

From: [Thomas Trask](#)
To: [VanBargan, Clara](#)
Cc: [Robin Gomez](#)
Subject: FW: Families versus LLCs
Date: Thursday, April 11, 2024 2:35:27 PM

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Clara,

This is the email that the vice-mayor was referring to last night. Tom

	<p>Thomas J. Trask, Esquire Board Certified in City, County and Local Government Law AV Preeminent® Rated Attorney TRASK DAIGNEAULT, LLP Harbor Oaks Professional Center 1001 South Ft. Harrison Avenue, Suite 201 Clearwater, FL 33756 Phone: (727) 733-0494 (Ext. 103) Fax: (727) 733-2991 E-Mail: tom@cityattorneys.legal</p>
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From: Thomas Trask
Sent: Monday, April 8, 2024 11:32 AM
To: Ray Kerr <rkerr@madeirabeachfl.gov>
Cc: Robin Gomez <RGomez@madeirabeachfl.gov>
Subject: RE: Families versus LLCs

Ray,

See my comments in **red** below. Tom

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From: Ray Kerr <rkerr@madeirabeachfl.gov>
Sent: Saturday, April 6, 2024 3:57 PM
To: Thomas Trask <tom@cityattorneys.legal>
Cc: Robin Gomez <RGomez@madeirabeachfl.gov>
Subject: Families versus LLCs

Tom,

I was preparing to send a copy of the email below to RJ Myers of Shumaker Advisors. RJ re-introduced himself to me at a recent Legislative Update event at the Cambria and suggested that we should meet for coffee sometime. While I would like to do this, I'm not sure if I am allowed to. **There is nothing that would legally prevent you with meeting with Mr. Myers. My advice to you, however, would be for you to mention the issue at a BOC meeting and ask if the other Commissioners had an objection. More than likely, you will receive their support. That may be helpful in your discussions with Mr. Myers.**

Can I send an email to RJ Myers and include the email below in the body of the message? **Yes, but please review the BOC Rules of Procedure first. Please also make sure the email states that your email/statement reflects your own personal request/opinion and not that of the BOC.**

The email is a copy of an email that I sent to both Representative Chaney and Senator Diceglie. I sent both of these from my private email address and personal home address. I sent them as a private citizen / resident.

Am I allowed to meet with RJ with, or without the City Manager in attendance? **You are allowed to meet with Mr. Myers without the City Manager in attendance.**

I understand that previous Mayor(s) have had direct conversations with Representative Chaney and it didn't seem to be a problem.

Here is a copy of the email:

Senator DiCeglie,

I would like you to consider merging two initiatives into a single bill.

- 1. Reduction of Homestead Property Tax Increase from 3% to 2%**
- 2. HJR 1377 (2021), Disregard Flood Resistance Improvements in Property Value Assessments Measure**

Both initiatives deal with property tax assessments for homestead single family homes. It is my hope that you can merge these together and introduce a single bill in the upcoming session.

In 2021, House Joint Resolution 1377 was successfully introduced onto the Florida 2022 ballot as Florida Amendment 1,

This was the 2021 Disregard Flood Resistance Improvements in Property Value Assessments Measure.

Unfortunately, the measure needed 60% approval, and it fell short at 57.26% and was defeated.

My hope is that you are not finished with working to get this measure back on the ballot, but with a twist that would garner more approval from inland residents.

Merging two initiatives has been done successfully in the past.

In 2008, Florida Amendment 3 set a precedent that residents would approve a merged bill:

- 1. Incentivize residents to make home improvements to mitigate wind damage, and**
- 2. The installation of solar devices.**

It seems a bit of a stretch that these two types of home improvements could be combined into a single bill to improve the chance of success, but they were, and this measure was approved by 60.51% of the electorate.

According to the U.S. Census data, the resident population has been decreasing steadily on the Pinellas County barrier islands since 2000.

- Madeira Beach has lost nearly 14%**
- Indian Rocks Beach has lost nearly 29%**

Home values have significantly risen, but home ownership has changed from families that have a stake in their community to the investor that sees an opportunity for short term rentals.

We want our residents that can afford to rebuild their homes to current FEMA standards, to do so without the fear that they would be unable to stay in their homes due to increased property taxes. FEMA approved homes benefit the local municipality, and all

other branches of government. Any lost opportunity for property tax revenue increases is short-term and will easily be recovered when the improved homes are eventually sold at higher values than if the home were not improved and sold at distressed prices after a flooding event(s).

The barrier islands are a special place to call home, but unfortunately many residents are being forced to sell their homes and relocate to higher ground. The original homes that were built in the mid-1900's were all built as a single level rancher design with the living area only a few feet above the water. While this may have been okay decades ago, it is no longer. Flood maps ratings and insurance premiums make it unaffordable to maintain the status quo.

Many of these families that are leaving have lived in the area for decades. The incoming residents don't share the local history and may have different values.

The number of homestead properties are shrinking, and the electorate is shrinking.

A hurricane doesn't need to mean a total disaster. The State benefits when more homes are rebuilt to FEMA standards.

Local municipalities also benefit as they are only able to elevate the roads and infrastructure as the homes are brought into FEMA compliance.

I would encourage you to reach out to your colleagues, the Pinellas County Property Appraisers Office and to the National Association of Realtors for their input.

I look forward to your response.

Thanks,

Ray Kerr

City of Madeira Beach

Vice Mayor / Commissioner, District 2

Email: rkerr@madeirabeachfl.gov

City Cell: (727) 486-9996

Disclaimer: Under Florida law (Florida Statute 668.6076), email addresses are public records. If you do not want your email address released in response to a public records request, please do not send electronic mail to the City of Madeira Beach. Instead, contact the appropriate department/division.