



Benderson Hotel Workshop January 8; January 9 Workshop Below

Siesta Key Condominium Council (SKCC)

Mission Statement: To provide member Condominium Associations, their owners, residents and renters current information applicable to Condominium living in the legislative, legal and insurance arenas, through a series of

*meetings/speakers and to support efforts that promote: **safety, economic stability, environmentalism**, and the **beautification** of Siesta Key.*

Over 246 people attended the Benderson Hotel ZOOM workshop January 8. The unusually high attendance illustrates the public's displeasure with proposed changes to the Comprehensive Plan which redefine transient accommodations to permit unrestricted density for hotels on Siesta Key. Residents realize the proposed Benderson changes are gateways to permit all current Siesta mega-hotel applications. Residents throughout Sarasota also complain they were not properly notified of these changes which also affect them.

Not all who wanted to speak were given the opportunity within the 2-hour workshop. Submitted questions were also addressed, but the general consensus is that responses were evasive and unsatisfactory. The public's questions have become much more sophisticated, citing specific Comp Plan and Land Use regulations. Density, intensity, traffic, setbacks, beach parking, overcrowding, and hurricane evacuation and safety were among the many concerns.

Stakeholder groups questioned two other important issues: 1) Why the proposal promotes issues that were defeated in two recent lawsuits and 2) why the regulation limiting development in flood zones A and B to promote safety should be removed and replaced by mitigation, placing money or land above saving lives.

For Carrie Seidman's cogent *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* column, see <https://www.heraldtribune.com/story/opinion/columns/2024/01/12/megahotels-dont-belong-on-siesta-key-heres-why-you-should-care/72200496007/>

Or

<https://www.pressreader.com/usa/herald-tribune/20240114/281981792438125>

Read Rachel Hackney Brown's excellent article in the *Sarasota News Leader*:

<https://sarasotanewsleader.com/from-concerns-about-hurricane-evacuation-to-those-regarding-character-of-siesta-village-residents-express-opposition-to-benderson-development-plans-for-high-rise-hotels-on-key/>

Anderson Hotel Workshop January 9

Over 72 people attended the Miramar Hotel reapplication and asked similar specific, sophisticated questions. Questions especially focused on the height exception, traffic, hurricane evacuation, lack of adequate setbacks, sewer and stormwater facilities, beach overcrowding and the lack of justification for the waiver to reapply before a year passed. This workshop was not as well attended because residents and stakeholders prioritized the Benderson proposal since the other mega-hotel applications depend upon its passage.

SKCC questions, including these, were among those inadequately addressed:

1. What method of transportation from the hotel to the beach is being considered in your analysis re traffic/access? What method of transportation are you considering for arrival at the subject hotel in your analysis?
2. People will stay at this proposed hotel to go to the Sarasota County public beach. This beach is owned by the citizens of Sarasota County for their use and already shows signs of overload. Parking is next to impossible. Does your analysis consider how the hotel will affect residents' ability to park and use their own beach?

Managers/Presidents: Please post on your bulletin boards and ensure your Board of Directors/Residents receive a copy of this notice.

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