LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY (LPA) STAFF REPORT

Case Number: ZON-25-07

LPA Public Hearing: October 8, 2025

Applicant: Justin Gingerich, Ignite Academy, Inc.

Representative: Brian J. Aungst, Jr., Macfarlane, Ferguson, & McMullen, P.A.

Subject Property: Approximately 5.23 acres located at 2271 Keystone Road in East Lake Tarpon.

Parcel ID(s): 08-27-16-89406-000-0110

REQUEST:

A Zoning Atlas amendment from R-A, Residential Agriculture to LI, Limited Institutional. A companion Future Land Use Map Amendment (Case no. FLU-25-08) is also proposed.

LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY (LPA) RECOMMENDATION:

The LPA finds the proposed Zoning Atlas amendment consistent with the Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan and recommends approval by the Board of County Commissioners. (The vote was 5-1, in favor).

Development Review Committee (DRC) RECOMMENDATION:

- **Staff recommends** that the LPA find the proposed Zoning Atlas amendment **consistent** with the Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan, based on this report.
- **Staff further recommends** that the LPA recommend **approval** of the proposed Zoning Atlas amendment to the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners.

SUMMARY REPORT

The Development Review Committee reviewed and analyzed this application on September 8, 2025. The Staff summary discussion and analysis follows:
The applicant is seeking to redevelop the property with a private school consisting of a two-story building to accommodate approximately 300 students from grades Kindergarten through 8. The applicant previously leased another north county location for their school operation with a church near the intersection of Trinity Boulevard

and East Lake Road that is zoned R-A, however the church decided to not renew their lease, and the school is actively looking for a new location within proximity to their current location. The subject property is approximately 5.23 acres, located at 2271 Keystone Road in East Lake Tarpon, and is currently developed with a single-family home. The property is currently under contract to purchase, subject to Rezoning and a Future Land Use Map Amendment (Case no. FLU-25-08).

The property is designated Residential Rural (RR) on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and is proposed to be amended to Institutional (I) via companion case FLU-25-08. The site is zoned R-A, Residential Agriculture, which allows for single-family residential lots (2 acre minimum) and a range of agricultural activities. Educational uses, including public and private schools may be permitted as a Type-2 use in an R-A zone. The proposed zoning designation LI, Limited Institutional, would allow for the private school use by right. According to the County's Land Development Code, "The purpose of the LI, Limited Institutional District is to designate, develop and accommodate public uses that serve the needs and interests of the surrounding community."

Surrounding Uses and Zoning Designations

The subject property is adjacent to R-A zoned, single family residential development on the north, east, and southwest. To the west is a vacant property in the City of Tarpon Springs. To the south, across Keystone Road is a town-home community located on Lake Tarpon, zoned Residential Planned Development, as well as a restaurant, zoned Neighborhood Commercial. There are some institutional and limited professional service uses nearby along the Keystone Road corridor. The property takes direct access from Keystone Road, which is a four-lane divided arterial roadway.

Flood Risk

The subject property has a low flood risk. The subject property is neither within the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA) nor the Coastal Storm Area (CSA). The subject property lies within Flood Zone X.

Scenic/Non-commercial Corridor (SNCC)

The subject property fronts along on Keystone Road, which a designated Scenic/Non-commercial Corridor (SNCC) as recognized by the Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan. Because of this, additional landscaping beyond what is normally mandated by the Land Development Code will be required along the site's road frontage. The exact amount and nature of the additional landscaping requirements will be determined during site plan review. It should be noted that low density residential development is the preferred land use along designated Scenic/Non-Commercial Corridors, although institutional uses may be located along these corridors because they provide beneficial services to the community, provided the traffic carrying capacity and the scenic nature of the roadway is protected.

Development along this scenic corridor is typically categorized within the Residential, Recreation, or Public/Semi-Public plan classifications on the Countywide Future Land Use Plan. Development along these scenic corridors is strongly encouraged to be consistent with the appropriate development pattern and compatible in scale with the intent of the corridor classification. The intent of this scenic corridor is to limit impacts on surrounding residential properties and other impact-sensitive uses.

Conclusion

Staff is of the opinion that the proposed Zoning Atlas amendment is appropriate for the subject property and is compatible with the surrounding development pattern, especially when considering the site's frontage along Keystone Road and other existing surrounding uses and similar nonresidential and institutional type uses occurring along the Keystone Road corridor. Staff also finds the amendment is consistent with the Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan (see specifically cited goals, objectives, and policies listed below), subject to the approval of the companion FLUM amendment case.

SURROUNDING ZONING AND LAND USE FACTS:

	Land Use Category	Zoning District	Existing Use
Subject Property:	Residential Rural	R-A	Single-Family Residence
Adjacent Properties:			
North	Residential Rural / City of Tarpon Springs	R-A / City of Tarpon Springs	Single-Family Residence / Vacant
South	Residential Rural / Residential Low Medium	R-A / RPD	Single-Family Residence / Vacant
East	Residential Rural	R-A	Single-Family Residence
West	City of Tarpon Springs	City of Tarpon Springs	Vacant Residential

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PINELLAS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Staff finds that the proposed amendment is consistent with the following adopted goals, objectives, and policies of the Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan:

FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT

Goal One: Provide a variety of land use character areas to meet the needs of a diverse population and support thriving, resilient, quality communities.

Objective 1.2: Maintain a Land Development Code that responds to the unique challenges of infill and (re)development within Unincorporated Pinellas County.

Policy 1.2.1: Utilize the Land Development Code to regulate the use, intensity and design of (re)development in a manner consistent with the Future Land Use Categories and FLUM.

COUNTY DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Approval of this request does not ensure that the site can meet County development regulations, including concurrency management regulations, which apply at the time of site plan review.

PROPOSED BCC HEARING DATE: November 18, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED TO DATE: Seven letters of opposition, 26 “petition” signatures, photo exhibits presented to the LPA

PERSONS APPEARING AT THE LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY HEARING: Four people appeared and spoke in favor of the request, five people appeared and spoke in opposition of the request.

ATTACHMENTS: Maps, Application