

October 21, 2025

Public Comment: Levy County Planning Commission (Meeting 10/27/2025)

Subject: Opposition to Anderson Columbia Sand Mine and Special Exceptions for Sand Mining on Agricultural Land

To the Board,

I am writing to oppose the proposed Anderson Columbia sand mine Quasi-Judicial PETITION NO SE 24-01 and the continued use of special exceptions to allow sand mining on agriculturally zoned land in Levy County.

The original intent of these exceptions was to provide landowners with limited flexibility for temporary, low impact uses that aligned with the rural character and environmental priorities of our county. **Sand mining, however, is an industrial activity with lasting consequences--on aquifer recharge, water quality, traffic safety, wildlife and human health, property values, resident quality of life, and community well-being.**

The Anderson Columbia proposed site on Rt 24 between Archer and Bronson, Parcel 0322100200 located at 11986 NE State Rd 24 Archer, FL 32618...Section 26, Township 11, and Range 17, lies within a Rural Residential Neighborhood and environmentally sensitive area. Approving industrial-scale mining in this zone contradicts the spirit of the comprehensive plan and undermines the integrity of the zoning code.

The special exception process was never meant to serve as a workaround for incompatible land uses like industrial sand mining. It was designed to allow case-by-case discretion for activities that complement agricultural zoning—not override it. Recent court decisions have affirmed this, highlighting the legal and ethical risks of misapplying the code. The proposed Anderson Columbia mine **does not meet** the criteria to be allowed and would be incompatible land use for the area as said in the staff report. The Levy County Planning Commission also previously rejected this proposed sand mine.

Other reasons to reject this petition and the incompatible land use sand mine:

- The proposed 99-acre sand mine site is too close to residential areas. Immediately surrounding the mine site are numerous residential and Agricultural use properties, a church, and hundreds of Levy County Residents. Our road, NE 116th St, is part of Forest Park 3, an HOA governed community which has been in existence since the 1980's. NE 116th St consists of 14 homes and is the only road in Forest Park 3 which somehow received A/RR zoning and is the only road that is entirely within the sand mine buffer zone. Why has our street been separated from the rest of the community? Forest Park 3 in its entirety consists of over 281 properties which have not all been notified because of the slight change to the updated petition that lowered the notification distance radius. When University Oaks and the other surrounding communities are also included, there are hundreds of homes and thousands of residents that would be affected by the sand mine. **Removing 1 vehicle trip from the petition does NOT remove the sand mine impact to the much larger surrounding community. All residents in the surrounding neighborhoods have the right to know about the impact on their health and quality of life.**
- With water not being sourced on site, water trucks for dust control will need to come from other locations. These additional trucks have NOT been added to the newly proposed 24 round trips per day. Adding these trucks would increase the number of vehicles entering and exiting the mine and should then increase the number/area of residents needed to be notified. The original petition that was rejected by the planning commission said 25 round trips. This updated petition now says 24 round trips. **What happens when that 25th truck eventually shows up? And we know it will! It's too late to notify the residents who were not notified because of the earlier change. What is the penalty for this**

violation? Who will monitor this? I say again, removing one (1) vehicle trip from the petition does NOT remove the sand mine impact to the much larger surrounding community.

- Some sections of the staff report state “the criterion has been met” but with further common-sense review appear to not meet the criteria and should be reassessed.
- No environmental or human safety studies have been included.
- No report or study on potential harm from dust & pollution to area wildlife, livestock, horses and other animals has been included.
- Their best practice for hazardous spill cleanup should not be acceptable. Water in this area drains at an extremely fast pace and hazardous spills will be quickly absorbed into the soil. Hazardous cleanup would be extremely difficult. All cleanups would need to be professionally done.
- The traffic study used is outdated at almost 3 years old. An updated study should be done to ensure correct traffic volume is known and updated safety standards are met. I conducted my own east & west bound clicker count on 2 different days, 2 hours each day. I calculated up to a 27% increase over the old, outdated traffic study. My results are attached.
- Vegetation screens will not meet the 80% opacity requirements during different seasons or after storms. FDOT also sprays to kill vegetation along the highway further eliminating leaf cover. The proposed entrance to the mine will be approximately 525 feet, through some trees, from our back porch. At certain times we will have a clear view of the entrance and the trucks coming and going from the sand mine. This is not the view we expected to see from our home when we moved to this beautiful rural area.
- **Property values will decline causing financial harm to the residents. Selling property will also be difficult** (who wants to live next to a sand mine). On the zoning and property appraiser web pages there is nothing that warns home buyers of the potential to have a sand mine located next to their property. Special exceptions are not common knowledge. With A/RR zoning you expect agricultural use of the land like cows, crops, trees or residential homes...not an industrial sand mine.
- The report states that vibration will be zero to minimal. What is considered minimal or acceptable vibration? Nothing is said. Who is deciding what is acceptable? Anderson Columbia? There is no vibration now so Zero should be the acceptable answer. What’s the penalty for violating this?
- There is the Potential to do Harm to local Levy County businesses close to the site.

The minimum standards proposed throughout the petition should not be acceptable. If special exceptions continue to be allowed, people/companies seeking these special exceptions should be held to much higher standards to protect Levy County residents and the rural character of the area.

Levy County has enormous potential for quality growth that could benefit everyone. A sand mine in a residential area would be incompatible land use and does NOT promote that quality growth. The residents of our Rural Residential Neighborhood and Levy County deserve better.

I respectfully urge the Board to **reject** the Anderson Columbia proposed sand mine and all future special exception applications for sand mining on agriculturally zoned land and to initiate a review of the Land Development Code to clarify that **such uses are incompatible** with the long-term vision for Levy County.

Respectfully,

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