



City of Bunnell, Florida

Agenda Item No. 13.

Document Date: 5/22/2019
Department: Community Development
Subject: Public Hearing PZA#2019-21: Request for Special Exception
Permission to Operate A Cold Weather Homeless Shelter at 205 N.
Pine Street.
Property Address: 205 N. Pine Street
Zoning Designation: R-1, Single Family Residential District
Future Land Use Designation: SF, Single Family - Low Density
Agenda Section: New Business

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type
Location Map	Location Map(s)
Operation Action Plans	Exhibit
Opposition Letter	Exhibit

Summary/Highlights:

The applicant, First United Methodist Church of Bunnell, is requesting special exception permission to operate a cold weather homeless shelter at 205 N. Pine Street.

Background:

History on the previous Cold Weather Shelter operated at this location:

Rev. Beth Gardener opened a cold weather shelter at 205 N. Pine Street between October and November 2008. After extensive research by the City Clerk's office, it was discovered Rev. Gardener talked about opening a cold weather shelter in 2009 but the PZA Board never officially granted approval for the use of a cold weather shelter. Also, the issue came before the City Commission in 2013 but the City Commission did not grant permission to operate either.

On May 7, 2019, the City received a building permit application for a bathroom expansion at the church. The expansion was intended to serve the clients of the cold weather shelter.

From the Land Development Code:

Sec. 34-111. - R-1 Single-family residential district.

(a) Purpose and intent. The purpose of this district is to provide for single-family residential areas of low density. This district is intended to encourage low density development where high density development would be detrimental to the community and to discourage activities not compatible with single-family residential development. This district is compatible with the single-family low density land use category, and is intended to encourage healthy and vibrant residential neighborhoods.

(b) Permitted principal and accessory uses and structures. Within the R-1 Single-family residential district, no building, structure or land shall be used except for one or more of the following uses:

(1) Single-family dwellings, including modular homes, and any customary single-family accessory buildings;

(2) Public library, post office, and other government recreation or public and institutional uses provided they do not conflict with state law;

(3) Parks, swimming pools, playgrounds and conservation areas;

(4) Home daycare facilities in accordance with state law and schools excluding institutions of higher learning;

(5) Special care housing with a maximum of six residents.

(c) Permitted special exception. Permitted special exceptions in the R-1 district shall be as follows:

(1) Churches and related activities pursuant to article V, division 3 of this Code;

(2) Golf courses and related club house facilities;

(3) Daycare centers;

(4) Other uses not listed above that may be compatible with and compliment the permitted uses of the district as approved by the planning, zoning, and appeals board.

The church has submitted a proposal on the expansion of their services to include the cold weather homeless shelter. (See attachment)

The City is receiving letters and calls of opposition for the proposed use. One of the main concerns from the community is the lack of institutional control for the current services the church engages in and allowing the programs to go under managed. The lack of control by the church staff or volunteers to monitor the programs has already caused an extra demand on police and social services. Additionally, with the proposed development of a new elementary school across the street at 109 N. Pine Street there is a concern that the lack of checks on the clients served could mean that sex offenders would be living at or getting other services 50 feet from the school.

Staff Recommendation:

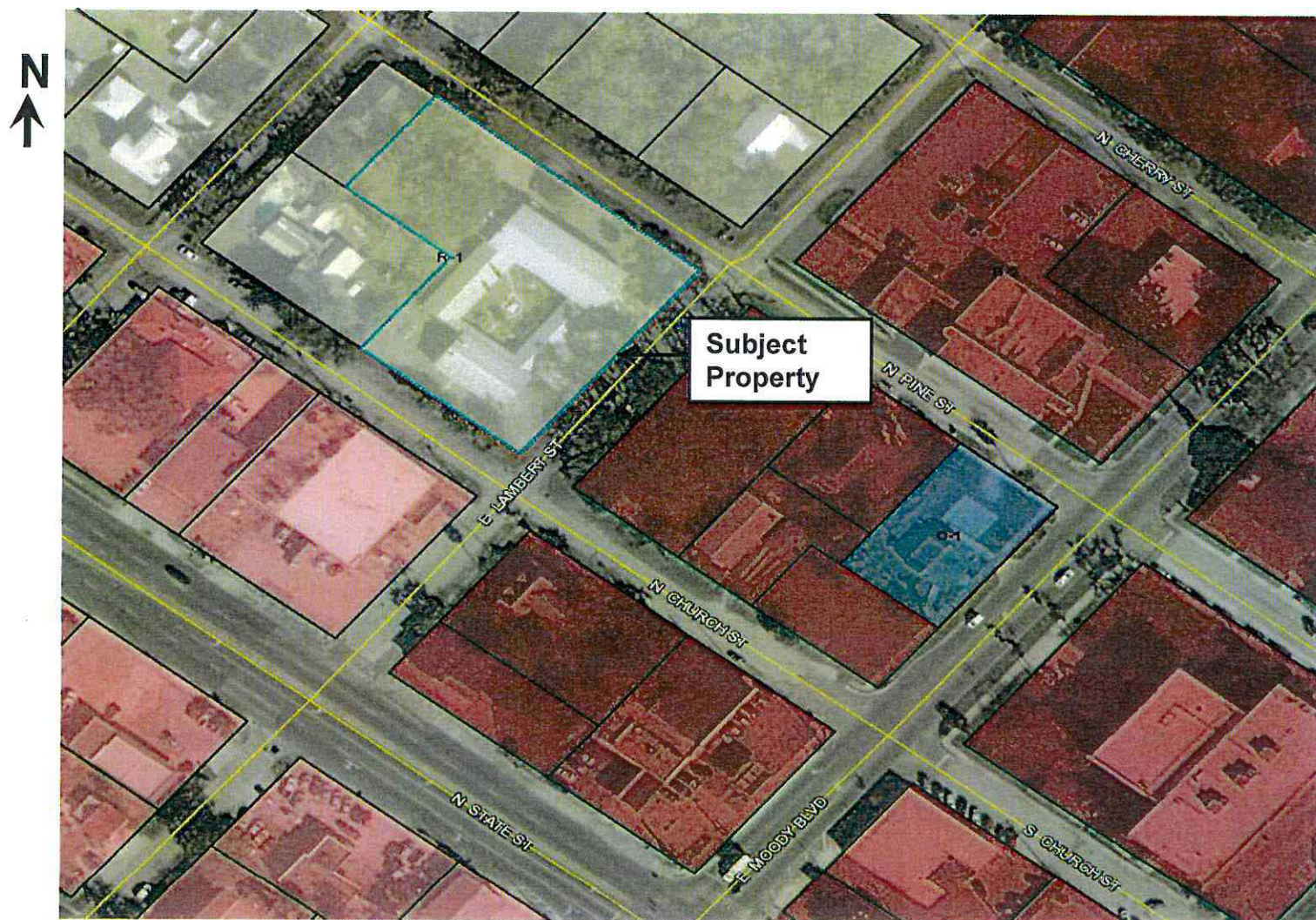
The church is seeking to maximum building capacity for services of commercial uses versus residential for which its zoned.

Thus, staff recommends denial of the special exception to operate a cold weather shelter at 205 N. Pine Street and suggest the church seek a better property in L-1, Light Industrial district to allow it to use it for all services they are trying to do.

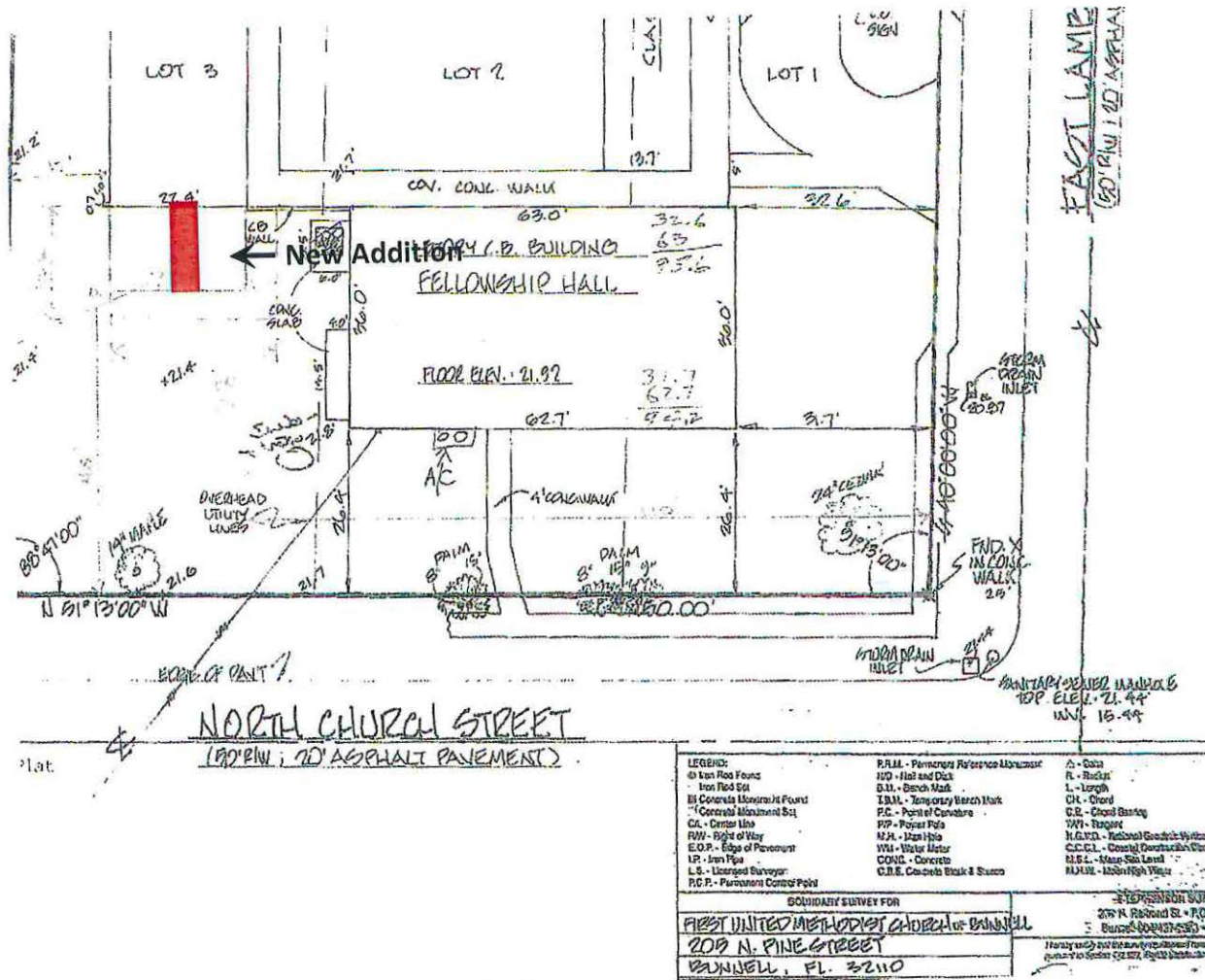
The City would grant 3 month grace period to shut-down the current cold weather program that was never approved by the City to allow it time to find and relocate to a new facility.

City Attorney Review:

First United Methodist Church Special Exception Request- Location Map



First United Methodist Church Special Exception Request- Concept Sketch



Special Exception Application – City of Bunnell – First United Methodist Church Bunnell

Describe exact reason for the request and physical nature of premises:

First United Methodist Church of Bunnell is seeking this Special Exception so that we may improve our facilities by building an extension to an existing building that would include two (2) handicap restrooms, two (2) showers, and a small laundry room. This project would benefit the Church in the following ways:

1. Upgrade our antiquated restrooms that do not comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act, and that do not have climate control.
2. Supply showers and laundry facilities for hurricane relief teams, supplied by the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) and Florida Restores, ministries of the Florida Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. These teams are dispatched to our area after natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding, etc.
3. Supply showers and laundry for those who utilize the Cold Weather Shelter and the Sheltering Tree. Both are operated by the Flagler County Family Assistance Center that rents facilities from the church.
4. Provide upgraded facilities for those who utilize our Fellowship Hall and property outside of the Sanctuary for special events, church events, the Care Cupboard Food Pantry and the Soul Café Dinner Church.
5. Provide additional storage space.

The following is a description of these ministries:

Care Cupboard Food Pantry – The Care Cupboard has functioned as a ministry of First United Methodist Church Bunnell for over 15 years. The Pantry began as a small one-room venture, where volunteers handed out brown bags of food they had purchased from local stores. Over the years we developed a relationship with Publix where volunteers would pick up day-old bread and pastries twice a week from two (2) local stores. Since 2010, Publix has made a semi-annual donation of 2-3 pallets of non-perishable food. Since 2016 Care Cupboard has been the beneficiary of the local Scouting For Food Drive.

In September of 2017, we developed a relationship with Feeding Northeast Florida (Jacksonville), where volunteers pick up food donations from local Target, Winn-Dixies, and Aldi twice a week. These volunteers deliver the food to the Care Cupboard storage located in classrooms 2 and 3, weigh each box and store in appropriate areas. This entails approximately eight (8) volunteers.

Since 2014 the Care Cupboard Food Pantry operating hours have been Wednesday 9:00-11:00 a.m. July and August the pantry has operated bi-weekly and is closed the week of Thanksgiving and the week after Christmas.

Approximately twenty (20) volunteers are currently assisting us. This includes the eight (8) drivers and twelve (12) for the day of distribution. Our goal is to have a staff of ~~forty (40) trained volunteers.~~

The duties of those on distribution day include: arrive at 7:30 a.m. to set up tables in the Fellowship Hall; move food from the designated storage areas; set up food stations; host said stations and welcome guests; inform guests of the amount of product that is available, and help load their carts if needed. One volunteer registers the guests and checks identification that we use to collect demographic data and to help support our policy that only one family member from an address may shop. One volunteer leads our guests in groups of five from our holding area located in the sanctuary through the courtyard and to the Fellowship Hall to the registration table.

We do not supply food to anyone who has been trespassed from the property or who has a pending warrant. Per our Child/Youth Protection Policy through the Florida Annual Conference, sexual offenders are not allowed on church property unless accompanied by law enforcement or an officer of the church.

While the pantry opens at 9:00 a.m., we have had guests gather as early as 7:00 a.m. outside the front of the church. This has caused problems with crowd control, parking, etc. After attempting various means of order, in October 2018, we began utilizing our sanctuary as a holding area, opening at 8:00 a.m. Guests are seating in a designated area of the sanctuary and must be in line to retain their place. This process is coordinated by a volunteer from the church, usually a member of our Board of Trustees and the Pastor. By providing a welcoming place that is out of the elements and not tolerating inappropriate behavior, we have minimized clashes between our guests and helped develop relationships with them. All volunteers go through a training and a background check.

In 2018 the Care Cupboard Food Pantry fed 18,000 families, mostly from Flagler County, but also Putman, St. John's, and Volusia Counties. Each week we pick up 4,000-5,000 pounds of food and serve approximately 100 guests. The addition of these new facilities would allow us to transform the old restrooms into much needed storage areas.

Soul Café Dinner Church – The Soul Café began in 2005 as a place where people from our neighborhood, the homeless, and others less fortunate could have a hot meal and fellowship. The menu began as pizza, soup, and sandwiches. In 2009, volunteers began to pick up food from Olive Garden, Bob Evans, Carrabba's, and Starbucks. These donations supplied the weekly meals as well as desserts from Publix. In addition to the meal, Pastor Beth would share a devotion, encourage discussion and have prayer.

Since then the local restaurants have improved on their food control and we have sought other food resources such as Second Harvest Food Bank, Johnson Farms, and

donations of meats and non-perishable foods. We do not serve food that is not prepared in our kitchen.

The Soul Café is open every Wednesday at 5:30pm. It is only closed the week of Thanksgiving to allow Team Feed Flagler to prepare the annual Community Thanksgiving Dinner on Thanksgiving Day from 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

We have developed four (4) cooking teams and each cook has received their Food Handler's license. On a normal Wednesday, fourteen (14) people volunteer their time to staff Soul Café.

The cooks arrive at 2:00 p.m. Their team prepares weekly menus and begins to set up tables, chairs, desserts, and drinks. The serving and cleanup team arrives between 4:30 and 5:00 p.m. to complete preparation of the serving area and table setup. The doors are open at 5:00 p.m. when our guests are welcome to enter while music is playing in the background. At 5:30 p.m. guests are welcomed, receive announcements and a prayer of thanksgiving/grace. Once everyone is served, folks are invited back for "seconds" and to have take out meals prepared. These meals may be for their next meal or a person who is not able to attend.

Once all food has been served, dishes and cooking equipment are cleaned as well as tables, chairs, kitchen counters, and the stove.

In addition to the meal and fellowship, at 6:00 p.m., there is a time of worship with music and a message usually offered by Pastor Terry.

The Soul Café serves an average of 50-60 meals weekly. Those who have been trespassed from church property do not receive food for Soul Café.

The Sheltering Tree/Flagler County Family Assistance Center

Overview: Operations

The Sheltering Tree has had a presence at First United Methodist Church since 2008 when the first Cold Weather Shelter (CWS) in Flagler County was opened in the Fellowship Hall by Rev. Beth Gardner and Carla Traister. This operation is staffed by trained volunteers who provide supervision and assistance to folks who have nowhere to sleep on a cold night (forecast of 40 degrees or below). We notify guests of the Shelter opening through local agencies by radio announcements and other media outlets. There are more than 150 Flagler County residents from churches and social organizations who are committed to providing warmth and safety to homeless families and individuals during cold weather. We are funded 100% through donations and are staffed exclusively by volunteers. There are no paid staff members.

In September 2016, the Sheltering Tree opened an office staffed by trained volunteers to assist homeless or nearly homeless Flagler County residents. This office is open one

day a week, for about 4 hours, with volunteers and board members working together to provide emergency food, clothing, bicycles and bicycle repair, lunch, referrals, and a friendly environment to local folks who are in need.

During the 2018-2019 winter season, the Cold Weather Shelter was open 19 nights, with an average of 19 overnight guests. Many safety procedures have been instituted over the years and you are welcome to review our training manuals and Guest Rules at any time. We are proud to provide a safe and warm environment for everyone. Flagler County guests arrive at 5:30 p.m. for dinner and leave by 8 a.m. the following day.

During the past year, on office days, we saw an average of 15 people including homeless individuals and residents for various reasons.

We partner with Flagler County Human Services, The STRIDE Program through the Sheriff's Office, St. Vincent de Paul, The Flagler County Free Clinic, Salvation Army, Family Life Center, Advent Health, Alpha Women's Center, and other local agencies. A variety of agencies refer clients to The Sheltering Tree as a resource.

Safety:

Increasingly in our society, we are all aware of safety concerns in our surrounding environment. We have excellent relationships with local law enforcement and cooperate with all local laws. We have increased our safety procedures at the CWS this past year to include:

1. Guests must relinquish all backpacks from arrival until their morning departure. They can enter the locked facility with a clear plastic bag of needed supplies.
2. A board member is present at the CWS until 10 p.m., the "lights out" time, and volunteers stay awake all night to supervise.
3. Specially trained volunteer monitors oversee the area from 7-10 p.m. along with the Hospitality Team which stays until 10 p.m. when the overnights arrive.

These procedures have resulted in a safer environment for all. Please check our records with local law enforcement. We do trespass individuals who do not follow instructions.

We are committed to a safe and friendly environment for all guests and volunteers.

Summary of Cold Weather Shelter Procedures

- Volunteers receive procedural training prior to the start of the Cold Weather Shelter season at a mandatory hands-on training session.
- Volunteers are provided written guidelines for further reference.
- Team leaders assure that all rules and policies are followed.

- A welcoming team, known as the Hospitality Team, is responsible for registering guests upon entering the premises.
- The Hospitality team orally reviews the rules with each guest, checks IDs and fills-in the individual guest forms with the required information. The Hospitality Team remains on the premises until 10 p.m. to oversee the Shelter operation and to maintain order and safety.
- Backpacks are confiscated, tagged and stored in a separate location, under lock and key.
- After a guest is registered, they are not permitted to leave the premises until morning. Any guest that vacates the premises is not permitted back on site for the duration of that evening. The main door is officially locked at 10 p.m.
- The food preparation team, known as the Supper Team, prepares and serves a healthy meal and is responsible for setting up for dinner service, serving, and clean-up.
- An Overnight Team stays on site and remains awake throughout the night, monitoring the safety of all. Security issues are immediately addressed or reported.
- A breakfast team provide a nutritious meal before all guests leave at 8 a.m. Additionally, this team cleans the bathrooms, stores the cots and bedding, and cleans the kitchen.

Wednesday Office Procedures

Volunteers are assigned to:

- Office Assistance: greeting guests, attending to phone calls and messages, providing emergency food and clothing, offering information regarding resources, assisting with sign-up for governmental and medical support services, providing limited individualized financial assistance, providing bus or travel transportation to verified housing destinations, providing local transportation for scheduled appointments, obtaining Florida identification cards, compiling information and maintaining written records of all services and client contact for each day the office is opened.
- Lunch Preparation: preparing sandwiches, soup, drinks and dessert for guests on the day the office is open.
- Laundry and Showers Facility: When operational, volunteers will staff the area, keep a written log of services provided, maintain order and security as well as monitor usage of the laundry facility and ensure cleanliness of the shower stalls after each use.
- Clothing Room: providing toiletries and a change of clothing for adult men and women.

- **Bicycles:** providing bicycles and locks, as well as providing service, maintenance, parts, and labor to guests to maintain bicycles in good working condition
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In order to ensure the safety of our volunteers, guests, and the community, The Sheltering Tree has adopted the follow guidelines:

All guests are registered with as much of the following information as possible:

- Full name and ID
- Home address (when available).
- Telephone number (when available).
- Each guest signs in and indicates the purpose of their visit.
- Board members consult with one another and/or Law Enforcement about any new or existing visitor who may have a new or existing conviction of a violent or predatory offense.
- Any guest considered to be disrupting The Sheltering Tree or church function will be initially warned and will be asked to leave if their behavior does not cease. A written incident report is prepared and kept on file for future reference.
- Any visitor who continues to disrupt or not follow set rules or laws is reported to Law Enforcement.
- Visitors are asked to sit in the provided/assigned areas or remain in the hall or courtyard.
- Visitors are directed not to loiter on the perimeter of the property and volunteers monitor for compliance

Flagler County Family Assistance Center (FCFAC) Mission and Goals:

1. *To manage FCFAC 501c3 with efficiency, transparency, and in honest service of the chronically homeless of Flagler.*

Our board meetings are open to anyone to attend.

2. *To provide those in need a safe warm shelter, food, and clothing when the weather is 40 degrees or colder. (The Cold Weather Shelter)*

We were open 19 nights during the 2018-2019 winter season. For 10 seasons, our openings have ranged from 9 – 40 nights.

3. *To assist the chronically homeless of Flagler with the tools, guidance, and support that leads towards permanent housing.*

Our office offers a listening ear to anyone who stops by, in order to develop a trust relationship with chronically homeless persons. We constantly update our referral resources.

4. *To provide extreme weather shelter and basic survival necessities including snacks, hydration, and clothing to the homeless of Flagler.*

The office is open one day a week to provide emergency help to the chronically homeless and nearly homeless.

5. *To provide emergency help to those either in imminent danger of homelessness or those who need temporary help that affords them a better quality of life.*

We partner with other local agencies to assist families and individuals to avoid or recover from homelessness.

The buildings and property of First United Methodist Church of Bunnell are owned by the Florida Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church and are held in trust by the Board of Trustees of First United Methodist Church of Bunnell. This group is elected by the congregation to serve as Officers of the church. The Pastor serves on the Board of Trustees with a voice but no vote, hence we request that this agreement be given in the name of the Board of Trustees of First United Methodist Church of Bunnell.

Statement of hardship imposed if not granted:

We believe the church of Jesus Christ was established to continue the work of our Lord. This work is manifested through, but not limited to corporate worship, opportunities for learning, fellowship, and acts of mercy, the latter which is the focus of this request. We believe we are to continually identify our neighbor and seek to find ways to make God's transforming love a reality for them. As we study scripture, we learn that Jesus cared for the whole person, mind, body and spirit, hence we seek to find ways to bring hope and healing to those who God brings to our doors. The ministries of the Care Cupboard Food Pantry, Soul Café Dinner Church and the Sheltering Tree (FCFAC), all seek to bring that hope and healing. There is a rhetorical question asked of churches, "if your church were to close, would anyone notice?" If this request is denied, we strongly believe that this congregation would eventually die off and the church would close. If that were to happen, the impact on this community would be severe.

First United Methodist Church of Bunnell
Board of Trustees Minutes
May 13, 2019

Trustees in Attendance: Lou McNab – Pres., Mike Kuypers - VP, Gordon Butler – Sec., Howard Kane, Ray Mercer, Chuck Burgan, Pastor Terry Wines

Lou opened the meeting in prayer and led us in reading the Mission and Vision statements.
The minutes of the meeting on 4/9/19 were accepted.

Old Business:

- a. Outstanding repairs/improvements needed: Choir room ceiling light, Rain gutter repair is partially complete,
- b. Additional parsonage work needed: 1) Paint and repair fascia if needed. The east door on the enclosed porch still needs to be enclosed, one window is off its track, more vegetation needs to be trimmed or removed, additional pressure-washing needs to be done on fence, soffit screening needs to be replaced, Remove unneeded cables on rear wall, adjust striker plate on door from garage into house,
- c. Ongoing: Adding FUMC to city sign on US#1, New banner/sign for Lambert St., Repair wooden pews-**Ongoing**
- d. Facilities usage agreement application form – **We agreed on a fee schedule for non-members and Mike will add it to the application.**
- e. Fellowship pew cushions need to be cleaned, - floors need to be stripped, sealed, and waxed.
- f. Status of addition to building for restrooms, showers, laundry facilities, and dumpster: Plans have been submitted to the City of Bunnell. Pastor Terry, Chuck and Pam Burgan met with Rodney Lucas (Community Development Director). We need a special exemption to provide services other than religious and educational activities. The application in the name of the Board of Trustees and a \$200 fee will be submitted to the City. The application will need to be approved by the Planning and Zoning Appeals Board (PZA) with public notification and opportunity for input. Trustees approved the expenditure of \$200 for the application fee.
- g. Eagle Scout Service Project
- h. Altar table needs wheels – **Complete**
- i. AC systems have been checked. **Wiring harnesses to Fellowship Hall units have been replaced. Dryer units are corroded and may leak in the near future. One condenser unit has been replaced (\$2500).**
- j. Changing locks to Kwikset rekeyable locks (Offices: 4 + add double cylinder deadbolt to outside entrance of pastor's office) (Sanctuary: Change Pine St. and courtyard locks) (Fellowship Hall: change 2 locks) Decide which locks and when and make enough extra keys) **(needs approval for expenditure)**
- k. Condition of main entrance door to the sanctuary **(Gordon will show Chuck the problem.)**
- l. Amplifier replacement for sanctuary sound system – **SBC has purchased a new amplifier. Chuck will review with Paul from SBC.**
- m. Saturday office workdays to delete, organize, and store records – summer project.
- n. **Mike repaired the hole in the block wall near the trash cans.**
- o. **Sanctuary carpet has been cleaned.**
- p. Mike covered one AC to prevent leaves from clogging unit. Additional pipe insulation is needed.
- q. One dimmer switch on altar not working.

New Business:

- a. The tool trailer and Scout trailer need to be moved out of the proposed construction area.
- b. Henrietta the chicken has a new home in the country as soon as she can be caught.

Pastor's Concerns:

- a. We have made a down payment on a replacement piano for when SBC leaves.
- b. We need to arrange for regular cleaning of the fellowship hall and the remainder of our facilities. Pastor Terry will speak with Stacy Lopez about the fellowship hall.

Review of Financial Reports – Lou will speak to the Finance Committee about how to provide needed monthly information to the Trustees.

Terry closed the meeting in prayer.

Next meeting – Monday, June 10th, 2019 – 5:00 PM



Susan Peterson
300 N. Pine Street
Bunnell, FL 32110
Phone: 386-313-6730
Qinflorida@gmail.com

May 23, 2019

To: Planning, Zoning & Appeals Board
Community Development
City of Bunnell, FL

Re: Special Exception Request PZA#2019-20
Special Exception Request PZA#2019-21
205 N. Pine Street, Bunnell

I respectfully submit my written objection to the above referenced Special Exception Requests and that it be read at the May 31, 2019 meeting of the Planning, Zoning & Appeals Board, entering it into the minutes.

The activities requested should never have been, nor should EVER be allowed in this area.

~ As an immediate area owner/resident/tax payer the neighborhood has experienced only negative alarming effects from these activities. The persons involved DO NOT remain at 205 N. Pine Street, and trespass onto other areas daily. The volunteers that staff do not live near there and admit would not have it in their neighborhood.

~ Young children and elderly of every age live in this immediate area and their safety is and has been threatened.



One particular instance comes to mind ~ Bunnell City Police Officers rectified a situation of a homeless person associated with the program at 205 N. Pine St. that had pitched a tent in woods on the 2nd block of N. Pine St. was stalking an 8 year old little girl that lives on the adjoining property. SO many instances of this nature occur, some never reported to authorities for fear of retaliation.

Who is going to complete background checks on EVERYONE prior to them being part of this program to make sure they are not registered sex offenders or pedophiles preying on the children who are riding their bikes, walking to schools, parks, or even playing in their yards? Or running scams, frightening or worse the elderly walking to the post office, or even gardening, mowing the grass in their own yards?

The law enforcement/code enforcement and any other authority need our help to enable them to do their job. By allowing and/or giving permission for these variance requests the board should each be held personally responsible for negative impacts and/or criminal activity resulting.

I support assisting the needy, but EVERYTHING MUST be in the right environment/location. A "flock" includes everyone. Humbly, I strongly request you deny these request.

Sincerely,

Susan Peterson

Susan Peterson