

ECCL Report: February 8, 2019

Executive Summary: 180th meeting of the Estero Council of Community Leaders



Proposed Changes in DR/GR Mining Rules: The Board of County Commissioners is considering an amendment to the Lee Plan that will allow fast-track approvals of widespread DR/GR mining applications. Mining can cause water quality and flooding issues and additional truck traffic on the already overloaded Corkscrew Rd. Please attend the County Commissioner Hearing on February 20 and contact the Commissioners to voice your concerns.

SWFL Heart & Wellness Festival: The American Heart Association is hosting its annual SWFL Heart & Wellness Festival and Heart Walk on Saturday, March 2 at Lee Health Coconut Point. The event will include an optional 1-mile non-competitive walk followed by an indoor festival, including some free wellness testing and health evaluations. Registration is \$35 (free for kids). You can register online at heart.org/swflwellness.

Breaking Par at Grandezza: The ECCL and its Education Outreach Council (EOC) are hosting the 7th Annual "Breaking Par at Grandezza," benefitting Junior Achievement of Southwest Florida. The Gala Dinner & Golf Tournament are taking place on March 21 & 22 at the Grandezza Country Club. The Golf Shotgun Scramble is sold out, but Gala tickets are still available. [Visit the ECCL's website to register or learn more.](#)

Village Report: The Village Comprehensive Plan was approved last summer and focuses on quality of life, development of a sense of place and a sense of community. In his report, Councilman Howard Levitan outlines the Village's top ten priorities in the Comp Plan.

Estero Community & Economic Development Team: The Estero Chamber of Commerce has organized a Community & Economic Development Team to develop and implement a strategic plan that enhances the overall quality of life within Estero and focuses on community development, business retention and growth, and a strong chamber of commerce.

Transportation Committee: The ECCL Committee conducted a survey and held focus group sessions to judge residents' concerns about London Bay Homes' proposed development of the former "Weeks Fish Camp" property, which is located in Bonita Springs on Estero Bay. The Committee is consulting with Estero's Village Councilperson, Bill Ribble, who is Estero's Liaison to Bonita Springs. The Village, the County, and the City of Bonita Springs have contracted for a

Coconut Road Traffic Study to assess current condition, the impact of proposed new developments, and recommendations for improvement. A [Bike-Ped Master Plan webpage](#) has been set up to collect community comments on bike and pedestrian issues. The Village approved a plan for a traffic signal on Puerta Lane at Corkscrew Road (Lowe's entrance).

Fundraising Program: The ECCL has established a new Finance and Fundraising Committee to help develop initiatives to tap advocacy-related resources, charities and other non-profits, and more. Current ECCL funding sources include dues from member communities and Lee Health, community donations, and digital marketing revenue. The Committee's considering establishing a 501(c)(3) organization and/or establishing a "field of interest fund" and offering charitable gift annuities.

Estero & San Carlos Park Fire Rescue: Both San Carlos Park and Estero Fire Rescue are participating in the Annual Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) Boot Drive being held March 8-10. Both departments are also preparing for brushfire season. Residents can expect smoke from planned burns at Wildblue on East Corkscrew. Now is the time to begin holding hurricane preparedness programs.

The next ECCL meeting will be Friday, March 8, 2019 at 10:00am at Estero Community Park.

SAN CARLOS PARK FIRE RESCUE

- Public Information Officer *Alexis Rothring*

- **Annual Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) Boot Drive**
 - Being held March 8-10 at Corkscrew Rd & Gulf Coast Town Center.
 - Last year, raised \$11,000 in San Carlos Park and \$185,000 in Lee County.
- **Brushfire Season**
 - Brushfire season is upon us.
 - Expect smoke from planned burns at WildBlue on East Corkscrew.
 - If concerned by unexpected smoke, please call 911.
- **Hurricane Preparedness**
 - Schedule your awareness programs in April.
 - Supplies should be purchased in May and avoid purchases after June 1.



ESTERO FIRE RESCUE

- Fire Chief *Scott Vanderbrook*

- **Annual Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) Boot Drive**
 - Estero is also participating.

- **Brushfire Season**
 - EFR is also gearing for brushfire season.
 - They're concerned about debris from Hurricane Irma that could burn.
- **Fire Hydrants**
 - Both fire districts check the proper functioning of all hydrants twice per year.
 - Water districts (Lee County Utilities & Bonita Springs Utilities) are responsible for painting.

VILLAGE REPORT

- Councilmember *Howard Levitan*

- **Village Comprehensive Plan**

- The plan was approved last summer and is a strategic document that outlines the Village's future development direction.
- It focuses on quality of life, development of a sense of place, and a sense of community.
- The Village strives to be a highly valued place to live, work, and visit



because of development standards and design guidelines that promote:

- Desirable Neighborhoods & Public Amenities;
- Vibrant Economic Centers;
- Attractive Landscaping, Streetscaping, Lighting, Signage, & Architectural Features; and
- An Interconnected Transportation Network.

- **Village's 10 Priorities:**

1. Develop a Village Center to Unify the Community
 - The Village recently purchased 62-acres and much of this land will likely be home to the Village Center.
2. Improve Connectivity Between Residential Neighborhoods, Economic Areas, Civic Uses, Parks, and Recreational Facilities
 - An example of improved connectivity is a "Green Ribbon" that could provide the ability to walk and bike to Estero's 3 parks.
3. Diversify Economic Base
4. Develop Targeted Industry Clusters Like Health Care
 - Facilities such as the medical area at Coconut Crossing (owned by Lee Health) will help address our 3rd and 4th priority.
5. Expand Multi-Modal Transportation Options
 - We will focus on a Bike/Ped Study and Suntrail/Rails to Trails.
6. Improve Access to the Estero River

- There is currently limited access to the river. With the recent 62-acre purchase, the Village now owns the Kayak Rental parking lot, one of the two river access areas.
- The river cannot carry all the water that flows into it because of silt from construction upstream. We need to improve the quantity of water flowing into the river and improve flow ways out east.
- 7. Promote Cultural & Historical Resources
 - The center of our historical area is part of the new property acquisition and offers direct connection via the river to Koreshan Park.
- 8. Provide Public Gathering Places
 - Part of the plan includes mixed-use standards in future land use. Our first test case will be Estero Crossing near Lowes.
- 9. Maintain Unified & Consistent Aesthetic/Visual Quality
- 10. Promote Private Investment & Mixed-Use Centers
 - The Village Center is planned to incorporate mixed use, which means higher density to support retail and civic uses, provide connectivity and walkability, and public gathering places.
- Learn more about what's happening with the Village Council on their website: <https://estero-fl.gov>

STRATEGIC PLANNING BY THE COMMUNITY & THE CHAMBER'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE

- Chamber of Commerce President-Elect *Pastor Nolen Rollins*

- The **purpose** of the Village of Estero Community & Economic Development Team is to develop and implement a strategic plan that enhances the overall quality of life within Estero and focuses on:
 - Community Development
 - Business Retention & Growth
 - Strong Chamber of Commerce
- The **strategy** is to establish a partnership of community and economic development entities, including the:
 - Village of Estero
 - Estero Chamber of Commerce
 - ECCL
 - Horizon Council – Lee County Economic Development
 - Florida Gulf Coast University
 - Local Schools
 - Estero Businesses
 - Local Area Board of Realtors
 - Non-Profit/Faith-Based Organizations



- Develop a plan/strategy for:
 - Public and private partnerships and investment.
 - Human resource development, education, and training.
 - Land use and sustainable housing growth.

LEE COUNTY LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY (LPA); PROPOSED CHANGES IN DR/GR MINING RULES

- Joel Avila

- **Proposed Amendments to the Lee Plan:**
 - Eliminate the requirement for a lime rock supply inventory and demand analysis.
 - Eliminate the need for mines to be designated on Map 14 (Future Limerock Mining Overlay District)
 - Delete Map 14 entirely from Plan
- **First LPA Hearing: December 17, 2018**
 - LPA concurred with eliminating needs assessment analysis.
 - LPA asked Lee County staff to provide additional information regarding Map 14 at the next hearing.
 - Groups speaking in opposition to proposal included the Conservancy of SW Florida, Sakata Seed, Village of Estero, ECCL, Audubon Society, Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife, Sierra Club, Florida Wildlife Federation, and other residents of Lee County.
- **Second LPA Hearing: January 28, 2019**
 - Lee County planning staff responded to objections raised at the Dec 17 hearing regarding Map 14.
 - Despite additional testimony in opposition to the proposal, LPA voted to favorably recommend the proposal to County Commissioners by 6-1 vote.
 - LPA also voted NOT to recommend staff's proposal to increase buffers between mines and residential property lines from 150 feet to 2,000 feet.
 - No discussion regarding various suggestions to conduct workshops to obtain input from the public, other professionals, and key stakeholders.
- **It was noted during those discussions:**
 - These amendments are being presented as a way to fix inconsistencies between the Lee Plan and the Plan Code and to streamline the approval process.
 - Objections to the current requirement for a need analysis do not pass the reasonability test.
 - *Objection #1: Why are we treating mining differently than other land uses?*
 - Answer: The impacts of mining are clearly more harmful, enduring and irreversible than the impacts of other uses.
 - *Objection #2: There is no established methodology for determining need.*



- Answer: There may be competing methodologies, but that doesn't mean that one cannot be selected after consultation with experts in the field.
- *Objection #3:* Nobody in their right mind would invest in a mine if the market demand didn't exist and the property for profitability didn't exist.
 - Answer: Yes, but the financial interests of mining operators are not the same as those of the general public. It is possible for Lee County mines to be very profitable by serving a very large geographical market while devastating the quality of life for Lee County residents.
- It was noted that Lee County mines serve 70% of 7 SW Florida counties.
- Prior advisory committees to the LPA:
 - Met 23 times
 - Lee County spent \$1.6M on consultants to ensure policies stood up to legal challenges.

- **What's Wrong with the Proposal? – Summary**

- Eliminates the commonsense requirement that the need for new mines be justified before they are approved.
- Map 14 is the result of a “carefully considered, carefully studied process that included experts, the public, staff, stakeholders, and interested parties.”
- Map 14 protects wildlife habitat, water resources, and directs mining away from incompatible uses.
- Rather than deleting Map 14 because it is not as effective as it could be, the Plan should be improved by more closely aligning the Map with Lee County code.
- Repeated requests for meaningful dialogue with key stakeholders have been ignored.



- **Other concerns discussed:**

- Environmental Issues:
 - Deep mines routinely dry up adjacent wetlands
 - Reduces water in the aquifer
 - Increases risk of flooding
- Additional truck traffic on already-overloaded Corkscrew Rd.

- **Next Steps**

- Spread the word – raise awareness
- Critical that County Commissioners understand the gravity of this proposal and how it can negatively impact the quality of life in Estero.
- Unlike with re-zoning proposals, there is no prohibition on contacting County Commissioners.

- **Share Your Concerns with County Commissioners**

- District 1: John Manning – 239-533-2224 or dist1@leegov.com

- District 2: Cecil Pendergrass – 239-533-2227 or dist2@leegov.com
- District 3: Larry Kiker – 239-533-2223 or dist3@leegov.com
- District 4: Brian Hamman – 239-533-2226 or dist4@leegov.com
- District 5: Frank Mann – 239-533-2225 or dist5@leegov.com
- **Attend the Board of County Commissioners Hearing on February 20 at 9:30am**
 - Bring your friends & neighbors – there’s power in numbers!

SWFL HEART & WELLNESS FESTIVAL

- AHA Lee Heart Director *Nicole Menendez*

- **Saturday, March 2, 2019**

8:00am – 12:00pm

Lee Health Coconut Point

- 1-Mile Non-Competitive Walk
 - Check-in at 8:00am for the 8:30am event
- Indoor Activities
 - 9:00am to 12:00pm
 - Includes balance evaluations, vision & blood pressure screenings, auditory tests, spine evaluations, and more.
- Receive a Heart Fair American Heart Association (AHA) T-Shirt!
- **Event Registration**
 - Registration Fee (Donation): \$35 – kids are free!
 - When you register, please remember to join the “ECCL team.”
 - Register onsite at Lee Health or online at: <http://www.heart.org/swflwellness>



ECCL STRATEGIC PLANNING TASK FORCE

- *Mark Novitski & Larry Jones*

- **Task force members have been meeting with various ECCL committees to:**
 - Understanding what their committee does
 - Ensure the committee is staying in their lane and not wandering into others’ responsibilities (e.g. Village of Estero or the Estero Chamber)
 - Work with committees to identify opportunities
 - Document ECCL (e.g. agenda prep, monthly members meeting slides, documenting member meetings) and committee (e.g. annual community renewals bills) processes and procedures
 - Ensure communication (within the committee, within the ECCL, and throughout the Estero community) and reporting actions, efforts, and accomplishments
 - Develop metrics to measure what we do to be able to report accomplishments
- **Welcoming New Members**
 - If interested, please contact Mark Novitski at marker21101@gmail.com or Larry Jones at lawerence1020@aol.com.

- *The next Strategic Task Force Meeting is Friday, March 15, 2019 at 10:00am in the Healthy Life Center Classroom at Lee Health Coconut Point.*

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

- Membership Director *Barry Freedman*

- There should be a sign-in sheet at the podium before every meeting.
- **Estero Communities “Invited to the Table”**
 - Stonybrook, Grandezza, Estero Palms, Osprey Cove, Copper Oaks, Villa Palmeras, Mariners Cove, Tidewater, Tahiti Village, Sunny Grove, Villagio, Reef, Estero Oaks, Oaks of Estero, Lakes of Estero, Terra Vista, Mirasol, Genova, Corkscrew Shores, Pepperland Ranch, WildBlue, & Place at Corkscrew.
 - Community contact information for all participants should be forwarded to Barry at ecclmshp@gmail.com.
- **Membership Committee**
 - Please consider joining the membership committee!
 - Contact Barry at ecclmshp@gmail.com
 - There was a committee meeting at the conclusion of the ECCL meeting where committee members were assigned responsibility for contacting communities that are not ECCL members.

ESTERO EDUCATION OUTREACH COUNCIL (EOC)

- Committee Chairs *Jim Shields & Jim Gilmartin*

- **Three Primary Initiatives:**
 - Junior Achievement
 - Lee County Schools Support
 - FGCU Entrepreneurship Support
- **Breaking Par at Grandezza**
 - ECCL & EOC are hosting the 7th Annual “Breaking Par at Grandezza” 2-day event
 - All proceeds are benefitting Junior Achievement of Southwest Florida
 - The Gala Dinner & Live Auction will be Thursday, March 21
 - The Golf Tournament & Awards Ceremony will be Friday, March 22
 - Both events are taking place at the Grandezza Country Club
 - Gala tickets are available, but the Golf Shotgun Scramble is sold out.
 - *Event information, registration, and sponsorships are available at:*
<https://esterotoday.com/breaking-par-at-grandezza-2>
 - For more information, please contact:
 - Jim Shields: jimshields@fl-office.com
 - Kenny James: kjames@jamesagroup.com



- Jim Gilmartin: jimgilm@gmail.com
- Learn more about the EOC on the ECCL website: <https://esterotoday.com/education-outreach-council>

COMMUNITY PLANNING REPORT

- Planning Director *Jim Tatoes*

- **Continuing the Work**
 - Status Updates
 - Estero Development Report
 - Speakers Panel
 - Community Turnover from Developer
 - Community Information Sharing
- **New Members Welcome**
 - Anyone interested in joining the Community Planning Committee should contact Jim at jetatoes@prodigy.net.

FINANCIAL REPORT

- Finance Director *Bob Lienesch*

- **January Revenue Included:**
 - Residential Community Annual Dues for 2019 received upfront of \$10,450.
 - Over 66% of communities have already paid their dues.
 - Donations of \$671 from a new donation program (more info below).
 - Digital Marketing (Net of Expense) of \$825 to publicize Lee Health events.
- **January Expenses Included:**
 - Website and electronic communication costs of \$1,182.
 - Upfront expenses to establish the new donation campaign of \$200.
 - The petition cost for the Eslick Bridge issue, which had been previously endorsed by the membership, of \$530.
 - Other expenses of \$401.
- **January Excess Revenue Over Expenses: \$9,633**
- **January 31 Cash Balance: \$15,607**
- For more details, you can view the full financial statements at the ECCL website: <http://esterotoday.com/reports/meetings-minutes>



FINANCE & FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE REPORT

- Committee Chair *Bob Lienesch*

- **Members Include:**

- Beverly MacNellis (Marsh Landing)
- Barry Freedman (Director)
- Jim Gilmartin (Director)
- Larry Jones (Shadow Wood)
- Tom MacDonald (Director)

- **Mission:** To solidify the ECCL's financial structure by securing non-traditional funding, providing adequate financial controls, and issuing financial statements to all stakeholders.

- **Responsibilities:** Each member assigned responsibilities, including action items.

- **New Members Welcome**

- Anyone interested in participating should contact Bob at rpl10000@gmail.com.

- *The next Financial Committee Meeting is Tuesday, February 19, 2019 at 1:30pm at 23421 Walden Center Dr #120 in Bonita Springs.*



FUNDRAISING PROGRAM

- EOC Chairman *Jim Gilmartin*

- **Current ECCL Limitations**

- Ability to fund advocacy-related resources
- Ability to support selected charities and not-for-profit organizations
- Ability to support community improvement programs
- Offset administrative expenses
- Ability to tell ECCL story

- **Current ECCL Funding Sources**

- Dues from Residential Communities
- Dues from Lee Health
- Potential contributions from communities, organizations, and individuals for specific causes (e.g. Village of Estero incorporation)
- Digital content marketing revenue from Lee Health

- **Recommended Funding Approach**

- Current sources of funds
- Email donation solicitations to Estero residents
- Other digital content marketing sources
- Special events
- Partner with Southwest Florida Community Foundation (SWFCF)
- Consider establishing a 501(c)(3) organization
 - Grants from public & private foundations
 - Supports specific community improvement programs/projects

- Tax-deductible donations
- Consider establishing a field of interest fund
 - Allows ECCL to direct the income from fund to an area of need, e.g. advocating for community needs, fostering Estero arts, preserving the environment, other worthwhile causes
 - Tax-deductible donations
- Consider offering charitable gift annuities
- **Further Thoughts on SWFCF**
 - Support ECCL’s effort for funding charitable organizations and community needs
 - Manage the funds for a minimum fee
 - Keep ECCL aware of our funding cycles
 - Share community impact grants and grants calendar
 - Has funded JA in the past and have donors who also do so through their funds
 - Help ECCL work with donors that may prefer more creative techniques like “charitable gift annuities” that create income for life for the donor

HEATH COMMITTEE REPORT

- Health Director *Lowell Gerson*

- Members working to support the Estero Heart Walk & Wellness Fair, as outlined earlier by Nicole Menendez from the American Heart Association.

- **Million-Mile Movement**

- Beginning January 15, we hope that people in Lee County will have a million movements such as running, walking, swimming, etc. over the next 3 months.
- *Learn more:*

<http://healthylee.com/news-events/million-mile-movement>



- Work continues on the strategic plan.
- *The next Health Committee Meeting is Friday, February 15, 2019 at 2:30pm in the Healthy Life Center Classroom at Lee Health Coconut Point.*
 - Agenda will include a discussion of the Cancer Center.
- *Learn more about the ECCL’s Health Committee at the ECCL’s website:*
<http://esterotoday.com/about-eccl/eccl-hospital-committee>

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT

- Transportation Director *Bob King*

- **Bay View on Estero Bay (aka Weeks Fish Camp)**

- Results on the Survey Monkey and Focus Group initiatives were published in the most recent ECCL Development Report.
 - *Report:* <https://esterotoday.com/feature-which-way-will-the-tide-turn>

- ECCL is coordinating with Councilperson Ribble, the Council Liaison to Bonita Springs, where the property is located.
- The first meeting with the developer, London Bay Homes, is scheduled for February 8.
- **Coconut Road Traffic Study**
 - The Village contracted with Kisinger Camp Associates to study the current condition of Coconut, the impact of proposed new developments, and recommendations for improvement.
 - The report, costing about \$30,000, is to be completed within 90 days.
- **Bike-Pedestrian (Ped) Master Plan**
 - The Village, Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and Jacobs Engineering are hosting a workshop on February 11 at Estero Community Park.
 - This gives residents an excellent opportunity to have input on the Bike-Ped Master Plan.
 - *For more information, go to: <https://esterofl.altaplanning.cloud/#/home>*
- **New Traffic Light on Corkscrew Road**
 - The Village approved a plan for a traffic light on Puente Lane at Corkscrew Rd (Lowe's Entrance).
 - The developers of a nearby location will reimburse the Village for the cost of the traffic signal design.
 - This will help to alleviate dangerous traffic issues for communities on the south side of Corkscrew Rd near I-75.
- *The next Transportation Committee Meeting is Thursday, February 21, 2019 at 9:30am at Fine Mark Bank.*



We hope to see you at our next meeting!

Friday, March 8, 2019
 10:00am – 12:00pm
 Estero Community Park