



TO: Sarasota County School Board

FROM: Kathie Ebaugh, AICP, Planning Director

DATE: February 8, 2018

RE: Central County School Site

Background

In June, 2016, as part of the budget for the 2016/17 Capital Improvement Plan, Sarasota County School Board allocated \$2,500,000 for the purchase of a new school site to meet the future growth demands of Sarasota County. Specifically, this school site is needed to address the growth of the central Sarasota County, along the I-75 corridor between Clark Road, Unincorporated Sarasota County and Border Road, Venice. The elementary and middle schools that serve this area are exceeding or nearing capacity.

Upon approval of the 2016/17 CIP Budget, Sarasota County Schools Planning Department instituted its site selection process to identify, review, and determine the most suitable school site to address this need. The process involves: 1) identifying potential sites; 2) working with a site selection committee and Sarasota County Schools Cabinet to evaluate the potential sites; 3) appraising the site to determine the market value; 4) negotiating with the property owner on a sales contract; and 5) presenting the final contract to Sarasota County School Board for approval.

Staff conducted a site selection effort from August 2016 to January 2017 and presented its recommendations at the January 17, 2017 Board Workshop. During this meeting the Board asked staff to enter negotiations to purchase a property in the Palmer Ranch Development. Unfortunately, staff and the property owner were not able to agree to terms to purchase the property. Negotiations ended when the property owner notified staff that they were no longer interested in selling the property to the School District.

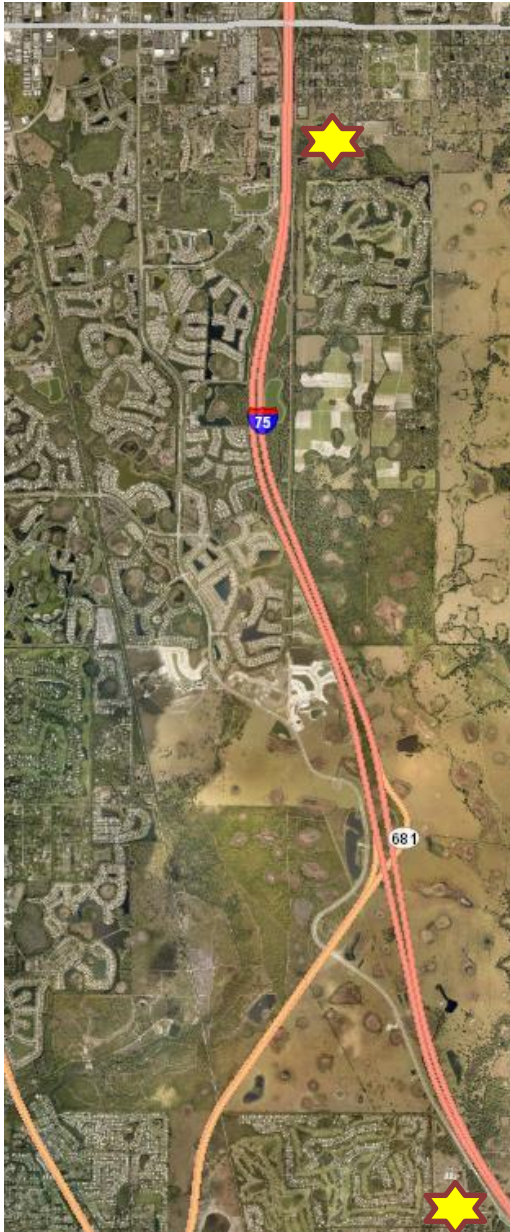
Walker and Herrli Sites: Overview

Staff restarted the site selection process by expanding the area to include properties within:

- Clark Road to the north;
- 41 to the West;
- I75 to the East; and
- Border Road to the South.

This led staff to complete a site assessment of two properties along Honore Boulevard as noted by the red stars on Map 1.

Map 1: Sites



Map 2: Walker Property



A summary of the property assessment for these two sites is as follows:

- Walker Property:
 - 41.1 acres
 - Asking Price: \$3.4 m
 - \$82,725 p/acre
 - Appraised Values:
 - \$3.4 m
 - \$3.6 m
- Herrli Property:
 - 17.86 acres
 - Asking Price: \$3.9 m
 - \$218,365 p/acre
 - Appraised Values:
 - \$3.9 m
 - \$3.59 m

Upon completion of the property assessment, staff brought the properties to the Sarasota County School Board Cabinet for review and discussion. As a result of the discussion, staff determined that the Herrli Property did not meet the District's future school needs because of its 1) close proximity to existing elementary and middle schools and 2) small size. However, the Cabinet did like the location and size of the Walker property and asked that staff bring it forward to the School Board for further discussion.

Walker Property Board Discussion Points

The Walker Property was one of the original properties that were identified and evaluated by the Site Selection Committee in August 2016. At the time, the property was identified as the second most preferred site. However, concerns related to the presence of power lines that run through the property, need to rezone the property to Government Use, and concerns expressed by nearby residents were reasons for recommending the Palmer Ranch Property over the Walker Property. These concerns are issues that are the focus of the Board Discussion at the February 20, 2018 workshop.

- FPL Transmission Power Lines: As noted by the yellow line on Map 2, FPL has a set of transmission power lines that cut through the center of the larger Walker Parcel. Staff has contacted FPL to inquire about the cost of moving the transmission lines to the edge of the property and has been given a cost estimate of up to \$3m (see attachments). Staff has asked for a secondary appraisal to see if this cost changes the original appraisal value of the property. This secondary appraisal is currently being done and will be provided to the Board as soon as it become available.
- Property Rezone: As the property is currently zoned RSF-2, the school board would need to work with Sarasota County to amend the zoning to Government Use (GU). This would require a neighborhood meeting and public hearings.
- Neighborhood Concerns: Staff has been made aware that some residents of the surrounding neighborhoods (Mission Valley and Calusa Lakes) are concerned about locating a school site on this property. As a neighborhood meeting would be required as part of the rezone application, staff will have an opportunity to learn about these concerns and work with the neighborhoods to assuage such concerns through the school planning and development efforts.

Staff Direction

Staff asks that the Board consider the offer of sale for Walker Property and provide staff direction about how you would like to proceed. With the Board's consent, Staff will do following:

- Reconvene the Site Selection Committee to discuss the Walker Property;
- Complete the assessment of the impacts of the FPL easement;
- Rezone the property to GU;
- Conduct a neighborhood meeting with the surrounding neighborhoods and property owners; and
- Enter into negotiations with Mr. Walker for the sale of this property, which will be brought to the Board for approval.

Otherwise, staff will continue searching for another site.

Attachments:

- Appraisals 1 and 2 for subject property

- FPL Letters regarding cost estimates