



St. Armands Residents Association
PO Box 2482
Sarasota, FL 34230

November 7, 2019

Mr. Lawrence Burlison
Code Compliance Coordinator
City Hall
Sarasota, FL 34230

Dear Mr. Burlison:

One of our residents spent some time speaking with Brandon Soriano the other day about an issue of great concern to the St. Armands Residents Association: the commercialization of our single-family residential area.

A number of large, multi-bedroom/bathroom structures have been constructed by the same group on St. Armands, Lido Key and Lido Shores, two of which are now open for business as "hotels without parking." Two more are nearly complete and others are expected. In recent months our residents have observed multiple occupants beyond what would be considered normal family occupancy, many cars creating parking problems in the vicinity and excessive party noise at 216 Van Buren Place.

Observers have noted eight bedrooms with adjacent bathrooms at 328 Monroe Drive and similar concerns at 340 Jackson Drive. Conversations with construction workers have confirmed purpose-built rental housing far beyond our single-family zoning. Similar abuses have recently presented in other parts of the country, as well as our city, and one need look no further than 1406 Westway Drive, Lido Shores (involving the same group we are dealing with here).

To see the nature and extent of the problem, reference Sarasota Magazine article October, 2019.

As you know, the St. Armands residential community dates back nearly 100 years and generally provides a peaceful living environment for full and part-time residents, both property owners and renters, subject to the City Zoning Code. Various "use categories" are defined, including residential use (such as household living) and commercial use (such as hotel and motel). Sec.II-303 provides, "Uses are assigned to the category whose description most closely describes the nature of the primary use...The names of uses on the list are generic. They are based on the common meaning of the terms and not on what a specific use may call itself...Household living is characterized by the

occupancy of a dwelling unit by a family. Tenancy is arranged for periods of longer than one week. Uses where tenancy may be arranged for a shorter period are not considered residential. They are considered to be a form of transient lodging...". We read this to mean that not only is a rental period of more than one week required in a single-family zoned area, but the rental be limited to a family as the term would be generally used (related by blood, marriage or adoption) or alternatively, a group of not more than four persons not related by blood, marriage or adoption living together as a single household unit. While this determination is problematic, it is unlikely to have families of eight or more people, let alone 18 or 20, routinely renting single family homes and any burden of proof should certainly be placed on the landlord or tenant or both.

Residents of St. Armands Key should be given the right to peacefully and safely enjoy their property and environment while obeying all applicable laws, zoning included. Increased traffic, parking problems, unwanted noise levels and general disturbance affecting the character of our single-family community is inconsistent with our zoning. A zoning designation of hotel or motel for such purpose-built commercial ventures would have been much more appropriate and construction on St. Armands would not have been allowed.

We look to the City for support and guidance, either in terms of code amendment, policy and/or aggressive enforcement. We need a solution to this growing problem.

Sincerely:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kevin Bales".

Kevin Bales

President, St. Armands Residents Association

CC: Brandon Soriano, Administrative Specialist II
Vice-Mayor Jennifer Ahearn-Koch
Commissioner Hagen Brody
Commissioner Shelli Freeland-Eddie
Commissioner Willie Shaw
City Manager Tom Barwin