



Estero Development Report

Volume 12, Number 3, Issued January 2013

Produced by the Estero Council of Community Leaders (ECCL)

For More Information about Estero

...see www.esterofl.org

January Opportunities for Citizen Participation That will Protect Estero's Quality of Life

| Date | Time | Event | Location |
|---------------|----------|---|---|
| Mon., Jan. 7 | 5 p.m. | Estero Fire Rescue Monthly Board Meeting | District Headquarters on Three Oaks, just south of Corkscrew Road |
| Wed., Jan. 9 | 5 p.m. | Estero Design Review Committee Meeting | Estero Community Park |
| Fri., Jan. 11 | 10 a.m. | ECCL Regular Monthly Meeting | Estero Community Park |
| Wed., Jan. 16 | 9 a.m. | Florida Farms Development (FFD) or Six L's Farm 1st day of Testimony before the Lee County Hearing Examiner | 2 nd Floor, Dept. of Community Development, 1500 Monroe Street, Fort Myers |
| Fri., Jan. 18 | 9 a.m. | ECCL Communications Roundtable | 102B Estero Recreation Center |
| Fri., Jan. 18 | 9 a.m. | Lee County MPO Meeting | Cape Coral City Council Chambers, 1015 Cultural Park Blvd., Cape Coral |
| Sun., Jan. 20 | 2-5 p.m. | Don Eslick Retirement Party Tickets available from all board members | Shadow Wood Clubhouse at The Brooks |
| Mon., Jan. 28 | 5 p.m. | Estero Community Planning Panel Meeting | Estero Community Park |

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Estero Community Website (www.esterofl.org)

The community groups sponsoring the site are:

Estero Community Planning Panel (ECP)
Estero Design Review Committee (EDRC)
Estero Council of Community Leaders (ECCL)
Estero Community Association (ECA)

Environment

Florida Farms Development to go before Lee County Hearing Examiner

Florida Farms Development (FFD), also known as the Six L's Farm property, will go before the Lee County Hearing Examiner on January 16, 2013, for up to six days of testimony as to why they should be able to mine their property for limerock.

FFD is located on the south side of Corkscrew Road, about 4 miles east of I-75. They have applied for a permit to rezone 4,652 acres of land from Agriculture District to allow for mining activities. This would include administrative offices, rock crushing operations, and plant facilities. Structure height is not to exceed 35 feet.

The proposed maximum mine depth is 100 feet, with an estimated duration of 45 years of extraction activity. FFD has one access road and they are proposing 1269 haul truck trips daily.

This property is located on East Corkscrew Road adjacent to the Flint Penn Strand, Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (CREW), and some of the rural residential neighborhoods. This also is a critical area for panthers and other endangered species.

Members of the ECCL will testify against the proposed mine as it would be outside of the County's designated limerock mining area, Map 14.

Community Planning

Miromar Development Corp. Proposes Change

Miromar Development Corp. is proposing a change to their 1800-acre Miromar Lakes mixed commercial and residential development, which currently surrounds Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) on all four sides. They are proposing to move over 75 percent of the commercial and office development from the northwest corner of the property to the southwest corner of the property. This would still leave a small commercial parcel just west of the University entrance.

This change is in response to FGCU's desire for commercial development just south of its campus to serve the expanding student dormitory population on the southern end of the campus. The new southern development would be accessed from Ben Hill Griffin Parkway as it approaches Estero Parkway from the north and from several locations along an eastward extension of Estero Parkway beyond its current dead-end at Ben Hill Griffin Parkway.

Several members of the Estero Council of Community Leaders and Estero Community Planning Panel (ECCP) met with the Director of Planning and Property Management for Miromar Development Corp. on December 20 to review this request.

Miromar indicated it would be including considerable preservation of natural areas on the new southern tract. They also were very receptive to various suggestions made by the ECCL and ECPP for small-scale "mass" transit (small shuttle buses, carts, as well as biking and walking paths) between the new commercial area and the key parts of the campus.

One of the biggest potential issues is transportation. Some of the concerns include: how far east will Estero Parkway to be extended, what will it connect with, and will this trigger some rearrangements farther east in how westbound traffic on Corkscrew Road might ultimately be given an alternate route to the northwest other than taking Corkscrew Road to I-75 or Three Oaks Parkway. There also are potential issues with the increase in traffic on Ben Hill Griffin as it passes the University.

In addition, if the planned office buildings are more than two stories in height, there could be aesthetic concerns in the Grandezza community.

Miromar Development Corp. stated it is intent on substantial public engagement on its proposal. They plan to go before both the ECPP and the Grandezza community, which will be directly south of the proposed new southern development.

“Martini Glass” Land Parcel

Earlier this year, Oakbrook Properties filed an application to change the zoning on their property at the eastern end of Coconut Road to allow up to 200 residential units.

Ned Dewhirst, of Oakbrook Properties, is scheduled to meet on January 10 with members of the Brooks Community Development District and Johnson Engineering to discuss drainage issues.

It's anticipated that this zoning request will go before the Lee County Hearing Examiner sometime in early 2013.

Midtowne Estero East

Ground has been broken and work is underway on the new Midtowne Estero East development. This property is located on Three Oaks Parkway, bordered on the south by Shadow Wood's Longleaf Trail

neighborhood and on the north by the Lowes store on the southeast corner of Three Oaks Parkway and Corkscrew Road.

The developers are building 110 units, which will consist of 55 one-floor, single-family twin villas, or what they are calling “paired patio homes,” with the base price starting around \$200,000. There are two somewhat different exterior designs for the units with approximately 1,500 square foot under air. Each villa will be about 35 feet tall, have extended lanais and a two-car garage with paver driveways.

There will be two gated entrances and exits to this property on Three Oaks Parkway. The southernmost entrance will be opposite the Estero Fire Station while the other will be just south of the entrance to Lowes. The amenities include a community pool with plantings around the pool deck, enhanced landscaping and buffering. The community will be 72 percent open space with native trees and wetlands, bisected by the Estero River.

This is one of three properties owned by Camaretta Properties. The other two, Corkscrew Woods and the Preserve at Corkscrew, are located on East Corkscrew Road.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs)

An ad hoc task force will be meeting on January 10 to discuss various recommendations regarding establishment of a TDR program for Lee County.

Members of this ad hoc group include Roger Strelow with the ECCL; Noel Address and Ann Pierce of the Local Planning Agency; Dennis Gilkey, formerly with the Bonita Bay Group; Nicole Johnson with the Conservancy of Southwest Florida; Nancy Payton of Florida Wildlife Federation, and Brad Cornell, Audubon, who has experience managing a successful TDR program in Collier County.

A consultant working with the County Planning Department will take this group’s recommendations into consideration when compiling his report, which is due March 31.

Estero Concert Series

Music by Vivaldi and Puccini was featured on December 30 at the second of five chamber music concerts being held at the Koreshan State Historical Site’s Art Hall.

The sold-out crowd first heard Concerto for Two Violins and Harpsichord featuring Bella Gutshtein on harpsichord and Boris Sandler and Daniela Shtereva on violin. Soprano Roza Bulat sang Puccini’s O mio babbino caro and Nessun dorma. The concert finale featured Glinka’s Grand Sextet in E-flat major.

The concerts are being presented by Bella Gutshtein and Boris Sandler, artistic directors and founders of the Estero Concert Series. The venue honors the Koreshan Unity Settlement, which considered art and music an integral part of their lives.

The next concert will feature the music of Beethoven and Mozart. The concert starts at 4 p.m., on Sunday, February 24.

Estero's November New Housing Starts Pick Up Again

During November, twenty-five (25) single family home building permits and a four-unit condominium building permit, with a combined building value of \$4.6 million, were issued in Estero. The total of twenty-nine (29) units is the fourth best monthly figure this year. Total year-to-date permits shown below continue to suggest an uptick in new home construction.

Sixty percent of the twenty-five (25) single family permits were for The Preserve at Corkscrew, which is being built by Centex/Pulte Homes and Lennar. The single permit for the condominium was issued for Terra Vista (DR Horton). On a year-to-date basis, over 70% of the single family permits have been issued to Bella Terra and Toll Bros' two developments: The Reserve of Estero and Belle Lago. But, as permits for these three developments appear to be slowing, The Preserve at Corkscrew has been ramping up as forty-nine (49) permits have been issued this year, of which thirty-five (35) were issued in the last three months.

The following table compares November year-to-date figures with those of the prior twelve years. So far this year, building values are up almost 50% percent from the last two years.

| Year | Year to Date Housing Units | Building Value of Units | Average Building Value Per Unit | Percentage of Single Family Units |
|------|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2000 | 1,956 | \$274,917,477 | \$140,551 | 42% |
| 2001 | 2,070 | 318,309,650 | 153,773 | 47 |
| 2002 | 1,418 | 265,574,765 | 187,288 | 50 |
| 2003 | 1,365 | 219,137,397 | 160,540 | 46 |
| 2004 | 1,485 | 328,019,837 | 220,889 | 62 |
| 2005 | 2,699 | 600,971,677 | 222,665 | 47 |
| 2006 | 1,268 | 330,712,219 | 260,814 | 39 |
| 2007 | 428 | 121,212,530 | 283,207 | 37 |
| 2008 | 144 | 49,233,767 | 341,901 | 81 |
| 2009 | 150 | 50,415,736 | 336,105 | 77 |
| 2010 | 177 | 36,167,371 | 204,335 | 80 |
| 2011 | 179 | 36,388,729 | 203,289 | 83 |
| 2012 | 304 | 53,633,486 | 176,426 | 73 |

Estero's November Commercial Permits Remain Weak

During November, commercial permits, excluding condominiums, totaling \$.6 million were issued for Estero's [commercial buildings](#). While not a significant amount, it is somewhat improved from recent

months. Almost all of this month’s investments were for interior remodeling at six stores located in various malls.

As shown in the following table, commercial investment fell precipitously from 2006 through 2010, and then began to improve in 2011. In 2012, the last few months’ permit levels have been exceptionally low. However, the 2012 year-to-date figure, as shown below, is slightly behind the comparable figure for 2011.

| Year | Year to Date | Annual Total |
|-------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 2000 | \$76,434,302 | \$77,250,835 |
| 2001 | 37,087,252 | 44,116,526 |
| 2002 | 23,095,139 | 23,135,139 |
| 2003 | 19,057,328 | 23,234,725 |
| 2004 | 59,806,230 | 60,859,820 |
| 2005 | 82,721,406 | 111,037,977 |
| 2006 | 180,995,072 | 184,709,240 |
| 2007 | 155,487,478 | 157,614,045 |
| 2008 | 38,765,644 | 39,261,677 |
| 2009 | 9,545,879 | 9,752,556 |
| 2010 | 8,836,508 | 9,322,546 |
| 2011 | 11,670,078 | 11,717,593 |
| 2012 | 11,558,546 | N/A |

The major commercial projects permitted this year are:

- \$2,000,000 for remodeling the Hyatt Regency;
- \$1,500,000 for expanding and remodeling Spring Run Country Club;
- \$1,445,000 for various Coconut Point Mall and Residences remodeling projects,
- \$1,442,000 for remodeling Shadow Wood Country Club;
- \$1,108,000 for various Miromar Mall remodeling projects, and
- \$1,000,000 for a new Goodwill Industries facility.

Note: The building values above understate the cost of each residence or commercial building because they exclude the value of the underlying land.

Note: Special thanks to Kara Stewart, Manager of Permitting Systems for Lee County for her help this month in redesigning permit reports for Estero. As part of that redesign, Estero’s information is accessed differently than in the past. From now on, when using their permit web site, click on the “Select the Type” drop down box to select “Planning Communities,” and then the “Select the Type” drop down box to access “Estero.” That brings up the “Estero Planning Community” report. See <http://www.leegov.com/gov/dept/dcd/Reports/Pages/reports.aspx>.

Estero's Single Family Home Sales Trend Up In December, the 4th Quarter and the Year 2012

Multiple Listing Service (MLS) figures show that twenty-eight (28) single family homes in Estero were sold in December, up from twenty-one (21) sold in November and twenty-four (24) sold last December. As shown below, sales were up 26 % in the fourth quarter compared with a year ago and 5% for the year 2012.

| Period | Sold in 2011 | Sold in 2012 | Inc (Dec) | Inc (Dec) % |
|---------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Jan | 23 | 58 | 35 | 152% |
| Feb | 45 | 21 | (24) | (53) |
| Mar | 39 | 32 | (7) | (18) |
| Qtr 1 | 107 | 111 | 4 | 4 |
| Apr | 50 | 29 | (21) | (42) |
| May | 27 | 37 | 10 | 37 |
| June | 28 | 32 | 4 | 14 |
| Qtr 2 | 105 | 98 | (7) | (7) |
| July | 26 | 35 | 9 | 35 |
| Aug | 31 | 20 | (11) | (35) |
| Sept | 24 | 31 | 7 | 29 |
| Qtr 3 | 81 | 86 | 5 | 6 |
| Oct | 16 | 28 | 12 | 75 |
| Nov | 21 | 21 | - | - |
| Dec | 24 | 28 | 4 | 17 |
| Qtr 4 | 61 | 77 | 16 | 26 |
| Year | 354 | 372 | 18 | 5 |

As of December 31, 2012, there were 382 listings of currently active unsold homes in Estero. This compares with 354 unsold homes a year ago. The 2012 and 2011 inventory figures both represent about a 12 months' supply of unsold homes, which is better than the 14 months' supply earlier in 2012. A 6 months' supply typically indicates a good market.

Of the 382 active listings, 15% represent "distressed sales," i.e., short-sale listings or bank owned properties which, in each case, the bank is expected to receive less than its loan amount. This month's 15% represents a continuing decline from a 20% figure six months ago.

Thanks to Joe Pavich, Sr. of Realty World in Estero for compiling these figures for the ECCL.

Note: These amounts include most of Estero, but do not include the Estero portion of Pelican Landing, which is not separately listed in the MLS. Also, none of the above amounts include listings of multi-family homes.