

## Tomoka Oaks Times Newsletter

*An Independent Newsletter Focused on Preventing  
Residential Development of the Tomoka Oaks Golf Course*

Dear Neighbors,

If you attended the Commission Hearing on Tuesday night, November 7, you probably felt like me. Just what the heck happened?

I am providing only brief highlights of the hearing. You can listen to the Tomoka Reserve portion of the meeting which begins around minute marker 40:00 at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4whfV-AGgPg>.

Many residents provided testimony, and I was allowed to be the first speaker since the City knew I represent 561 Ormond Beach households who oppose this development. You can download my speech [here](#). You may also wish to read the [Synopsis](#) of the prior 2006 Tomoka Oaks Golf Village PRD which I provided each commissioner prior to the meeting. This 2006 PRD retained the golf course property while clustering a limited number of condos and townhomes in the center of the golf course.

I was so impressed with the thoughtful testimony given by so many Tomoka Oaks, Escondido, and Trails residents who eloquently communicated their concerns and opposition. Thanks to the hard work of Darla and Doug Widnall of the Trails, the auditorium was filled with a sea of red **Save Tomoka Oaks** t-shirts worn by the majority of audience members. Without saying a word, those t-shirts sent a powerful visual message to the commission that we are united in our opposition.

BTW: I retained a court reporter to take minutes of the hearing which let the City and the developer know we are not passively sitting by while they determine the fate of our neighborhood and community. It was a worth while investment which captured key moments should we need to legally challenge any decision.

So what was the outcome on the hearing? In a nutshell:

- The Commission voted unanimously, 5-0, to send the application back to the Planning Board for revisions that would address outstanding issues, under stipulation any application on this land would remain a PRD. Two commissioners cited the 2006 PRD as one of the considerations for review.
- This decision was not one that I was expecting and took the developer by surprise as well. The day after the hearing, on November 8, Rob Merrell, the attorney for the developer, released a statement to the *Daytona Beach News-Journal* which stated:

*"We are disappointed that the City Commission denied our development proposal and instead ordered us back to the Planning Board, who - after three public hearings - voted to*

*recommend denial of our application.*

*The property owners of Tomoka Reserve were prepared to negotiate with the City Commission about any concerns they had regarding the application, but their request that we reduce the number of (house) lots by 50% is simply not a viable option for us. This unexpected order for a new development proposal is irregular, so we must take some time to evaluate the legal and planning options ahead of us."*

### ***So what might happen going forward?***

I am refraining from speculating. But I have informed our attorney Brent Spain of this hearing outcome to get his legal counsel.

I emailed Steven Spraker to ask about timelines for a new round of Planning Board hearings, and Steven replied: *I do not have any information or updates to provide. No dates have been established. If a Planning Board date is established it would be provided on the (city's) webpage and the distribution list.*

I will send future email blasts as I receive information on this ongoing process.

I did want to end this email with an excerpt from Max Ehrmann's inspirational writing "*Desiderata*" which says:

Whether or not it is clear to you,  
the universe is unfolding as it should.  
Therefore be at peace with God  
whatever you conceive Him to be.  
And whatever your labors and aspirations  
in the noisy confusion of life,  
keep peace with your soul.

So to all my supporters, I say, "One day at a time. One step at a time." I personally am trusting God to reveal the best outcome.

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Read the *Tomoka Oaks Times* newsletters at [tomokaoakshistory.com/newsletter](http://tomokaoakshistory.com/newsletter)

*Not giving in or up,*

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