

August 4, 2021

Dear Chairs and Members of ARCOM, LPC, and Code Enforcement,

I last wrote to you in May, 2021, to inform you that the Council requested that your meetings return to “in person” in accordance with Governor DeSantis’ Executive Order that government bodies be physically present for meetings. However, according to Florida statute, commissioners and board members who have bona fide reasons to attend virtually could do so as long as a quorum was physically present. The expectation at that time was that all members of ARCOM, LPC and Code Enforcement would be physically present unless there was a reason which would preclude their attendance. The Council supported the change to “in person” meetings based on the following: the Palm Beach County positivity rate was 3% indicating low community spread; “breakthrough” infections were reported to be exceedingly rare; and vaccinated persons were not thought to transmit the virus to others.

However, according to recent reports from the CDC, Dr. Fauci and others, the delta variant is quite different. Vaccinated persons can become infected with the delta variant. They may carry the same viral load as those who are not vaccinated and they can transmit the virus to others. In addition to this new information on the delta variant, the County’s positivity rate has continued to increase week over week to very concerning levels. During the month of July the weekly average increased to 15.5% which indicates uncontrolled community spread.

For these reasons, as President I will recommend to the Council on Tuesday, August 10, that you will not be required to travel back and forth for meetings during the remainder of August. Most of you travel by air and there is no distancing that can be achieved on a commercial flight. The recommendation will include that your meetings be held virtually provided that a quorum is present in Town Hall. Of particular concern, is that you might become infected, be asymptomatic and pass the virus to others including those under 12 who are most vulnerable because they cannot be vaccinated.

Mayor Moore very clearly stated, at the Special Council meeting held on July 27 to discuss the increase in infections, that our most important obligation is to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the town. The Mayor and Council recognize that

your obligation is to protect your health and that of your families. It is my hope, that we can return to “in person” meetings in chambers in September. This is an achievable goal if the unvaccinated get vaccinated and wear a mask until they achieve full immunity.

Thank you for your patience with these changes. We strive to do the people’s business, but at the same time we must acknowledge that we are still in this pandemic. There is no handbook which provides a set of instructions on how to best conduct town business during a pandemic. The situation is fluid and we remain watchful.

Respectfully,

Maggie Zeidman
President, Town Council