

Tristan Davis

From: Office of Chairman Smith
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2026 9:46 AM
To: Commissioner Correspondence
Subject: Docket No. 20260000
Attachments: Urgent Constituent Concern: Cell Tower Approved on St. Johns County Conservation Property

Please place the attached in Docket No. 20260000.

Thank you!

Tristan Davis

From: Mabel Perez <mperez002@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2026 4:04 PM
To: Office of Chairman Smith
Subject: Urgent Constituent Concern: Cell Tower Approved on St. Johns County Conservation Property

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Chairwoman Smith,

I am reaching out as a St. Johns County resident to bring an issue to your attention that I believe has implications well beyond my neighborhood and could affect communities throughout Florida.

On July 23, the St. Johns County Planning and Zoning Agency approved, by a 4-3 vote, a Special Use Permit for a **180-foot cell tower to be constructed on conservation property along St. Thomas Island Parkway in Glen St. Johns**, an established residential community.

Our community was shocked by the decision and is preparing to appeal it to the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners. We have only 30 days to file the appeal, and residents have raised nearly **\$4,500 among ourselves** to help secure legal representation and specialists to assist with the process. We know that is not nearly enough to fight our case but this is not simply a small group of neighbors objecting to a cell tower. A total of **303 residents signed a petition opposing the project, with wet signatures collected door-to-door**, and hundreds of residents have been engaged throughout the process.

Our concerns include the use of conservation property, potential impacts to wetlands and wetland buffers, clearing of natural areas, the tower's proximity to homes which would affect property values, whether alternative locations were adequately considered and whether the data shows that this tower is needed when there are already 2 other 180-foot towers that will be built less than 1.5 miles away.

There is also a larger development-interest component. The property is owned by **White's Timber, the agricultural arm of Hutson Properties**, the company behind the massive SilverLeaf master-planned community. This relationship has raised questions among residents about the broader development interests involved and how decisions affecting conservation land and established residential communities are evaluated.

More broadly, Florida's tremendous growth means communities across the state will increasingly face decisions about where telecommunications infrastructure should be located. We believe this situation raises important questions about whether existing guidelines adequately protect conservation areas, wetlands, natural resources, and established neighborhoods while still allowing Florida to meet its growing infrastructure needs.

I am asking that you please put this issue on your radar, review what has occurred, and let us know whether there are any avenues at the state level through which residents can seek assistance,

oversight, or guidance. We would also greatly appreciate any assistance you can provide in helping ensure that the concerns of affected homeowners are appropriately heard.

I am including the July 23 PZA hearing below. **Our case is Agenda Item 9, beginning at approximately 1:27:00.** I would also encourage you to listen to Agenda Item 10, which involves another proposed cell tower near Colee Cove and provides an interesting comparison of how these projects are evaluated.

PZA Hearing: <https://stjohnscountyfl.new.swagit.com/videos/394392>

For reference, the Agenda Item 9 vote was:

- Greg Matovina, District 1 — Approved
- Meagan Perkins, District 4 — Approved
- Henry F. Green, District 5 — Approved
- Judy Spiegel, District 3 — Approved
- Dr. Richard A. Hilsenbeck, District 3 — Denied
- Chuck Labanowski, District 2 — Denied
- Robert Olson, District 5 — Denied

There are also several aspects of this situation—including developments behind the scenes—that would be difficult to fully explain in an email but would be important for you to understand. I would welcome the opportunity to speak with you or a member of your staff and walk you through the timeline, the concerns raised by residents, and what we have learned.

The appeal deadline makes this particularly time-sensitive, and I would sincerely appreciate your attention to this matter.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope we can connect.

Mabel Perez
St. Johns County Resident
Glen St. Johns
352-425-1223