



# VARIANCE STAFF REPORT

OFFICE OF PLANNING & ZONING

Tab Number: 3

Public Hearing Date: November 5, 2025

Case No. and Project Name: PZ2025-285, Equestrian Trail Property

Commissioner District: District 4 – Leslie Campione

Applicant(s): Michael W. Rankin, LPG

Owner(s): Robert G. Horvatits

Requested Action: A variance to Land Development Regulations (LDR) Section 14.11.01(D)(2)(b) and Section 14.11.01(D)(2)(c) to allow a minor lot split resulting in one of two new parcels to front a twenty-five (25) foot wide ingress / egress easement that does not connect to a publicly maintained road, in lieu of the required fifty (50) foot wide minimum width and required connection of the easement to a publicly maintained road.

Case Manager: Meagan Bracciale, Planner I

### Subject Property Information

Size: 10 +/- gross acres

Location: 32649 Equestrian Trail, in the unincorporated Sorrento area

Alternate Key No.: 2716061

Future Land Use: Rural Transition (Attachment “A”)

Current Zoning District: Agriculture (A) District (Attachment “B”)

Flood Zone(s): “X”

JPA/ISBA: N/A

Overlay/Rural Protection Area: Mount Plymouth-Sorrento Community and the Wekiva Study Area (WSA) (Attachment “C”)

### Adjacent Property Land Use Table

Direction	Future Land Use	Zoning	Existing Use	Comments
North	Rural Transition	Agriculture (A) District	Residential	Vacant Residential
South	Rural Transition	Agriculture (A) District	Residential; Non-Intensive Agriculture	Single-Family Residence South of Snafflebit Lane
East	Rural Transition	Agriculture (A) District	Residential	Single-Family Residence East of Equestrian Trail

Direction	Future Land Use	Zoning	Existing Use	Comments
West	Rural Transition	Agriculture (A) District	Residential	Single-Family Residence

### Summary of Request

The subject parcel is identified by Alternate Key Number 2716061 and contains approximately 10+/- gross acres. The subject parcel is zoned as Agriculture (A) District; is designated with a Rural Transition Future Land Use Category (FLUC) by the 2030 Comprehensive Plan; and is located within the Mount Plymouth-Sorrento Community and the Wekiva Study Area (WSA). The subject parcel is developed with a single-family dwelling unit and a utility building pursuant to the Property Record Card.

The subject parcel is situated within the Mount Plymouth-Sorrento Community, and the intent of Comprehensive Plan Policy I-2.1.2, entitled *Guiding Principles for Development*, is to ensure that new development within the Mount Plymouth-Sorrento Community is of high quality while maintaining community character and protecting property rights. The proposed variance and subsequent proposed lot split are consistent with this policy and have been designed to ensure enduring compatibility with established neighborhoods and rural lifestyles, as the proposed lot split will result in two (2) parcels that comply with the required density for the Agriculture (A) District, as well as the Rural Transition FLUC.

The subject parcel is situated within the Wekiva Study Area (WSA). All proposed development within the WSA shall be in compliance with Comprehensive Plan Policy I-3.4.5, *Development Design Standards*. Pursuant to Comprehensive Plan Policy I-3.4.1, *Surveys and Studies*, this project is exempt from the required soil analysis and site specific hydrogeologic and geotechnical reports due to the proposed development being on a parcel less than forty (40) acres in size and not resulting in a density greater than allowed within the Future Land Use Category.

GIS maps indicate that the subject parcel is located within flood zone “X” and there is no indication that wetlands exist on the site. On September 22, 2025, the requested action was sent to the Public Works Department and the Office of Fire Rescue for a determination of consistency with applicable regulations, including flood and stormwater requirements. Fire Rescue did not have any concerns or comments regarding the requested variance. Public Works did not have any concerns regarding the requested variance, but did request the following condition, should the variance be approved:

The portion of Snafflebit Lane right-of-way easement that the parent parcel fronts shall meet a minimum of 50-ft in width. The Owner shall dedicate any additional land needed to meet the 50-ft width for the easement frontage.

The Applicant is requesting a variance to the following LDR Sections:

Section 14.11.01(D)(2)(b) to allow a minor lot split resulting in one of two new parcels to front an ingress / egress easement that does not connect to a publicly maintained road, in lieu of the required connection of the easement to a publicly maintained road.

Section 14.11.01(D)(2)(c) to allow a minor lot split resulting in one of two new parcels to front an ingress / egress easement that is twenty-five (25) feet in width, in lieu of the required minimum width of fifty (50) feet.

The proposed lot split is consistent with all other LDR Section 14.11.01, *Minor Lot Split*, criteria and is illustrated in Attachment “D”.

The Applicant provided a Project Narrative as shown on Attachment “E”.

Should the Board of Adjustment approve this variance request, the Applicant will be required to obtain zoning and building permits to comply with Lake County Land Development Regulations.

**– Staff Analysis –**

**LDR Section 14.15.02 states that variances will be granted when the person subject to a Land Development Regulation demonstrates that the purpose of the Land Development Regulation will be or has been achieved by other means, and when application of a Land Development Regulation would create a substantial hardship or would violate principles of fairness.**

**1. The purpose of the Land Development Regulation will be or has been achieved by other means.**

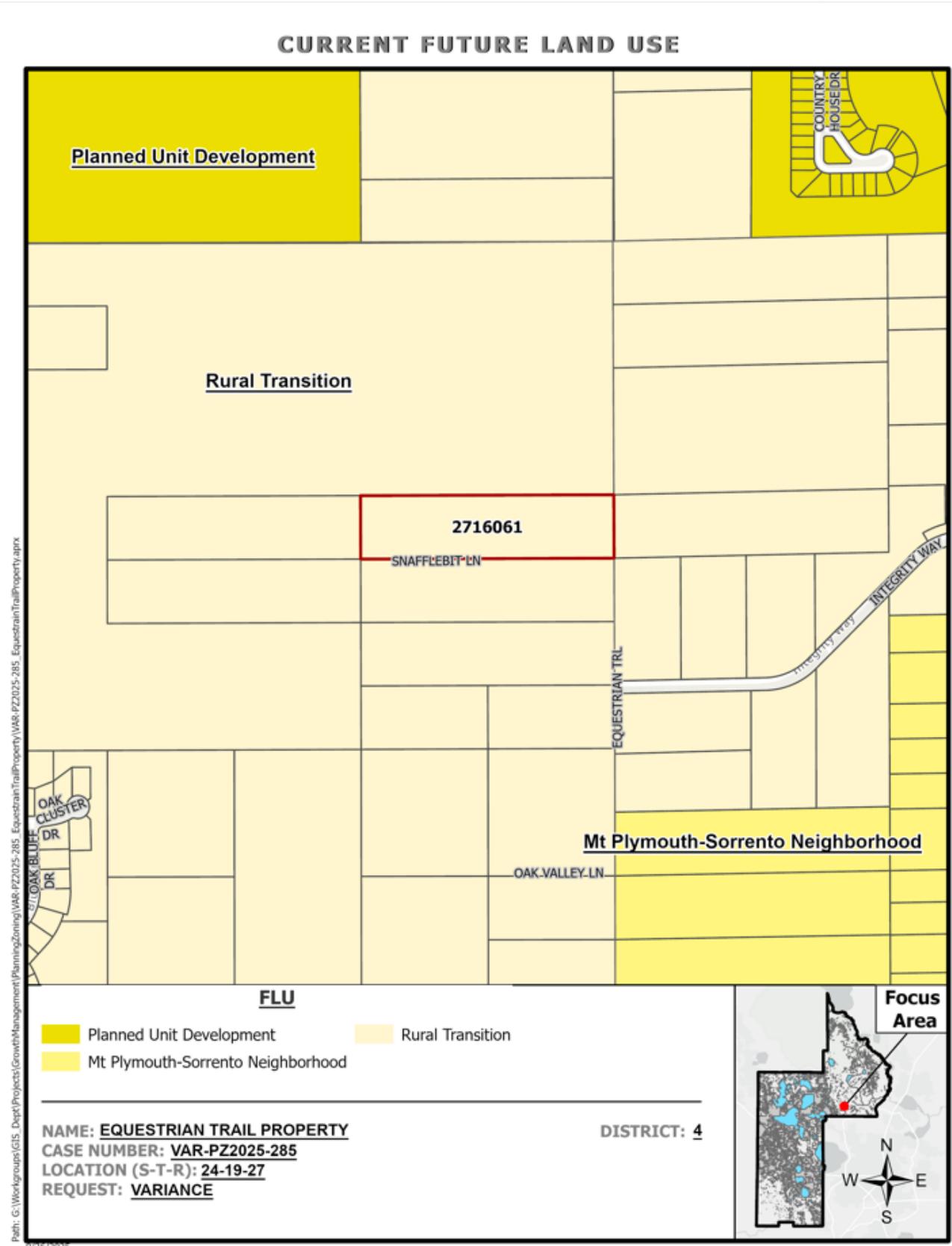
The intent of LDR Section 9.05.00 entitled *Access Management*, is to establish reasonable access to and from property, minimize operational difficulties caused by incompatible traffic functions, and serve the public interest. The existing ingress / egress easement currently provides reasonable access to all adjacent developed parcels. The ingress / egress easement known as Snafflebit Lane connects to Equestrian Trail, a privately maintained, paved road that connects to Integrity Way, a county-maintained road, within six hundred and seventy (670) feet of the subject property

The Applicant provided the following statement as evidence that the intent of the Land Development Regulations will be or has been achieved by other means, *“A private easement may be permitted if it is determined that there is no need for a future road corridor, the easement does not obligate the county to maintain it, and deed restrictions are recorded prior to lot split approval that require the property owners of the newly created lots to maintain the paved private road easement (14.11.01)*

**2. The application of a Land Development Regulation would create a substantial hardship or would violate principles of fairness. For purposes of this Section, "substantial hardship" means a demonstrated economic, technological, legal, or other type of hardship to the person requesting the variance. For purposes of this Section, "principles of fairness" are violated when the literal application of a Land Development Regulation affects a particular person in a manner significantly different from the way it affects other similarly situated persons who are subject to the Land Development Regulation.**

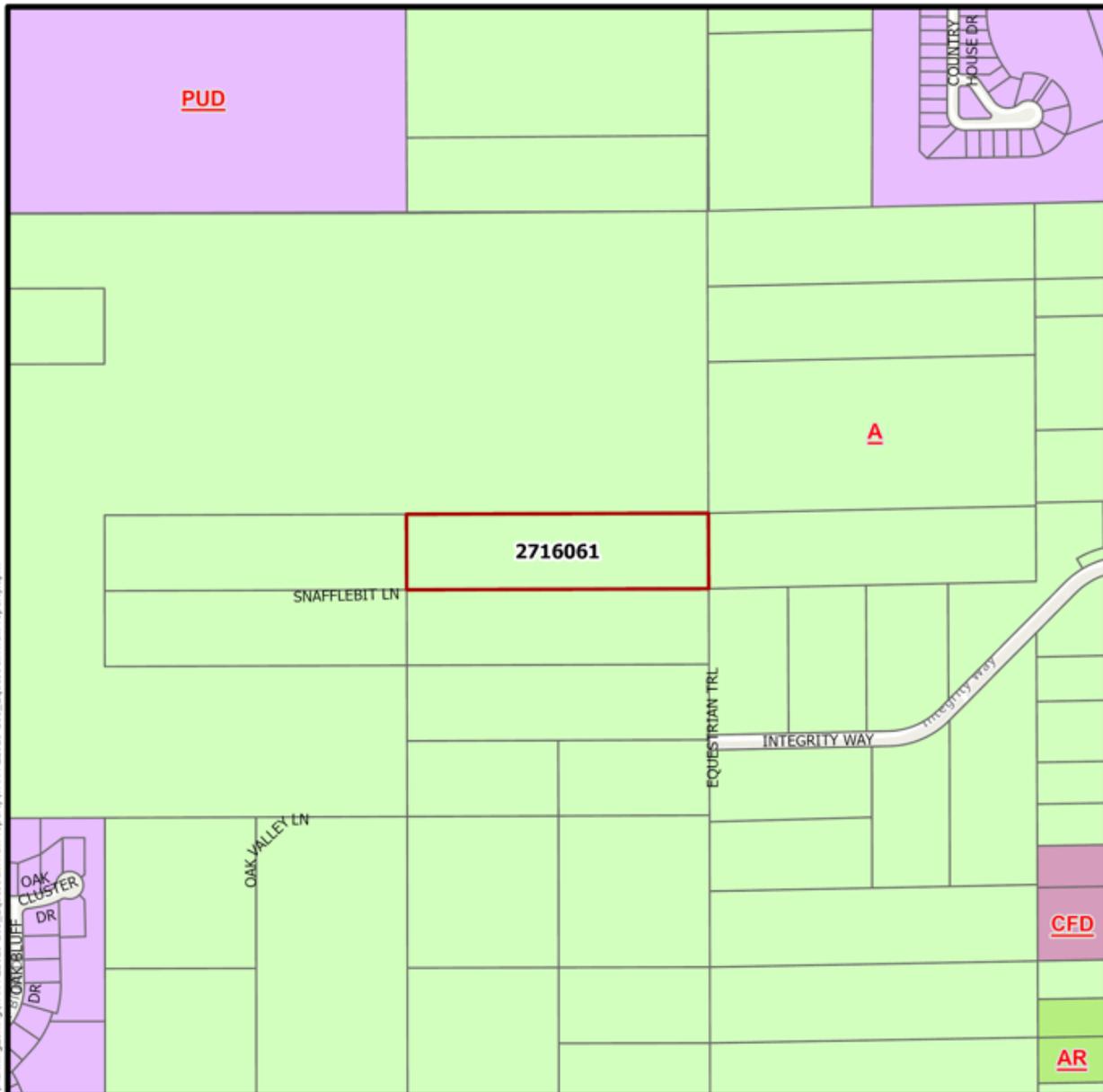
The Applicant provided the following statement as evidence that the principle of fairness would be violated if the variance isn't approved, *“A variance allowing a lot split would enable reasonable use of the land while maintaining consistency with surrounding development patterns and without adverse impact to neighboring properties. Furthermore, it would allow the applicant greater enjoyment and reasonable use of their property, which is otherwise restricted.”*

# Attachment "A" – Future Land Use Map



# Attachment "B" – Zoning Map

## CURRENT ZONING

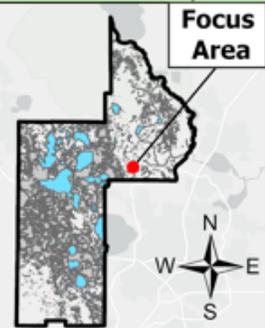


### Zoning

- A
- AR
- CFD
- PUD

NAME: EQUESTRIAN TRAIL PROPERTY  
CASE NUMBER: VAR-PZ2025-285  
LOCATION (S-T-R): 24-19-27  
REQUEST: VARIANCE

DISTRICT: 4



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9/26/2025

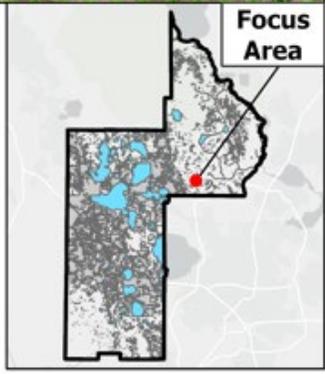
# Attachment "C" – Overlay District Map

VAR-PZ2025-285  
Equestrian Trail Property



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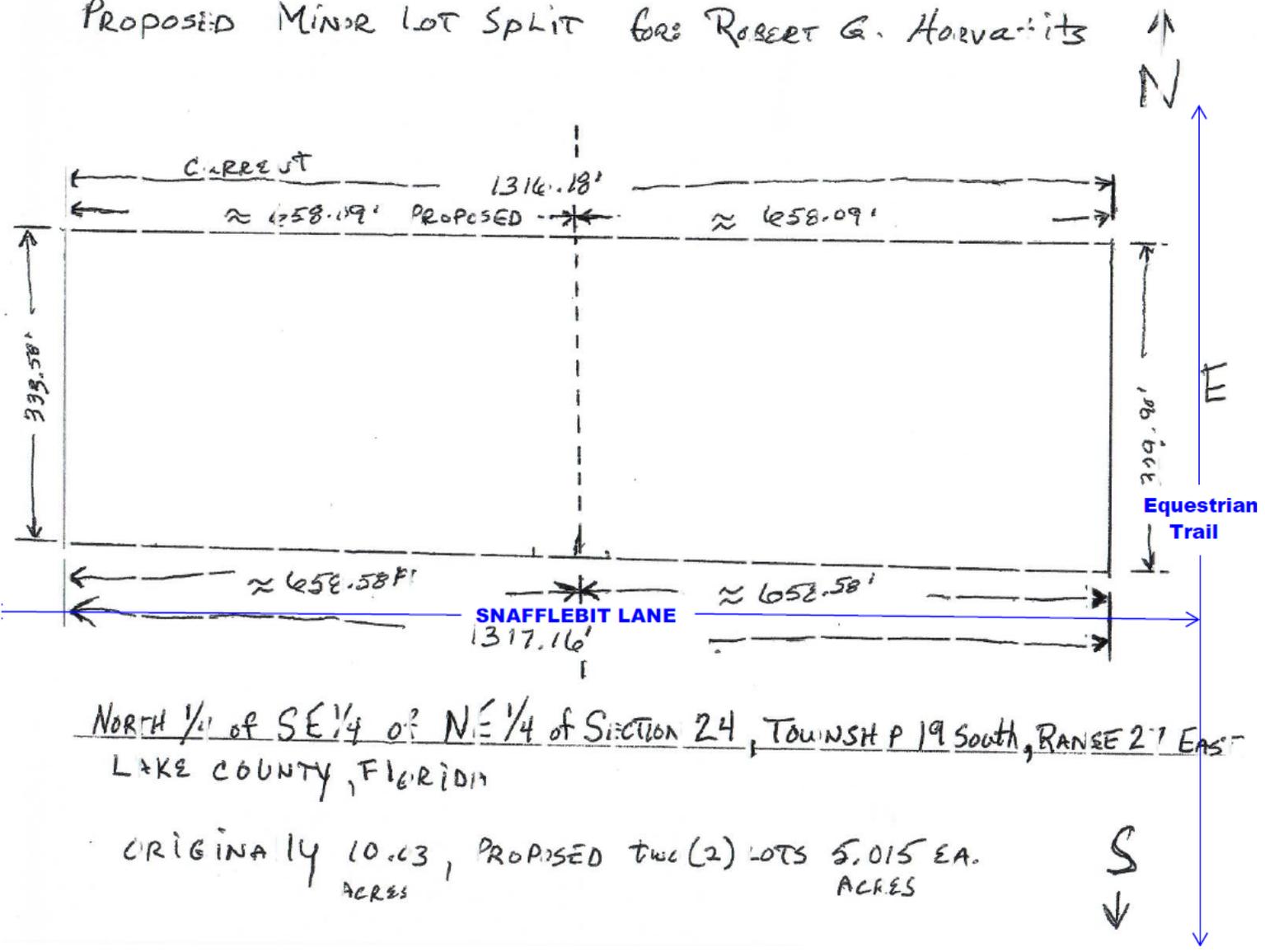
Variance



9/26/2025

# Attachment "D" - Plot Plan

PROPOSED MINOR LOT SPLIT FOR ROBERT G. HARVAITZ



NORTH 1/4 of SE 1/4 of NE 1/4 of SECTION 24, TOWNSHIP 19 SOUTH, RANGE 27 EAST  
LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA

ORIGINALLY 10.63 ACRES, PROPOSED TWO (2) LOTS 5.015 EA. ACRES

# Attachment “E” – Project Narrative



## Office of Planning and Zoning

### Project Narrative Variance

1. What is the substantial hardship in meeting the specific code requirement?

A variance allowing a lot split would enable reasonable use of the land while maintaining consistency with surrounding development patterns and without adverse impact to neighboring properties.

Furthermore, it would allow the applicant greater enjoyment and reasonable use of their property, which is otherwise restricted.

2. Describe how the purpose of the Land Development Regulation will be or has been achieved by other means:

A private easement may be permitted if it is determined that there is no need for a future road corridor, the easement does not obligate the county to maintain it, and deed restrictions are recorded prior to lot split approval that require the property owners of the newly created lots to maintain the paved private road easement. 14.11.01

# Map of Subject Property



# Aerial Map of Subject Property

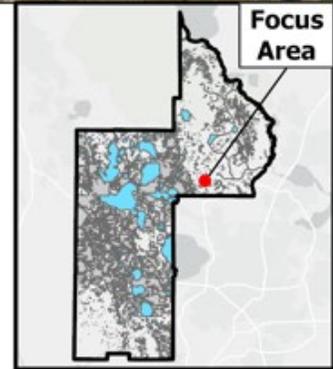
**VAR-PZ2025-285**  
**Equestrian Trail Property**



Path: G:\Workgroups\GIS\_Dept\Projects\GrowthManagement\Planning\Zoning\VAR-PZ2025-285\_EquestrianTrailProperty\VAR-PZ2025-285\_EquestrianTrailProperty.aprx



Variance



9/26/2025

# FINAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER

(PZ2025-285 / AR 6212)

**WHEREAS**, Michael W. Rankin (the “Applicant”) requested a variance on behalf of Robert G. Horvatits (the “Owner”), to Land Development Regulations (LDR) Section 14.11.01(D)(2)(b) and Section 14.11.01(D)(2)(c) to allow a minor lot split resulting in one of two new parcels to front a twenty-five (25) foot wide ingress / egress easement that does not connect to a publicly maintained road, in lieu of the required fifty (50) foot wide minimum width and required connection of the easement to a publicly maintained road; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject property consists of approximately 10 +/- acres located 32649 Equestrian Trail in the unincorporated Sorrento area in Section 24, Township 19 South, Range 27 East, identified by Alternate Key Number 2716061, and more particularly described in Exhibit “A”; and

**WHEREAS**, after giving notice of a hearing on a petition for a variance to the Lake County Land Development Regulations, including notice that the request for a variance would be presented to the Board of Adjustment of Lake County, Florida, on November 5, 2025; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Adjustment reviewed the petition, staff report and any comments, favorable or unfavorable, from the public and surrounding property owners at a public hearing duly advertised.

**DONE AND ORDERED** by the Board of Adjustment of Lake County, Florida, that:

1. **Variance Granted:** The following variances to Land Development Regulations (LDR) are hereby granted:
  - a. Section 14.11.01(D)(2) to allow a minor lot split resulting in one of two new parcels to front an ingress / egress easement that does not connect to a publicly maintained road, in lieu of the required connection of the easement to a publicly maintained road is hereby granted.
  - b. Section 14.11.01(D)(2)(c) to allow a minor lot split resulting in one of two new parcels to front an ingress / egress easement that is twenty-five (25) feet in width, in lieu of the required minimum width of fifty (50) feet.
2. **Conditions:** The variance granted above is subject to the following requirements/conditions:
  - a. No permanent mobile home shall be permitted on the property pursuant to conditions of the Snafflebit Lane non-exclusive easement agreement recorded in O.R. Book 827, Page 1470 of the Public Records of Lake County Florida.
  - b. The portion of Snafflebit Lane right-of-way easement that the parent parcel fronts shall meet a minimum of 50-ft in width. The Owner shall dedicate any additional land needed to meet the 50-ft width for the easement frontage.
3. **No Estoppel:** Approval of this variance cannot be relied upon to assert a claim of estoppel against the County if the property identified herein cannot be developed due to the inability to meet other requirements under the applicable Land Development Regulations. The Owner is solely responsible for performing any necessary due diligence to ensure the property will appropriately support future development.

**BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT  
LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Bea Meeks, Chairman**

**State of Florida  
County of Lake**

**Sworn to (or affirmed) and subscribed before me by means of  physical presence or  online notarization, this 5th day of November 2025, by Bea Meeks, as Chairman of the Lake County Board of Adjustment.**

**Personally Known OR Produced Identification**

**Type of Identification Produced \_\_\_\_\_**

**(SEAL)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Notary Signature**

Pursuant to Section 286.0105, Florida Statutes, if any person desires to appeal any decision with respect to a matter considered at a public meeting or hearing of the Board of Adjustment, such person will need a record of the proceedings, and such person may need to ensure that a verbatim record for such purpose is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is based.

A final administrative order of the Board of Adjustment may be appealed to the Circuit Court in Lake County, Florida. Such an appeal shall be filed within thirty (30) days of the execution of this Order. Those filing an appeal of an administrative order must comply with all applicable Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure.

### Exhibit "A" – Legal Description

The N $\frac{1}{2}$  of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$  of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 24, Township 19 South, Range 27 East, in Lake County, Florida, reserving unto the grantors, their heirs and assigns a non-exclusive easement for ingress and egress and utilities over the East 25 feet thereof.

ALSO, a non-exclusive easement for ingress and egress and utilities over the East 25 feet of the North 25 feet of the S $\frac{1}{2}$  of the N $\frac{1}{2}$  of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$  of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , Section 24, Township 19 South, Range 27 East.

ALSO, a non-exclusive easement for ingress and egress and utilities over the West 25 feet of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  and over the West 25 feet of the S-3/4 of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , Section 19, Township 19 South, Range 28 East.

This conveyance is subject to the restriction that no mobile home shall be placed on the above described property with the exception that a skirted mobile home shall be permitted for one year beginning with the date hereof

