From: <u>Kyle Benda</u>
To: <u>Robin Reinhart</u>

Cc: <u>Pamela Hare</u>; <u>Lisa Morgan</u>

Subject: FW: LR 23-581

Date: Monday, October 2, 2023 11:28:03 AM

Attachments: Supporting Doc.pdf

LR 23-581.pdf image002.png image003.png

Hey Robin,

I'm not sure what your question is in this LR. The response to the previous response still stands: pigeon aviaries are not permitted in residential districts. However, because Mr. Crespo is applying for a reasonable accommodation from that prohibition under the Fair Housing Act.

For a claim to arise under the Fair Housing Act, a person with a disability must first ask for it. *Sherrer v. Miami-Dade Cnty.*, 2015 WL 4396784 at *2 (S.D. Fla. 2015). The request for a special exception use permit is the best vehicle for this request for accommodation because Mr. Crespo is asking for an accommodation related to the use of his property, not necessarily the physical limitations of it.

In assessing a claim for a reasonable accommodation, the reasonableness and the necessity of the accommodation requested. *Schwarz v. City of Treasure* Island, 544 F.3d 1201, 1219-30 (11th Cir. 2008).

For reasonableness, an "[a]ccommodation is not reasonable if it either [1] imposes undue financial and administrative burdens on a grantee or [2] requires a fundamental alteration in the nature of the program." *Id.* at 1220. A modification of the zoning requirements for a piece of property is a fundamental alteration of the government program, so the question becomes whether the requested accommodation completely defeats the purpose of the zoning requirements such that it is not reasonable in light of the surrounding property.

For necessity, such accommodation should be granted only if it is necessary to afford the disabled person an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling when compared to nondisabled people. *Id.* at 1225. This equal opportunity needs to be the opportunity for a disabled person to live in a dwelling of their choice, not simply some other place in the County. *Id.* Moreover, to be necessary, "there must be a direct linkage between the proposed accommodation and the equal opportunity to be provided." *Caron Foundation of Fla., Inc. v. City of Delray Beach*, 879 F. Supp. 2d 1353, 1366 (S.D. Fla. 2012).

Please let me know if you have any other questions.

Best,



KYLE J. BENDA
Assistant County Attorney
County Attorney's Office
kbenda@hernandocounty.us

A 20 N Main St, Suite 462, Brooksville, FL 34601-2850 **P** 352-754-4122 | **F** 352-754-4001 | <u>www.hernandocounty.us/</u>

NOTE: Florida has a very broad public records law. Your email communications may be subject to public disclosure.

From: Lisa Morgan < LMorgan@co.hernando.fl.us>

Sent: Friday, September 29, 2023 12:55 PM **To:** Kyle Benda <KBenda@co.hernando.fl.us> **Cc:** Pamela Hare <PHare@co.hernando.fl.us>

Subject: Re: LR 23-581

Please see attached and below.

Thank you!

Kind regards,

Qiśa Morgan

Paralegal

Hernando County Attorney's Office 20 North Main Street, Suite 462 Brooksville, FL 34601-2850 P 352-754-4122 Ext. 20132

F 352-754-4001

Email: lmorgan@co.hernando.fl.us



From: Robin Reinhart < RReinhart@co.hernando.fl.us >

Sent: Friday, September 29, 2023 10:21 AM

To: Lisa Morgan <<u>LMorgan@co.hernando.fl.us</u>>; Pamela Hare <<u>PHare@co.hernando.fl.us</u>>

Cc: Michelle Miller < MLMiller@co.hernando.fl.us >; Omar DePablo < ODePablo@hernandocounty.us >

Subject: LR2023-581

Good morning

Alejandro Crespo is requesting relief via Special Expectation use permit, for a reasonable accommodation for a service-related disability to have a pigeon aviary in an r1c zoning district.

Prior Ir 20-23-113 was for request for a legal review of the interpretation of pigeons as fowl or not and whether pigeons' aviaries should be permitted in residential areas.



Robin Reinhart | Agenda Coordinator

Planning Division | Development Services Department

1653 Blaise Dr., Brooksville, FL 34601 **Phone**: (352) 754-4057 ext. 28011

Fax: (352)754-4420

Email: rreinhart@hernandocounty.us

Website: https://www.hernandocounty.us/zoning

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM



We mean business™

August 2, 2023

Received

AUG 0 2 2023

Planning Department Hernando County, Florida

Ms. Michelle Miller
Planning Administrator
Planning Department
Hernando County Board of County Commissioners
1653 Blaise Drive
Brooksville, Florida 34601

RE:

Request for Relief is a Special Exception Use Permit for a Reasonable Accommodation for a Service Related Disability to have a pigeon aviary in an R1C Zoning District.

Dear Ms. Miller:

Enclosed is an application for a Special Exception Use Permit (the "Application") along with the required ancillary documentation as required by the Hernando County Board of County Commissioners (the "County") on behalf of Alejandro Crespo (the "Applicant") for property located at 12483 Covent Garden Road, Brooksville, FL 34613 (the "Property").

This Application is submitted in reference to Code Enforcement Case SMS Case No.: 418727, Hernando County, Florida vs. Alejandro Crespo (the "Code Enforcement Case"). The Code Enforcement Case is still pending and has been continued from the July 26, 2023 hearing date, while the Applicant pursues a special exception use permit to maintain a pigeon aviary within a R-1C Residential District. The Applicant keeps and maintains the pigeon aviary to house his pigeons that serve as emotional support animals to help treat his service-related handicap of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

The County's Land Development Code does not have a specific mechanism or an express written procedure to submit reasonable accommodation requests. After consulting with Kyle Benda, Assistant County Attorney, it was suggested to proceed with an Application as a Special Exception Use Permit.

Please contact our office with any questions or comments that may be necessary to submit a complete application.

Sincerely.

Jarrod D. Prater, Esq. Attorney-At-Law

cc:

Alejandro Crespo, Applicant

Kyle Benda, Assistant County Attorney Rachel Boymer, Code Enforcement Officer

We mean business™

August 31, 2023

Received

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AUG 02 2023

Planning Department Hernando County, Florida

SENT VIA EMAIL: mlmiller@co.hernando.fl.us

Ms. Michelle Miller
Planning Administrator
Planning Department
Hernando County Board of County Commissioners
1653 Blaise Drive
Brooksville, Florida 34601

RE: I

Request for Relief is a Special Exception Use Permit for a Reasonable Accommodation for a Service-Related Disability to have a pigeon aviary in an R1C Zoning District – Supplement to Prior Application

Dear Ms. Miller:

On August 3, 2023, we submitted an application for a Special Exception Use Permit (the "Application") along with required ancillary documentation as required by the Hernando County Board of County Commissioners (the "County") on behalf of Alejandro Crespo (the "Applicant") for property located at 12483 Convent Garden Road, Brooksville, FL 34613(the "Property").

The Application was submitted in reference to Code Enforcement Case SMS Case No.: 4148727, Hernando County, Florida vs. Alejandro Crespo (the "Code Enforcement Case"). The Applicant through the Application has requested a special exception use permit to maintain a pigeon aviary within an R-1C Residential District. This letter serves as a supplemental to the Application regarding the lighting of the pigeon aviary and providing the Adjacent Property Ownership List (the "List") as issued by the Hernando County Property Appraiser. The List is attached to this letter.

As part of resolving the compliance with the Code Enforcement Case, the Applicant originally had planned to remove the electricity from the accessory structure. Thus, in the Application's narrative section, we originally indicated that no lightning would be used in the accessory structure. However, the County Inspector for the County confirmed that due to the building plans for the accessory structure contemplating the use of electricity, the electricity needed to be reinstalled. As such, the Applicant reinstalled the electricity in accordance with the building plans and the County's requirements.

August 31, 2023 Alejandro Crespo Application for Special Exception Use Permit Page 2

No lighting has been installed that will be used on the outside of the accessory structure. The lighting currently installed is used solely on the inside of the structure and does not shine or direct lighting toward any neighboring property next to the accessory structure. The Applicant does not intend to use any special lighting for the use of the pigeon aviary, but only standard lighting within the accessory structure that one would ordinarily find in a building used within a residential area.

Please contact our office with any questions or comments that may be necessary to supplement and update the Application accordingly.

Sincerely,

Jarrod D. Prater

Jarrod D. Prater, Esq.
Attorney at Law

cc: Alejandro Crespo, Application (<u>alejandrocrespo47@outlook.com</u>)

Kyle Benda, Assistant County Attorney (<u>kbenda@co.hernando.fl.us</u>)

Rebecca Boymer, Code Enforcement Officer (<u>RBoymer@HernandoCounty.us</u>)

HERNANDO COUNTY CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT OR SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE PERMIT PETITION



Application request (check one):

☐ Conditional Use Permit

☑ Special Exception Use Permit

PRINT OR TYPE ALL INFORMATION

File No. ____Official Date Stamp:

9E-23-08

Received

AUG 02 2023

Planning Department Hernando County Florida

- A		Hernando County, Florida
Date: August 2, 2023		Journal Harrist
APPLICANT NAME: Alejandro Crespo		
Address: 12483 Convent Garden Road		
City: Brooksville	State: Flori	da Zip: 34613
Phone: (813) 435-0320 Email: alejandrocrespo47@outlook.c		
Property owner's name: (if not the applicant)		
REPRESENTATIVE/CONTACT NAME: Alejandro Crespo		
Company Name: The Hogan Law Firm, LLC		
Address: 20 S. Broad Street / PO Box 485		
City: Brooksville	State: Florid	<u>da</u> Zip: 34605
Phone: (352) 799-8423 Email: jrey@hoganlawfirm.com and/	or iprater@nogania	wtirm.com
HOME OWNERS ASSOCIATION: Yes No (if applicable provide name)		
Contact Name:		
Address: City:		State: Zip:
PROPERTY INFORMATION:		
1. PARCEL(S) <u>KEY</u> NUMBER(S): 726888 and 726897		
2. SECTION <u>09</u> , TOWNSHIP <u>22</u>	, RANC	GE <u>18</u>
3. Current zoning classification: R-1C Residential		
4. Desired use: Use of a 372 square foot accessory building as a pige	on aviary normally a	allowed in A/R Districts.
5. Size of area covered by application: 40,902 Square Feet or .939 acre	(Combination of tw	o parcels)
6. Highway and street boundaries: Covent Garden Road	10 5 7 7	
7. Has a public hearing been held on this property within the past twelve mo		ac :1 ::c : 1 !!!
8 Will expert witness(es) be utilized during the public hearings?		(If yes, identify on an attached list.)
Will additional time be required during the public hearing(s) and how much	ch? Li Yes Li No (Time needed:)
PROPERTY OWNER AFFIDIVAT		
Alejandro Creeno		
I, Alejandro Crespo , hav application and state and affirm that all information submitted within this petition	ve thoroughly examin	ed the instructions for filing this
belief and are a matter of public record, and that (check one):	n are true and correct	to the best of my knowledge and
☐ I am the owner of the property and am making this application OR		
✓ I am the owner of the property and am authorizing (applicant): Jennifer C.	Rev and/or Jarrod	D Prater
and (representative, if applicable): The Hogan Law Firm, PLLC	rtey and/or Janou	D. Flater
to submit an application for the described property.	1	
	11-11-	
Jeografia	Edward or	
97 1/	Signature of Property	Owner
STATE OF FLORIDA		
The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me thisday of	August	20 2 3 h
Herandro Crespo who is personally known to	to me of produced F	as identification.
will is personally known	to me gr produced <u>r c</u>	as identification.
11/1/2 1/1/2		Therida
KIN a few I	Notary Public State of F Kayla Feidt	-iorioa
Signature of Notary Public 6/16/2026	_ My Commission	}
Effective Date: 11/8/16 Last Revision: 11/8/16	LAP. 0/10/2020	Notary Seal/Stamp

Horace P. of State of French

Special Exception Use Permit Application Narrative

August 2, 2023

Received

AUG 0 2 2023

Planning Department Hernando County, Florida

REQUESTED ACTION:

The applicant requests the approval of a special exception use on the subject properties zoned as R-1C residential district to allow the applicant to keep and maintain a pigeon aviary or pigeon loft on the applicant's property as emotional support animals and to participate in competitive pigeon racing. The Hernando County Land Development Code provides for pigeon aviaries within agricultural/residential districts and the request seeks an exception to allow the aviary in the currently zoned R-1C property. This is a request for a reasonable accommodation for a qualifying service-related disability pursuant to the Fair Housing Act of 1988, 42 U.S.C. §3601, and the Florida Fair Housing Act, Section 760.20, Florida Statutes. While the applicant seeks a special exception use, it recognized the any approval of such use based on a reasonable accommodation would only be applicable to the property for so long as it is owned by the applicant, and would not otherwise run with the land.

OWNER/APPLICANT INFORMATION:

Property Owner(s) of Record:

Alejandro Crespo

12483 Covent Garden Road Brooksville, FL 34613

Proof of Ownership: The following deeds of record are referenced for establishing proof of ownership: Warranty Deed at OR Book 3574, Page 728, and OR Book 4135, Page 1355.

Applicant:

Alejandro Crespo

12483 Covent Garden Road Brooksville, FL 34613

SITE LOCATION:

Parcel Key No. / Parcel No.:

726888/ R01-221-17-3340-0357-0130

726897/R01-221-17-3340-0357-0140

Property Address: 14283 Covent Garden Road and TBD Covent Garden Road, Brooksville,

Hernando County, Florida 34613-3847

Legal Description: The full legal description for the parcels are as follows:

Parcel Key No./ Parcel No.: 726888/ R01-221-17-3340-0357-0130

01025784

1 of 9

Alejandro Crespo

Lot 13, Block 357, Royal Highlands Unit No. 5, according to the plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 12, Pages 45 through 59, inclusive, of the Public Records of Hernando County, Florida.

Parcel Key No./ Parcel No.: 726897/ R01-221-17-3340-0357-0140

Lot 14, Block 357, Royal Highlands, Unit No. 5, as per plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 12, Pages 45 through 59, Public Records of Hernando County, Florida.



SITE CHARACTERISTICS:

Property Size/Size of Area to Be Rezoned: .939 +/- Acres

Property Square Footage: 40,902 Square Feet +/-

Current Future Land Use Designation: Rural

Current Zoning: Residential (R1C)

Current Use: Residential/Vacant

01025784 2 of 9 Alejandro Crespo

Surrounding Future Land Use Designation:

North	Rural
East	Rural
South	Rural
West	Rural

Surrounding Zoning:

North	Residential
East	Residential
South	Residential
West	Residential

Surrounding Uses:

North	Residential	
East	Residential	
South	Residential/Vacant	
West	Vacant	

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Building Description: The proposed use of the subject property includes the use of an existing accessory structure that is 372 square feet to house pigeons that compete in competitive pigeon racing. The structure is 31 feet long and 12 feet wide with a slanted roof. The roof is 13 feet high at its highest point and 9 feet high at its lowest point.

Building Setbacks: As an accessory structure to a principal residence the setbacks are 7.5 feet from the side lot line and 15 feet from the rear lot line. It should be noted that the structure is located on the West lot line adjacent to the second parcel owned by the applicant.

Landscape/Buffering: There is no landscaping or buffering around the structure.

Lighting: The accessory structure does not contain electricity, and therefore, there is no lighting.

Parking: There is no parking applicable to this use, as the use is solely for the property owner who will use the existing driveway and parking in the normal course of occupancy of his residence.

Transportation/Access: The property is accessed from a local street that connect to Sunshine Grove Road. No additional transportation impacts are anticipated for the requested use, and no specialty vehicles are planned to be used with the aviary or racing.

SPECIAL EXCPETION USE PERMIT:

Requested Special Exception Use Permit: The applicant seeks approval to use an existing accessory structure as a pigeon aviary or pigeon loft. The current structure is 372 square feet and sits on one parcel that is 20,457 square feet. The applicant owns another lot that is next door to primary parcel which is also 20,457 square feet. Taking both parcels into account the building accessory sits on a total of 40,914 square feet owned by the applicant. A survey and building plans are attached hereto as *Exhibit A*. This use would only be used while applicant owns the subject property.

Analysis in Support of Request:

Pursuant to Objective 4.01(A) and Objective 4.01(B) of the Hernando County Comprehensive Plan (HCCP), certain special exception uses may be allowed within certain residential districts to meet the needs of the "various segments of the population." Strategy 4.01(A)(2), of the HCCP, provides:

"Provide within the Residential Category on the Future Land Use Map, a range of densities, lot sizes, setbacks, and a variety of housing types in locations convenient to the needs of various segments of the population." (emphasis added)

Furthermore, Strategy 4.01B(3) provides:

"Hernando County should promote suitable locations for special needs populations with respect to proximity to services and computability of land uses. Housing for special needs populations will be regulated in the land development regulations as a permitted use or special exception in a variety of zoning districts throughout the County. (emphasis added)

This special exception use request is consistent with the County's goals as outlined in the HCCP and is a request that must be granted as required by federal and state law as a reasonable accommodation under the Fair Housing Act of 1988, 42 U.S.C. §3601 and the Florida Fair Housing Act, Section 760.20, Florida Statutes.

Article IV Zoning District Regulations, Section 1. Establishment of Zoning Districts, A. Zoning District Designations, paragraph (3) of the Hernando County Land Development Code establishes the R-1C Residential District as follows:

"This district is designed to encourage and protect low-density, single-family development and is intended to be the district most utilized for regulating future single-family development within the county."

The R-1C zoning district is established pursuant to Article IV Zoning District Regulations, Section 2. Residential Districts, paragraph C. R-1C Residential District of the Hernando County Land Development Code. Pursuant to Article IV, Section 13. Agricultural/Residential Districts. Paragraph A(1)(a)(vi.) states:

"Pigeon aviaries with a maximum of 1,500 square feet of area devoted to housing pigeons, per acre."

Under the Hernando County Land Development Code, Article IV, Section 13. Agricultural/ Residential Districts. Paragraph A(1)(a)(vi.), pigeon aviaries are a permitted use in all agricultural/ residential districts. The applicant is seeking to use an existing accessory structure on his property as a pigeon aviary that houses pigeons. The housing and care of pigions serve as an "emotional support" to the applicant as part of his overall health care treatment plan for a service-related disability. Applicant has been diagnosed by a qualified health care provider with a post-traumatic stress disorder and as a result suffers from anxiety and isolation symptoms. The applicants participation in the housing, care and racing of pigeons has mitigated various symptoms of PTSD as part of his overall treatment plan.

Reasonable Accommodation

This request for relief is not expressly provided for in the Hernando County Land Development Code. The request for relief is being sought as a reasonable accommodation for a deviation from the Hernando County Land Development Code pursuant to the Fair Housing Act of 1988, 42 U.S.C. §3601 (FHA), and the Florida Fair Housing Act, Section 760.20, Florida Statutes (FFHA). Generally, the FHA prohibits discrimination against an individual based on race, color, religion, sex, familial status, or national origin (the "Protected Groups"). Such acts of discrimination include refusing to sell or rent any dwelling, and publishing advertisements for the sale or rental of any dwelling that has a preference, limitation, or discrimination based on the Protected Groups' immutable characteristics. See generally 42 U.S.C. §3604(a)(b)(c)(d).

The FHA was amended to include in the Protected Groups individuals with a "handicap." The FHA has adopted the same definition of handicap as the Americans with Disabilities Act defining "disability." See 42 U.S.C. §3602(h) and Bradgon v. Abbott, 524 U.S. 624, 631 (1998). The ADA has defined "disability" as "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual; a record of such an impairment; or being regarding as an impairment. Furthermore, a person "being regarded as having such an impairment" will be regarded with a disability if the individual has been subjected to an action prohibited under the ADA because of an actual or perceived physical or mental impairment whether or not the impairment limits or is perceived to limit a major life activity." 42 U.S.C §12102.

The FHA limits the ability of local governments to impose zoning and land use restrictions against a person based on a handicap. "A refusal to make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices or services, when such accommodations may be necessary to afford a person equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling" is a form of discrimination. 42 U.S.C. §3604(f)(3)(B). See also Oconomowoc Res. Prog. v. City of Milwaukee, 300 F. 3d 775, 782 (7th Cir. 2002). Thus, the County must grant an accommodation to an individual who makes a request for the accommodation if the County's zoning ordinance prevents the location of an animal within a specific area and the individual needs that animal to aid with their disability.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has defined "assistance animal" as an animal that "works, provides assistance, or performs tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, or that provides emotional support that alleviates one or more identified effects of a person's disability." See generally 24 C.F.R. § 100.204(b) and FHEO-2020-01, Issued

January

28, 2020. See also https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/assistance_animals#_What_Is_a_n.

When a person meets the definition of a handicap and needs an assistance animal as part of their living arrangement under the FHA, the local government must provide a reasonable accommodation for a handicapped individual under federal law. When analyzing the accommodation, a federal court will look at three elements: necessity, equal opportunity of enjoyment, and reasonableness. As part of the requirements for a reasonable accommodation, federal courts will require that the requesting party show a necessity for the accommodation, "creating a causation inquiry that examines whether the requested accommodation would redress injuries that otherwise would prevent a disabled resident from enjoying the same property as a non-disabled person would." Hollis v. Chestnut Bend Homeowners Ass'n, 760 F. 3d 531, 541 (6th Cir. 2014). Additionally, the requesting party must also show equal opportunity is achieved when the accommodation "ameliorates the effects of the disability such that the disabled individual can use and enjoy his residence the same as a non-disabled person." Id. Courts have noted the second and first requirements usually go hand in hand. Anderson v. City of Blue Ash, 798 F. 3d 338, 362 (6th Cir. 2015). The final element to meet is reasonableness. To meet this standard federal courts will balance the burden imposed on a local government versus the benefits gained for disabled individuals. This balancing test is a "highly fact-specific inquiry." Federal courts will consider a requested accommodation as reasonable unless it requires a "fundamental alteration in the nature of a program" or "imposes undue financial and administrative burdens." Southeastern Community College v. Davis, 442 U.S. 397 (1979). See also Shapiro v. Cadman Towers, Inc., 51 F. 3d 328, 334 (2d Cir. 1995). The accommodation must be granted if it imposes no fundamental alteration to a program or does not create an undue financial and administrative burden. Anderson v. City of Blue Ash, 798 F. 3d 338, 362 (6th Cir. 2015).

Florida law is also in lockstep with the federal law. The FFHA is designed to mirror and follow the federal FHA. Florida and federal courts have interpreted the FFHA in the same manner as the federal FHA.

"The Florida Fair Housing Act is the state counterpart to the federal Fair Housing Act. Like the federal statute, the Florida Fair Housing Act provides a private right of action for any person who claims to have been injured by a discriminatory housing practice. Furthermore, the Florida Fair Housing Act is patterned after the Fair Housing Act and courts have recognized that it is to be construed consistently with federal law. Accordingly, the Court's discussion treats interchangeably the corresponding provisions of the federal and Florida fair housing statutes and case law interpreting the same." *Noah v. Assor*, 379 F. Supp. 3d 1284, 1295-1296 (S.D. Fla. 2019). *See also Dornbach v. Hooley*, 854 So. 2d 211, 213 (Fla. 2d DCA 2002).

Handicap:

Under the definition of "handicap," as defined by the FHA and FFHA, the applicant meets the definition of being service-related handicapped. Crespo has been diagnosed with a post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) resulting from his service in the United States military and overseas deployments. The Mayo Clinic has defined PSTD as a mental health condition that is triggered by a traumatic event resulting from directly experiencing the event or witnessing the event. Symptoms of PTSD may include flashbacks, nightmares, and severe anxiety, as well as uncontrollable thoughts about the event. This can result in difficulty in adjusting and coping for individuals with **PTSD** after experiencing traumatic https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/post-traumatic-stress-disorder/symptomscauses/syc-20355967. As provided in the Affidavit of Reasonable Accommodation and Letter from Dr. Cueva attached hereto as Exhibits B and C, Crespo's PTSD is 70% service-related. Additionally, Crespo has other physical ailments from his military service that have rendered him 100% service-related handicapped. The symptoms of his PTSD have created a major impact on his life activities.

Emotional Support Animal:

Crespo has engaged in several treatments with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for his PTSD. Dr. Cueva has indicated that the VA's treatments have had limited success. However, to address the limitations of his treatments, Crespo has engaged in pigeon fancying or competitive pigeon racing as an additional treatment. Dr. Cueva's letter states that the hobby is "extremely therapeutic" and "give him a purpose, serve as motivation and inspire him to interact with other people through pigeon clubs and competitive races." Crespo's pigeons serve as emotional support animals to alleviate his PTSD symptoms of anxiety and isolation. Prior to engaging in pigeon fancying, Crespo suffered from suicidal thoughts and alcoholic addiction. Pigeon fancying helped channel his mental health to remove his suicidal thoughts and eliminate alcohol as a coping mechanism. Crespo has indicated in his talks with Dr. Cueva that the threat of losing his pigeons has raised his anxiety and has created fear that he would return to those negative symptoms of his PTSD. Thus, the pigeons are required as an additional treatment for his PTSD and serve as emotional support animals. Dr. Cueva also confirms that the request to keep the pigeons can be treated as no different than having a dog or cat to provide comfort in their home.

Necessity:

Crespo meets the definition of "handicapped" and his pigeons meet the definition of "assistance animals." Crespo is entitled to make a request for an accommodation from the Hernando County Land Development Code. Under the first requirement of necessity, a court will examine whether or not Crespo's handicap is redressed by the presence of the pigeons and participating in pigeon fancying. Despite receiving the treatments from the VA, Crespo's need for the pigeons is established by the Letter from Dr. Cueva. Dr. Cueva's letter confirms that the treatments from the VA by themselves have had limited success. He states that "while he has engaged in treatment with the VA, he has found it very difficult to live a fulfilling life." Pigeon fancying has helped Crespo engage in a therapeutic lifestyle that has treated his PTSD symptoms. Without the pigeons, the negative side effects of Crespo's PTSD would rear its ugly head. As noted above, Crespo suffered from suicidal thoughts and alcoholic addiction from his PTSD. Pigeon fancying has helped alleviate the negative symptoms of his PTSD.

Equal Opportunity:

Under the second requirement of equal opportunity, Crespo would need to show that the pigeons reduce his anxiety and increase his enjoyment of the Property the same as a non-disabled person could. Dr. Cueva's letter and affidavit support this element.

Reasonableness:

Finally, under the reasonableness standard, Crespo would have to show that the accommodation does not materially alter the zoning ordinance or impose an undue financial burden or administrative burden on the County. Under federal case law, the mere presence of an animal by itself is insufficient to show a material altering of the zoning ordinance. See generally Anderson v. City of Blue Ash, 798 F. 3d 338 (6th Cir. 2015). See generally Smith & Lee Assocs. v. City of Taylor, 102 F. 3d at 781, 796 (6th Cir. 1996). Federal courts will look at the specific facts of the situation to determine the reasonableness. In the present matter, the facts of the size and shape of the accessory building, the use of the pigeons in competitive racing, and the frequency of bird release demonstrate that it does not materially alter the zoning ordinance nor create an administrative burden on the County to enforce the zoning restrictions.

The use of an accessory building is permitted under the Hernando County Land Development Code, however, use as a pigeon aviary in R1C is not permitted. However, without the presence of the aviary, Crespo would not be able to actively participate in pigeon racing or pigeon clubs. The Hernando County Code permits a pigeon aviary in agricultural/ residential distractive provided the aviary does not exceed 1,500 square feet per acre. The accessory building here is much smaller sitting at a total of 372 square feet. Furthermore, the pigeon aviary is only 31 feet long and 12 feet wide. The pigeon roof is slanted. The roof is 13 feet high at its highest point and 9 feet high at its lowest point. The current building accessory sits on a parcel that is roughly half an acre, but the applicant also owns an additional parcel adjacent to this parcel that brings the total property to just below one full acre. A typical competitive pigeon aviary has around 150 pigeons that compete in racing. Crespo's aviary houses 127 pigeons.

Additionally, the pigeon aviary is distinguishable from a chicken coop in several ways. Competitive racing pigeons are provided a specific organic food and dietary supplement that are

designed to eliminate the spread of germs and keep the pigeons in healthy conditions. Furthermore, the aviary is cleaned daily and any feces are removed from and disposed of with solid waste collection. The feces are placed into garbage bags and then into garbage pins that are picked up on the weekly regular schedule by the applicant's garbage disposal service to be disposed on County sanctioned landfills.

Pigeon racing is also not a year-round competitive season. The racing season usually runs from July to December. During the offseason, the pigeons are kept in the pigeon loft and are not released. The type of race distance will determine the type of training the pigeons will receive during the race season. If the race is for a period of 360 miles or greater, the pigeons will fly freely around the pigeon loft for a 45-minute period and will return to the loft at the same time. If the race ranges from 100 to 120 miles, the pigeons will be taken offsite to another location 60 to 70 miles away and released. The pigeons will return to the loft at varying times throughout the day, usually returning no later than 10:00 PM. Pigeon training is a limited technique designed to limit the impact on neighboring properties. Competitive racing pigeons are specifically trained to return to the loft from which they come, and not roost or otherwise linger in the surrounding area

Finally, other nearby properties with similar zoning to the applicant have pigeon lofts located on them. Attached as *Exhibit D* is a map with yellow dots showing the location of other pigeon aviaries on properties designated at R-1C residential districts. The number of lofts within a one mile radius demonstrate that the existence of a loft at the applicant's property is reasonable and would not otherwise fundamentally change the zoning scheme in the area.

Conclusion:

The FHA and FFHA require that Hernando County grant a reasonable accommodation for Crespo's pigeons, despite the violation of the Hernando County Land Development Code. Crespo's PTSD meets the definition of "handicap," and the pigeons also meet the broad definition of an "assistance animal," as the pigeons serve as emotional support animals. Crespo can show that the accommodation is reasonable and necessary to redress his PTSD symptoms and that such an accommodation provides an equal opportunity to enjoy his Property. Finally, the accommodation would be reasonable as courts do not consider the presence of animals in a residential zone as a fundamental change from the zoning ordinance, and it would not impose an undue burden, due to the lack of complaints and the lack of enforcement by the County against other neighboring aviaries. We respectfully request that the applicants request for relief be granted.

AFFIDAVIT OF REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION Planning Department County. Florida

BEFORE ME, the undersigned authority, personally appeared as <u>Dr. David E. Cueva</u>, <u>PsyD</u> of the Brooksville Community Based Outpatient Clinic that provides medical services to veterans for the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), who being duly sworn according to the law, deposes and says:

- 1. Affiant is an employee and staff psychologist with the VA at the Brooksville Community Based Outpatient Clinic in Brooksville, Florida. Affiant has a caseload covering mental health disorders including Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Specific Phobias, marital issues, and life stage changes. Affiant's services include psychotherapy, evidence-based treatments, and structured group psychotherapy.
- 2. Affiant has personal knowledge of facts contained in this Affidavit including the treatment of Alejandro Crespo's ("Mr. Crespo") difficulties with military-related Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).
- 3. Affiant has personally worked with Mr. Crespo regarding the treatment of Mr. Crespo's PTSD and has determined that the PTSD is seventy percent (70%) service-connected, along with several other physical ailments rendering Mr. Crespo one hundred percent (100%) service-connected disabled.
- 4. Affiant has determined that Mr. Crespo suffers from anxiety symptoms related to his PTSD for many years. Though Mr. Crespo has engaged in treatment with the VA, Mr. Crespo has found it very difficult to live a fulfilling life, despite such treatments.
- 5. One method Mr. Crespo has engaged in to alleviate his anxiety symptoms for his PTSD is pigeon fancying. Mr. Crespo has revealed that his hobby of pigeon fancying is extremely therapeutic for him. Pigeon fancying has given him a purpose to serve as motivation to interact with other people through pigeon clubs and pigeon competitive racing.
- 6. Mr. Crespo's accommodation request is a necessity as Mr. Crespo's engagement with his pigeons, helps provide further treatment to alleviate the anxiety symptoms that Mr. Crespo suffers from due to his PTSD disability that the VA would not otherwise be able to provide.
- 7. If Mr. Crespo's accommodation request is granted it will also permit him to enjoy his home compared to a non-disabled person, as Mr. Crespo's neighbors and other neighboring properties also engage in local pigeon fancying clubs and pigeon racing in Hernando County, Florida. Mr. Crespo's interaction with his pigeons gives him a much more meaningful and fulfilling life.
- 8. Mr. Crespo's accommodation request is also reasonable as it can be thought of as a request for anyone who has a dog or cat that helps them feel less distressed and thus more comfortable in their home and around other people.

FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NOT.

Dated: _	07/24/2023	Jaca E. Cui pono

Dr. David E. Cueva, PsyD Brooksville Community Based

Outpatient Clinic

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

STATE OF FLORIDA COUNTY OF HERNANDO

The foregoing instrument was sworn to and subscribed hereto before me by means of [] physical presence or [] online notarization this <u>lyf</u> day of July, 2023 by Dr. David E. Cueva, PsyD. He/she is [] personally known to me or M has produced <u>FL Drivers (1000)</u> as identification.

Notary Public State of Florida Kayla Feidt
My Commission
HH 276954
Exp. 6/16/2026

Notary Public State of Florida

Print Name: Kayla

My Commission Expires (//(0/2



AUG 0 2 2023

Planning Department Hernando County. Florida

April 6, 2023

Veterans Health Administration

Department of Veterans Affairs

James A. Haley Medical Center (VAMC) Brooksville Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) 14540 Cortez Blvd , Suite 108, Brooksville, FL 34613, 352-597-8287

Department of Planning and Zoning Code Enforcement 789 Providence Blvd, Brooksville, FL 34601 352-754-4056

To whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of Mr. Alejandro Crespo in support of his request for Reasonable Accommodations regarding his pigeons. I am a staff psychologist with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) at the Brooksville Community Based Outpatient Clinic in Florida. I have worked with Mr. Crespo related to his difficulties with military-related Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). In addition, Mr. Crespo is service connected for PTSD (70%) and he has a number of other physical issues totaling him 100% service connected disabled.

Mr. Crespo has suffered from anxiety related to his PTSD for many years and while he has engaged in treatment with the VA he has found it very difficult to live a fulfilling life. He has talked about the hobby of being a pigeon fancier as extremely therapeutic for him. His pigeons give him a purpose, serve as motivation and inspire him to interact with other people through pigeon clubs and competitive races. This request for Reasonable Accommodations is appropriate and can be thought of us a request for anyone who has a dog or cat that help them feel less distress and thus more comfortable in their home and around other people.

In closing, I have full confidence that Mr. Crespo will continue in his treatment. Granting his Reasonable Accommodation will only help him in his overall recovery. He lives a much more meaning and fulfilling life with the pigeons in his life. If I can be of any help, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

David E. Cueva, PsyD

Staff Psychologist – Program Manager
James A. Haley Medical Center (VAMC)

Brooksville Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) 14540 Cortez Blvd, Suite 103

Brooksville, FL 34613 david.cueva@va.gov 352-597-8287 x4153

AS BUILT ACCESSORY STRUCTURE FOR:

2483 CONVENT GARDEN RD SPRING HILL, FL 34613 MR. ALEJANDRO CRESPO

THE CONTRACT DOCUMENTS
The contract documents consist o

The contract documents consist of the Owner-Contractor Agreement, these Conditions, the expressing specialization and all Addendo issued prior to and all Modifications issued after exercising of the Contract.

CHANCE CROERS
A Change Order is o written order to the Controctor signed by the Owner and the Achieci, issued older execution of the Controct, authorising a change in the Work or on objainment in the Controct Sam or the Controct Time.

THE WORK in comprises the completed construction required by the Contract Documents and include an loop recessory to produce such construction, and all moterials and equipment incorporated an loop incorporated in such construction.

The Architict will be the Owner's representative during construction and until lines payment in each. The Architect will not be responsible for and will not be control or charge of construction means, methods, techniques, sequences or pocedures, or for sately procedures more and the control of the sequences or pocedures, or for sately procedures on the owner of the sequence of the Architect shall oft call lines how correst to the New Architect shall not all other bear of the Architect shall not an architecture of the Architect shall not an architecture of the Architecture of the Architecture and the Architecture and the Architecture and the Architecture and the compound of an assembly of which the item is a compound.

Upon authorization by the Owner additional compensation, the Architect will render extensive Construction Administration as described in the AIA Standard Documents.

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The Owner reserve the right to perform work related to the Project with his own forces, and to several special controlled in the project with his own forces.

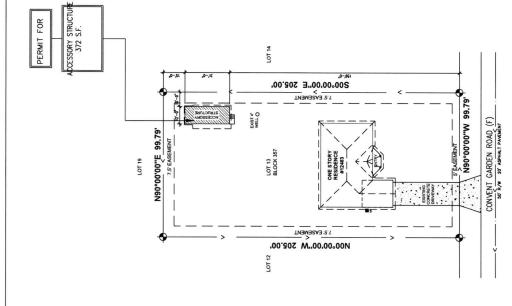
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SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETION The Book is the Dote certified by the Architect when the Dote of substantial Competion of the Work is the Octet certified by the Architect when the Dote of substantial competer, so the Omer con coupy or utilize the Work.



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FLOOD ZONE INFORMATION"
COMMUNITY HERNAND COUNTY 120110
MAP PARE NO. 1205.500159
FIRM DATE: 02/02/2012
FLOOD ZONE: X





2

SITE PLAN

FLORIDA BUILDING CODE 7TH EDITION 2020

DRAWINGS 0 INDEX

S-1 Fixtures & Foundation Plan S-2 Sections & Details Plan S-3 Notes & Details Plan S-4 Flashing Details Plan A-1 Site Plan A-2 Floor Plan A-3 Elevations & Roof Plan E-1 Electrical Plan

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.075 17 AND 18, BLOCK G, MAP OF HILSBORO HEIGHTS SOUTH, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF AS RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 10 AT PAGE 28 OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY , FLORIDA DESCRIPTION LEGAL

THIS PERMIT UNDER FBC 2020, 7th EDITION GROUP R-3 13'-4" ONE(1) 372 S.F. TYPE OF CONSTRUCTION OCCUPANCY CLASSIFICATION HEIGHT OF BUILDING No. OF STORIES AREA PER FLOOR (SF).

Received

AUG 02 2023

Hernando County, Florida Planning Department



LUISA ALONSO & ASSOCIATES, LLC. LIC. NO. CGC1513885

1024 W HILLSBORDUGH AVE, TAMPA, FL 33603 Ph: (813)-735-8398 e-mail: laalassociates@yahoo.com

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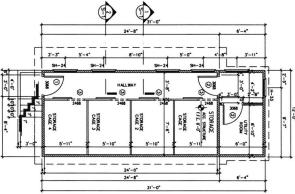
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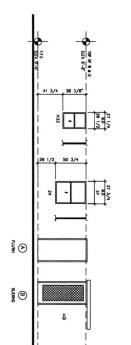


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Received

planning Department Hernando County. Florida



FLORIDA BUILDING CODE 7TH PDITION (2020)



AS BUILT ACCESSOEY STRUCTURE FOR: MR. ALEJANDRO CRESPO 12483 CONVENT GARDEN RD. SPRING HILL, FL 34613 MR. ALEJANDRO CRESPO

(813)-XXX-XXXX

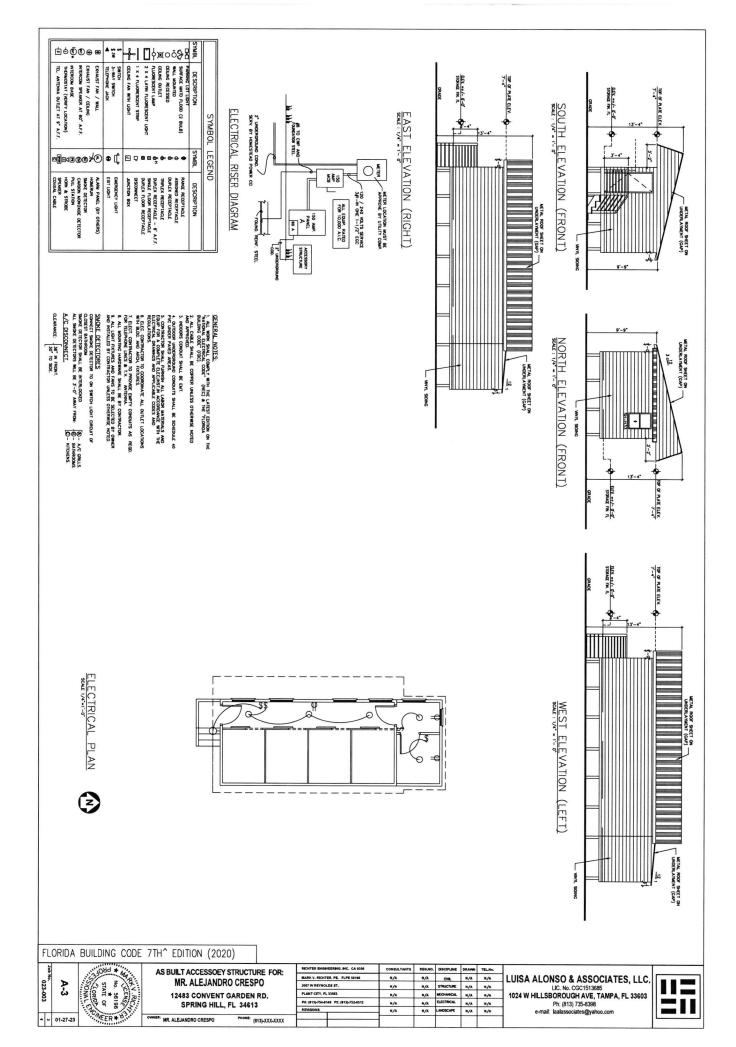
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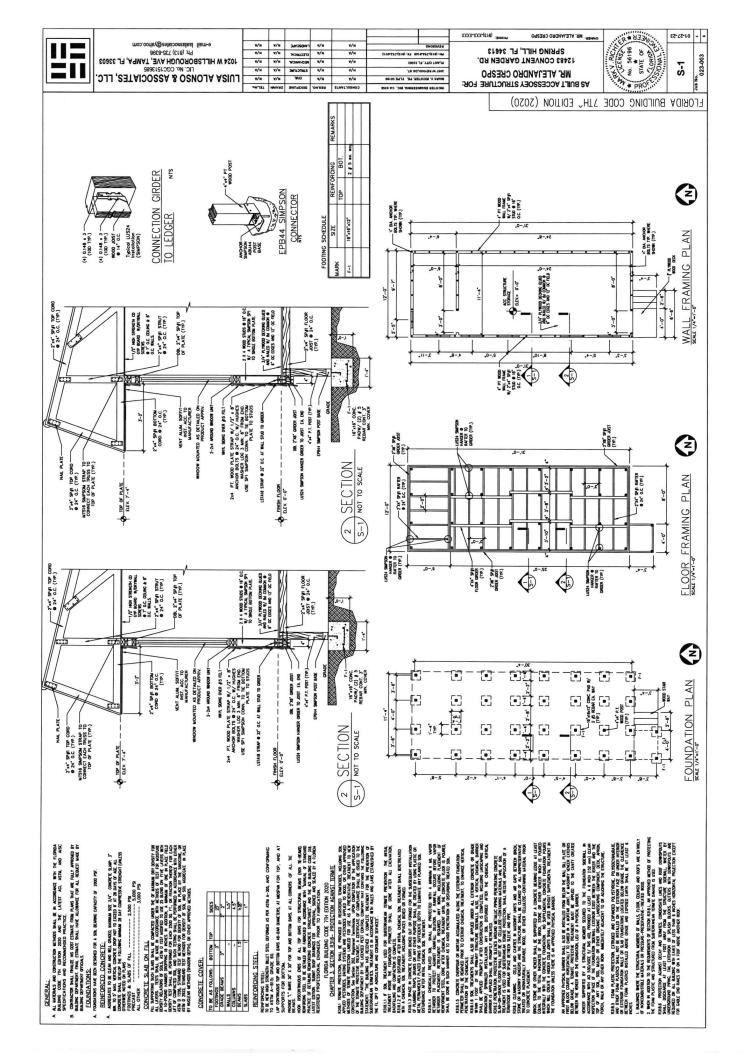
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RICHTER ENGINEERING, INC. CA 9356	CONSULTANTS	REG.NO.	DISCIPLINE	DRAWN	TELNo.
MARK V. RICHTER, PE. FLPE 56196	N/A	N/A	CVL	N/A	N/A
2007 W REYNOLDS ST.	N/A	N/A	STRUCTURE	N/A	N/A
PLANT CITY, FL 33563	N/A	H/A	MECHANICAL	N/A	N/A
PH: (813)-754-8148 FX: (813)-752-0512	N/A	N/A	ELECTRICAL	N/A	N/A
REVISIONS	N/A	N/A	LANDSCAPE	N/A	N/A

LUISA ALONSO & ASSOCIATES, LLC.
LIC. No. CGC1513885
1024 W HILLSBOROUGH AVE, TAMPA, FL 33603 Ph: (813) 735-8398 e-mail: laalassociates@yaho







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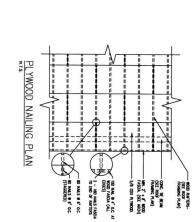
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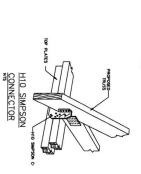
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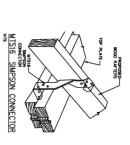
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10° 0° PAIE 1+ 7'-0°	10° or PADE 16° y - c	1
CONSCION ® 34' CC	TOP OF PLATE He. 7'-4' TOP AND PLATE HE. 7'-4' AND COMMON MOST THE STATE OF THE S	6-10, 82 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

7TH^ EDITION (2020)

F	L	ORIDA	BUILDING	CODE
023-003	Job No.	S-2	No. 56196 W STATE OF	NATY RICH
-	-	01-27-23	***ER*	

ROOF FRAMING PLAN

2

AS BUILT ACCESSOEY STRUCTURE FOR: MR. ALEJANDRO CRESPO 12483 CONVENT GARDEN RD. SPRING HILL, FL 34613

MR. ALEJANDRO CRESPO

PHONE: (813)-XXX-XXXX

RICHTER ENGINEERING, INC., CA 9356	CONSULTANTS	REG.NO.	DISCIPLINE	DRAWN	TELNo
MARK V. RICHTER, PE. FLPE 56196	N/A	N/A	CWL	N/A	N/A
2007 W REYNOLDS ST.	N/A	N/A	STRUCTURE	N/A	H/A
PLANT CITY, FL 33563	N/A	N/A	WECHANICAL	H/A	N/A
PH: (813)-754-8148 FX: (813)-752-0512	N/A	N/A	ELECTRICAL	N/A	N/A
REVISIONS	N/A	N/A	LANDSCAPE	N/A	N/A

LUISA ALONSO & ASSOCIATES, LLC.
LIC. No. CSC1513665

1024 W HILLSBOROUGH AVE, TAMPA, FL 33603
Pt; (13) 75-3398
e-mail: laalassociates@yahoo.com



e-mail: laalassociates@yahoo.com	Ī
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Ph: (813) 735-8398	ſ
1024 W HILLSBOROUGH AVE, TAMPA, FL 33603	ŀ
SOURCE IS AGMAT SVA HOLIOGOGS LIN WASCOL	ı
LIC. No. CGC1513685	t
LUISA ALONSO & ASSOCIATES, LLC.	ł

KENISTONS	V/N	V/N	34YOSQW1	V/N	V/N
ZLOGZSZ-(CLE) :X4 BFLF-SS-(GLE) :H4	V/N	V/N	201000000	V/H	V/H
PLANT CITY, FL 33663	V/N	V/N	MECHANICAL	V/H	V/N
1003 W REYNOLDS ST.	Y/N	V/N	SHUTOURTE	V/N	Y/N
MARK V. RICHTER, PE. FLPE 56196	V/H	V/N	CIME	V/H	V/N

PHONE: (813)-XXX-XXXXX	MER: MR. ALEJANDRO CRESPO
FL 34613	SPRING HILL,

SPRINT ACCESSOEY STRUCTURE FOR: 12483 CONVENT GERDEN RD. 12483 CONVENT GERDEN RD.

EB + St.	Sivier E
RICK ENSENSE	10.1
70	ONA
4 2 b	
**** PI	

S-3 17-73 1-10 No. 023-003 1-1

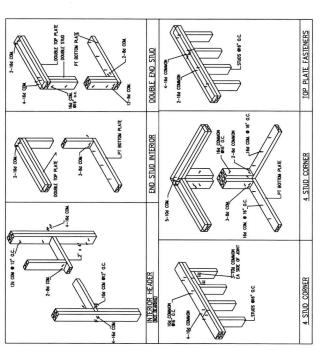
FLORIDA BUILDING CODE 7TH" EDITION (2020)

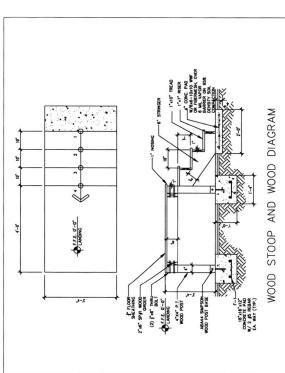
		HEAC	HEADER TABLE		
WINDOW/DOOR		PREMIUSE SIZE	JACK ATTACHMENT	NUMBER (PER SIDE 0	NUMBER OF JACKS (PER SIDE OF WALL OPENING)
UP TO 3'-0"		2-2×6	16d AT 6" O.C.	1 JACK	×
3'-1" TO 5'-0"		2-2x8	16d AT 6" O.C.	2 JACKS	S
5'-1" TO 8'-0"		2-2×10	16d AT 6" O.C.	2 JACKS	S
8'-1" TO 12'-0"		2-2×12	16d AT 6" O.C.	3 JACKS	S
			FASTENERS	S	
CONNECTOR		DESCRIPTION	PTION	PROC	PRODUCT APPROVAL No.
8	9 4	6-104 COMMON NAILS TO STUD 4-104 COMMON NAILS TO PLATE	TO STUD TO PLATE		FL10456
292	9 9	6-10d COMMON NAILS TO STUD 6-10d COMMON NAILS TO PLATE	TO STUD TO PLATES		FL10456
91	8	8-8d common nails to each member	O EACH MEMBER		FL10456
H2.5	,	5-8d COMMON NAILS TO EACH MEMBER	O EACH MEMBER		FL10456
828	6	6-104x1/2 COMMON NAILS TO POST	ALS TO POST		FL10456
SPH8	12-	12-10dx1/2 COMMON NALS TO POST	IAILS TO POST		FL10456

NOTE = SP1 AND SP2: DRIVE ONE STUD NAIL AT AN ANGLE THROUGH THE STUD NTO THE PLATE

NAILING SCHEDULE

3 at each joint 16 CC 4 C	6. Oc ot edges 6 Oc ot other bearings 7 Oc on ceiling 6 Oc on wells 7 Oc on wells 6 Oc on wells	6° o.c. edges and 6° o.c. Field 6° o.c. edges and 12° o.c. intermedate	4° a.c edges end 8° a.c. intermediate	2" a.c. intermedials	3° a.c. ol edges 6° ol other bearings 3° a.c. ol edges 5° ol other bearings	4" a.c. of edges 6" a.c. of other bearings 4" a.c. of edges 6" a.c. of other bearings	7 a.c on celings 8 a.c. on solis 7 a.c on celings
18 d common 18 d common 3 d common 10 d common 10 d common 8 d common 8 d common 8 d common 8 d common 8 d common 9 d common 9 d common 9 d common	11 go 1 1/2" gatv. 7/16" haod 1 3/6" drywall nail 1 1/2" drywall nail	8 d Ring-Shanks 8 d common	16 golvenized wire stoples 3/8" min. crosm. length of 1 plus wood structural pensi or perticleboard thickness	16 galvonized wire stoples 3/8" min. crosm. length of 1" plus wood structural panel or particleboard thickness	1 1/2 galvanized roofing noil 6d common noil 1 3/4* galvanized roofing noil 8d common noil	11 go 1 1/2 galvanized 7/16" head 11 go 1 3/4" galvanized 7/16" head	1 3/8" drywoll noil 1 1/2" drywoll noil
LIDERS THE TO LOST OR RECORDS, FACT MAY, TO LOST OR RECORDS, FACT MAY, TO LOST OR RECORDS, FACT MAY, TO THE OWNER, THE WALLS OR THE OWNER, THE WALLS OWNER, THE	CIPSUM WALLBOARD 3/8" GIPSUM WALLBOARD 1/2" 1/2" GIPSUM WALLBOARD 1/2"	MOOD STRUCTURAL PAREL AND PARTICLE BOARD ROOF RINAL SHEANNG 1/2" OR LESS 19/32" or greeter	5/16" - 1/2"	19/32" - 3/4"	Fiberboard sheething 1 1/7 23/32"	Gypsum Sheathing 1/2" 5/6"	Gypsum Wellboard 1/2" 3/8"





August 3, 2023

Omar DePablo Hernando Co Planning Department 6153 Blaise Dr Brooksville, FL 34601 Received

AUG 02 2023

Planning Department Hernando County, Florida

Re: Aleia

Alejandro Crespo

Please see the enclosed check for payment of the Special Exception Use Permit. If you have any questions, please contact the office.

Sincerely, Christie Stellians

Christie Williams

Office | Marketing Manager

Hogan Law Firm

(352) 799-8423 Office

(352) 540-7494 Direct

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Christie@HoganLawFirm.com