

Testimony Before Lake Park, FL Commission 9/03/2025:

Public Comment on Terminating the Relationship with Forest Development

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I have previously appeared before you on several community issues, one of which focused on the Mayor, Commissioners, and Town Manager's gun violence safety, and another about the personal and professional value systems necessary for you to make difficult decisions. As a private resident, and as a leader of a local resident engagement nonprofit, I have strived to be of good faith, thoughtful, and empathetic, serving as your community partner.

Tonight, I will speak because I think we are soon at a cross-roads decision about P-3 and Forest Development, which in my view also encompasses consideration of the PADD project and Nautilus status. I seek a brave, value-driven Mayor or Commissioner to consider a motion I will suggest.

[Regrettably, I do not have the allotted time necessary to cite all 22 of my *Whereas* preambles – I expect they are essentially correct. They support my motion and are for you to digest]

- 1) *Whereas all remaining Developer projects fundamentally alter the character of the small town feel residents hold so dear.*
- 2) *Whereas it was widely reported in public media sites that the Lake Park Comprehensive Plan, several changes in zoning codes, and new levels of density for the Nautilus project were inappropriately waived to accommodate the developer. This holds true with the PADD proposal.*
- 3) *Whereas the town attorney does not recommend the changing of the purpose and intent of Ordinance 78-70 and associated State statutes as sought by the Developer.*
- 4) *Whereas the P-3 Comprehensive Agreement has been breached several times by Forest Development*
- 5) *Whereas critical path deadlines for P-3 were missed without formal extensions.*
- 6) *Whereas the P-3 agreement is a town-threatening 99-year lease with payments to the town for only 10.*
- 7) *Whereas the Developer has no apparent or known P-3 secured financing in place.*
- 8) *Whereas the town attorney, incorporating his vast experience in land planning and zoning, has regularly cited the challenges related to development of each Forest project.*
- 9) *Whereas the town attorney has publicly cited challenges related to the PADD project due to wastewater capacity.*
- 10) *Whereas the Developer achieves long term control over the P-3, 12-acre site for an entire century.*
- 11) *Whereas the marina project leaves little public space and parking.*
- 12) *Whereas the marina project proposed dock and fuel space satisfies the needs of only the wealthy citizens of Nautilus and large boats.*
- 13) *Whereas the town attorney has stated that the PADD project is not entitled to the height or density sought by the Developers application.*

- 14) *Whereas the PADD project establishes the unusual approach of allocating residential units based upon a basket or bucket of units, which does not provide equal opportunities for all property owners in the downtown area.*
- 15) *Whereas the town attorney has stated that the PADD projects are out of scale with the downtown.*
- 16) *Whereas the Developer has demonstrated poor lift station planning on the PADD project, to again request zoning waivers using an off property residential site.*
- 17) *Whereas the Developer is currently pumping 24/7 or intermittently, discharging dissolved and suspended solids into the lagoon at the marina.*
- 18) *Whereas Nautilus 220 has had Seven Clean Water Act violations in 2022 & 2025 for pumping into the lagoon.*
- 19) *Whereas the town attorney has deemed it reckless to have the Developer rely on a future Tri-Rail station for planning purposes around the PADD.*
- 20) *Whereas, some site plans, permits, and financing documentation are absent.*
- 21) *Whereas the Developer has threatened lawsuits if they don't achieve their for-profit goals.*
- 22) *Whereas the Developer has misrepresented their projects in social and mass media outlets.*

At the end of the day, how many reasons do we need to have all the stakeholders in this town endure the pain of working with Forest?

I encourage and suggest a motion: *“that Lake Park elected representatives and the Town Manager immediately cease all further negotiating, planning, and approval efforts with Forest Development projects of any sort”. Or similar language.*

Mr. Mayor, Commissioners, this necessary motion may result in legal action. Do not fear short-term challenges in this regard, as compared to the long-term loss of control of the P-3 space, and the sacrifice of intelligent agreements that benefit the town, and our value system.

Leadership is not about power; it's about purpose. You were chosen to serve, not to sit — lead boldly!

Your decisions today will shape generations tomorrow and your title gives you authority, but your actions earn you respect. Act undaunted and inspire trust.

Rise to the moment — residents are counting on you. Be the voice of courage in an environment of compromise.

Development in Lake Park is indeed needed. Invite a firm with a background of proven competency... creative, innovative, and resident focused. No high-rises.

Thank you for your consideration.