



Pinellas County

Staff Report

File #: 17-1566A, **Version:** 1

Subject:

Proposed initiation of litigation in the case of Pinellas County v. Sam Cole - action for injunction.

Recommended Action:

Approval for the County Attorney to initiate litigation in the case of Pinellas County v. Sam Cole.

Strategic Plan:

N/A

Summary:

Sam Cole is the legal owner of three condominium units in downtown Tierra Verde, all of which are zoned as commercial use. Mr. Cole currently resides in one unit and has a homestead exemption on this property. Mr. Cole has also rented out the other two units as residential rentals to various tenants in the past twelve months, all in violation of Pinellas County Code §138-832, General Retail Commercial and Limited Services District, Permitted Uses.

Mr. Cole has been found guilty of zoning violations by the County Court utilizing the local ordinance violation process, as well as the Special Magistrate. As a result, a lien was placed against his property. This lien accrues a daily fine and is currently in excess of \$149,500.00. Due to the homestead exemption claimed on the property and the continuing complaints received from the Downtown Tierra Verde Condominium Association, staff has a good faith reason to believe that Mr. Cole continues to violate the Pinellas County Code. The County has also received additional complaints of violations of the Building Code, which may also be resolved through this action.

Background Information:

N/A

Fiscal Impact:

Unknown.

Staff Member Responsible:

Jewel White, County Attorney
Ashley N. Donnell, Assistant County Attorney

Partners:

N/A

Attachments:

N/A