

The SHORE LINE

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Noel Yancey - Editor

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A former town commissioner protested at a public hearing the evening of April 11 a proposal to lighten a restriction he said the town adopted 11 years ago in the hope it would prevent construction of any additional motels in Pine Knoll Shores.

JEROME PROTESTS

"It seems to me that to change the rules at this late date would be a little unfair," said Larry Jerome who served six years on the PKS

ZONING CHANGE

Planning Board and later three years on the Board of Commissioners from which he stepped down last December.

He said the zoning provision that limited hotels and motels to 10 bedrooms per acre - later lowered to 8 - was adopted in 1973 "after careful consideration" with the full realization it would not be economically feasible under it to build new hotels or motels in the town.

Jerome was the only person at a hearing before the Board of Commissioners, to voice outright opposition to the recommendations by the PKS Planning Board that would retain an 8-unit-per-acre restriction on condominiums but raise the restriction on hotels and motels from 8 to 20 bedrooms per acre.

The changes, which grew out of a study by Art Browne and Bob Armstrong, also would confine new hotels and motels to the area between the Coral Bay West condominiums and the town's eastern boundary, and would prevent the Ramada Inn or the Iron Steamer Inn from being rebuilt if they are ever more than half destroyed.

Spokesmen for the John Yancey Motor Hotel which is pressing a lawsuit against the town in an effort to get the courts to set aside the reduction in permitted density from 10 to 8 bedrooms per acre, indicated they considered the change from 8 to 20 units a big step in the right direction. However, they carefully refrained from saying whether it would be enough to satisfy them.

Warren Davis, attorney for John Yancey, said he thought a "more realistic density" would be 40 to 45 units per acre.

However, Andy Heatwole, a John Yancey vice president for real estate, said that 20 or 25 units "is certainly a heck of a lot better than eight."

Earlier Davis had said the John Yancey is prepared "to totally renovate" the motel which was built 18 years ago and would hope to operate it under a Quality Inn franchise.

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