

December 10, 2025

VIA EMAIL: BHawkins@co.hernando.fl.us
AND HAND DELIVERY

Hon. Brian Hawkins, Chairman
Hernando County Board of County Commissioners
20 N. Main Street, Room 263
Brooksville, FL 34601

Re: Special Exception for Home Occupancy Business
File No.: SE-25-12
Request for Appeal of P & Z decision to Board of County Commission

Dear Mr. Hawkins:

I represent David and Lynn Merritt, as trustees of the Merritt Family Trust Agreement U/T/D August 29, 2007, the owners of the subject property and petitioners in the above-referenced special exception application which was denied by the Planning and Zoning Commission on December 8, 2025. The purpose of this letter is to request the Board of County Commissioners consider an appeal of the Planning and Zoning action. A majority vote of the Board of County Commissioners is required to approve considering the appeal. Thereafter, new notices are sent out by staff, and the appeal is considered at the next scheduled County Commission meeting.

I am asking that a vote be held at the BOCC January 6, 2026 meeting to consider the appeal on February 3, 2026. This is an application for special exception for a limited at home monument business. A small part of the 8.3 acres is used to inscribe stones, typically marble and granite, for offsite installation at cemeteries and other locations. The inscription of stones has been ongoing since the Merritts purchased the property in 2015. As explained in the application and at the Planning and Zoning hearing, Joseph Merritt, David Merritt's son, is the only person who performs the inscribing by using an enclosed sandblasting booth located in the middle of the 8.3 acre property. He does the inscription work one or two days a week for up to three (3) hours each day.

None of the adjacent property owner neighbors object to the use. For their ten years of ownership, no one else objected to the use, until the signs were posted for a public inquiry workshop. Staff recommended approval of the special exception. Planning and Zoning voted 3-

2 to deny.

Should the Board of County Commission vote to consider the appeal, we request the Board also limit the number of days and hours per day. We also ask that you come to the Merritts' property and see what is actually being done and the minimal noise generated by the sandblasting booth. I am happy to coordinate a visit at your convenience (and for all other commissioners at their convenience) so you can have a better understanding when it is before you at the meeting.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Darryl W. Johnston

cc: Hon. John Allocco: JAllocco@HernandoCounty.us
Hon. Ryan Amsler: RAmsler@HernandoCounty.us
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