

Dear Members of the WCIND Board and Charlotte County Board of Commissioners,

Executive Summary

- Palm Island Estates is requesting a **pause on any action** related to the proposed Freedom Transit Ferry.
- A long-term lease for an on-island landing site has been proposed to the WCIND, yet island residents have **not been provided sufficient information** to determine whether a second ferry service is desired or in the community's best interest.
- While PIE is not taking a position for or against a second ferry service at this time, we are **opposed to moving forward without transparency, community engagement, and a complete business plan**.
- PIE believes the proposed location for a ferry landing at 100 Kettle Harbor Drive is **fundamentally inappropriate due to its proximity to homes, inadequate on-site capacity, and serious traffic safety risks at a narrow blind corner**.

Palm Island Estates (PIE) is the voluntary homeowners association representing the majority of the households on Palm Island. In addition to this formal representation, PIE has a well-informed understanding of the priorities, concerns, and values of island residents.

We are writing regarding the proposed Freedom Transit ferry landing at 100 Kettle Harbor Drive, **for which a long-term lease has already been presented to the WCIND Board and is anticipated to return for further consideration at an upcoming meeting**. At this time, PIE and the island community have not been provided with sufficient information to evaluate whether a second ferry service is in the best interest of Palm Island, whether it is desired by residents, or whether it should move forward at all. To date, the only information shared broadly with islanders has been limited public Facebook posts containing general statements and talking points, without supporting data, a business plan, operational details, or impact analysis.

PIE is not taking a position for or against a second ferry service at this time. However, we are unequivocally opposed to this proposal moving forward without transparency, meaningful community engagement, and the opportunity for island residents to review and understand a complete and credible plan.

Accordingly, our primary request is simple and specific:

We respectfully ask WCIND and the County Commissioners to pause all consideration of this proposal, including any lease approvals or related actions, until a detailed business and operational plan has been presented to the island community and residents have been given a clear voice in the process.

Separately and independently from the question of whether a second ferry service is desirable, PIE is very clear that the proposed location at 100 Kettle Harbor Drive is fundamentally inappropriate. Our concerns are based on three key factors:

1. Residential proximity and quality of life

The proposed landing would be located on an unusually small lot, ~55 feet wide, ~30% narrower than a standard 80 feet island lot, within a purely residential neighborhood. Homes are as close as 20 feet from the property line. A 24-hour ferry operation would introduce noise, exhaust, lighting, and activity that would significantly impact residents' quality of life and property values. For comparison, the closest home to the existing Palm Island Transit landing is approximately 605 feet away.

2. Insufficient on-site capacity and traffic spillover

Due to the limited size and depth of the lot, it is highly unlikely that queued vehicles could be fully accommodated on-site. This would result in vehicles stacking onto Kettle Harbor Drive, interfering with normal traffic flow and access for residents.

3. Serious traffic safety concerns at a blind corner

The road access to the proposed site is located on a nearly 90-degree blind curve on a narrow sand road that is barely wide enough to safely accommodate two-way traffic under normal residential conditions. Visibility is limited from both directions, and vehicles already must proceed cautiously when passing one another at this location. Introducing turning movements, queued vehicles, or ferry-related traffic would significantly increase the risk of collisions and impede safe passage. The road is not designed to safely handle this level or type of activity, making the proposed location a clear and unnecessary safety hazard.

In addition, the Roads & Bridges Committee, an advisory board to the Don Pedro/Knight Islands Street and Drainage Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU), formally voted on November 13 to disapprove the proposed ferry landing location at 100 Kettle Harbor Drive. This vote and the committee's concerns were shared with WCIND. The committee's decision further underscores the safety and infrastructure issues associated with this specific location.

For clarity, we are including supporting materials that visually and factually illustrate the proposed location, its proximity to surrounding homes, the unusually narrow dimensions of the lot, and its position adjacent to a blind curve on Kettle Harbor Drive, as well as a comparison to the existing Palm Island Transit landing.

PIE has made multiple good-faith attempts to obtain additional information, including requesting more detailed materials and inviting Freedom Transit to participate in an island-wide informational town hall. To date, those requests have either received non-substantive responses or no response at all. Similar requests for clarification from residents on public forums have also gone unanswered.

Palm Island residents are not opposed to discussion, innovation, or solutions. What we are asking for is transparency, due process, and respect for the community most directly affected by these decisions.

We appreciate your consideration of this request and respectfully urge you to pause further action until the island community has been properly informed and engaged.

Respectfully,
Palm Island Estates (PIE)

Attachments:

1. Satellite map showing proposed landing at 100 Kettle Harbor Drive, adjacent residences, lot width, and roadway configuration
2. Distance summary of proposed landing to nearby homes and comparison to existing Palm Island Transit landing
3. Satellite image of existing Palm Island Transit island-side landing for comparison
4. Reference photos
5. Screenshots of public Freedom Transit Facebook posts and unanswered resident requests for additional information

WCIND Commissioners

- Christopher Constance – Chris.Constance@CharlotteCountyFL.gov
- Ron Cutsinger – rcutsinger@scgov.net
- Jason Bearden – jason.bearden@mymanatee.org
- Kevin Ruane – dist1@leegov.com

Satellite map showing proposed landing at 100 Kettle Harbor Drive, adjacent residences, lot width, and roadway configuration



Attachment 2:

Distance summary of proposed landing at 100 Kettle Harbor Drive to nearby homes and comparison to existing Palm Island Transit landing

Distance from Adjacent Homes to 100 Kettle

- Pointe Bocilla Lot 1 - 54'
- Pointe Bocilla Lot 2 - 20'
- Pointe Bocilla Lot 3 - 51'
- 110 Kettle Harbor – 39'

Distance from Neighboring Homes to 100 Kettle

- 41 Kettle - 341'
- 61 Kettle – 242'
- 71 Kettle – 141'
- 97 Kettle – 113'
- 111 Kettle – 236'
- 130 Kettle – 130'

Palm Island Transit Island-side Landing

- Landing to 11 N. Gulf – Closest Home to Landing on N. Gulf – 605'
- Palm Island Transit Landing to Proposed Freedom Transit Landing – 100 Kettle – 1290'

Attachment 3:

Satellite image of existing Palm Island Transit island-side landing for comparison



Attachment 4:

Reference photos

The curve in the road at 100 Kettle Harbor Drive heading south. Not how you cannot see oncoming traffic.



The curve in the road at 100 Kettle Harbor Drive heading north. Not how you cannot see oncoming traffic.




Photo of 100 Kettle Harbor Drive showing width of lot and proximity to houses



Attachment 5:

Screenshots of public Freedom Transit Facebook posts and unanswered resident requests for additional information.

Original Survey Post - Aug 6, 2025

**Kat Steve**
August 6, 2025 · 🌐

Freedom Transit
a 30 year vision coming soon

LGI, DP, KI, PIR and TK

The premier barge service commencing operations soon to our island community.

The last 3 Hurricanes have illuminated severe problems in our current ferry system. As such a large number of residents have committed time and resources to ensure our safety and continuity of island access before and after emergencies. We are nearly 100% funded and dedicated to a fair and extremely competitive barge operation.

You all had input throughout the years and we've listened.

We pledge:

- 24 hour access to your homes.
- Drive on-drive off service.
- Immediate 24 hr access for emergency responders.
- A fair annual fee and profit sharing.
- Greatly reduced fees for septic pump-outs before hurricane season.
- No fear of retaliation and confiscation of barge passes.
- Island beautification program.
- It our island, its our lifestyle, its our money so please vote.

Email commissioner Constance, prior to Friday morning. Your opinion sends a powerful message they have to listen to. Chris.Constance@CharlotteCountyFL.gov


I will be meeting with 4 commissioners from surrounding counties to decide your future. Also please take the survey and get your voice heard. I am sorry for the late notice but I felt it best not to be banned for an additional life term.

Kevin Stevens

<https://surveymonkey.com/r/XHTPNQY>

Follow-up post showing unanswered resident requests for additional information.

Kat's Post



Don Pedro Island

Kat Steve · ★ Rising contributor · August 8, 2025 · 🌐


I want to thank everyone who took the time to fill out the survey. It was announced at the last minute on purpose but here is a quick summary of the results

147 replies


90% in favor of a fair market solution


10% thought "love the current ferry system, no change required" I think we know who may have written this.


I also attended the commissioners meeting today and I was so impressed with the entire meeting. Sarasota , Manatee and our Commission Constance were all very favorable to a new competitive system. If you ever have the chance, consider a vote for these 3 would be a vote well cast. In the near future I will keep everyone informed and asking for input and help launching your new transportation system. Thank you again and this is a positive step of many hurdles that we will have to overcome.

 Monica Errico, Deb Glade McFarland Knighten and 22 others


5 comments

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Linda Cotherman


Can you give us more detail on what will happen? Landing sites, fees, type of ferry, how the community will control this business venture, etc. Sounds interesting, would like to know what to expect. Thanx

19w

Like

Reply

2 




Jp Ryskamp


Why move to an island that you are aware of it's unique privacy

20w

Like

Reply

2 




Kat Steve

Jp Ryskamp I guess by privacy you mean corruption, 2am deals, attorneys with conflicts of interest, strong arm tactics and fear, sarcasm and ridicule.

20w

Like

Reply



Robert Hill

Is it Freedom Transit or Freedom Translation, can't find an active Florida corp listed as Freedom Transit?

20w

Like

Reply