

•••• PLEASE READ CAREFULLY ••••

**A CRITICAL MESSAGE TO ALL PROPERTY OWNERS
IN TARA PRESERVE and TARA GOLF AND COUNTRY
CLUB (TGCC)**

Summary. In December, Lake Lincoln LLC, the developer of 12 Oaks Plaza, filed a proposal with the Manatee County Planning Commission that would, if approved, allow them to make several changes in the 12 Oaks area, including rezoning the SW corner of SR 70 and Tara Blvd. for commercial use and permitting a variety of additional uses for sites within the Plaza, including construction of a cell tower

When the County Planning Department notified residents by postcard of the developer's proposal, several property owners from the Preserve and TGCC began meeting to study the implications of these changes. Their research demonstrated that the requested changes would negatively impact the safety, quality of life, and property values of homeowners in both the Preserve and Tara Golf and Country Club. Their findings are summarized on pages 2 and 3 of this document.

In January you were mailed an orange flyer describing the developer's proposal and its implications for the community. About 200 residents attended informational meetings to learn more about the issue. Several joined the advisory group, and others volunteered to help by speaking with neighbors, attending public hearings, and writing letters.

In early March, the Tara Master Association (TMA), which represents the interests of residents in both the Preserve and Tara Golf and Country Club, voted to make the advisory group an ad hoc committee of the TMA and authorized the use of some existing funds for expenditures incurred in fighting the developer's proposed changes, e.g., mailings such as this one and professional fees incurred to prepare and present our case at hearings with County Planners and Commissioners. The cost is \$20 per household.

The TMA's attorney has reviewed the matter and affirmed that the TMA's actions were consistent with the purposes, powers, and duties contained in the governing documents. The attorney went further to say that without our intervention, the proposed zoning and related changes may be detrimental to the community.

Additional Information

The proposal for land use changes in the 12 Oaks Plaza has been submitted to Manatee County by the developer, Lake Lincoln. Tara Master Association board and committee members have studied Lake Lincoln's proposal carefully because we wish to work collaboratively with developers to improve the community. However, we believe that some parts of their proposal are not in the best interests of the community and should be opposed.

Currently 12 Oaks Plaza is an unappealing hodgepodge. Its occupied buildings lack coherent design, signage, and landscaping. Incomplete and undeveloped sites are even more unsightly. Obviously the economic slowdown has impeded Lake Lincoln's ability to find suitable tenants for the undeveloped sites, hence their request that new land uses be added to the more than 80 already approved.

While we believe that the number of approved uses is sufficient and need not be modified, our primary concern is with the types of land uses approved and the appearance of the center once the sites are developed. What we are striving for is a well-planned, attractive, safe, and upscale commercial center that offers a variety of shopping choices and services. What we want to avoid is more of what we have now or, even worse, something that has an industrial look. Each major change is described below.

1. **Commercial development at the SW corner of SR70 and Tara Boulevard.** We oppose this change because:
 - The traffic at this intersection is already rated D on a scale where A is best and F is failed, for the afternoon traffic.
 - Entrances and exits on both roads would increase traffic congestion and lead to more U-turns at the Stone River stoplight.
 - Traffic would make it harder to enter and exit from Plantation Oaks condos.
 - The change would increase the number of vehicles weaving across bicycle and turn lanes on SR70, making a dangerous intersection even more hazardous.
 - The commercial development would reduce wetlands by one acre, and may lead to more development of the 10 acres of wetlands on this corner..
 - The commercial development would impinge on our gracious entrance to our community with a Commercial property and this would erode home values.

2. **Erection of a monopole cell tower.** We oppose this change because:
 - The cell phone tower that could be as high as 200 feet and as close as 400 feet from some homes in the Preserve.
 - Research indicates that such towers erected within 1500 feet of homes depress property values.
 - Current cell phone tower installations bear signs warning of potential danger, which we don't want in our shopping center.
 - Scientific research has demonstrated that emissions from cell phone towers cause a variety of harmful effects in laboratory animals and may be hazardous to humans as well.
 - These risks were sufficient to cause the International Association of Fire Fighters to oppose placing cell phone towers at their locations. We agree with the firefighters. Until further research clarifies the magnitude of health risks, the wisest course of action is to avoid erecting cell phone towers near residential areas.
 - Other areas are available that would not be so close to residences- but are not THIS developer's property.
 - If such a tower were erected, finding suitable tenants for the remaining undeveloped sites would be even more challenging. What kinds of businesses will want to locate next to a cell phone tower?

3. **Assisted living facility of up to 350 beds.** We support this use.
 - A significant number of retirees currently residing in Tara Preserve and Tara Golf and Country Club may have use for such a facility in the future, and its proximity to their primary residences would be an asset.
 - It should be noted, however, that residents would be less likely to select this facility if it were located adjacent to a cell phone tower.
 - We believe that this use is already approved and no change is necessary for such a facility to be built.
4. **Mini-Warehouse Storage** We support this use.
 - We believe that this use is already approved and no change is necessary for such a facility to be built.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THE ATTACHED PETITION TO SUPPORT YOUR LEADERSHIP WORKING ON YOUR BEHALF.** Please note that the petition does not address funding. Signing this petition does not mean you endorse the use of TMA funds. It simply means that you oppose the developer's proposal. If you agree that the developer's proposal should be opposed, please sign and return the enclosed petition by APRIL 15, 2010. Please note that every property owner as well as any other adult domiciled at the property may sign the petition. The more names we have, the stronger our case will be.
- **ATTEND PUBLIC HEARINGS ON THIS MATTER.** When public hearings occur, our elected officials will be influenced by the strength of the community's opposition to the developer's proposal. In the past, the developer has delayed proceedings until summer, when many property owners are away. For this reason, the strength of property owners' opposition needs to be verified now. That is the purpose of the enclosed petition.
- **STAY INFORMED.** The ad hoc Committee has been unsuccessful in getting more information from the developer about what uses would be made of particular parcels in 12 Oaks Plaza or what buildings on those parcels would look like. If we do get more information, we will post it on the 12 Oaks Plaza link at www.taramasterassociation.com, along with updates on the progress of our challenge. Please check it periodically.
- **Write to your representatives on the Board of County Commissioners:** Residents who wish to voice opposition to the developer's proposal should feel free to use any of the arguments made above in to write to the Manatee County Commissioners and newspapers listed on the next page.
- **Volunteer:** And finally, if you want to become even more involved, contact the chairperson of the ad hoc Committee on 12 Oak Plaza, Bill Pastori, at drnoyz1@verizon.net. Or call Bill at 941 752-9070

1) **Members of the Manatee County Commission**

All at P.O. Box 1000, Bradenton, FL 34203 or by email at

Gwen Brown, gwen.brown@mymanatee.org

Larry Bustle, larry.bustle@mymanatee.org

John Chappie, john.chappie@mymanatee.org

Ron Getman, ron.getman@mymanatee.org

Donna Hayes, donna.hayes@mymanatee.org

Joe McClash, joe.mcclash@mymanatee.org

Carol Whitmore, carol.whitmore@mymanatee.org

2) **Newspapers**

Bradenton Herald

102 Manatee Avenue West

Bradenton, FL 34205-8810

cwille@bradenton.com

Type "Letter to the editor" in the subject line

Sarasota-Manatee Herald-Tribune

P. O. Box 1719

Sarasota, FL 34230

Editor.letters@heraldtribune.com

Type "Letter to the editor" in the subject line

The East County Observer

8780 State Route 70, Suite 101

Bradenton, FL 34202

Eastcountyletters@yourobsERVER.com

Bradenton Times Inc. □

405 26 Avenue West □

Bradenton, FL 34205 □ □

Phone: 941-896-7857 □

Fax: 941-749-1505 □ □

Email: □ info@thebradentontimes.com

12 Oaks Plaza Petition

As property owners in (CIRCLE ONE) Tara Preserve or Tara Golf and Country Club, we believe existing zoning and land use provisions for the 12 Oaks Plaza area provide sufficient opportunities for development and should, therefore, be retained in their current form. We oppose requests for modifications to the TARA Development Order proposed by the developer, Lake Lincoln LLC. **And specifically,**

- 1) We oppose ANY AND ALL PROPOSED changes related to the 10 acre parcel on the SW corner of SR 70 and Tara Boulevard.
- 2) We oppose the proposed land use equivalency matrix that would allow conversion between approved uses.
- 3) We oppose construction of a monopole telecommunications tower that could be as high as 200 feet and as close as 400 feet to residences in Tara Preserve.

We withhold comment on remaining elements of the request until the developer provides more information on size and location. We hope the developer will work with the Tara Master Association, which represents property owners in both the Preserve and Golf and Country Club, to achieve a well planned, attractive, and safe commercial center that offers a variety of shopping choices and services.

Property Owner	Property Address	Phone	Email address
Print Sign		Home Cell	
Print Sign		Home Cell	
Print Sign		Home Cell	
Print Sign		Home Cell	

All property owners, as well as any other adults residing at the property listed above, are eligible to sign this petition. Signed petitions should be returned to the TMA office at 6602 Drewry's Bluff, Bradenton FL 34203 directly or by mail, or by fax (941-751-4637) or email at: TMA12Oaks@taragcc.com.