



# Unified Land Development Code Revision: Docks

MAY 10, 2022  
ALACHUA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Environmental Protection Department  
Emily Rodriguez  
Senior Environmental Specialist

# Need for the update

- Dock applications are increasing, and docks are becoming larger
- Docks are structures in a Conservation Resource (Chapter 406, ULDC)
- Current code does not specify any upper limits for Development Review Committee approval

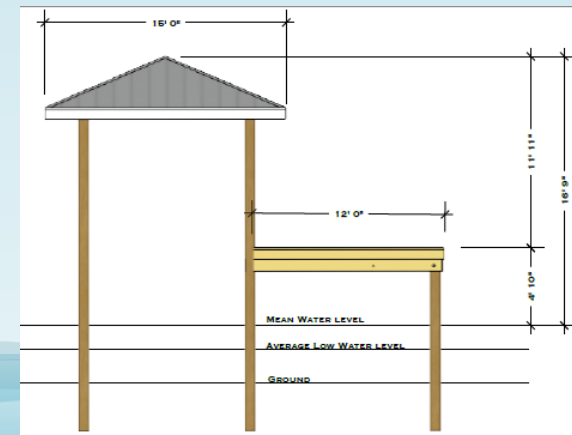
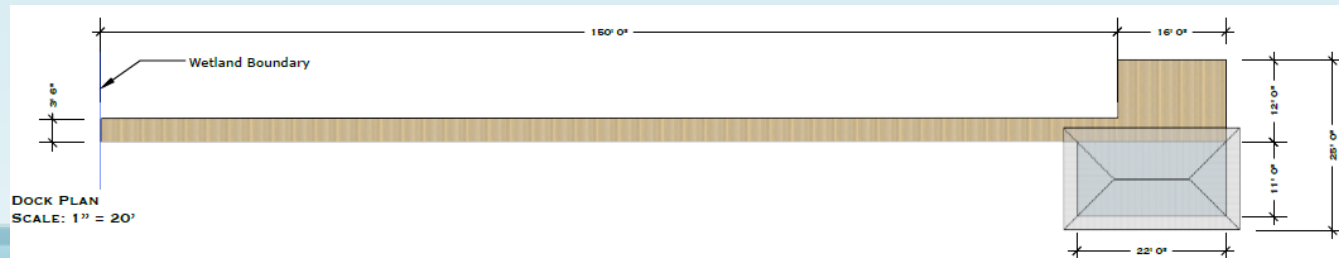


# 8-25-2020 BoCC workshop presentation

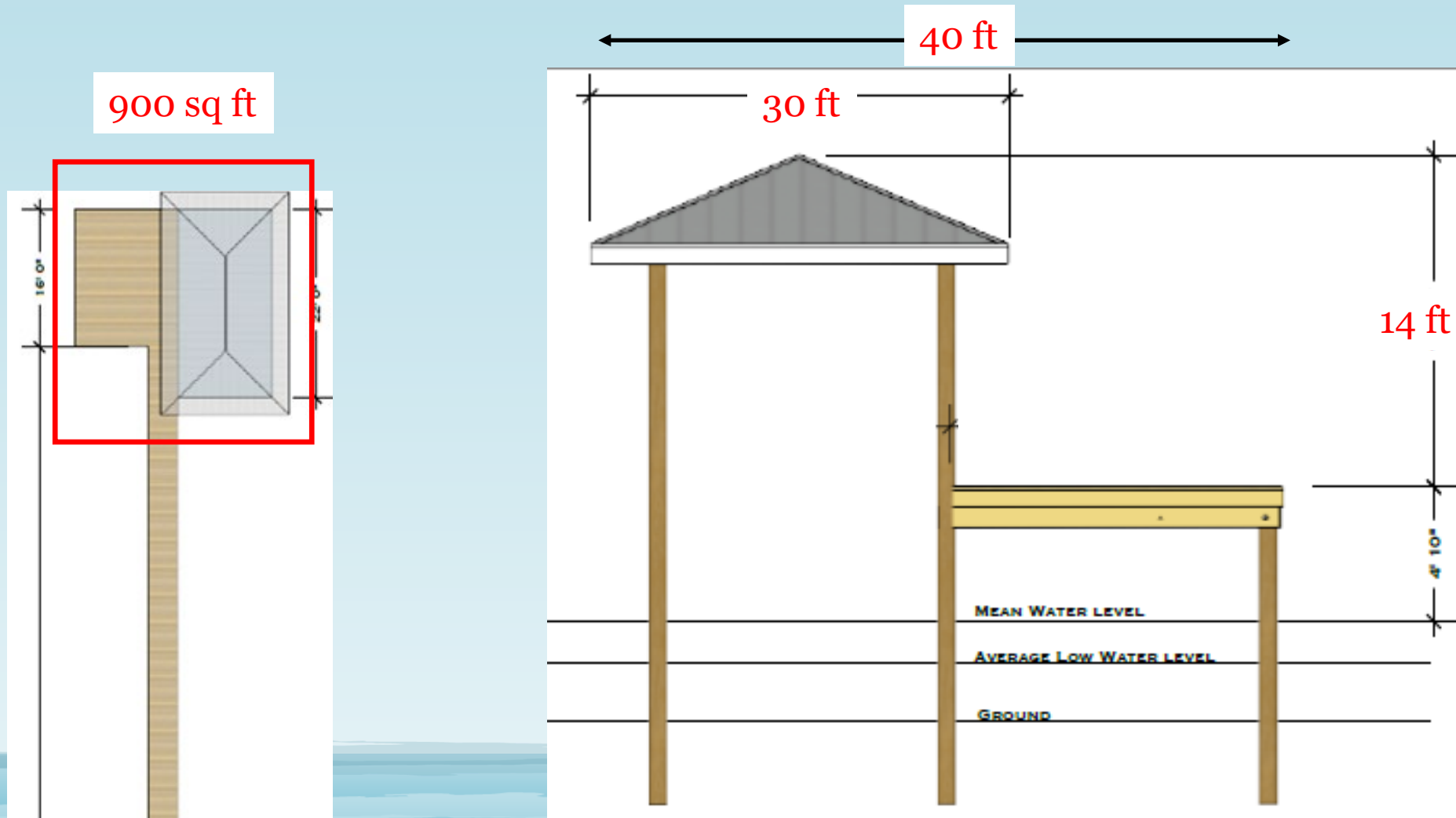
	Current Language 404.108, ULDC	Possible direction
General	One "code" fits all approach.	Santa Fe River specific standard to minimize access footprint. Different standards for each lake?
Size	Total size, including access walkway, threshold for review. No maximum.	Threshold for review based on size of platform(s)/covered area, excluding walkway.
Height	Silent	Threshold for review based on height. Set maximum.
Width	Only addresses "enclosure" width (20%), silent on total platform width (including non-covered areas).	Set review threshold for total platform width. Set maximum total width and covered area width.
Enclosure	Poorly defined, unclear if covered areas can be walled in.	Define "covered areas." Prohibit walls (screens ok).
Aquatic vegetation	"Not be detrimental to the natural system, including aquatic vegetation." General 10 ft exception for access.	Specify allowable clearing around dock/platform(s) or for water access/recreation.

# Summary of proposed changes

- New limit for total platform size (900 sf), threshold for review changing from total size to platform size
- New limit for total width (40 ft) and covered width (30 ft)
- New limit for height above decking (14 ft)
- New limit for one dock per single family property
- New limits for docks on the Santa Fe River (single covered platform  $\leq 160$  square feet and total footprint  $\leq 300$  square feet)



# Summary of proposed changes

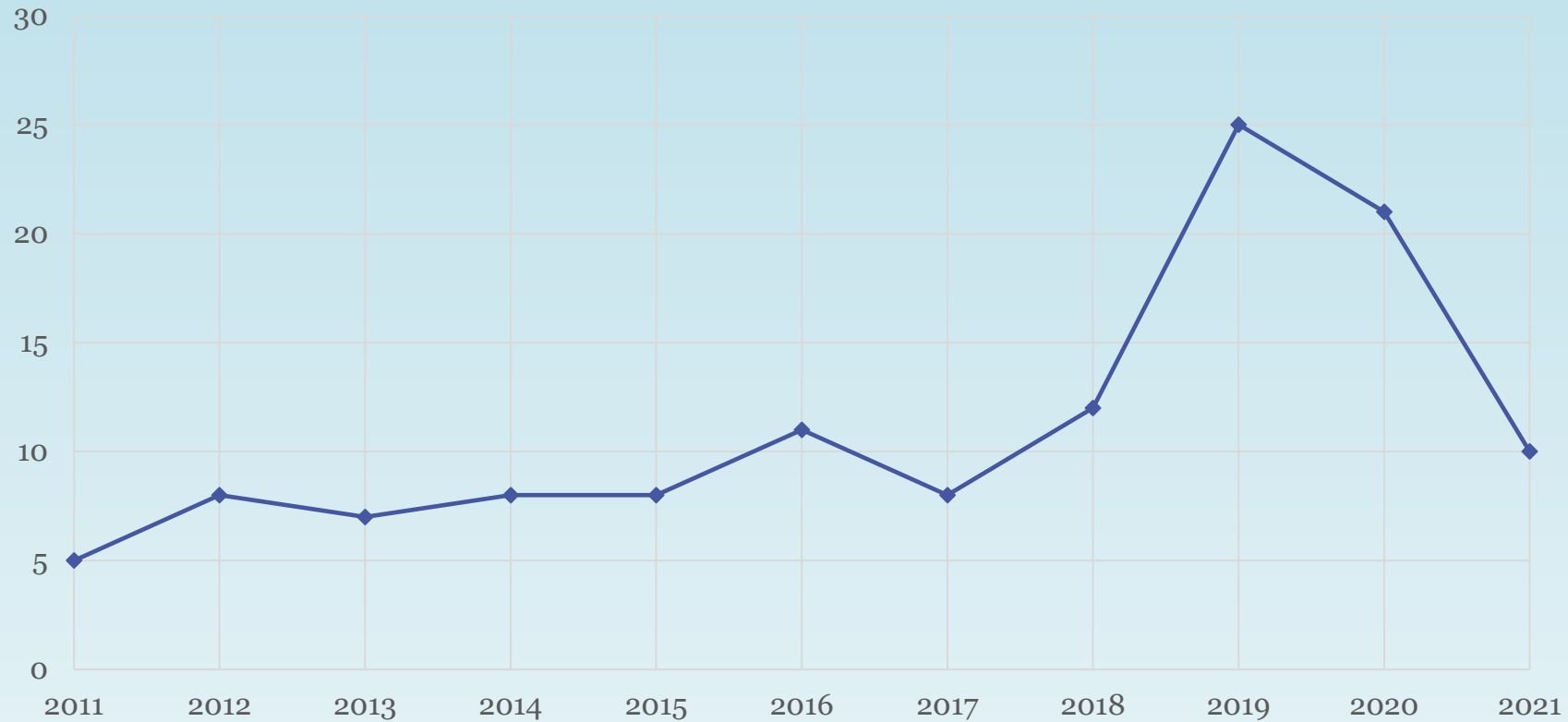


# A brief history of the dock code

- Created in 1980; required Board of County Commissioners approval for all docks (Special Use Permit)
- 1992 - switched from BoCC approval to Development Review Committee approval; in addition to total size limit of 1,000 sf, added new limit for covered width at 20% of shoreline
- 2009 – switched from DRC approval to Pre-Application Screening approval for docks under 1,000 sf and meeting all standards
- 2015 – added setback requirements
- 2019 – added Administrative Development Plan Approval process for repair and minor modifications to docks over 1,000 sf and/or not meeting standards (after Hurricane Irma)

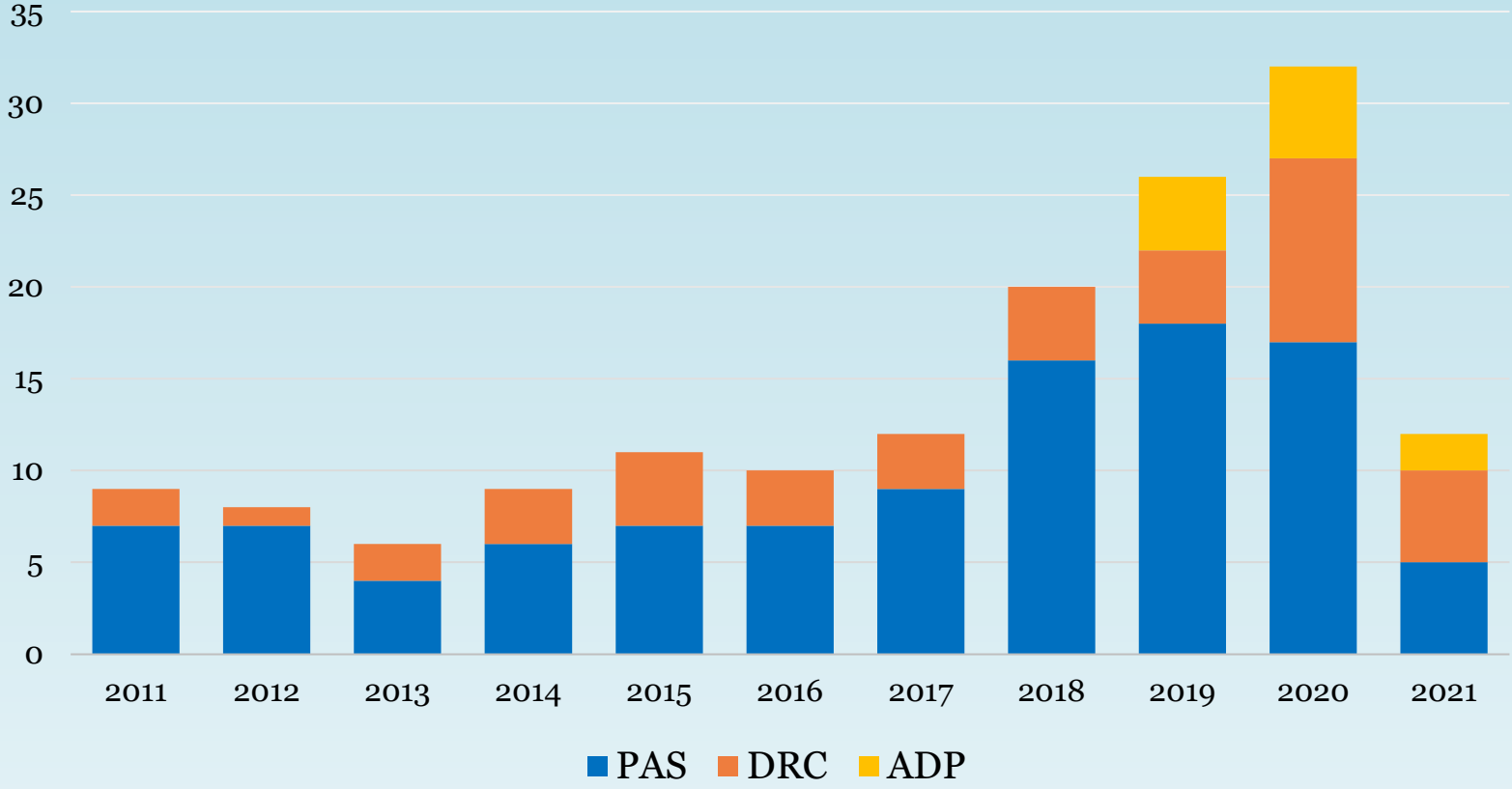
# 123 Building permits issued for docks 2011-2021

## NUMBER OF PERMITS



# Applications for docks 2011-2021

## APPLICATIONS BY APPROVAL



154 applications submitted

- 2/3 approved through PAS
- 1/3 approved through DRC



# Current dock code

## Standards in Unified Land Development Code (see Section 404.108 for complete language)

- (a) Maximum enclosure width\*
  - 16 ft. if property width is  $\leq$  80 ft.
  - For lots  $>$  80 ft., 20% of property width
- (b) Provide copies of other agency permits prior to construction
- (c) Docks shall not create a hazard to navigation or pursuit of water sports
- (d) Docks shall not be detrimental to trees and aquatic vegetation
- (e) Setbacks
  - 25 ft. from side if property width is  $\geq$  65 ft.,
  - For lots  $<$  65 ft., dock should be centered as much as possible and minimum 10 ft. from side

\*Up to 3 ft. of roof overhangs may be excluded for covered structures. For total square feet calculations, up to 3 ft. of overhangs may only be excluded if the overhang is over water.

## Applies to:

- Docks in unincorporated Alachua County
- Docks in Lake Santa Fe, including those associated with property in Bradford, Clay, and Putnam counties
- Docks in Orange Lake, including those associated with property in Marion County



In addition to meeting Alachua County requirements, contact the **Florida Department of Environmental Protection** to determine if your dock requires state permitting (904-256-1700).

Please note: Contractors must be licensed in the State of Florida to perform dock construction.

# Current dock code

Sec. 404.108(a) Maximum enclosure width. If the property width at the lateral shoreline is eighty (80) feet or less, the maximum enclosure width, including any roofed areas, shall not measure more than sixteen (16) feet and for lots with more than eighty (80) feet of property width at the lateral shoreline, the maximum enclosure width, including any roofed areas, of a dock may not exceed twenty (20) percent of the property width at the lateral shoreline **unless otherwise approved by the DRC or administrative development plan approval process** pursuant to Section 402.48. **The determination must be based on visual impacts and compliance with the standards below.**

Sec. 404.108(f)(2)b. New docks that exceed one thousand (1,000) square feet of surface area, or do not meet the standards in both Subsections (a) and (e) of Section 404.108, **may only be reviewed and approved by the DRC**, in accordance with Chapter 401 Article V.

# Stakeholder feedback

- **Dock contractors:** want firm size limits to be able to tell their customers what's do-able
- **Santa Fe Lake Dwellers Association:** want restrictions on size to reduce visual impacts, hazard to navigation
- **Florida Dept of Environmental Protection:** a stricter Alachua County dock code helps them with enforcement



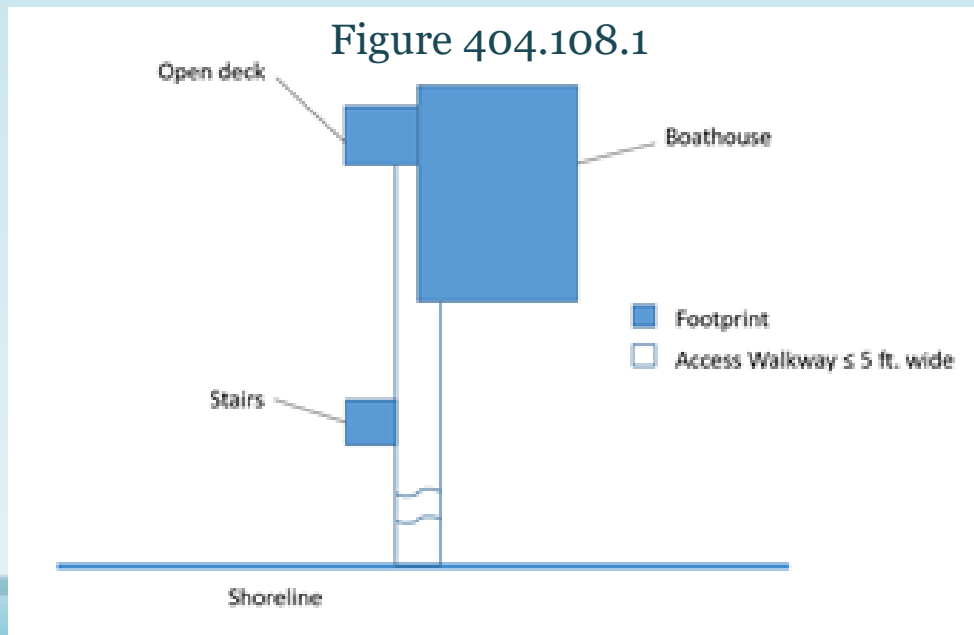
# Proposed changes – size threshold

<b>Current Dock Code</b>	<b>Proposed Dock Code</b>
Total square feet (1,000) is threshold for review process (PAS or DRC)	Platform square feet (600) is threshold for review process

- Platform size is a more targeted and enforceable standard
- Boardwalks are considered a minimal impact (see Sec. 406.50(b))
- A longer boardwalk often results in lesser or no impacts to aquatic vegetation
- Hazard to navigation is a concern but is addressed with its own standard

# Proposed changes – size threshold

<b>Current Dock Code</b>	<b>Proposed Dock Code</b>
Total square feet (1,000) is threshold for review process (PAS or DRC)	Platform square feet (600) is threshold for review process



# Proposed changes – covered width threshold

<b>Current Dock Code</b>	<b>Proposed Dock Code</b>
Covered width is threshold (20 %, excluding overhangs)	Total width is threshold (25 ft, including overhangs)

- By setting a review threshold for total width, smaller docks are incentivized
- Including overhangs is consistent with FDEP and should reduce confusion

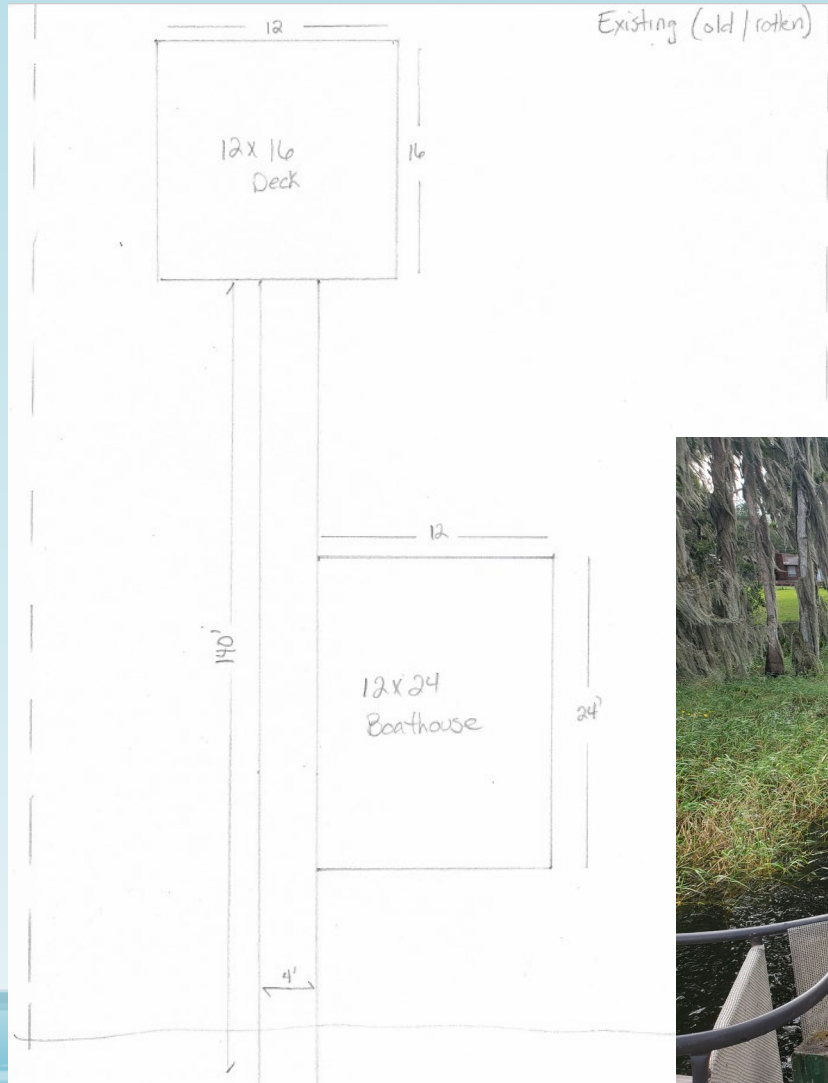


# Proposed changes – eliminate ADPA process

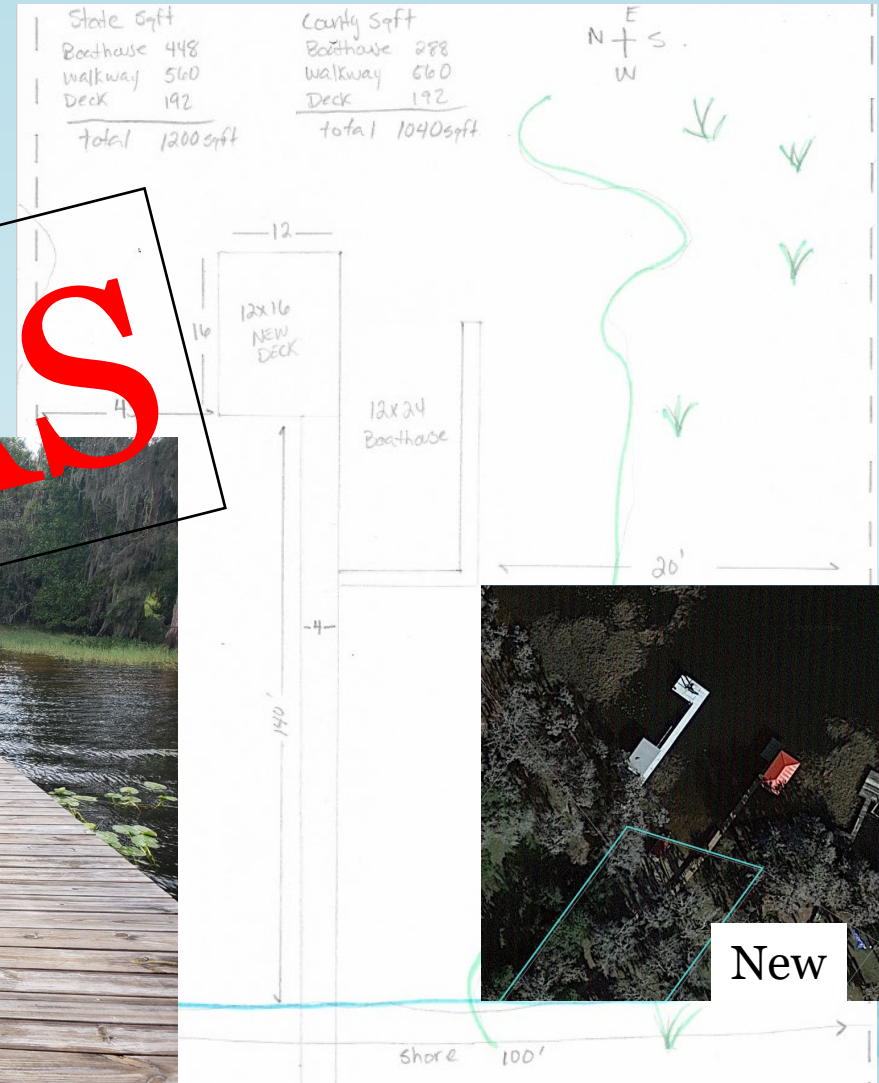
<b>Current Dock Code</b>	<b>Proposed Dock Code</b>
Administrative Development Plan Approval process for non-compliant dock reconfigurations with no expansion of covered area	ADPA process eliminated; reconfigurations for docks non-compliant with setback only, allowed through PAS

- Most rebuilds that took advantage of ADPA were reconfigurations either in the setback or under 600 SF platform size but met all other standards
- Reconfigurations that increase compliance would now go through PAS
- All other non-compliant reconfigurations would now go through DRC, provided they do not increase beyond standards

# Proposed changes – eliminate ADPA process



Reconfiguration;  
no expansion.  
Pre-existing in  
setback, meets all  
other standards.

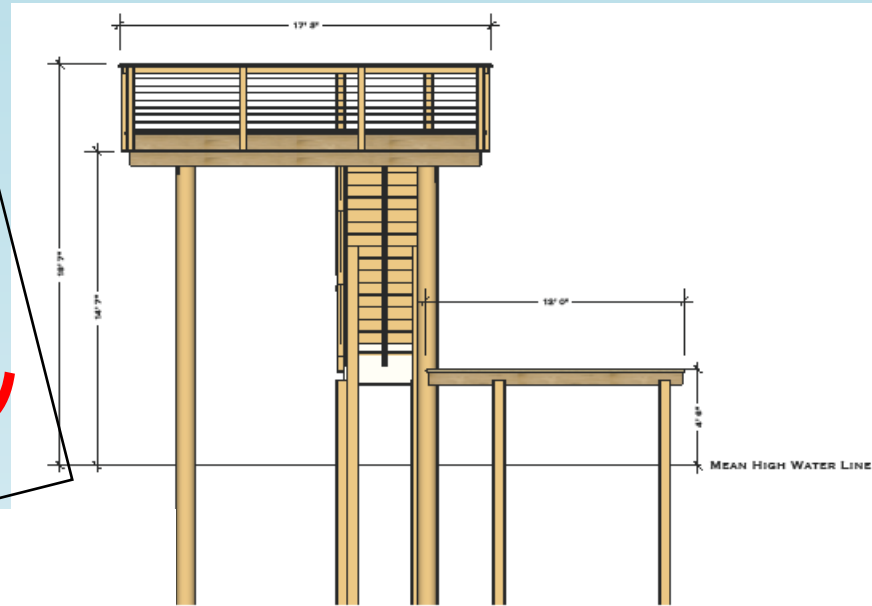




# Proposed changes – eliminate ADPA process

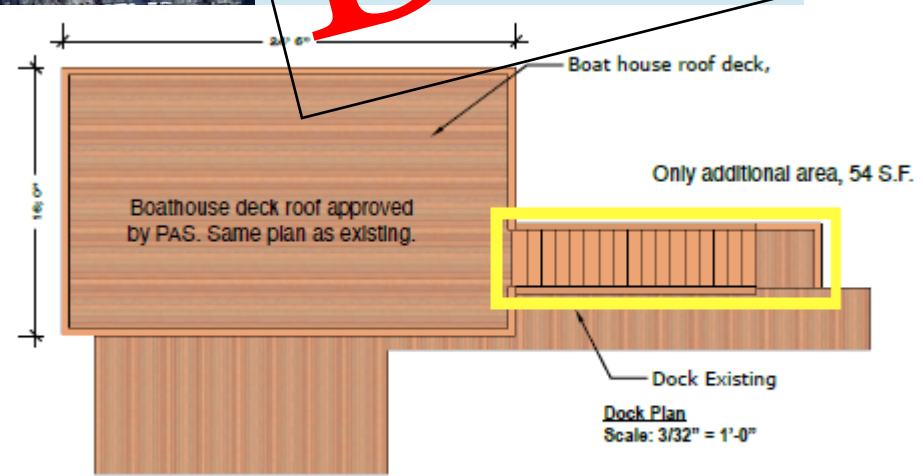
Added a top deck and 54 SF of stairs, over 600 SF

**DRC**



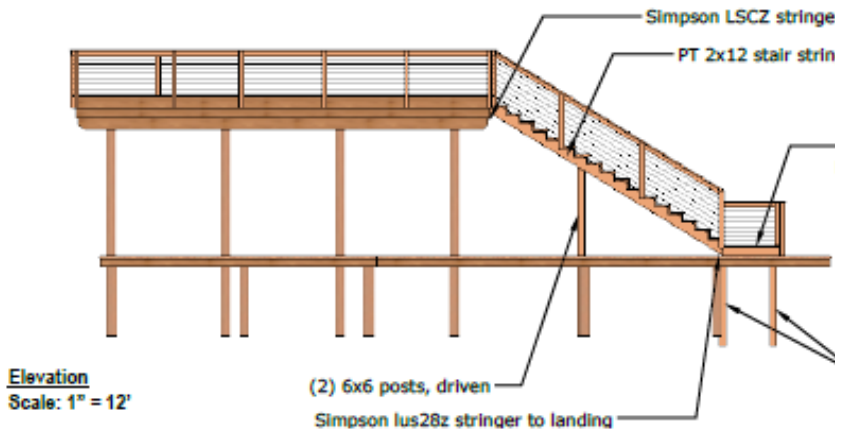
EAST ELEVATION ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW  
SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

SQUARE FOOTAGE OF EXISTING DOCK WITH STAIRS ADDITION		
ACCESS PIER:	4' x 170'	= 680 S.F.
DOCK:	12' x 19'	= 228 S.F.
BOATHOUSE	16' x 24'6"	= 392 S.F.
STAIRS	3' x 18'	= 54 S.F.
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>= 1354 S.F.</b>



FOOTAGE OF APPROVED DOCK WITH PAS

PIER:	4' x 170'	= 680 S.F.
	12' x 19'	= 228 S.F.
USE	16' x 24'6"	= 392 S.F.
		= 1300 S.F.



# Proposed changes – no walls or multiple docks

<b>Current Dock Code</b>	<b>Proposed Dock Code</b>
Silent on total width, covered width and height limits, docks on the Santa Fe River, walls, and multiple docks per property	See thresholds and limits in next table; walls and multiple docks prohibited



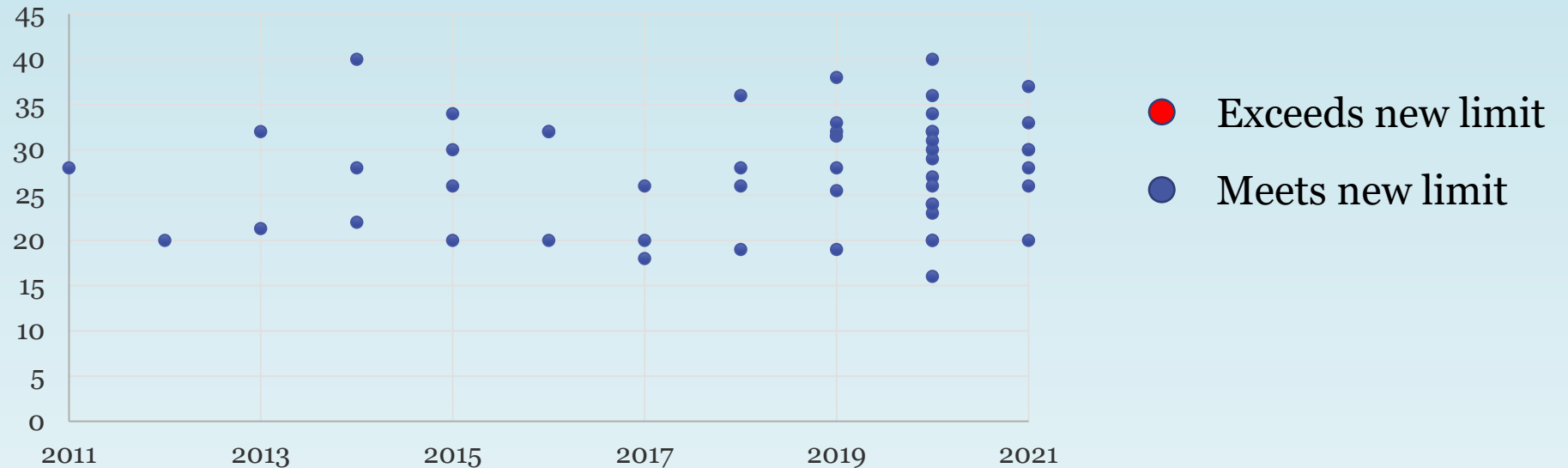
# Proposed new standards

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Pre-Application Screening approval limit</b>	<b>Development Review Committee approval limit</b>
<b>Maximum platform size</b>	600 square feet	900 square feet
<b>Maximum width</b>	25 feet for properties > 80 feet wide 20 feet for properties ≤ 80 feet wide	The lesser of 40 feet or 40% of the property width at the shoreline
<b>Maximum covered width</b>	25 feet for properties > 80 feet wide 20 feet for properties ≤ 80 feet wide	30 feet
<b>Maximum height</b>	14 feet	14 feet
<b>Setbacks</b>	10 feet for properties < 65 feet wide 25 feet for properties ≥ 65 feet wide	Less only if it is necessary to avoid or minimize adverse impacts to natural resources or riparian rights
<b>Santa Fe River docks</b>	Limited to a single uncovered platform ≤ 160 square feet	Limited to a single covered platform ≤ 160 square feet and total footprint ≤ 300 square feet

# Proposed new standards – total width

Standard	Application Screening Process approval limit	DRC approval limit
<b>Maximum width</b>	The lesser of 25 feet or 25% for properties > 80 feet wide 20 feet for properties ≤ 80 feet wide	The lesser of 40 feet or 40%

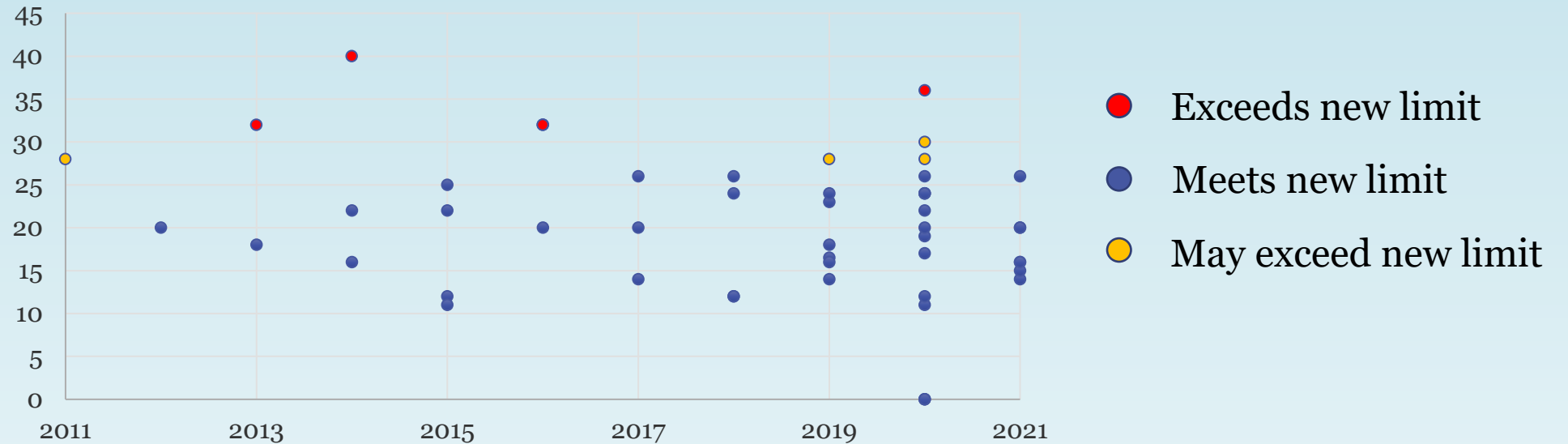
**Dev. Review Approved Total Width (ft)**



# Proposed new standards – covered width

Standard	Application Screening Process approval limit	DRC approval limit
<b>Maximum covered width</b>	The lesser of 25 feet or 25% for properties > 80 feet wide 20 feet for properties ≤ 80 feet wide	30 feet

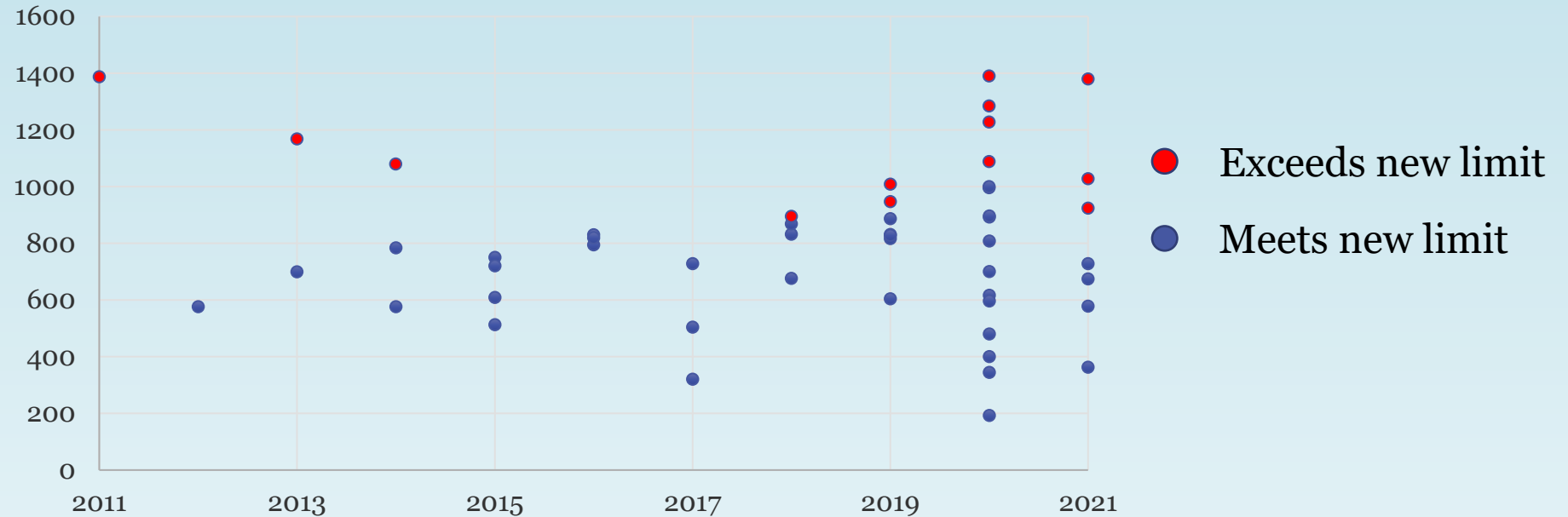
**Dev. Review Approved Covered Width (ft)**



# Proposed new standards – platform size

Standard	Application Screening Process approval limit	DRC approval limit
Maximum platform size	600 square feet	900 square feet

**Dev. Review Approved Platform Size (sf)**



# Staff Recommendation

- **Request to advertise a public hearing to consider an amendment to the Unified Land Development Code amending Chapter 404, Article XXVIII, Section 404.108 related to docks.**

