FORWARD PINELLAS STAFF ANALYSIS

APPLICATION NO.:	Case CW 26-15
STAFF:	Emma Wennick, Program Planner
APPLICANT:	Safety Harbor
PROPERTY SIZE:	0.46 acres m.o.l.
CURRENT COUNTYWIDE PLAN MAP CATEGORY:	Retail & Services
PROPOSED COUNTYWIDE PLAN MAP CATEGORY:	Residential Low Medium
CURRENT LOCAL FUTURE LAND USE PLAN MAP CATEGORY:	Safety Harbor – Commercial Neighborhood
PROPOSED LOCAL FUTURE LAND USE PLAN MAP CATEGORY:	Safety Harbor – Residential Urban
LOCATION / PARCEL ID:	603 Elm St., Safety Harbor / 04-29-16-51822-002-0140

BACKGROUND SUMMARY:

The applicant requests a Countywide Plan Map amendment for a 0.46-acre site at 603 Elm Street to change its designation from Retail & Services to Residential Low Medium. The site currently contains three platted lots and a vacant commercial building that formerly housed a restaurant before closing in 2022. The owner intends to split the parcel along its original lot lines to construct three single-family homes. The proposed change eliminates an isolated commercial designation within the Lincoln Heights Subdivision, aligning the property's land use classification with the surrounding residential neighborhood.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:
Staff recommends approval of an amendment to the Countywide Plan Map from Retail & Services to Residential Low Medium.

PLANNERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:
The Planners Advisory Committee met on October 5, 2026 and voted 15-0 to recommend approval.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL/COMMISSION ACTION:
The Safety Harbor City Commission reviewed the proposed amendment on September 9, 2026, and it was approved on first reading. Residents from the neighborhood expressed that the restaurant held a special place in their memories. Some also acknowledged that development patterns have changed over time.

CURRENT PROPERTY INFORMATION:

Property Use(s):	Restaurant (vacant)
Site Features:	Property consists of three platted lots and is developed with a single commercial building formerly used as a restaurant

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:
When considering this application, the following general site conditions, planning concepts, and other facts should be noted:

1. The proposed single-family residential development transitions a former commercial site into alignment with the surrounding residential character of the Lincoln Heights Subdivision.

2. The applicant's plan for three single-family homes yields an effective density of approximately 6.5 dwelling units per acre, which falls well within the Residential Low Medium maximum threshold of 10 dwelling units per acre.

3. The site maintains existing municipal infrastructure access along Elm Street and Spruce Street, ensuring adequate public facility capacity without creating adverse operational impacts.

RELEVANT COUNTYWIDE CONSIDERATIONS:

The proposed amendment to the Countywide Plan Map is a legislative decision. The standards for the current and proposed Countywide Plan Map categories are summarized below:

	Current Countywide Plan Map Category: Retail & Services	**Proposed Countywide Plan Map Category:** Residential Low Medium
Purpose:	Intended to depict areas developed with, or appropriate to be developed with, a mix of businesses that provide for the shopping and personal service needs of the community or region, provide for employment opportunities and accommodate target employment uses, and may include residential uses as part of the mix of uses.	Intended to depict areas that are now developed, or appropriate to be developed, in a suburban, low density or moderately dense residential manner; and to recognize such areas as primarily well-suited for residential uses that are consistent with the suburban qualities, transportation facilities, including transit, and natural resources of such areas.
Permitted Uses:	Office; Personal Service/Office Support; Retail Commercial; Commercial/Business Service; Commercial Recreation, Residential; Residential Equivalent; Vacation Rental pursuant to the provisions of Section 509.242(1)(c), Florida Statutes; Recreational Vehicle Park; Temporary Lodging; Research/Development- Light; Storage/Warehouse/Distribution-Light; Manufacturing-Light; Recreation/Open Space; Community Garden; Agricultural-Light. Manufacturing-Medium is subject to a three-acre maximum. Institutional; Transportation/Utility; Agricultural; Ancillary Nonresidential are subject to a five-acre maximum.	Residential; Residential Equivalent; Vacation Rental pursuant to the provisions of Section 509.242(1)(c), Florida Statutes; Accessory Dwelling Unit; Public Educational Facility; Recreation/Open Space; Community Garden; Agricultural-Light; Agricultural. Office; Personal Service/Office Support; Retail Commercial are Subject to One Acre Maximum Ancillary Nonresidential; Transportation/Utility are subject to a three-acre maximum. Institutional (except Public Educational Facilities which are not subject to this threshold, pursuant to the provisions of Section 6.5.4.2) are subject to a five-acre maximum.
Max. Density:	24 units per acre	10 units per acre
Max. Floor Area Ratio (FAR):	0.55	0.50

Max. Impervious Surface Ratio (ISR):	0.90	0.75

Section 6.5.3. of the Countywide Rules provides the review criteria for amendments to the Countywide Plan Map. An analysis of these criteria are provided below:

1. **The manner in, and extent to, which the amendment is consistent with the Countywide Rules and with the Countywide Plan Strategies as implemented through the Countywide Rules.**

   Staff Analysis: The proposed amendment aligns directly with the Countywide Rules and supports the Countywide Plan Strategies by directing infill residential redevelopment into an established urban service area with existing infrastructure. Changing the subject property from Retail & Services to Residential Low Medium satisfies the strategy to eliminate isolated, incompatible commercial pockets within purely residential neighborhoods. The proposed density of 6.5 units per acre comfortably meets the Residential Low Medium category standards, which permit up to 10 dwelling units per acre. Furthermore, the amendment advances local land development goals while maintaining full consistency with the policy framework and spatial standards established in the Countywide Rules.

2. **Forward Pinellas has developed a multimodal accessibility index (MAX index). Proposed amendments will need to maintain a MAX score equal to or better than the Countywide Average MAX score. The Current Countywide Average MAX score: 8.1; if that score is not reached, balancing criteria will be required. An amendment adopting or amending the Activity Center (AC), Multimodal Corridor (MMC) and Planned Redevelopment District (PRD) categories and affecting fewer than 10 acres shall be subject to the Multimodal Accessibility Index (MAX Index).**

   Staff Analysis: Since the proposed amendment does not increase density or intensity and does not involve an Activity Center, Multimodal Corridor, or Planned Redevelopment District designation, Multimodal Accessibility Index balancing criteria isn't required to be evaluated.

3. **If located within a Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor, the manner in, and extent to, which the amendment conforms to the criteria and standards contained in Section 6.5.4.1 of these Countywide Rules.**

Staff Analysis: The amendment area is not located on a Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor; therefore, those policies are not applicable.

4. **If located within a Coastal High Hazard Area, the manner in, and extent to, which the amendment conforms to the terms set forth in Section 4.2.7.**

   Staff Analysis: The subject property is not located within the Coastal High Hazard Area.

5. **If the amendment involves the creation, expansion, contraction of, or substantive change to the Activity Center, Multimodal Corridor, or Planned Redevelopment District category, the manner in, and extent to, which the amendment conforms to the purpose and requirements of the applicable category, and addresses the relevant Planning and Urban Design Principles described in Section 6.2.6 and Land Use Goal 16.0 of the Countywide Plan Strategies.**

   Staff Analysis: The amendment area does not involve the creation, expansion, contraction of, or substantive change to the Activity Center, Multimodal Corridor, or Planned Redevelopment District category.

6. **The manner in, and extent to, which the amendment significantly impacts a public educational facility or an adjoining jurisdiction.**

   Staff Analysis: The amendment area is not located adjacent to an adjoining jurisdiction and if approved, the amendment would not significantly impact a public educational facility.

7. **If the amendment involves the conversion from the Employment (E), Industrial (I), or Target Employment Center (TEC) category, the extent to which the amendment area can continue to provide for target employment opportunities as evaluated and set forth in Section 6.5.4.5.**

   Staff Analysis: The amendment area does not involve the conversion of Employment, Industrial, or Target Employment Center designated land.

PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE

The proposed Countywide Plan Map amendment was publicly advertised as required by Section 7.8.4. of the Countywide Rules. No public correspondence has been received to date.

CONCLUSION

Staff finds the proposed amendment is consistent with the Relevant Countywide Considerations found in Section 6.5.3.1 of the Countywide Rules.