

18947 SE FEDERAL HIGHWAY

My Comments & Reference Summary

Combined interpretation of the Martin County zoning determination and the Waterfront & Dock Feasibility Report

Key Fact	What It Means
Current zoning	R-3A - Liberal Multi-Family Residential
Future Land Use	Marine Waterfront Commercial
Waterfront	Approx. 220 feet
Existing dock	Approx. 186 feet with two existing 50-foot boat slips
Main environmental issue	Extensive seagrass limits new commercial and multi-family marina expansion

The Big Picture

Putting the two reports together, the property still has a strong redevelopment story. The seagrass does **not** eliminate the waterfront value; it changes which development concepts are most realistic. The property should be positioned as a flexible **commercial waterfront redevelopment opportunity**, rather than as a future large-marina site.

The County confirms Marine Waterfront Commercial Future Land Use and states that where the R-3A permitted uses conflict with that future land-use designation, the future land-use designation controls. The County also states that rezoning would not be mandatory. That is an important marketing advantage, although every actual project remains subject to site-specific approvals.

1. Waterfront Restaurant / Hospitality

This is one of the strongest concepts for the property. General restaurants are identified in the WRC use table, and the Marine Waterfront Commercial framework is designed around water-related and waterfront-oriented uses.

The marine report also says commercial waterfront redevelopment remains viable. The existing dock could likely continue serving a commercial waterfront use, subject to agency approval, and minor modifications in the currently unvegetated area may be possible.

My comment: I would market this around a waterfront restaurant, hospitality or similar income-producing concept that takes advantage of the existing dock and waterfront - not around constructing a large new marina.

2. Boutique Hotel / Resort

Hotels, motels, resorts and spas appear in the WRC permitted-use table. Marine Waterfront policy describes hotel/motel density of up to 20 units per gross acre. At approximately 0.773 acres, that mathematically equates to roughly 15 units before setbacks, parking, open-space requirements, environmental constraints and site planning are considered.

Important: this does not mean a 15-unit hotel is approved. The County's determination references a 30-foot maximum height, while the broader Marine Waterfront policy describes up to 40 feet for resort/water-related uses. A specific proposal needs County confirmation.

My comment: A small boutique waterfront hotel or resort could be a compelling buyer concept, particularly if designed around the existing waterfront infrastructure rather than extensive new dockage.

3. Single-Family Waterfront Development

This is the strongest waterfront scenario from the marine/environmental standpoint. The marine report says that if Martin County approves a future subdivision, each individual residential lot should be capable of supporting its own private dock with up to two boat slips. Those docks may extend to the -4.0-foot Mean Low Water contour.

The marine report illustrates a conceptual three-lot layout, but it expressly says that the report does not determine whether the property can legally be subdivided. The County separately recommends a pre-application meeting to address splitting, platting and redevelopment.

My comment: The three-luxury-home concept is absolutely worth presenting to developers as a concept, because the private-dock potential is particularly attractive. But we should never state that three lots have been approved.

4. Multi-Family / Townhomes

R-3A provides a legitimate residential redevelopment path for apartments, multi-family dwellings, townhouses and duplexes, subject to the Future Land Use framework and project-specific review.

The drawback is the waterfront component. The marine report says extensive seagrass would likely limit new multi-family marina facilities. Terminal platforms and boat slips generally cannot be located over existing seagrass. There is a small area near the end of the existing dock with little or no seagrass, so limited docking may be possible, but approval is not assured.

My comment: Multi-family remains a viable land-development concept, but I would not sell it on the promise of extensive boat slips. The waterfront itself remains valuable; the marina component is the limitation.

5. Existing Dock

The existing approximately 186-foot dock is important. For commercial redevelopment, the marine report indicates that it could likely continue serving the waterfront use, subject to agency approval. For multi-family redevelopment, it may potentially remain, but because it exceeds the size typically permitted for new multi-family facilities, continued use requires regulatory review.

Commercial and future multi-family docking would require a State of Florida Submerged Land Lease. Expansion beyond the existing footprint is not something the marine report recommends anticipating.

My comment: The existing dock should be treated as a potentially valuable existing asset. A buyer should investigate preserving it before considering removal or major redesign.

6. Existing Buildings / Grandfathered Rights

The County identifies the existing retail store as a nonconforming structure/use. The cited rules may allow reconstruction or redevelopment within the existing horizontal footprint, and certain nonconforming primary structures established before March 29, 2002 may potentially be vertically enlarged notwithstanding certain setback criteria.

My comment: A developer should not automatically demolish the existing structures. Their grandfathered footprint or nonconforming rights may have value that should be understood before anything is removed.

My Ranking of the Development Opportunities

Rank	Concept	Why
1	Waterfront restaurant / hospitality	Strong commercial-waterfront story; can potentially work with existing dock.
2	Boutique hotel / resort	Fits the waterfront FLU; strong location and income-producing concept.
3	Single-family waterfront homes	Best private-dock scenario, if subdivision is approved.
4	Multi-family / townhomes	Viable land use, but substantially less dock/marina potential.

Rank	Concept	Why
5	Large marina	Weakest concept because extensive seagrass constrains new slips/platforms.

What I Would Emphasize in Marketing

Lead with: rare waterfront redevelopment opportunity; approximately 220 feet of waterfront; U.S. 1 frontage; Marine Waterfront Commercial Future Land Use; existing dock; multiple potential commercial and residential redevelopment paths.

Do not lead with: a future large marina. The marine findings make that the least compelling development scenario.

Use careful language: restaurant/hospitality, boutique hotel/resort, multi-family and multiple single-family homesites should all be presented as redevelopment concepts subject to governmental, environmental, subdivision and site-plan approvals.

The Most Important Next Step

I would schedule the County-recommended pre-application meeting and have a land planner/civil engineer test several concept plans: (1) waterfront restaurant/hospitality, (2) boutique hotel/resort, (3) three-lot single-family concept, and (4) multi-family/townhomes. That would move the marketing story from broad potential toward much more concrete development scenarios.

Bottom line: The property still has significant redevelopment potential. The land-use report is encouraging; the marine report simply tells us how to use the waterfront intelligently. The strongest strategy is to capitalize on the Commercial Waterfront designation and existing waterfront assets while designing around, rather than fighting, the seagrass constraints.

Reference note: This summary reflects my plain-English interpretation of the supplied Martin County zoning determination and Waterfront & Dock Feasibility Report. It is for reference and marketing-planning purposes only and is not a legal opinion, development order, permit, engineering certification or guarantee of approval.