

April 6, 2025

The Honorable Brian Scott
Chair, Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners
315 Court St
Clearwater, FL 33756

Re: Case Number: FLU-24-03 and ZON-24-05
Applicant: Dushyant Gulati
Property Location: 2281 Kersey Road

Subject: Concerns Regarding Proposed Development and Potential Flooding associated with Dushyant Gulati and 2224 Lawton Dr.

Dear Honorable Board of County Commissioners,

I am writing to express my serious concerns regarding the proposed development planned for the area directly behind my property, located at 2224 Lawton Dr. (Parcel 5 on attachment A). I believe that the current development plans, as they stand, pose a significant risk of severe flooding to my property and to neighboring properties (Lawton Dr properties) along the proposed developments 290 ft south property line (see attachment A).

My property is situated at the southwest corner (see attachment A) of the proposed development. Excessive rainwater runoff from the Lawton Dr properties and the developments southern 290 ft drain to a shared natural swale located along the development's southern fence line (see attachment B). This shallow depression serves as a natural watershed, effectively absorbing and channeling rainwater runoff west toward a large retention pond. Any significant alteration to this natural drainage pattern, particularly through increased impervious surfaces associated with the proposed development, will inevitably lead to a substantial increase in runoff and worsening drainage issues.

As can be seen in the photos of my backyard, heavy rainfall can and has frequently overwhelmed the drainage capacity of the swale. This has caused significant ponding of rainwater consuming much of my backyard as well as my neighbors. The Board is reminded that the drainage issues we currently experience are with three acres of undeveloped land with numerous large oak trees and plants absorbing water. As noted above, any alteration to this already stressed swale, will undoubtedly result in a worsening situation.

This matter was discussed with Mr. Gulati (owner and developer) on several occasions. To mitigate the drainage concerns, Mr. Gulati agreed to a minimum 25-foot landscape buffer on the western 125-feet of the south property line (modification 9) as detailed in his application to the LPA. However, during the public hearing on March 12, 2025, Mr. Gulati inexplicably requested this modification be removed. He indicated that would allow more flexibility and allow him to build three houses along the south property line with his desired backyard to backyard proposal. However, this plan would eliminate 290 ft of the shared natural swale and only exacerbate the drainage issues for the Lawton Dr properties.

Mr. Gulati appears to be only concerned with drainage issues associated with his development. He apparently has no regards to the impact this development will have on exiting neighbors. This is evidenced by his removal of the 25-foot landscape buffer at the LPA meeting.

Based on my understanding of the topography and existing drainage patterns, I am convinced that the proposed development will result in a concentrated flow of water directly onto my property as well as adjacent properties. This will overwhelm the existing drainage capacity and cause significant flooding, particularly during periods of heavy rainfall.

To mitigate this very real threat, I respectfully request that the Board of County Commissioners mandate a minimum setback of 35 to 50 feet from the south property line for any development activity (as can be seen in the photos, water ponds up a minimum of 25 ft on both sides of the south property line). This setback would allow for the preservation of a natural buffer zone, which is crucial for absorbing and dispersing rainwater.

Furthermore, I urge the Board to require the developer to conduct a thorough hydrological study to assess the potential impact of the development on drainage patterns and to implement appropriate mitigation measures, such as:

- Retention or detention ponds: Particularly on the southwest end of property to allow for natural east to west water flow.
- Permeable paving: To reduce the volume of surface runoff.
- Enhanced swales and drainage ditches: To effectively channel water away from properties.
- Preservation of existing natural vegetation: Which helps absorb rainwater.
- Housing Density: Reduce the number of homes built to nine (9) so there is less pavement, rooftops, and driveways, which prevent water from soaking into the ground.

I understand the importance of responsible development within our county. However, it is imperative that such development does not come at the expense of the safety and well-being of existing residents. I implore the Board to prioritize the prevention of potential flooding and to ensure that the proposed development is undertaken in a manner that protects the interests of all stakeholders.

I am available to meet with the Board or its representatives to further discuss my concerns. It would be beneficial if Board members could drive by and look down the south property line from Winchester Road. You are also welcome to access my property to give you the best perspective to address the above noted concerns. Thank you for your time and consideration of this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

William Yedkois
(727) 403-4330
Bill2224@live.com

30-29-16-70326-200-2805

Proposed Development

