



## Estero Development Report

Volume 13, Number 2, Issued January 2014  
 Produced by the Estero Council of Community Leaders (ECCL)  
 For more on Estero, visit [www.EsteroFL.org](http://www.EsteroFL.org)

### Calendar

Wed., Jan. 8, 5 p.m.	<b>Estero Design Review Committee Meeting</b>	Estero Community Park
Fri., Jan. 10, 10 a.m.	<b>ECCL Monthly Members' Meeting</b>	Estero Community Park
Tues., Jan. 14, 5 p.m.	<b>Estero Fire Rescue Monthly Board Meeting</b>	District Headquarters, Three Oaks Parkway
Fri., Jan. 17, 9 a.m.	<b>Lee County MPO</b>	Cape Coral City Council Chambers, 1015 Cultural Park Blvd., Cape Coral
Sun., Jan. 19, 4 p.m.	<b>Estero Concert Series</b>	Koreshan State Historic Site's Art Hall
Mon., Jan. 27, 5 p.m.	<b>Estero Community Planning Panel</b>	Estero Community Park

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## **GOVERNMENT RELATIONS**

### **Hospital/Healthcare**

The Hospital Committee is meeting with executives of Lee Memorial Health System in early January. The purpose of the meeting is to talk about our next steps when the Administrative Law Judge issues her decision on the South Lee Hospital Certificate of Need. Lee Memorial Health System’s President Jim Nathan will be chairing the discussion.

The Estero Community Planning Panel (ECPP) was presented the site and building plans for the new hospital to be located behind the Bonita Community Health Center. The proposed change to the Coconut Point DRI and amendment to the Coconut Point MPD will be recommended by ECPP to the County. This change includes the building height, which is proposed to remain as currently approved in the Coconut Point MPD of 60 feet/5 stories, with the exception that a hospital may be 90 feet/6 stories.

### **Bonita Springs Downtown Development**

Lee County commissioners approved a revenue sharing agreement with the city of Bonita Springs to help the city make improvements to its downtown. The agreement makes the county and the city 50-50 financing partners in a \$16 million Bonita Springs downtown redevelopment project. The ECCL believes this is a good decision for regional economic development and John Goodrich has received an economic explanation from Bonita Springs and the County outlining how the plan will work.

### **Update on Incorporation Efforts**

We will start conducting informational meetings explaining why residents should vote for incorporation, the form of government, etc. We’ll be holding these meetings primarily in the February-March timeframe in order to reach our winter residents. John Goodrich will prepare a

new presentation by mid-January. The theme of ECCL's incorporation efforts is to "Advocate Incorporation", "Educate the Electorate", and "Finance an Incorporation Effort".

We need to focus on raising money in order to insure we have the funds to go forward with the process and we will be initiating a "get out and vote" campaign which will include our normal efforts at registration and use of absentee ballots.

## COMMUNITY PLANNING

### Hertz Headquarters Building Design

The Estero Community Planning Panel, Lee County, and the Design Review Authority (which implements the Design Guidelines for the Simon/Oakbrook Coconut Point Community) have endorsed the modern building design for the Hertz headquarters as compatible with the general Mediterranean design preference. This is provided for in the County Land Development Code and in the Design Guidelines. This also was supported by the ECCL and appears to be supported in general by the Estero community. The actions allowing a departure from the "preferred" Mediterranean style did not conflict with any applicable law or agreement but were carried out as the governing requirements explicitly allow. In this instance, the importance of a company's headquarters design to its own important public image was given considerable weight.

### Miromar Lakes

The Miromar Lakes' proposal of developing high-density student housing and retail immediately north of the Grandezza community is continuing to be heard by the Lee County Hearing Examiner. A final hearing date is scheduled in January.

## ENVIRONMENT

### Coalition Meeting on the Redevelopment of the Bonita Springs' DRGR

On December 4, the ECCL hosted an environmental coalition meeting to discuss the environmental implications of the proposed development of the Northeast Quadrant of the Bonita Springs' Density Reduction Groundwater Resource (DRGR) area. We are in the process of developing a collaborative position. One area of general agreement is that our position will not oppose all development of the area, but will insist that all of the water issues be addressed adequately prior to any development. One concern is the impact of any DRGR development on the water quality in Lee County's DRGR which could impact other communities in south Lee County, including Estero. The other issue is the future impact of development on infrastructure and transportation. Our group is in the process of drafting some general bullet points to review at our January meeting.

### The Florida Water and Land Legacy Campaign

A total of 947,000 signed petitions have been gathered to date and the petition gathering part of the campaign is concluded. **448,364** submitted petitions have been verified to date by the

Florida Supervisor of Elections. **683,149** signed petitions need to be verified to qualify this petition for the ballot in November 2014.

### **Pebble Pointe at The Brooks – The “Martini Glass Parcel”**

The 38.05-acre “martini glass” parcel on the far eastern portion of Coconut Road was recently sold by Oakbrook Properties to developer Taylor Morrison. The new development will be called Pebble Point at The Brooks and will consist of 91 single-family home sites. A great deal of preliminary work is now underway. Ned Dewhirst of Oakbrook Properties and a representative of Taylor Morrison will be meeting with the Brooks Council of Presidents on January 21, 2014, to review the project.

### **Estero’s New Home Starts Remain Soft in November**

In November, 2013, permits were issued in the Estero Planning Community for seventeen (17) single family homes and seven (7) condominium homes. The total of twenty-four (24) units represents the fewest permits issued in any month since October, 2012. However, on a year-to-date basis, permits have increased by over 40% from 2012.

The dollar value of the November permits was \$4,340,463, representing the lowest monthly total in the last year, but, on a year-to-date basis, building values are up about 40%. The Preserve at Corkscrew obtained fifteen (15) of the 17 total single family permits. For the first month in two years, no permits were issued to Bella Terra, while the two Toll Bros.’ developments on Estero Parkway were issued only one permit. Some of the softness may be seasonal. But, also it reflects that, other than the Preserve, the single family housing developments which have been so active in recent years are nearing build-out.

The seven (7) condominium units are for the Mirasol development on Via Coconut, which has permitted seventy-eight (78) units this year.

The following table compares year-to-date 2013 figures with the prior thirteen years.

Year	Year-to-Date Housing Units	Building Value	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
2013	431	74,766,411	173,472	74

Source: Lee County Permit Reports for the Estero Planning Community; See <http://www.leegov.com/gov/dept/dcd/Reports/Pages/reports.aspx>. Click on the “Select the Report Type” drop down box to select “Planning Communities,” and then click on the “Select the Area” drop down box to access “Estero,” which displays the “Estero Planning Community” Residential reports.

## Estero’s Commercial Permits in November Include New Restaurant

During November, commercial permits, excluding the condominium building, totaled \$1.5 million in Estero. Included in the total was a \$750,000 permit for a Culvers Restaurant on Corkscrew next to the Hess Station.

So far this year, the most significant investment has been the \$5.0 million Family Health Centers building just north of the Vines on Rt. 41. Other notable investments included the interior build-out of the office building on Chevrolet Way near I-75, interior remodeling projects at Coconut Point and Miromar malls, remodeling of the two Publix buildings, and construction of the common areas in Villa Palmeras.

As shown below, commercial investment began to improve in 2011 and the early months of 2012. However, the last few months in 2012 and, with the exception of the Family Health Centers permit earlier this year, the first eleven months of 2013 have been weak. With office vacancy rates at about 25%, significant additional investments for office space are unlikely in the near future.

The following table compares year-to-date 2013 figures with the prior thirteen years.

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	11,879,291
2013	14,458,248	N/A

Source: Lee County Permit Reports for the Estero Planning Community; See <http://www.leegov.com/gov/dept/dcd/Reports/Pages/reports.aspx>. Click on the “Select the Report Type” drop down box to select “Planning Communities,” and then click on the “Select the Area” drop down box to access “Estero,” which displays the “Estero Planning Community” Commercial reports.

The ECCL thanks Andrew DeSalvo at Premier Commercial, Inc. for providing vacancy statistics for Estero businesses.

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

## Estero’s Single Family Home Sales Surge in December---2013 Closes Up 20%

In December, 2013, MLS records show that forty-nine (49) single family homes were sold in Estero. This equals the best month of 2013 and represents a 75% increase over December, 2012. For the fourth quarter, sales were up over 60% from the fourth quarter of 2012, and 2013 finished up 20% over 2012.

Included in December sales were only 4 sales (or 8%) that were “distressed sales,” i.e., short-sale listings or bank owned properties which, in each case, the bank received less than its loan amount. The 8% is below the average of about 13% for the first eleven months this year. Sales figures for the last 3 years are shown in the following table:

<b>Period</b>	<b>Sold in 2011</b>	<b>Sold in 2012</b>	<b>Sold in 2013</b>	<b>Inc (Dec)</b>	<b>Inc (Dec) %</b>
<b>Jan</b>	23	58	20	(38)	(65) %
<b>Feb</b>	45	21	25	4	19
<b>Mar</b>	39	32	39	7	22
<b>Qtr 1</b>	107	111	84	(27)	(24)
<b>Apr</b>	50	29	49	20	69
<b>May</b>	27	37	48	11	30
<b>June</b>	28	32	46	14	44
<b>Qtr 2</b>	105	98	143	45	46
<b>July</b>	26	35	38	3	9
<b>Aug</b>	31	20	32	12	60
<b>Sept</b>	24	31	27	(4)	(13)
<b>Qtr 3</b>	81	86	97	11	13
<b>Oct</b>	16	28	48	20	71
<b>Nov</b>	21	21	27	6	29
<b>Dec</b>	24	28	<b>49</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Qtr 4</b>	61	77	<b>124</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Year</b>	354	372	<b>448</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>20</b>

As of December, 2013, there were 305 listings of currently active unsold homes in Estero, compared with 382 listings a year ago; this represents the second lowest inventory in the last 30 months. The 305 listings include 74 pending sales, the lowest level of 2013.

The 305 inventory represents about an 8 months’ supply of unsold homes, which is consistent with the previous three months, and is dramatically improved from December, 2012 and the first half of 2013. A 6 months’ supply typically indicates a good market.

As of December 31, 11% of the active listings are expected to be “distressed sales.” This is one of the lower monthly percentages this year and below the 15% reported in December last year.

Note: These amounts were derived from the Multiple Listing Service (“MLS”) and provided by Joe Pavich, Sr. of Realty World in Estero for the benefit of the ECCL. The figures include homes in the Estero Planning Community (excluding homes in the Estero portion of Pelican Landing, which are not separately shown in the MLS). Not included are figures for multi-family homes.