

From: [Beatrice Veiga](#)
To: [Planning Department](#)
Subject: Urgent: DENIAL of PZZAM2026-00002 (Rezone for AI Data Center)
Date: Wednesday, September 16, 2026 6:27:47 PM
Attachments: [image.png](#)
Importance: High

City of Fort Pierce

Warning: Sender [REDACTED] is not yet trusted by your organization.
Please be careful clicking on the URLs.

[This is UNSAFE: Report](#)

[This is SPAM: Block](#)

[This is SAFE](#)

powered by Graphus®

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED] [Learn why this is important](#)

SECURITY WARNING: This email has been generated from external sources and is not affiliated with the City of Fort Pierce systems. Exercise caution while clicking on links or opening attachments. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to the IT department promptly.

Planning Commission,

I respectfully request that the Planning Board recommend DENIAL of PZZAM2026-00002, the application to rezone the 200.23 acre Willow Lakes property at 10050 West Midway Road from Planned Development to approximately 174 acres of Light Industrial I-1 and 26 acres of General Commercial C-3. This application asks the City to grant a massive industrial entitlement first and obtain the critical facts later. The City Code requires the opposite. Before approving a zoning atlas amendment, the Board must find that the amendment:

1. Is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan;
2. Will not adversely affect the City's ability to satisfy land and water-use needs;
3. Will not adversely affect transportation, community facilities, or public services; and
4. Will promote and protect the public health, safety, and general welfare.

The present record does not support those required findings.

THE APPLICATION IS PREMATURE AND MATERIALLY INCOMPLETE

The applicant has not identified the company that would build or operate the data center. The staff report states that the owner intends to obtain the rezoning and then enter into an agreement with a partner company, which would later submit a site plan.

The City is therefore being asked to approve 174 acres of industrial zoning without knowing the operator, final equipment, electrical demand, cooling technology, generator inventory, fuel storage volume, noise profile, construction phases, or required infrastructure upgrades.

The conceptual plan shows six data center buildings containing approximately 220,000 square feet each, a total of approximately 1.32 million square feet, plus another 250,000 square feet of commercial development.

A project of this magnitude cannot be justified by a conceptual drawing and promises that the essential engineering will be supplied after rezoning.

STAFF'S OWN RECOMMEDATIONS ARE INTERNALLY INCONSISTENT

The City acknowledges that a data center is not expressly identified as a permitted use in its zoning code.

The separate September 17 zoning category agenda item describes the proposed use as involving continuous cooling operations, significant electrical infrastructure, transformers, switchgear, emergency generators, fuel storage, service activity, and potential mechanical noise.

That agenda item recommends that a data center be reviewed as a conditional use.

If a data center requires conditional-use review, the City should first establish clear and enforceable data-center standards and require project-specific evidence. The Board should not approve the underlying industrial rezoning while the standards governing the proposed use remain unresolved.

THE WATER ANALYSIS IS BASED ON AN UNVERIFIED ASSUMPTION

The applicant's engineering memorandum estimates average potable-water and sewer demand of approximately 65,500 gallons per day. However, the memorandum expressly states that its calculations are preliminary and subject to tenant selection, final design, and detailed engineering.

More importantly, it excludes process-cooling water by assuming that the data center will use a closed-loop cooling system supplied by the on-site former aggregate-mining lake.

The application contains no sealed water-balance analysis, pond-yield study, hydro-geologic evaluation, drought analysis, evaporation estimate, thermal analysis, groundwater-interaction study, water-quality evaluation, reclaimed-water feasibility analysis, or agency determination that the proposed cooling system can be lawfully and sustainably operated.

The mere existence of a lake does not establish an adequate cooling-water supply.

ELECTRICAL CAPACITY AND PUBLIC COSTS REMAIN UNDISCLOSED

The application relies on the existence of transmission easements and a nearby electrical substation. Proximity to electrical infrastructure is not proof of available capacity.

The record contains no quantified maximum electrical demand, FPL capacity commitment, system-impact analysis, upgrade schedule, or binding agreement identifying who will pay for new generation, transmission, or substation improvements.

Florida law identifies a large-scale data center as one with an anticipated monthly peak load of at least 50 megawatts. The applicant has not disclosed whether this six-building campus will meet or exceed that threshold.

The City should not approve the rezoning until the project's maximum electrical demand is disclosed and the utility provides written confirmation that the necessary infrastructure can be supplied without transferring project-specific costs or reliability risks to existing customers.

NOISE, EMISSIONS, FIRE PROTECTION, AND EMERGENCY DEMANDS HAVE NOT BEEN

ESTABLISHED

The City's own analysis recognizes that a data center may involve round-the-clock cooling systems, chillers, transformers, switchgear, emergency generators, fuel storage, service activity, and continuous mechanical noise.

Nevertheless, the application contains no professional acoustical study, property-line noise limits, nighttime standards, low-frequency or tonal-noise analysis, generator-testing restrictions, emissions inventory, or maximum generator and fuel-storage commitment.

The record also lacks a written determination from the St. Lucie County Fire District establishing that staffing, apparatus, water supply, hazardous-material response, and emergency planning are adequate for the maximum development permitted by the requested zoning.

Without that information, the Board cannot find that the amendment will protect public health and safety or avoid adverse effects on community services.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT IDENTIFIES UNRESOLVED RESOURCES

The June 2026 environmental assessment documents freshwater marshes, pine flatwoods, described as being in good ecological condition, a large reservoir, confirmed gopher-tortoise burrows, potential habitat for listed species, and aquatic features within a wood-stork foraging area.

The report also states that the identified wetland boundaries rely on an informal determination from 2020 and that a systematic gopher-tortoise survey must be conducted before construction.

The assessment is an environmental inventory, not an analysis of the actual six-building development plan. It does not determine the project's wetland impacts, stormwater volumes, habitat fragmentation, heat, lighting, cooling-water effects, or cumulative environmental consequences.

Likewise, a 2006 historical-resource letter prepared for a different project does not replace current, project-specific review twenty years later.

THE PROPOSED COVENANT DOES NOT PROTECT THE PUBLIC

The draft restrictive covenant limits the I-1 property to a data center and undefined "supporting ancillary uses," but it establishes no maximum building area, electrical load, water withdrawal, cooling demand, generator count, fuel storage, noise level, emissions, height, lighting, or generator-testing schedule.

The covenant automatically expires after 50 years. It may be amended or terminated by agreement between the owner and City Commission. Its submitted Exhibit A, which is supposed to contain the legal description of the restricted property, is blank.

A covenant that merely names the intended use without controlling its size, intensity, or impacts cannot replace the evidence and enforceable conditions required before rezoning.

THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT ESTABLISH A GENUINE MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

Staff states that I-1 and C-3 satisfy the Mixed Use Development designation because they represent two listed land-use categories. That is merely a category recount.

The Comprehensive Plan language quoted in the staff report calls for well-planned centers that integrate complementary uses and create live-work environments.

Converting approximately 87 percent of this property into a secure industrial campus with no public access and limited permanent employment, while placing highway-oriented commercial development along the remaining frontage, does not establish an integrated mixed-use community.

The existing Planned Development envisioned residential, retail, commercial, recreational, pedestrian, and public-space components. The applicant must demonstrate how the replacement advances the purpose of the Mixed Use Development designation, not merely how two zoning labels can be placed on the same parcel.

REQUESTED ACTION

The Planning Board should recommend DENIAL because the record does not support the mandatory findings required by City Code Section 125-136.

This recommendation matters. Under City Code Section 125-133, a Planning Board recommendation of disapproval may be overcome only by a four-fifths vote of the City Commission.

If the Board declines to recommend denial, it should continue the application without making a recommendation until the applicant supplies:

1. Final project parameters and the identity of the proposed operator;
2. A completed and recorded covenant containing legal description and enforceable limits on the project's size and intensity;
3. Independent water, cooling, hydro-geologic, electrical, noise, emissions, environmental, stormwater, traffic, fiscal, and emergency-response studies;
4. Written capacity determinations from FPL, the applicable water-management and environmental agencies, and the St. Lucie County Fire District; and
5. Draft development-order conditions binding the owner, operator, successors, and assigns.

Fort Pierce should determine whether this property can safely and responsibly support the actual project before changing the zoning.

On the record presented for September 17, 2026, the required findings cannot responsibly be made.

Sincerely,

Beatrice Veiga

[REDACTED]

