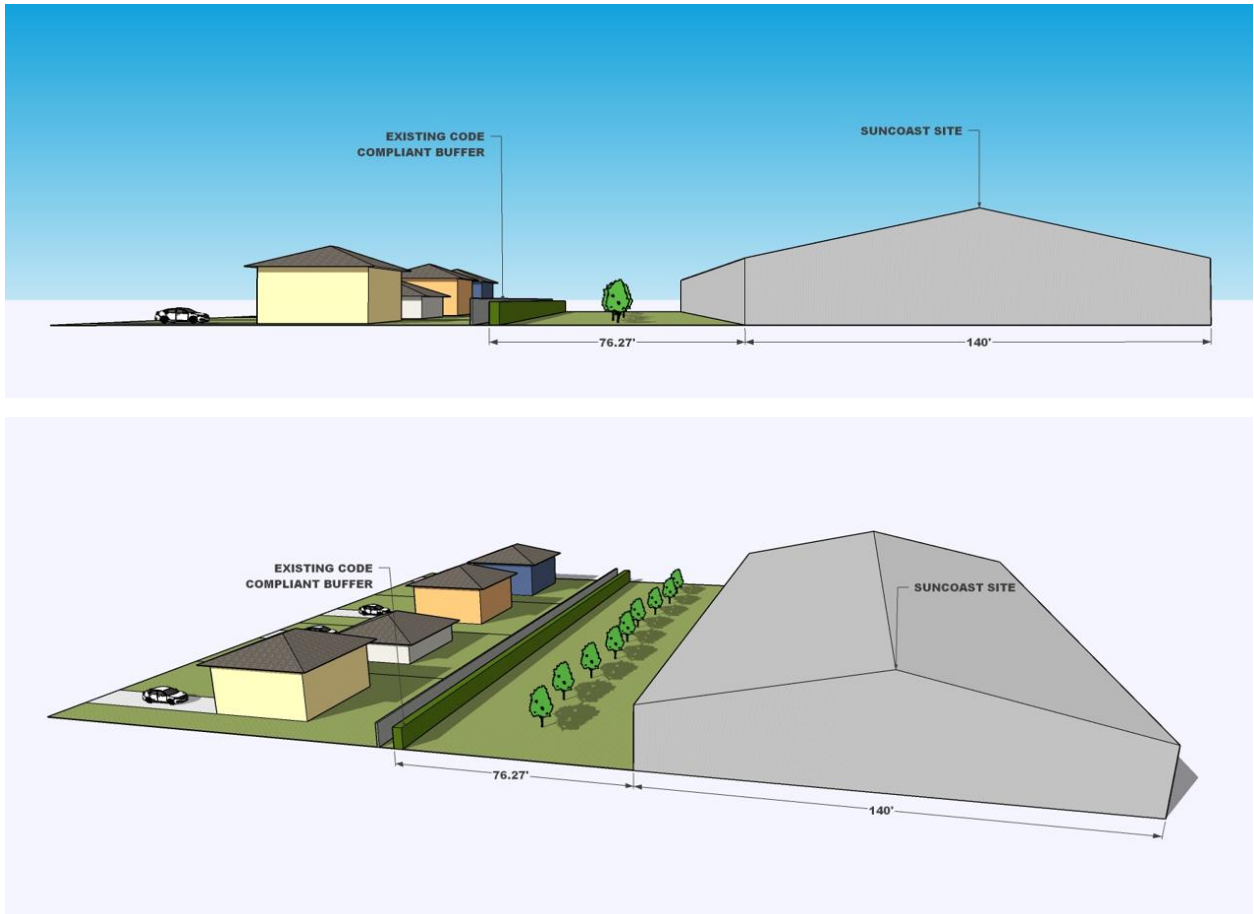
The current proposal includes construction of a 42,000 square foot building and the addition of a rail spur terminating into loading/unloading platforms; an existing 3,454 square foot building is proposed to be retained. Exhibit 4 highlights the placement.

**Exhibit 4 – Current Site Layout Proposal**



The size and height of the new building will create an imposing mass for the adjacent residential uses. The side facing the residential lots is 300 feet long and 35 feet in height, spanning four houses. Exhibit 5 attempts to provide a comparison of the residential scale with the proposed building.

### Exhibit 5 - Mass Comparison of Adjacent Uses



As shown in Exhibit 6, existing trees on the residential properties could soften the mass to some extent, but many views from these houses will have an unobstructed view of the large building and operations.

### Exhibit 6 – Trees on Adjacent Residential Lots



Additional trees have been planted on the Suncoast property south of the north property line; however, they remain young and do not yet provide significant buffering. There is also concern that these trees will not survive given the design of the proposed stormwater management ponds. Furthermore, the design of the pond will likely eliminate the hedge along the wall and two of the recently planted trees on the west end.

A review by the City’s landscape architect notes that if approved, at a minimum, additional buffering will be needed to lessen the impact of the mass of the proposed building. One option to mitigate the impacts would be to require a vegetative screen wall similar to the below images of Exhibit 7. This product is Greenscreen and can be a continuous screen or can be segmented; for example, centered between the trees along the north property line. Another option could be to require architectural detailing of the building façade.

**Exhibit 7 – Options for Mitigating the Mass of the Proposed Building**



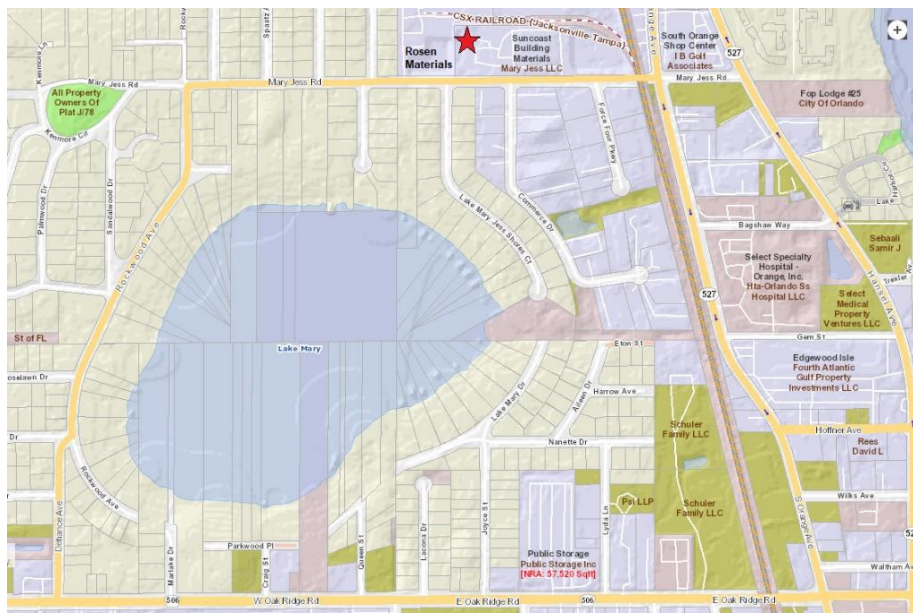
Even with additional landscaping, some impacts may not be able to be mitigated. Whereas the building is proposed to be designed to allow internal loading and unloading (inside the building), which is intended to minimize outside loading and unloading activities, the staging of trucks outside of the building waiting to load or unload would create a nuisance to the adjacent residents.

In addition to the potential impacts to the adjacent residents, the proposed use will also directly impact residential uses on the north and west sides of the Rosen Materials property. According to the application, 110 additional vehicles will use the driveway on the Rosen Materials property on a daily basis: 55 entering the site and 55 exiting, with 30% of these vehicles being large heavy trucks.

During the morning peak hour, 22 vehicles are anticipated to be going into the subject property and 12 will be exiting, with the hours of operation potentially starting at 6 a.m. During the evening peak hour, 7 vehicles are anticipated to be entering the subject property and 20 exiting.

This increased truck/vehicle use on the Rosen driveway will also impact the neighborhoods on the south side of Mary Jess Road including those along Chenault Avenue and Lake Mary Jess Shores Court, and potentially the neighborhoods to the west along and off of Rockwood Drive/Defiance Avenue since Rockwood/Defiance provides a direct connection to Oak Ridge Road as shown on Exhibit 8. The condition of the 2016 special exception to limit all vehicles from turning westbound on Mary Jess may be difficult to enforce unless the Rosen Materials owner agrees to erect a sign on their property as was required by the 2016 conditions of approval: “Applicant shall install appropriate signage on the property to indicate no truck traffic west bound on Mary Jess Road.”

**Exhibit 8 - Area Road Network**



Another access impact will result from a contemplated railroad spur entering at the northeast corner of the site, directly abutting residential lots. The estimated location is shown on Exhibit 9; the spur has not yet, though, been approved. While these impacted residents currently abut the railroad track, there will be increased noise from the switching activity from mainline to spur; plus, the existing vegetation in or hanging over the railroad right-of-way that currently provides some buffering for these residents will be eliminated.

**Exhibit 9 – Potential Spur for the Subject Property**

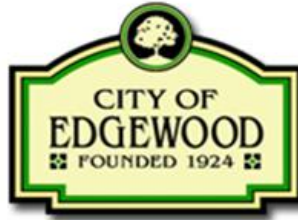


The connection of the spur and off-loading of the freight will also impact the ability to screen the use from the tracks, which was a condition of the 2016 approval: “A continuous hedge at least three feet high and 50 percent opaque at planting, of a species capable of growing to at least five feet in height and 75 percent opaqueness within 18 months shall be planted and maintained along the east property line south of the existing wall.” This hedge was intended to provide aesthetic buffering to the site as the commuter train passes this site several times a day. If the request is approved, this hedge needs to be required or have a decorative wall or Greenscreen substitute, with evergreen trees or palms to soften the height and size of the building and the loading/unloading areas.

**III. Code Requirements for Approvals of Special Exceptions and Staff Recommendation**

Per Code Section 134-405(a), approval of special exceptions must be in consideration of the character of and impact to the surrounding land use. As stated in Code Section 134-104, a special exception shall not be approved by the City Council unless and until the City Council makes a finding that the granting of the special exception shall not adversely affect the public interest. This has not been proven. Staff recommends denial.

Confirmation of Special  
Exception approval on subject  
property with conditions



September 29, 2016

Sam Sebaali, PE  
President  
FEG  
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Orlando, FL 32809

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**RE: 2016-SE-03** Code 134-405 (b)(10) Outdoor storage of merchandise, parts or other equipment

**2016-SE-04** Code 134-405 (b)(11) Building material storage and sales (new, no junk or used material)

**2016-SE-05** Code 134-405(b)(14) Storage and wholesale distribution warehouse adjacent to a residential zoning district or property with a residential future land use designation, including those across a right-of-way.

Sam:

This correspondence serves to confirm that on September 12, 2016, the City of Edgewood's Planning & Zoning Board considered your client(s) application for the variances noted above. The Planning & Zoning Board forwarded a recommendation for approval with eight (8) conditions to the City Council. In their regular City Council meeting held on September 20, 2016, City Council approved the Planning & Zoning Board's recommendation along with their conditions, and added four conditions. The following conditions were included in the approval of the above referenced conditions:

1) A "Type A" landscape buffer shall be provided along the northern property line, adjacent to lots of Lake Jessamine Estates, Phase 2. This buffer is required to include a masonry wall. The existing wall along the north property line can be used to satisfy the masonry wall requirement.

Landscaping adjacent to the wall shall include planting large, non-deciduous trees or shrubs that will achieve a dense continuous visual screening from eight feet to at least 25 feet in height. Shade trees for each 40 lineal feet or fraction thereof shall be planted within the buffer area.

The buffer area may be used for stormwater management, provided that the buffer yard screening requirements are maintained. Vehicular use areas, storage of materials, and accessory structures are prohibited within the buffer area.

2) Buildings onsite shall be limited to one story and a maximum of 35 feet in height.

3) Stacked material and equipment stored onsite shall be limited to a maximum height of 25 feet.



- 4) A six (6) feet wide landscape buffer shall be planted and maintained along the property's Mary Jess Road frontage. One understory, non-deciduous shade tree shall be planted within the Mary Jess Road buffer for each 20 linear feet, or fraction thereof. The trees can be grouped for aesthetic purposes, but a distance between groupings shall not exceed 60 feet. The buffer shall also include a continuous hedge at least three feet high, and 50 percent opaque at planting of a species capable of growing to at least five feet in height and 75 percent opacity within 18 months.
- 5) A continuous hedge at least three feet high and 50 percent opaque at planting, of a species capable of growing to at least five feet in height and 75 percent opacity within 18 months shall be planted and maintained along the east property line south of the existing wall.
- 6) Water efficient plants in the onsite landscaping are encouraged. A permanent underground central irrigation system providing 100 percent coverage of all landscape/buffer areas is required.
- 7) If the wall along Mary Jess Road remains, the wall shall be re-painted in earth tones to blend in with the landscaping.
- 8) Truck traffic is prohibited on Mary Jess Road west of Chenault Avenue.
- 9) Applicant shall install appropriate signage on the property to indicate no truck traffic west bound on Mary Jess Road.
- 10) Storage located within 50 feet of the north and south lines of the property shall be limited to 10 feet in height.
- 11) Hours of operations shall be limited to 6 a.m. to 6p.m.; Monday through Saturday.
- 12) In addition to being painted, the wall shall be restored to good repair
- 13) Limited to one vehicular access curb cut from the public right-of-way.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Bea L. Meeks, MMC, CPM, CBTO  
City Clerk  
[bmeeks@edgewood-fl.gov](mailto:bmeeks@edgewood-fl.gov)

