



The ECCL Report

Summary of the 149th meeting of the Estero Council of Community Leaders
June 10, 2016
Estero Community Park
10 a.m. to noon

Membership: Welcome to Meadowbrook representative Ulf Goranson and West Bay Club alternate Kate Pahls.

Finance: \$900 in dues was collected in May. Defense of the DR/GR cost \$400 in May. Normal operating expenses totaled \$1,500. The balance as of this meeting is \$28,000.

Vice Mayor Howard Levitan spoke about the need for community support for the Village Council regarding the Village Center and the Land Development Code amendments that are now under discussion. He explained that he personally began working on the Village Center idea in 2011 as a representative to the ECCL from Pelican Sound. "I've spend five years of my life working on this," he said, "most of it with the ECCL."

On June 9, the Village Planning and Zoning Board (PZB) voted 5-0 to recommend that the Village Council approve the amendments as modified by staff after once again listening to several comments made by landowners' representatives. Mr. Levitan indicated that these changes would be contained in the eighth draft of this document. He wrote a summary of this proposal that is posted on the ECCL website ([to read it, click here](#)).

The landowners in the Village Center area, often accompanied by their lawyers, planners and engineers, continue to disagree with the proposed compromises regarding density of housing units but the village has continued to push for them *and requests citizens to attend the hearing and speak up in support of the village's vision for the village center at its Council meeting on June 22 at 5:30 pm. (Note: The meeting begins earlier in the afternoon but the Village Center discussion is at 5:30.)* The Village Council will vote on the proposed amendments that evening.

The amendments include provisions sought by the developers that will exchange increased density (and consequently, building height) for the Village Center community benefits using a tiered approach. As density increases through 4 tiers, the developers will be required to provide greater community concessions like bike lanes, walkable streets, public gathering places, sites for civic, recreational and arts facilities, access to the Estero River, etc. In addition to the amendments, a “pattern book,” sometimes referred to as a “beauty book,” outlines design models developers must abide by.

Mr. Levitan said that it is important for many Estero residents to testify at the June 22 meeting and express their support for the Village Center proposal as it has been amended throughout this year-long process. The Council does not expect residents to provide detailed comments regarding the plan amendments.

In answering a question, Mr. Levitan said that protection of the Estero River needs to be one of the village’s highest priorities. Funding for such an option is the challenge in achieving this goal.

Citizens who are unable to attend the meeting can make their voices heard by emailing council members. Their addresses can be found here: <https://estero-fl.gov/council/>



Second from the left is Rick Argo (in the gray uniform), manager of the Koreshan Historic Site, and Sean McCabe from the Conservancy.

Citizen input requested for parks’ planning: Rick Argo, manager of the Koreshan State Historic Site, Estero Bay Preserve State Park and Mound Key Archaeological State Park talked about a public meeting for taking input regarding a long-term Unit Management Plan (UMP) for the three parks to be held June 29 from 5 to 7 pm in the Arts Hall at the Koreshan Park. *Citizen input is strongly encouraged.* A draft of the UMP is available here:

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/planning/default.htm> (links at bottom of page)

Mr. Argo indicated that there are currently no annual passes available for local residents at any of the 160 state parks. Using a grant from Lee County, the local parks were able to hire a consultant for ideas on increasing attendance and use and any improvements that should be made. Those recommendations will be part of the draft plan. The ECCL will continue to publicize happenings at the park and other local sites through its email list.

Recycling presentation: Molly Schweers of Lee County Solid Waste Division gave a presentation titled “Recycle Smart.” That presentation stressed what types of materials should be recycled through roadside pick-up and which should be put in garbage containers. [View her presentation here.](#)

Conservancy of Southwest Florida’s priorities: Sean McCabe of the Conservancy gave a presentation addressing this topic. He highlighted several new development proposals in the DR/GR: Old Corkscrew Plantation mine application, Troyer Brothers mine application, Pepperland Ranch high density housing proposal, and the Corkscrew Crossing residential community, located within the Village of Estero. Both Pepperland Ranch and Corkscrew Crossing are located on Corkscrew Road. [View that here.](#)

DR/GR protection lawsuit: Don Eslick stated that the ECCL Board of Directors have decided not to appeal Judge Alane Laboda’s decision to dismiss the case challenging Lee County’s decision to allow higher density housing development at Corkscrew Farms. The judge’s dismissal was based on grounds that the ECCL was not sufficiently impacted to have “standing” in order to bring the suit.

The Board reached an agreement with the developer of the property and Lee County in which ECCL agreed not to appeal the decision in exchange for all parties paying their own legal fees and none of the parties can sue any of the other parties nor any of their members or member organizations. In addition, the judge’s ruling will not preclude the ECCL from challenging the consistency of a subsequent Lee Comprehensive Plan Amendment application of the developer or any successor organization that seeks to increase the existing density or reduce the required conservation and flow way restoration.

ECCL Board decisions: At its last board meeting, ECCL directors voted into adopt the following two administrative policies:

1. The ECCL will not use its communication capabilities in support of any fundraising requests on behalf of other Estero community organizations that we otherwise assist with outreach efforts.
2. Any recording, videotaping or stenography during an ECCL meeting, other than by legitimate media sources, cannot be done without permission from the chairman prior to the meeting’s start.

Transportation: Director Bob King reported that volunteers are still sought for the Committee's six sub-committees, but participation and progress has been great.

Lee County BOCC has selected an engineering firm to conduct a traffic study of Corkscrew Road that's expected to be complete in July 2017. The Village is also contracting for a traffic study. Bids have been taken and the scope of work and costs are being determined.

Regarding roadwork that is to be done by the Village vs. the County, \$100,000 has been approved by the Citizen's Advisory Council of the Metropolitan Planning Organization for an Estero-wide master pedestrian and bicycle plan.

The Village of Estero has identified and informed the County of three transportation projects as priorities for the village: a traffic light at Bella Terra on Corkscrew Road, sidewalks on Estero Parkway, and resurfacing of Estero Parkway.

In its response County Manager Roger Desjarlais indicated that the county is prepared to pay \$847,000 toward the cost of the Estero Parkway sidewalks; that Cameratta Properties, the developer for The Place at Corkscrew, formerly known as Corkscrew Farms, has agreed to provide the signal light at Bella Terra. In addition, he did not think Estero Parkway needed to be resurfaced, a position with which the Village disagrees. These discussions continue at the Manager level.

The Committee is also preparing an inventory and study of existing and proposed apartment complexes and their impact on traffic.

The next transportation committee meeting is June 30 at 9 am at Fine Mark Bank on Coconut Road.

Environment: Pete Cangialosi, ECCL Environmental Director, summarized his planned presentations which will be given fully at the next ECCL meeting. He indicated that ECCL has been following administrative developments related to the Troyer Brothers mining plan application, Pepperland Ranch, and Corkscrew Crossing.

He indicated that the Troyer property includes a strip of land between the proposed mining area and Corkscrew Road that could allow trucks from the mine to access Corkscrew Road in the future.

He also indicated an upcoming hearing at South Florida Water Management District offices in Fort Myers on many proposed projects including Corkscrew Crossing on June 15.

While not discussed at the meeting, Mr. Cangialosi indicates that ECCL is a founding member of "**Yes on Conservation 20/20**," a group composed of environmental organizations and individuals in SW Florida whose goal is to educate Lee County voters on the merits of the County's Conservation 20/20 program. Lee County BOCC has

decided to put continuation of the program to a referendum vote in the November general election. The group's web page and Facebook page are being constructed and can be found at <http://www.yesonconservation2020.org/> and <https://www.facebook.com/YesOnConservation2020/> respectively.

Development: ECCL Community Planning Director Jim Tatoles indicated that Autumn Leaves senior facility will have a grand opening soon. This is one of several senior housing projects under way. Watch for an upcoming Estero Development Report for more details.

The meeting was adjourned shortly after noon.

The next meeting is Friday, July 8, 10 am to noon at Estero Community Park.

- Dayna Harpster, ECCL Media and Public Relations Consultant
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