

From: John Leary <jlearylhtn@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, Jan 7, 2026 at 12:32 PM

Subject: Support for town manager

To: Roger Michaud <RMichaud@lakeparkflorida.gov>, Michael Hensley <mhensley@lakeparkflorida.gov>, Judith Thomas <jthomas@lakeparkflorida.gov>, <jlinden@lakeparkflorida.gov>, <morourke@lakeparkflorida.gov>

Cc: Richard Reade <rreade@lakeparkflorida.gov>

Exhibit B

Mr Mayor & Commissioners,

Recent news accounts involving Forest Development and its litigation against the town are very disturbing. Even more disturbing are inferences made by Forest maligning the character and professional competence of Town Manager Richard Reade. Furthermore, I'm more aggrieved by a rumor I heard today, suggesting that at least one commissioner is lobbying to oust Mr. Reade. I truly hope that rumor is unfounded. But if it is true, I must voice my opposition to it.

Despite his short tenure, Mr. Reade has been highly responsive to the needs of the existing Lake Shore Drive neighborhood. Frankly, he has been a breath of fresh air when compared to the disingenuousness and double dealing of his predecessor. I'll give you one example: at a public hearing, I raised the possibility of sunshine law violations. I was vilified by the former Town Manager for raising the issue. But we now know violations of the sunshine law have occurred. It's been widely reported. I could give you a dozen other examples involving that individual, but one will suffice. Who is Mr. Reade looking out for? I believe he's looking out for all of us.

When our association was in need of temporary parking during our repaving operations, Mr. Reade helped us coordinate with city departments and the Sheriff's Office to solve our problem. Back in December, we held an on-premises meeting between our residents, the mayor, the town manager and the new captain of the Sheriff's Office. Mr. Reade was fully engaged with our residents. He not only informed us, but also provided quick followup after the meeting from municipal department heads. As I stated at the meeting, Mr. Reade is a person of integrity, and I truly believe it.

Having been personally involved in litigation as head of our condominium association and as a business owner for 30+ years, I know lawyers can and do make outrageous allegations against opponents in court filings; and they do so without fear of retribution. Truth is not their goal; all that matters is the outcome for their client. It's why most of us hate lawyers!

Our neighborhood is a beneficiary of the improvements made at 220 Lake Shore Drive. But increasingly, I come to believe that Forest has not been a good neighbor. As is now well known, the concessions made to Forest for the P3 project were well below market rates and don't run with the land. Based on my own experience, that's unheard of. Years ago, on a private development project, I was committed to a 99 year ground lease with increasing annual payments over the life of the ground lease. That ground lease was with Lincoln National Life, a sophisticated realty player. As such, it's surprising that P3 payments terminate in the near term. Is it unreasonable for residents to expect more equitable terms from Forest? It seems to me Mr. Reade is being attacked because he's looking out for the interests of all of us. Forest needs to pay up!

Forest has had its way in this town for a number of years. But rather than have gratitude for what they've

succeeded in doing, they now attack our Town Manager. It's time for the Commission to rally around Mr Reade and vigorously pursue a better deal for the town. Better financial terms; certainly. Permanent public space; how could any public official expect less'?

I'm a pro-development guy. I'm delighted when a person takes a risk and succeeds. Forest's success should be applauded. But, Forest's attacks against our town manager are unwarranted. Forest is to blame for it's problem, not Mr. Reade. Mr. Reade is looking at things differently than his predecessor did. His are new eyes, with a new perspective; and we all expect a different outcome. It's time for the commission to distance itself from Forest; and get the best deal possible for our Town.

John

By the way, I will be forwarding this message to the residents of 501 Lake Shore and to our neighbors along Lake Shore Drive.

John Leary

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