



## The Watermarke Resort & Club

August 30, 2016

Dear Vilano Beach Residents and Business Owners,

There is an absolutely gorgeous parcel of property in St. Johns County, a one-of-a-kind location between the Atlantic Ocean and the Intracoastal Waterway, where Palm Valley Venture Partners is proposing to build The Watermarke Resort and Club, a private boutique luxury resort and club offering hotel rooms and event/meeting space along with resort-style guest amenities. Unfortunately, there are misconceptions about the project.

The Watermarke Team has a deep respect for the unique charm and personality of Vilano Beach, and we are sensitive to the community's concerns. The Watermarke has been designed to complement and enhance the surrounding community, both residential and commercial areas. The resort will be situated on approximately 43 acres in Vilano Beach, offering no more than 170 guest rooms and suites. The resort itself will be built on only a portion of the 17 acres of upland, leaving the remaining 26 acres as permanent conservation land. The proposed resort development is a smaller building footprint than the currently approved 79-unit residential development and will allow for maximum preservation of the site's scenic wetlands and uplands.

The Watermark Team is asking for a Future Land Use Map designation change from Residential C to Residential D, to include hotels, motels and club facilities, with an amendment that specifies the requested change is for this proposed private resort project only. This protects Vilano Beach by not allowing a different commercial project in the future.

Our team is committed to making The Watermarke Resort & Club a good neighbor and benefit to the community. I believe The Watermarke Resort & Club will one day be the crown jewel of the Vilano Beach community and I hope you support the project by asking the Board of County Commissioners to vote yes on Sept. 20<sup>th</sup>. I invite you to visit [www.thewatermarkeresort.com](http://www.thewatermarkeresort.com) for more information.

Respectfully,

Steve Magiera  
Owner/Partner  
Palm Valley Venture Partners  
[www.thewatermarkeresort.com](http://www.thewatermarkeresort.com)

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to you as a business owner and longtime resident of St. Johns County. My wife and I are both fifth generation Floridians, and we have raised our three children here in Ponte Vedra Beach. We are both originally townies (from Jacksonville), but when our first son was born, we knew that having access to the amazing schools in St. Johns County was a must. The excellence of our school system is in part due to the fact that we have a very healthy tax base that supports our schools. Part of the strength of our beach community comes from the existence of unique resort hotel properties like The Ponte Vedra Inn & Club, The Lodge at Ponte Vedra, and The Marriott Sawgrass. These high end properties bring wealthy tourists to the area, many of whom have ultimately made St. Johns County their home. Property values increase, tax revenue increases, and our schools and children benefit. It also helps all other aspects of our economy here at the beach. I am a local business owner, and have certainly benefited from the prosperity of St. Johns County. I served on the Board of the Ponte Vedra Chamber of Commerce for 7 years, and have a strong appreciation for what well-intentioned development can do for our residents and community. Currently, I am the President of the Board of Directors of the Beaches Museum and History Park. I have now served on this board for 6 years. My reason for mentioning this is because I have a vested interest in our community and the greater St. Johns County community.

I understand that a very important meeting will be taking place on Tuesday September 20<sup>th</sup> to consider approving The Watermarke Resort and Club in Vilano Beach. My understanding is that this land is already approved for 79 residential homes and 39 boat slips. The land is an eyesore, and we should be grateful that someone has stepped forward to develop it. The Watermarke project would be a significant improvement over the current approved use as it will bring over 75 permanent jobs to the area and provide much needed high end hotel rooms. The resort will also have a smaller footprint on the property's upland acres leaving more land for conservation. The Vilano Beach area will also benefit from the guests who will frequent the Vilano Beach Town Center and area restaurants. Everyone who calls Vilano Beach home needs these businesses to thrive in order to serve our community. Change is often challenged; for instance I recall that there was some local opposition to the Publix when first proposed. It is now used by virtually everyone in Vilano Beach and has made other small businesses possible. I believe that the Watermarke will have a wonderful and positive impact on the area while generating jobs for our neighbors, and adding sales tax revenue and bed taxes that will stay right here in St. Johns County.

I would like to voice my support of The Watermarke Resort and Club, and I encourage you to support it as well.

Thank you for the work you do on our behalf. It is often thankless, I am sure.

Sincerely,

Darby Brower

Jeb, Jimmy, Bill, Jay, Rachel, (If I May)

I am writing this email in support of the planned Watermarke development on Vilano Beach.

The recent debate in St. Johns County regarding marketing vs infrastructure expense could not be more fitting. Simply put, the Watermarke will provide both increased revenue for the county as well as free marketing.

What an opportunity St. Johns County and Vilano Beach have for such a positive economic development, one that brings significantly greater tax revenue and more jobs.

The reduced impact on schools and traffic is also of note.

The potential and long term impact of providing sustainable revenue and jobs is a win-win for Vilano and St. Johns County.

I am excited for the development and believe it will be a place residents will be proud of and frequent and guests from out of town will return to visit.

Sincerely,

J. Cody Vincent, CPA  
Manager- Tax Services

September 14, 2016

The Honorable Jeb Smith  
The Honorable Jimmy Johns  
The Honorable Bill McClure  
The Honorable Jay Morris  
The Honorable Rachel Bennett

Dear Honorable Commissioners,

During my terms as mayor of St. Augustine, I always tried to do what was best for the majority, not just for a few or on behalf of special interests. In the same spirit, I am in favor of allowing the planned Watermarke project to proceed.

There are two options for this property. The Watermarke resort or a 79-unit residential development. The resort offers many benefits over a residential development including less traffic, less density, improved emergency evacuation and zero impact on schools. The resort will generate incremental tax revenue and add jobs. Why is there even a question on which one is better?

St. Johns County residents are concerned about the county's rapid population growth and whether the County government can provide the infrastructure and services to support a residential development. The Watermarke resort is a positive economic development and the best choice for St. Johns County.

Sincerely,

Ramelle Petroglou

Dear Commissioners,

I am so excited to see that someone believes in investing in our amazing beach community, as much as my family and I do. We live here in Ponte Vedra Beach, and spend a lot of our family time playing up and down the beaches and inter coastal waterways of Vilano, St Augustine and Ponte Vedra Beach. After extensively reviewing the Watermarke Resort & Club plans, my family and I are confident that this project will be a stunning addition to our coast. How exciting! It exudes coastal class, while still embracing the old world charm of our Florida heritage. We also love that they have chosen to pay tribute to the historical value that surrounds our area.

Before I go on, I want to share with you that I am a nine generational Floridian. I grew up surfing and playing on these beaches (As did my grandparents, great-grandparents and great- great grandparents and so on) This has been a great gift to my life and it's why I have chosen to raise my children here. Our beach communities are what I love the most about our great state. It's also why I am very protective of our coasts. It always makes me sad to see projects come along that do not pay tribute to the history, nostalgia and beauty of our amazing surroundings. The Watermarke project has been brilliant in complimenting our natural surroundings and respecting our rich history. I wish more projects would do the same.

What I love the most about the Watermarke project, is that it enhances our area and celebrates our beauty. It is clear to see that this project will have a positive impact on the community of Vilano Beach, as well as it's surrounding areas. This excites me very much. All three of my children skimboard and surf in Vilano. This coast is part of their life history too. We want to do all that we can do help make it even better for them and their children's futures. We believe the Watermarke project is a step in that direction. We most definitely prefer this option, over the currently approved plan that allows 79 residences on the property.

We are very grateful to the creators and supporters of the Vilano Town Center and believe that guests of the Watermarke Resort & Club will help the Town Center to thrive. The Watermarke project will shine a beautiful light on the Vilano Beach community, for beach lovers all over the world to embrace and celebrate. It's exciting to think that we could all be a part in helping that come to be. I'm looking forward to experiencing the fine dining, shopping, excursions and ocean to inter-coastal sunrises and sunsets, this resort will provide. Change is never easy. As Mark Twain once said "No one likes change, but a wet baby" With that said, we all know that change is

inevitable. The key is to advocate for change that is healthy and leads to a better tomorrow. We believe that The Watermarke Resort is that kind of change for the city of Vilano and it's surrounding areas. Let's continue to make St. Johns County the best county on the Florida coast. I strongly encourage the Board of County Commissioners to approve this beautiful project on Sept. 20th.

Thank You for your time and consideration,

Christy Mouery Haynes

September 14, 2016

The Honorable Jeb Smith  
The Honorable Jimmy Johns  
The Honorable Bill McClure  
The Honorable Jay Morris  
The Honorable Rachael Bennett

Dear Honorable Commissioners,

We strongly support the proposed Watermarke Resort & Club development in Vilano Beach. As retired residents of St. Johns County, we live on a fixed income, and continued tax increases are very worrisome. Developing additional commercial properties in Vilano Beach can help offset these tax increases.

The Watermarke will provide sales and bed tax revenue, as well as new jobs. It will help expand the customer base for existing and future businesses operating in the Vilano Beach Town Center, enhancing the development of the Vilano Beach Town Center by serving and increasing visitors to the area.

Market trends for St. Augustine show that hospitality is a growing need. The Watermarke would attract many tourists from out of the local area and create revenue that would benefit St. Johns County residents and tourists alike. All of the resort amenities would foster a positive economic impact, and in turn, bring more revenue to St. Johns County.

We sincerely believe this is the right plan for Vilano Beach.

Sincerely,

Harvey and Inga Langsam  
291 Clearwater Drive  
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082

September 13, 2016

The Honorable Jeb Smith  
Chairman  
St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners  
500 San Sebastian View  
St. Augustine, FL. 32084

Dear Chairman Smith,

As a resident and a professor of public policy, I am always interested in seeing local governments successfully partner with the private sector to ensure long term economic sustainability and a consistently impressive quality of life for their communities.

I have reviewed the information, data, and reports concerning the proposed Watermarke Resort and Club which requires final approval of our county commission. This carefully crafted project should produce a number of positive and measurable benefits for our community. It meets a market need while generating valuable commercial property tax revenue to fund public services. It also reduces potential impacts associated with other types of allowable development for this property. I often emphasize in class – and our county government has embraced this best practice policy – the need to attract and retain a good mix of both residential and commercial land uses to optimize opportunities for being and remaining an economically vibrant community with a very desirable quality of life.

The Watermarke Team has clearly endeavored to address all possible concerns while also maintaining the market feasibility of this project. I would strongly encourage our county commission to closely review their proposed project and grant final approval. This will be a tremendous asset to our community.

Sincerely,



Joe Saviak, J.D., Ph.D.

cc: Vice Chairman Jimmy Johns  
Commissioner Bill McClure  
Commissioner Jay Morris  
Commissioner Rachel Bennett