To the Okaloosa County Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners

cc: Mt Olive neighbors and the public

Re: Requests to rezone 54 acres at Mt Olive Road and US 90 from Agriculture to Industrial (Planning Commission, November 12)

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for your service to Okaloosa County. As President of the Mt Olive Homeowners Association, I respectfully ask you to vote **no** on two requests to change about 54 acres of farmland to industrial use: 12.65 acres at Jace Drive and Mt Olive Road, and 41.05 acres of the Shoal River property along US 90. The Planning Commission will hear both on November 12, and the County Commission is expected to decide on December 8.

This land is inside our community, not beside it. County records show 343 homes in Mt Olive, most on lots of one to five wooded acres. Fifteen homes border this land directly, and hundreds more share the same roads. On the county's maps our area is labeled agricultural, but in daily life it is a neighborhood of families. Our county's Comprehensive Plan, its official long-range guide for growth, requires that before a zoning change is approved, the new use be weighed for compatibility with its neighbors (Policy 4.4). That review looks at the most intense use the new zoning would allow, along with traffic, noise and lighting, and whether there is a reasonable transition between homes and heavier uses.

Industrial zoning would allow far more than most people expect. Without another zoning vote, an owner could build a junkyard, waste transfer station, construction-debris landfill, petroleum storage, manufacturing plant or warehouse. Industrial zoning would also allow buildings up to 100 feet tall, about eight stories, with up to 85 percent of the land paved or built on (Okaloosa Land Development Code 2.12.06). The applicant's own plan shows roads designed “to accommodate truck traffic typical with industrial uses,” and it sets aside land to connect those roads to Randi Road. Nothing in the proposal keeps that traffic away from our homes.

Approval is the decision that matters. Several commissioners have told me face to face that they would not prevent landowners from using their land to the full extent of its zoning. We respect that principle, and it is exactly why this vote matters. Once this land is zoned industrial, every use that zoning allows becomes possible. Placing industrial zoning in the middle of a rural residential community would permanently change the way of life our families chose when we made Mt Olive our home.

The burden has not been met. Before farmland can be converted to more intense use, our county's plan requires the applicant to show five things (Policy 9.2): that the change is needed; that it will not cause urban sprawl; that it fits logically with nearby developed land; that roads, water and other services are available; and how the site relates to the county's planned growth areas.

Industrial land is already available across the street. Directly across US 90 sits the Shoal River Industrial Park, county-owned and already zoned industrial. Our county's own February 2026 brochure shows about 427 acres there marked “County Owned and Available.” The application states that the request “is not tied to a particular industrial tenant or an immediate construction project.” When industrial land is already available nearby, the need to convert farmland inside a residential community has not been shown.

In our county’s own words

- **On compatibility (Policy 4.4):** Compatibility “shall be considered during rezoning,” including “potential maximum densities, intensities” and an “appropriate transition of uses.”

- **On the expected impacts (county staff report):** “increased traffic, noise, outdoor lighting, building scale, and operational activities.”
- **On the roads (applicant’s plan):** roads “intended to accommodate truck traffic typical with industrial uses.”
- **On the evidence (county staff report):** the applicant’s narrative “does not include additional factual, technical, or mapping documentation to independently substantiate” its conclusions.
- **On what the boards decide:** the Planning Commission may recommend “approval, approval with conditions, or denial.”

These are our county’s own written standards, and every community benefits when they are applied as written.

What affects one community affects all of us. Bluewater Bay’s families chose a planned suburban neighborhood, and Mt Olive’s families chose a rural, country way of life on wooded acreage. Both choices are equally worthy of protection, and neither should have industrial zoning placed in its midst. I respectfully ask the Planning Commission to recommend denial, and the Board of County Commissioners to deny both requests.

To my neighbors: please join us at the Planning Commission hearing on **Thursday, November 12, at 5:01 PM, at 1250 N. Eglin Parkway, Shalimar.** Fill out a speaker card, or simply be present. If you cannot attend, send a short, respectful written comment to county planning staff before the hearing.

Respectfully,

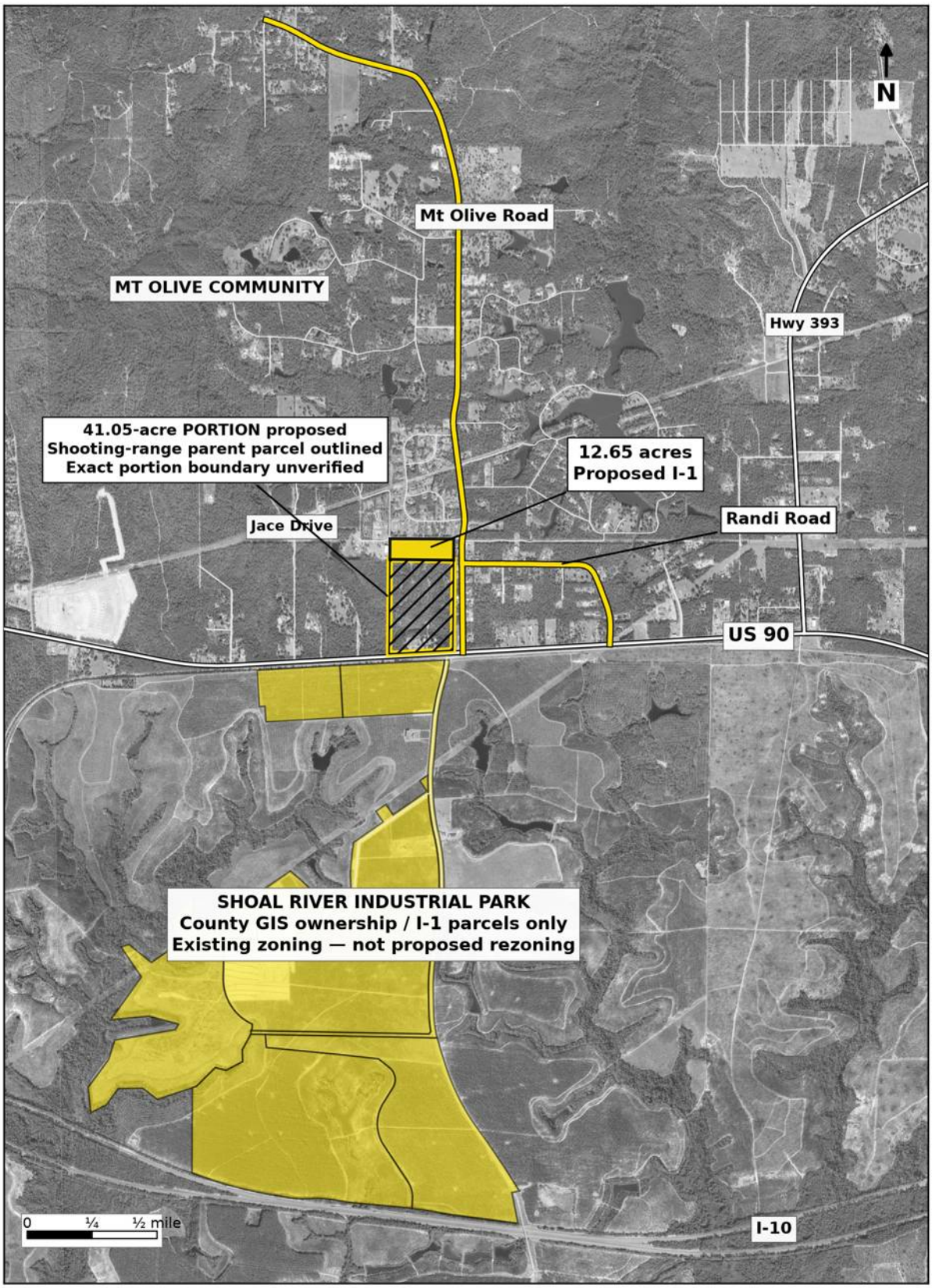


Rob Sugg
President, Mt Olive Homeowners Association

Enclosure: Area map

MT OLIVE / US 90 EAST

Okaloosa County, Florida • Industrial zoning context



Yellow: county I-1 parcels, proposed 12.65 acres, and the two named roads

Yellow outline + black hatch: parent parcel containing the proposed 41.05-acre portion.

Boundary caution: the outlined parent is about 55.94 acres; it is NOT the 41.05-acre rezoning boundary.

Park coverage follows county GIS ownership/zoning records; sales may not yet be reflected. Not all is available.

Sources: Okaloosa County GIS — 2025 aerial, parcels, zoning, street centerlines; public rezoning notices;
One Okaloosa industrial park brochure. GIS retrieved Nov. 8, 2026 (CST). Reference map, not a survey.