



Estero Development Report

Volume 11, Number 12, Issued September 2012
Produced by the Estero Council of Community Leaders (ECCL)

For More Information about Estero

...see www.esterofl.org

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

Date	Time	Event	Location
Tuesday, October 9th	5 p.m.	Estero Fire Rescue Monthly Board Meeting	District Headquarters on Three Oaks just south of Corkscrew
Wednesday, October 10th	5 p.m.	Estero Design Review Committee (EDRC) meeting	Estero Community Park
Friday, October 12th	10 a.m.	ECCL Regular Monthly Meeting... Izzy Havenick, Naples-Ft Myers Greyhound Track will be our speaker	Estero Community Park
Monday, October 15th	6 p.m.	Estero Community Planning Panel (ECPP) Meeting	Estero Community Park
Friday, October 19th	9 a.m.	Lee County MPO (Transportation Planning) meeting	Cape Coral City Council Chambers, 1015 Cultural Park Blvd, Cape Coral

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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)

Corkscrew Woods Rezoning Approved

On October 1, the Lee Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approved rezoning the [Corkscrew Woods development](#) to allow up to 800 single family homes on that site.

Corkscrew Woods is located within the DR/GR, just east of the Bella Terra community. The developer, Cameratta Properties, had worked with Lee County staff to draft a Comprehensive Plan amendment, in which they agreed to pay Lee County for the additional 650 housing units by allocating additional lands to environmental improvements as well as providing funds for a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program.

The ECCL, the Conservancy of Southwest Florida and the Florida Wildlife Federation all testified before the BOCC in support of using the developer's payment to fund a consultant(s) to help the County's Planning Division formulate the County's Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program. The payment will be made prior to the issuance of the first Development Order and the beginning of the development of the Corkscrew Woods property.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) Program in the Works

Work has begun within the ECCL and with outside experts to develop a specific proposal for the long overdue Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program for density transfers within the [DR/GR](#) area.

The ECCL aims to develop a fairly specific proposal to give to the Lee County Planning Division staff, the Local Planning Agency and the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC).

On October 1, the BOCC agreed to direct the County Planning Division staff to initiate a DR/GR TDR Program. The staff will be able initiate the program by using funds acquired from the Corkscrew Woods' payment for the impacts of their additional housing units.

Paul O'Connor, head of the Planning Division, has stated that a TDR Program is already in effect and that, with the consultant's assistance, they will set up a TDR "bank" to be run by the County as a "broker" for TDRs.

Research & Enterprise Diamond (RED)

Lee County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) has selected Analytica, a Florida-based consulting firm to prepare a strategic plan for the Research and Enterprise Diamond (RED) area encompassing Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU), Southwest Florida Regional International Airport (RSW) and other undeveloped properties. These undeveloped properties have considerable potential for high-tech, business and public entity development.

The ECCL plans to participate in and work with the consultant to promote desirable development in this area and other areas within Lee County. The ECCL is working closely with the FGCU Backe Chair for Alternative Energy and others to facilitate University participation in RED.

JumpStart to Help Local Entrepreneurs

A very successful entrepreneurial development and support organization called JumpStart is considering the multi-county Southwest Florida area, from Sarasota down through Collier County, as one of its next focal points for helping local entrepreneurs get started in business. They will assist with consulting expertise from successful entrepreneurs as well as stimulating "angel" (start up capital) investments from these same business executives.

The ECCL has been active in hosting, facilitating and encouraging this activity, including meetings with Lee County economic development officials and local entrepreneurs already in business here.

JumpStart is based in Cleveland and has programs in place in Cleveland, northern Indiana, northern New York State and eight other locations.

JumpStart CEO to Speak Here

The Gulf Coast Venture Forum, Florida Gulf Coast University and several other local organizations are hosting Ray Leach, CEO of JumpStart Inc., as the keynote speaker at the 2012/13 Annual Season Kick-off Meeting on November 1, 2012 at the Trianon Bonita Bay Hotel in Bonita Springs.

Leach will deliver a message about "Growing Entrepreneurial Ecosystems and Transforming Regional Economies". Leach is an experienced angel investor, expert in technology entrepreneurship, and national thought leader on entrepreneurship and innovation. He has led

JumpStart's effort in creating economic transformation through entrepreneurship since its founding in 2004.

Under Leach's leadership, the organization has gained national recognition for its innovative model. Prior to JumpStart, Leach taught workshops at the MIT Sloan School of Management and served as an Entrepreneur-in-Residence for CommonAngels, Boston's largest angel organization.

ECCL will be inviting all of the south Lee County participants of the Catalyst Club that were organized last year in conjunction with Lee County Economic Development. This effort is designed to involve many of south Lee County's retired executives and entrepreneurs to become investors in and/or mentors of future southwest Florida start-up enterprises.

Registration and reception will begin at 5:15 p.m., followed by the speaker's presentation at 6:15 p.m. Price of admission is \$45. For more information or to pre-register, go to www.floridaventureforum.org.

County Comprehensive Plan Amendments "Lee Plan" Being Updated

A major focus of the County's Local Planning Agency and its Community Citizens Advisory Committee is to complete a planned substantial update and overhaul of the Comprehensive Plan ("Lee Plan") which underlies and guides all major land development and related transportation system decisions.

This year-long process is nearing completion of recommendations, based on the Evaluation and Assessment Report (EAR) for 2035 for the Board of County Commissioners to adopt. This should be a major step forward for a County already known for substantial progressive and forward-thinking in its planning.

2013 ECCL Leadership Elected

At the September 14 ECCL meeting, John Goodrich, Chairman of the Transition Committee, presented the membership with a slate of proposed officers for the year 2013. The membership voted unanimously to elect the following Executive Committee:

Chairman: Nick Batos

Financial Director: Bob Lienesch

Transportation Director: Jim Boesch

Communications Director: Marilyn Edwards

Environment Director: Phil Douglas

Community Planning Director: Roger Strelow

Government Relations Director: John Goodrich

A Vice-Chairman will be selected from and by this group. Each director has volunteered to serve a one-year term, starting January 1, 2013.

Don Eslick has served as Chairman of the ECCL for the past 10 years. He will serve the ECCL in an emeritus capacity starting in January 2013.

Florida's Water and Land Legacy Campaign

For the past twenty years the Florida Legislature has appropriated \$300 million annually for Florida Forever, our nation's most successful state conservation program.

This program has been supported by Florida Governors Graham, Martinez, Chiles, Bush, and Crist. Since 2009 the funding for Florida Forever has been slashed by **97.5%**. The funds have been diverted by the legislature and the Governor to cover the budget shortfall and to fund other programs.

The campaign of the Florida Water and Legacy Organization is to get a proposed constitutional amendment on the ballot by November, 2014. In order to accomplish this, over 1 million signatures will need to be generated by the campaign. The ECCL membership voted to endorse this effort at their September 14, 2012 meeting.

The following are important points to remember about this campaign for the constitutional amendment:

- **It will ensure that our beaches, rivers, lakes and forests are protected for future generations.**
- **It will create a long-term fund for programs like Florida Forever and the Everglades restoration.**
- **If approved this amendment will direct one-third of existing state revenues from "*doc stamps*" to fund restoration and conservation projects in Florida. In the past the Florida Forever Program was funded from the revenue provided by the "*doc stamps*."**
- **The amendment would sunset twenty years after its enactment date.**

- **The amendment will provide a dedicated stream of revenue for 20 years. It is estimated that the amount of revenue provided each year of the duration of the amendment would be approximately \$500 million. Based upon current projections, it is estimated that somewhere between 5 to 10 billion dollars could be generated in Florida during the 20 year period of time.**
- **The revenue generated by this amendment would be dedicated for conservation and could not be comingled with general revenue or diverted for other non-conservation purposes.**

The campaign for this amendment will be a statewide effort. Currently the

Florida Water and Land Legacy is looking for distribution points within the state as well as coordinators and volunteers to circulate the petitions. Because of the requirements of Florida Law each petition will be one page thus there will be over 1 million individual petitions submitted.

Phil Douglas, the Environmental Director for the ECCL, will be the contact person for those interested in this effort. He can be reached at 239-948-4494 or via email at pdindy@comcast.net. The initial packet of materials is also available from the ECCL website which is www.esterofl.org.

We will need *at least* one individual from each ECCL community to help us in this effort. Stay tuned as more information will be forthcoming.

For further information see <http://floridawaterlandlegacy.org>.

September and Third Quarter Estero Single Family Home Sales Show Increase

Multiple Listing Service (MLS) figures show that thirty-one (31) single family homes in Estero were sold in September. Compared with a year ago, September sales were up 29%, Third Quarter sales were up 6%, but on a year-to-date basis, sales were essentially flat. As shown in the following table, the monthly figures do not suggest a trend in either direction.

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
YTD	293	295	2	-
Oct	16			
Nov	21			
Dec	24			
Qtr 4	61			
Year	354			

As of September 30, 2012, there were 333 listings of currently active unsold single family homes in Estero. This is about the same as September last year, but 5% less than at the beginning of this year. The 333 figure represents an 11 month supply of unsold homes, both this year and last year at this time. But, the 11 month supply is down from 12 month's last month and at the beginning of this year. A 6 month supply typically indicates a good market.

Of the 333 active listings, 19% 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 percent has hovered around 20% for the last few months.

Thanks as always 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.

Surge in Estero Housing Starts Turns Down in August

During August, thirteen (13) single family home building permits and one seven-unit condominium building permit, with a combined building value of \$4.6 million, were issued in Estero. The total of 20 permits is down 13% from August a year ago and down over 60% from the unusually high number of permits issued in June and July this year, when, on average, 55 permits were issued each month.

The 13 single family permits were spread over five separate developments: The Reserve of Estero (Toll Bros'), The Preserve at Corkscrew (Centex / Pulte Homes), Bella Terra (Lennar), Wildcat Run (Stock Construction), and West Bay (Metropole Construction). The permit for the seven-unit condominium was issued for Mirasol (DR Horton). On a year-to-date basis, about 85% of the single family permits have been issued to Lennar and Toll Bros'.

The following table compares year-to-date August figures with those of the prior twelve years. The figures suggest a significant increase in building activity this year.

Year	Year to Date Housing Units	Building Value of Units	Average Building Value Per Unit	Percentage of Single Family Units
2000	1,324	\$185,979,596	\$140,468	44%
2001	1,620	247,128,734	152,549	45
2002	995	170,674,374	171,532	58
2003	1,130	173,165,820	153,244	41
2004	1,155	252,025,813	218,204	64
2005	1,924	402,498,096	209,199	52
2006	1,086	270,683,985	249,249	30
2007	405	112,048,147	276,662	36
2008	116	39,664,561	341,936	84
2009	104	36,972,442	355,504	77
2010	144	29,055,466	205,326	78
2011	129	26,549,340	205,809	83
2012	225	39,423,532	175,216	72

Estero's August Commercial Permits Weaken

During August, commercial permits, excluding condominium units, totaling \$.3 million were issued for Estero's [commercial buildings](#). This is the lowest monthly figure of the year, which had been averaging about \$1.5 million per month.

As shown in the following table, commercial investment in Estero fell precipitously from 2006 through 2010, and then began to improve in 2011. So far this year, the value of permits has continued to strengthen, despite the low figure in August, and is up significantly compared with the past three years.

Year	Year to Date	Annual Total
2000	\$73,093,826	\$77,250,835
2001	26,322,473	44,116,526
2002	16,986,322	23,135,139
2003	14,032,515	23,234,725
2004	16,385,992	60,859,820
2005	51,712,399	111,037,977
2006	163,043,204	184,709,240
2007	144,142,654	157,614,045
2008	36,229,679	39,261,677
2009	7,924,236	9,752,556
2010	6,021,412	9,322,546
2011	9,477,466	11,717,593
2012	11,002,622	?

The major commercial projects permitted so far this year are:

- \$2,000,000 for remodeling the Hyatt Regency;
- \$1,500,000 for expanding and remodeling Spring Run Country Club;
- \$1,400,000 for remodeling Shadow Wood Country Club;
- \$1,100,000 for various Coconut Point 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.

The County permit information used in this report may be found at <http://www.lee-county.com/dcd/Reports/EsteroReports.htm>