

MINUTES OF THE TOWN COMMISSION MEETING TOWN OF LADY LAKE, FLORIDA

February 3, 2025

The regular meeting of the Lady Lake Town Commission was held in the Commission Chambers at Lady Lake Town Hall, 409 Fennell Blvd., Lady Lake, Florida, with Mayor Freeman presiding. The meeting convened at 6:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

INVOCATION

Pastor Tony Omerzu – Crossroad Community Church

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Mayor Freeman

ROLL CALL

Commissioner (Ward)	Present
Regan (Four)	YES
Gourlie (Two)	YES
Roberts (One)	YES
Sage (Five)	Excused
Freeman (Three)	YES

STAFF PRESENT

Bill Lawrence, Town Manager; Thad Carroll, Growth Management Director; Becky Higgins, Senior Planner; C.T. Eagle, Public Works Director; Lieutenant Rob Tempesta and Police Chief Steve Hunt, Lady Lake Police Department; Tamika DeLee, Human Resources Director; Nancy Wilson, Town Clerk; and Carol Osborne, Deputy Town Clerk.

Town Attorney Taylor Tremel was also in attendance.

A. CONSENT

1. January 22, 2025 – Town Commission Minutes

Commissioner Gourlie made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 22, 2025 town commission meeting; Commissioner Regan seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

**2. Consideration of Three Reappointments to the Parks, Recreation, and Tree Advisory Board.
(Town Clerk)**

Town Clerk Nancy Wilson stated the three reappointments are for board members who have been on the board for many years, and she recommends their reappointments.

Commissioner Roberts stated that she would like to discuss the Parks, Recreation and Tree Advisory board with the Parks and Recreation Director at a future commission meeting.

Commissioner Roberts made a motion to table item 2, under the Consent agenda; Commissioner Regan seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

B. TOWN ATTORNEY'S REPORT

**1. Ordinance 2024-25 – First Reading – Rezoning – Amending the Zoning Designation from Lady Lake Planned Unit Development (PUD) and Lady Lake Heavy Commercial (HC) to Lady Lake Planned Unit Development (PUD) for Property Owned by Benchmark Development 1, LLC, being approximately 67.73 acres; located Southwesterly of U.S. Highway 27/441, and North of Oak Street; Referenced by Alternate Key Numbers 3872772, 3872774, 3877865, 3878663, 1279445, 1770556, 3872777, 3872778, 3878664, 3948082, 3948083, 3948084, within Lake County Florida.
(Thad Carroll)**

Growth Management Director Thad Carroll stated that the applicant is Marty DelleBovi representing the Benchmark Development Group. The application was received on November 4, 2024. The combined size of the property is approximately 67.73 acres. The current Future Land Use designation is Lady Lake Commercial General – Retail Sales and Services, and the zoning request is Planned Unit Development (PUD). The present use of the property is a shopping center; the neighboring vacant property is included in the total acreage for this proposal. He noted that Kohl's, McDonald's and Tire Kingdom have been sold and are not under the control of the Benchmark Group.

The zoning designations of the adjacent properties: North – Heavy Commercial; East – Manufactured Home High-Density; South – Lake County Agricultural and Lady Lake PUD; West – PUD, Heavy Commercial and Public Facilities District.

Mr. Carroll advised the intent of the developer is to connect the proposed development on the east portion of the property with the existing development of Lady Lake Crossing. The applicant met with the Florida Department of Transportation to discuss a signal and connection with the tie-in at County Road 25/Teague Trail. Also, there will be a connection to Clay Avenue, allowing traffic to travel south to County Road 466.

Mr. Carroll stated that current zoning entitlements are all permitted uses in the Light Commercial, Heavy Commercial and Commercial Tourist zoning districts. The applicant is proposing 21 uses of retail, sales and services.

Notices to inform the surrounding 30 property owners within 150' of the subject property were mailed on Monday, December 30, 2024. The property was posted on Monday, January 6, 2025. To date, staff have not received any correspondence expressing support or opposition of this application.

At the January 13, 2025 meeting, the Planning and Zoning Board voted 4-0 to forward Ordinance 2024-25 to the Town Commission with the recommendation of approval.

Commissioner Roberts asked Mr. DelleBovi which retail services he has in mind for the project.

Marty DelleBovi, Executive Vice-President of Benchmark Group, 4053 Maple Rd., Amherst, NY

Mr. DelleBovi stated that his group was in partnership with Mr. Mayfield and his son. He stated that the original development proposal showed no continuous drive aisles which forced vehicles out of one development onto the highway to travel to another shopping development. The former developer did not want to make the inner road connections. When the deal fell through with the Mayfield's, the Benchmark Group purchased the property.

Mr. DelleBovi stated that they worked with town staff to design the road arteries to keep the traffic within the developments. The former developer did not complete the permitting for the traffic signal. He stated that Public Works Director, C.T. Eagle, has been very helpful and they met with FDOT and are set to submit the application for the traffic signal in March. He advised that the street signals that are in place currently will be removed and modified at the entrance of the development. Fennell Boulevard will continue across Hwy 27/441, and all the drive lanes from the existing Kohl's/Sportsman's Warehouse center will connect, resulting in connectivity through to Village Crossroads shopping plaza to Rolling Acres Road.

Mr. DelleBovi stated that the Fennell Boulevard cul-de-sac will be completed to Clay Avenue within the next two years. They are working on an agreement with Lake County to maintain the county portion of Teague Trail and there will be a drive lane leading to the traffic light by RaceTrac gasoline station. He stated that they are in communication with many retailers and outparcel businesses. The inline stores will continue from Sportsman's Warehouse.

Mr. DelleBovi stated that the St. Johns River Management permit is nearly complete. They are working with FDOT and the FEMA adjustments have been completed. He stated that by May 2025 they will submit the development order application to the town for the initial infrastructure, site work beginning later this year and anticipates retailers opening in the first and second quarter of 2026.

Mayor Freeman asked if the southern portion of the property will be the retention area.

Mr. DelleBovi stated that a detention pond is there currently, which is part of the St. Johns River Management District permit, and modifications will be made to that pond. He stated that street signals will be installed in that area and improvements to the sidewalks will be made as well.

Commissioner Roberts made a motion to approve Ordinance 2024-25 on first reading; Commissioner Gourlie seconded.

Commissioner (Ward)	Vote
Regan (Four)	YES
Gourlie (Two)	YES
Roberts (One)	YES
Freeman (Three)	YES

Motion passed by a 4-0 vote.

2. Ordinance 2024-30 — First Reading - Large Scale Future Land Use Comprehensive Plan Amendment – Sawmill Holdings, LLC — Change the Future Land Use Designation from Lady Lake Commercial Tourist (CT) to Lady Lake Rural Low Density (RLD) for One Property being approximately 52.2 Acres, owned by Sawmill Holdings, LLC, addressed as 3105 Hartsock Sawmill Road, within the Town Limits of the Town of Lady Lake, Florida. (Thad Carroll)

Growth Management Director Carroll stated that this ordinance is to change the Future Land Use Designation from Lady Lake Commercial Tourist (CT) to Lady Lake Rural Low Density (RLD) for one property being approximately 52.2 acres, owned by Sawmill Holdings, LLC. The application was received in December 2024.

In 2015, the future land use of the subject property was changed to allow for a proposed RV resort project via Ordinance 2015-04. This project was approved for 185 RV sites with a 4,500 square foot clubhouse, bath house, registration building, and park, but it never came to fruition. In 2018, the property owner recorded a conservation easement and a declaration of restrictions and covenants, in perpetuity; this was done without town review. This conservation easement only allows for two single family residences to be built within a 2-acre portion of the property. The current future land use does not allow for a single-family residence, making the property unusable. Impacts of the ordinance are minimal.

Mr. Carroll clarified that the town's LDRs would allow up to ten dwelling units per acre. However, due to the restrictions in the conservation easement, there will never be more than two dwelling units on the property.

The impacts of this amendment on town services are minimal; a lot of the property is rural and located in Lake County. Town property on the west side is zoned commercial.

The property will be serviced by a well and septic, should a residence be constructed. The subject property may only have up to two single family homes, having little demand on the public school system. Impacts on parks and recreation will be minimal. Hartsock Sawmill Road is maintained by Lake County and because of the limitations of the conservation easement, traffic should not exceed that of a single-family residence. Portions of the subject property are in flood zones.

Notices to inform the surrounding 15 property owners within 150' of the subject property were mailed on Monday, December 30, 2024. The property was also posted the same day. To date, staff has not received any correspondence expressing support or opposition of this application. When staff was on site posting the property, a neighboring property owner expressed his excitement that the property would be zoned to stay in character with the area.

Commissioner Roberts stated that the land has a conservation in perpetuity easement and asked if a subsequent landowner could revoke the conservancy easement.

Town Attorney Tremel advised that the rights run with the land and cannot be revoked.

Mayor Freeman confirmed with Mr. Carroll that there will be no impact on town services.

Mr. Carroll answered affirmatively.

Commissioner Gourlie made a motion to approve Ordinance 2024-30 on first reading; Commissioner Roberts seconded.

Commissioner (Ward)	Vote
Regan (Four)	YES
Gourlie (Two)	YES
Roberts (One)	YES
Freeman (Three)	YES

Motion carried by a 4-0 vote.

3. Ordinance 2024-31 – First Reading – Rezoning – Sawmill Holdings, LLC – An Ordinance Changing the Zoning Designation for Certain Property being approximately 52.2 Acres Owned by Sawmill Holdings, LLC, Located at the East End of Hartsock Sawmill Road from Commercial Tourist (CT) to Agriculture Residential (AG-1) within the Town Limits of the Town of Lady Lake, Florida. (Thad Carroll

Growth Management Director Carroll stated that on Thursday, December 5, 2024, an application was filed with the Town of Lady Lake by Virginia Brown on behalf of the property owner, Sawmill Holdings, LLC to amend the zoning designation of approximately 52.2 acres from Lady Lake Commercial Tourist to Lady Lake Agriculture Residential. He clarified that the Commercial Tourist designation does not allow single-family homes. Therefore, because the proposal stipulates a maximum of two residential units, the applicant must down-zone to a residential designation.

Mr. Carroll stated in 2015 the property was designated from Single Family Medium Density (RS-6) to Commercial Tourist via Ordinance 2015-05. That plan is no longer viable due to the conservation easement and declaration of restrictions and covenants, in perpetuity, that have been recorded on the property. The Lady Lake Agriculture Residential (AG-1) is appropriate for this property as it provides for the protection of interim agricultural pursuits in transitional or urbanized areas. The density shall not exceed one unit per acre. Most of the zoning designations of the adjacent properties are under Lake County's jurisdiction.

Notices to inform the surrounding 15 property owners within 150' of the subject property were mailed on Monday, December 30, 2024. The property was also posted the same day.

To date, staff have not received any correspondence expressing support or opposition of this application.

At the Planning and Zoning meeting on January 13, 2025, the board voted 4-0 to forward Ordinance 2024-31 to the Town Commission with the recommendation of approval. The second and final hearing will be scheduled pending the Florida State Land Planning Agency's review of Ordinance 2024-30.

**Commissioner Regan made a motion to approve Ordinance 2024-31 on first reading;
Commissioner Gourlie seconded.**

Commissioner (Ward)	Vote
Regan (Four)	YES
Gourlie (Two)	YES
Roberts (One)	YES
Freeman (Three)	YES

Motion passed by a 4-0 vote.

4. Ordinance 2024-32 - Small Scale Future Land Use Comprehensive Plan Amendment – T Lovell Alpha, LP – Change the Future Land Use Designation from Lady Lae Commercial General – Retail Sales and Services (RT) to Lady Lake Multi-Family Low Rise (MF-LR) for Three Properties being

18.5 Acres, owned by T Lovell Alpha, LP, addressed as 38624 and 38700 Rolling Acres Road, within the Town Limits of the Town of Lady Lake, Florida. (Thad Carroll)

Per the request by the applicant, this ordinance is tabled to the March 3rd, 2025, town commission meeting.

5. Ordinance 2024-33 — Rezoning – Amending the Zoning Designation for Properties Owned by T Lovell Alpha, LP, being approximately 18.5 acres Located South of Lakeview Street and East of Rolling Acres Road; Amending the Current Entitlements of the Planned Unit Development (PUD) Memorandum of Agreement within Lake County, Florida. (Thad Carroll)

Per the request by the applicant, this ordinance is tabled to the March 3rd, 2025, town commission meeting.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Lawrence reported that newly implemented live streaming of the meetings is averaging 30 viewers per meeting.

Mr. Lawrence stated the Mock Commission meeting with The Villages Civics class was held Thursday January 30. He acknowledged Julia Harris and Nancy Wilson who assisted in organizing this event, and to all the department managers who worked with the students during the mock commission meeting. He stated Mayor Freeman educated the student commissioners as to how to conduct the meeting and how to conduct themselves during the meeting. The teachers commented that this year's event was the most organized. This is the tenth year that the American Legion Ladies Auxiliary Post 347, The Villages Civics class, and the Town have collaborated for this event.

Mr. Lawrence advised that Mayor Freeman will be at the Farmer's Market February 4th from 11AM – 1PM. He stated that Mayor Freeman attends all the events and meets the new police officers. His enthusiasm is much appreciated.

The St. Patrick's Day Parade in Spanish Springs is Monday, March 17th at 3PM. To the commissioners who plan to participate, please let the police department know.

Mr. Lawrence stated that a workshop is scheduled for February 13th at 4 p.m. with a consultant who specializes in constructing police stations.

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Mayor Freeman asked the commissioners for their consideration in appointing Richard Masso to the Metropolitan Planning Organization Citizen's Advisory Committee. He stated this group discusses proposed projects with the MPO and gives their input. He stated Mr. Masso would be a

great addition to this group. He noted that most municipalities do not have a citizen representative.

Commissioner Regan asked if Mr. Masso is in favor of this appointment. Mayor Freeman stated that he has discussed this with Mr. Masso, and he agreed to the appointment.

Commissioner Gourlie made a motion to appoint Richard Masso to the Metropolitan Planning Organization Citizen's Advisory Committee; Commissioner Roberts seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Mayor Freeman stated at the January 22nd Commission meeting that Lake County Commissioner Leslie Campione proposed that the county should become a chartered county which would give them more authority over annexations. He reported that she did not get the votes required to move forward with this proposal.

Mayor Freeman stated he met with Councilman Rolfson, Mt. Dora; Clermont Mayor Tim Murray, and Amelia Smart who wrote the strategic plan for the Lake County League of Cities. He stated that Ms. Smart will begin working with the Lake County League to enhance its presence. He asked the commissioners for suggestions that would make the League more valuable to Lake County.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Carroll stated for the record that Ordinance 2024-32 and Ordinance 2024-33 have been tabled until the March 3, 2025, commission meeting.

ADJOURN

Being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.



Carol Osborne, Deputy Town Clerk



Ed Freeman, Mayor