

Residents surrender in fight against new McDonald's sign

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LUTZ — Although there is little they can do about it, the golden arches are still tarnished for some residents of Crystal Lakes Manors subdivision.

Members of the subdivision's homeowners association met Monday night to discuss the 30-foot sign McDonald's plans to build near the entrance to the community off U.S. Highway 41.

And they realized there was very little they can do to stop it. Most of their options — and their complaints — have been exhausted.

"The time allotted for an appeal is two weeks," said Dennis Boucher,

association president. "And I think that, at this point, we are outside that."

Cliff Livingston, attorney for the owners of a new shopping center also going up near the subdivision, clarified some questions about future signs in the area.

He told the association the Department of Transportation had bought 10 feet of the existing 50-foot strip of land between the CSX railroad tracks and U.S. 41, with an option to use 25 more feet, if necessary, for road expansion.

"That only leaves 10 feet for the railroad, so I don't think you're going to see any signs at all in that stretch of land between the road

and the railroad," he said.

Residents also discussed problems with a subdivision sign on the northern edge of their property, the possibility of getting speed bumps and privatization of the subdivision's roads.

Meanwhile, most of the residents who attended the meeting didn't blame Hillsborough County for approving the sign. However, they blamed McDonald's for pushing for a sign that residents obviously didn't want. They also were upset the restaurant at one point pushed for changes in the county's sign law.

The case was resolved when McDonald's bought land from the railroad for the sign.