

Lake Park Town Commission Meeting - May 7, 2025

Testimony by Michael Steinhauer 435 Greenbriar Drive, Lake Park

Good evening. I want to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to the Town Manager, our Honorable Mayor and the Commission, for seeking 3rd party consultation on the growth and development issue, and for their holding the **April 26 community workshop**. It meant a great deal to residents to have a forum where our voices could be heard. We value transparency and participation, and that event showed a clear willingness by town leadership to listen.

At that standing room only workshop, one message came through loud and clear: **Lake Park residents overwhelmingly support a small-scale, walkable, historically respectful downtown**—one that reflects our Comprehensive Plan, that calls for small-scale development.

And yet, in the past several years under the former Town Manager, **amendments were made to allow buildings 12 stories and higher**, a glaring contradiction of the vision laid out in the Plan.

Town Attorney **Thomas Baird** has raised his concerns repeatedly. For instance, in his April 2023 memo, he warned that the “bucket of units” approach—averaging 48 units per acre—is not only poor planning but also not supported by **Florida Statute 163.3177(6)(a)**. He noted internal inconsistencies between Policy 12.2 and both Policy 12.1 and Objective 12. He further objected to height waivers allowing up to four stories of structured parking, calling it bad planning that should be revisited.

Unfortunately, these concerns have yet to be addressed.

Tonight, I respectfully request that this Commission: first, **void the waiver request on the table now for this high-rise proposal**. Then move **forward with amending the recent zoning changes to bring them back into alignment** with the Comprehensive Plan and state law. This isn't about stopping progress, it's about shaping the right kind of progress. Development should respect our heritage, scale, and sense of place.

We believe that with our new Town Manager, current Mayor, and most Commissioners, **Lake Park has a renewed sense of partnership for a better future—one where the voices of residents are truly heard and respected on this and other issues.**

The resident-focused movement that has come alive will not disappear until the final votes are cast and we can rejoice in savoring the small-town culture and feel that motivated us to invest here and to call Lake Park our home.

Thank you for your service, and for continuing to listen to your community.