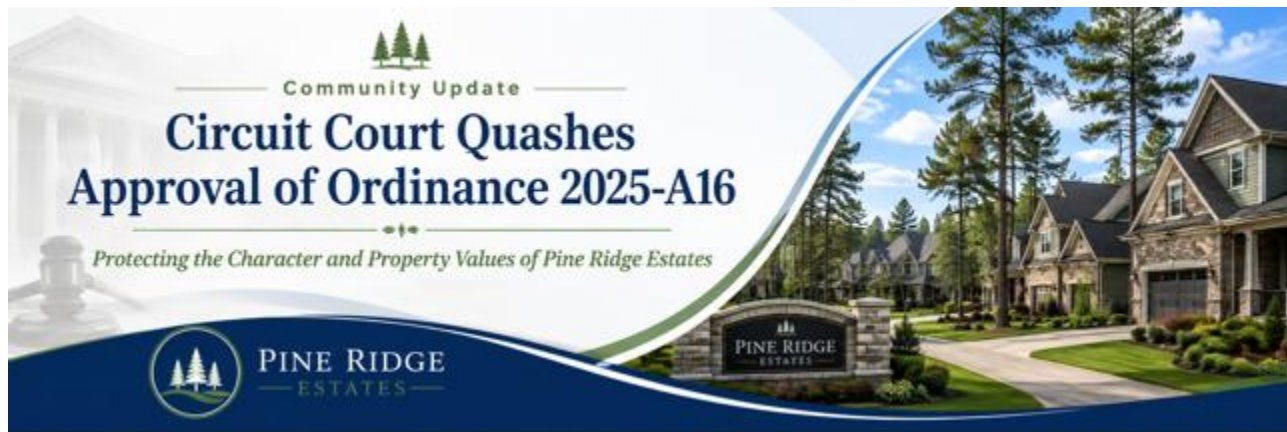




Dear Pine Ridge Property Owners,

As we posted on Friday, the Circuit Court ruled in Pine Ridge's favor regarding the change of use of the former Golf Course property.

Most members of the community supported the actions taken by the Board of Directors, while some did not. While some viewed this matter primarily as an issue affecting those members who live on or adjacent to the former Golf Course, the last four Boards recognized the broader implications for all of Pine Ridge Estates.

One of the three core responsibilities of the Corporation is to **"Protect the Value of the Properties."** What initially appeared to be a dispute over a golf course ultimately became a much broader issue: protecting the Master Plan and established character of Pine Ridge Estates.

We knew that when the BOCC reversed its earlier decision and granted the developer the ability to build homes on the former Golf Course property, it would negatively affect the property values of homes on and adjacent to the property. The County itself acknowledged this impact by subsequently lowering property assessments.

What was less obvious at the time—and what the Court's ruling helps bring into focus—is that the County's decision involved the application of zoning and land-use rules in a manner that the Board believed was inconsistent with the County's own ordinances.

The Boards took action because the issue was bigger than the former Golf Course. We believed that simply accepting this change would establish a precedent that could potentially allow other significant zoning or land-use changes within Pine Ridge in the future. Once the protections established by the Master Plan are weakened in one area, the implications can extend well beyond that individual property.

We do not yet know whether this fight is over. There may be additional steps or issues to address. What we do know is that the current Board will continue to do its due diligence and take the actions it believes are necessary to protect the character, integrity, and property values of Pine Ridge Estates.

As you consider candidates for the Board in future elections, you may want to consider where each candidate stands on these issues and their willingness to protect the long-term interests of the entire Pine Ridge community.

Below is a synopsis of the Court’s ruling, along with a link to the full court document. The complete document will also be posted on the Member Portal under **Settlement Agreements**.

On August 14, 2026, the Circuit Court granted the Pine Ridge Property Owners Association’s Petition for Writ of Certiorari and **quashed the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners’ quasi-judicial approval of Application AA-2025-00002, as memorialized in Ordinance 2025-A16.**

Because this matter has generated substantial interest throughout our community, we believe it is important to explain what the Court actually found.

What the Court Decided

The Court concluded that the Board of County Commissioners **failed to observe the essential requirements of law** in the process used to approve this DRI-related amendment.

The ruling was not based upon personal preference concerning the proposed development, nor did the Court simply substitute its judgment for that of the County Commission. The Court's decision focused on whether the County followed an identifiable and legally authorized framework under its own adopted regulations and applicable Florida law.

The Court concluded that the record did not demonstrate that it did.

The Principal Errors Identified by the Court

1. No Clearly Identified, Code-Grounded Procedure for the DRI Amendment

The County processed the application through its Planned Unit Development/Planned Development Overlay, or **PUD/PDO**, framework.

The Court found that the record did not demonstrate a clear provision in Citrus County’s adopted Comprehensive Plan or Land Development Code expressly authorizing this DRI-related amendment to proceed through that procedure.

The Court emphasized that a governmental land-use decision must be grounded in the procedures and standards actually contained in the County’s adopted law.

2. DRI, PD, PDO, and PUD Terminology Was Treated as Interchangeable Without Sufficient Code Authority

During the case, the record reflected that terminology involving DRI, PD, PDO, and PUD classifications had evolved over time and had been used interchangeably in practice.

The Court determined that historical administrative practice or interchangeable terminology could not take the place of an express, identifiable procedure contained in the County's adopted regulations.

The relevant question was not whether the County had historically handled matters in this fashion. The relevant question was whether the adopted Code actually authorized the procedure used in this particular case. The Court found that the necessary code-grounded authorization had not been demonstrated.

3. The Board Did Not Clearly Determine Which Controlling Land-Use Requirements Applied

The parties placed several potentially mandatory provisions of the Land Development Code and Comprehensive Plan directly in dispute.

These included questions concerning matters such as **density limitations, concurrency requirements, and the effect of claimed vested development rights.**

The Court concluded that the Board did not make a clear, code-grounded determination concerning the applicability of these controlling provisions before approving the application.

4. Ordinance 2025-A16 Did Not Resolve the Underlying Legal Problem

Ordinance 2025-A16 characterized the approval as a modification to the Pine Ridge Unit 3 PUD master plan.

However, the Court found that the ordinance did not resolve the threshold question of whether the County's adopted regulations actually authorized a DRI amendment to proceed through the PUD/PDO process being used.

Instead, according to the Court, the ordinance assumed that framework and proceeded to approval.

The Court additionally concluded that the ordinance's broad repealer clause could not substitute for the legal analysis necessary to determine whether the correct procedures and mandatory standards had been applied.

5. The Record Did Not Clearly Articulate the Governing Legal Basis for Approval

The Court also examined the record of the Board's deliberations.

It noted that the deliberations concluded with limited articulation of the governing legal rationale supporting approval, including the tie-breaking vote.

The Court specifically explained that it was not relying upon this point to reweigh the merits of the application. Rather, because formal findings were absent, the ordinance and hearing record needed to otherwise demonstrate that the Board had applied the correct governing law.

The Court concluded that the record did not adequately do so.

The Court's Overall Conclusion

The Court summarized the central problem by finding that the Board approved a modification to a previously approved DRI under an assumed PUD/PDO master-plan framework **without the record demonstrating a clearly identified, code-grounded procedural vehicle authorizing that approach.**

The Court further found that the Board had not made a clear, code-grounded determination regarding controlling provisions of the Land Development Code that had been placed directly at issue by the parties.

These findings led the Court to conclude that the Board **failed to observe the essential requirements of law.**

What the Court Ordered

The final ruling is straightforward:

The Pine Ridge Property Owners Association's Petition for Writ of Certiorari was GRANTED.

The Citrus County Board of County Commissioners' approval of Application AA-2025-00002, as memorialized in Ordinance 2025-A16, was QUASHED.

This means that the County approval challenged by the Association has been set aside by the Court.

A Word to Our Community

This proceeding involved complex questions of Florida land-use law, Citrus County's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code, and the legal procedures applicable to the Pine Ridge property.

Throughout the process, the Association's position has been that decisions affecting Pine Ridge should be made in accordance with the laws and procedures governing those decisions.

The Court has now issued a detailed 21-page ruling explaining why the County's approval did not satisfy those requirements.

We recognize that this newsletter reaches property owners and other interested parties who may hold differing views concerning the proposed development. Our purpose in providing this update is therefore not to characterize anyone's motives or intentions, but to accurately communicate the Court's findings and its ruling.

We thank our Members for remaining engaged and informed throughout this matter.

Board of Directors
Pine Ridge Property Owners Association