



TIERRA VERDE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC.
1275 Pinellas Bayway South, 2nd Floor • Tierra Verde, Florida 33715
(727) 867-9362 • Email tassn@tampabay.rr.com

October 6, 2025

Chris Steinocher
President & CEO
St. Petersburg Area Chamber of Commerce
100 Second Ave. N., Suite 150
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Re: Chamber's Support Letter for Greenleaf Capital's Tierra Verde Marina Project

Dear Mr. Steinocher,

We are deeply disappointed by the Chamber's September 22, 2025, letter of support for the proposed Greenleaf Capital Tierra Verde Marina project. The Chamber's endorsement not only misrepresents critical facts but also fails to reflect the interests of its own Tierra Verde members.

1. Mischaracterization of the Project Design

Your letter describes the proposed facility as "not simply a racking structure but one that has been thoughtfully and decoratively enhanced." This is false. The project is a massive industrial racking warehouse, wholly out of scale with the community. Decorative cladding does not erase the incompatibility of a building that towers over every other structure on Tierra Verde. The need for a special exemption should have made this obvious.

2. Misleading Claim of Community Responsiveness

You state that Greenleaf has "incorporated feedback from city staff and the community." In reality, widespread opposition from Tierra Verde residents, civic groups, and environmental advocates remains. Much of the "community" support Greenleaf has touted originates from organizations in downtown St. Petersburg—not from the people most directly impacted.

3. Inaccurate Assertion of Consistency with Existing Use

Your letter claims the project "maintains consistency with the existing land and water use of the area." This is factually incorrect. The current marina is a modest, low-intensity complex. The proposed facility is a high-density, multi-story dry stack warehouse—an industrial use that fundamentally alters the scale, character, and purpose of the site. The loss of retail and services serving Tierra Verde residents alone makes clear the inconsistency.

4. Misrepresentations Regarding Emergency Preparedness

Your letter highlights supposed storm preparation benefits, including "additional haul-out and fuel availability" and "emergency fuel access to vehicles." These claims are speculative, unenforceable, and misleading. In fact, the project:

- Creates evacuation hazards through single-point access and traffic bottlenecks.
- Eliminates the only local gas station, reducing available evacuation and generator fuel by at least 50%.
- Concentrates more vessels in a vulnerable location, amplifying risks during storm events.

5. Failure to Represent Chamber Members on Tierra Verde

Perhaps most troubling, your letter asserts the Chamber speaks for the business community yet does not appear to reflect input from Tierra Verde businesses. Had the Chamber engaged its island-based business, it would have discovered overwhelming opposition. Instead, members' dues were used to promote a project that undermines their businesses, their workforce, and their community.

Conclusion

The Chamber's letter presents an inaccurate and incomplete narrative that does a disservice both to Tierra Verde and to the Chamber's credibility. We expect the Chamber to represent its members fairly, transparently, and with accountability—not to lend its name to projects that erode the very economic vitality it claims to protect.

We urge the Chamber to reconsider its position, engage directly with its Tierra Verde members, and withdraw or amend its letter of support. Failure to do so will only reinforce the perception that the Chamber values outside developers over its own membership.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'RS', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Ron Schalter

President, Tierra Verde Community Association