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Placida Community Plan

August 1, 2002

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SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Placida Planning Area is located in the southwestern portion of the Cape Haze Peninsula and is roughly bounded by the Cape Haze Area to the north, C.R. 771 to the east and Lemon Bay and Placida Harbor to the south and west.

As a result of rapid growth in their community, residents of the Placida area are concerned that new development and redevelopment may result in a significant change in the character of the community. Property owners have expressed a broad range of concerns including infrastructure, public services and facilities, natural resources and density and style of development.

The impetus for this Study was generated through several issues raised by a broad range of property owners. Two issues in particular sparked the need for closer examination concerning the future development in the area. These issues included the need for height limitations for proposed buildings and overflow of the parking area at the Placida boat ramp.

With the understanding that the rapid growth of the area would only magnify the problems and concerns, Charlotte County moved forward with the Placida Community Plan.

The Placida Community Plan was formulated based on the input derived from area residents through Ad Hoc committee meetings and a visioning session. The results of the "Visioning Process" generated the following recommendations:

Boat Ramp

- Install No Parking signs along C.R. 775 and C.R. 771 from Thunderation Landings to the northern limits of the Gasparilla Mobile Home Park.
- Impose \$100 fine for illegal parking and increase fines if not effective
- Increase fines for repeat offenders
- Provide increased presence and enforcement of illegal parking by Charlotte County Sheriff's Office.
- Consider requiring a permit to use the boat facility, providing a vehicular decal to identify permit holders. This permit would be free for Charlotte County residents.

Sidewalks

- Sidewalks should be included within the Coral Creek Bridge project to the greatest extent possible.
- Coral Creek Bridge sidewalks should join with the Cape Haze Pioneer Trail to as to provide continuity and uninterrupted pathway for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Sidewalks along the corridor should meander(non-linear) in concert with the natural topography and landscape as well as with the proposed lighting and landscape improvements.
- Turnouts should be incorporated within the sidewalk system, providing rest areas and benches. The locations of the turnout should be in the proximity to subdivision entrances and possible future bus stop locations.
- The sidewalk should be constructed along the northeast side of C.R. 775 and the northwest side of C.R. 771 to provide continuity with the Cape Haze Pioneer Trail and to limit crossings of C.R. 775 and C.R. 771.

- The extension of sidewalks to the boundary of the Placida Community , should be funded through extension of the 1% sales tax.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Trails

- Endorse the inclusion of Phase III of the Cape Haze Pioneer Trail into the Coral Creek Bridge project, such that construction of the last leg of the trail will be completed 2 years ahead of schedule.
- Coordinate with the Gasparilla Island Bridge Authority on future long term plans for connecting the bicycle paths from the mainland to Boca Grande.

Street Lighting

- Ornamental Street Lighting consisting of a unified style should be installed along CR 771 and CR 775 to the north limits of Placida, as part of the Coral Creek Bridge project to the greatest extent possible.

Landscaping

- Provide additional landscaping around the welcome signs at the entry to the community.
- Provide landscaping in conjunction with the proposed sidewalks, using native plant species. Selection of a flowering tree specie(s), one or more palm species, xeriscape and native vegetation types should be selected to unify the community.
- Landscape plantings should be provided in clusters at the bridge approaches.
- Street furniture such as benches and trash receptacles should match the style of the street lighting.

Speed Limits/Traffic Control

- Maintain the 45 mph speed limit prior to the approaches to the Coral Creek Bridge.
- Endorse the proposed 35 mph speed limit for the Coral Creek Bridge.
- Extend "No Passing" zones along the corridor including:
 - No Passing signs
 - Double Yellow pavement markings
 - Flashing yellow warning lights at entrance to community
- Increase enforcement of speed limits by the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office.

Water/Fire Protection

- Install fire hydrants along the C.R. 775 and C.R. 771 corridor
- Sewer service for the Placida area in the foreseeable future is recommended.

Billboards

- Billboards should be restricted within the Placida Community Plan boundary.

Community Parking

- Additional parking should be provided within the existing County right of way of the soon to be abandoned C.R. 775 , south of Coral Creek.
- Parking for the Cape Haze Pioneer Trail should be included within the plans for the Coral Creek Bridge project.
- All parking surfaces should be shell.
- All parking should be lighted.

PLACIDA COMMUNITY PLAN

I. OVERVIEW

The Placida Planning Area is located in the southwestern portion of the Cape Haze Peninsula and is roughly bounded by the Cape Haze Area to the north, C.R. 771 to the east and Lemon Bay and Placida Harbor to the south and west (see figures 1 & 2). The area is contained within the south half of Section 2, north half of Section 11 and all of Section 12, Township 42S, Range 20E.

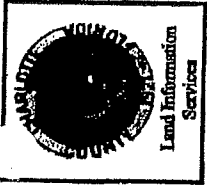
As a result of rapid growth in their community, residents of the Placida area are concerned that new development and redevelopment, as presently allowed under the County's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning provisions, may result in a significant change in the character of the community. Property owners have expressed a broad range of concerns including infrastructure, public services and facilities, natural resources and density and style of development.

Preceding the commissioning of this report, Charlotte County staff conducted workshops within the Placida planning area to clearly identify their issues and concerns.

The priority issues were as follows:

1. How to incorporate regulations that will limit height and encourage development or redevelopment in a style and intensity compatible with the desired character of the area while achieving a balance between proposed regulatory changes and private property rights.
2. How to optimize the assets of the local community, such as the entrances to the community along C. R. 775 and C. R. 771, the proposed bike trail, realignment of C. R. 771, access to public lands, and utilization of marine oriented properties within the context of the existing or desired community character.
3. How to preserve and enhance the existing low intensity character of the Placida community and, if appropriate, to establish an architectural style or theme for new development in the area

The information gathered through the public workshops formed the basis for preparation of the Placida Community Plan.



PLACIDA PLANNING AREA



0 1000 2000 Feet

Mapped August 2, 2001 by Lisa M. Caldwell

This map is a representation of the current status of the Placida Planning Area. It is based on the most current information available to the City of Placida. The City of Placida is not responsible for any errors or omissions on this map. The City of Placida is not responsible for any damages or losses resulting from the use of this map. The City of Placida is not responsible for any claims or lawsuits filed against the City of Placida or its officials, employees, or agents, in any court of law, arising out of or from the use of this map.

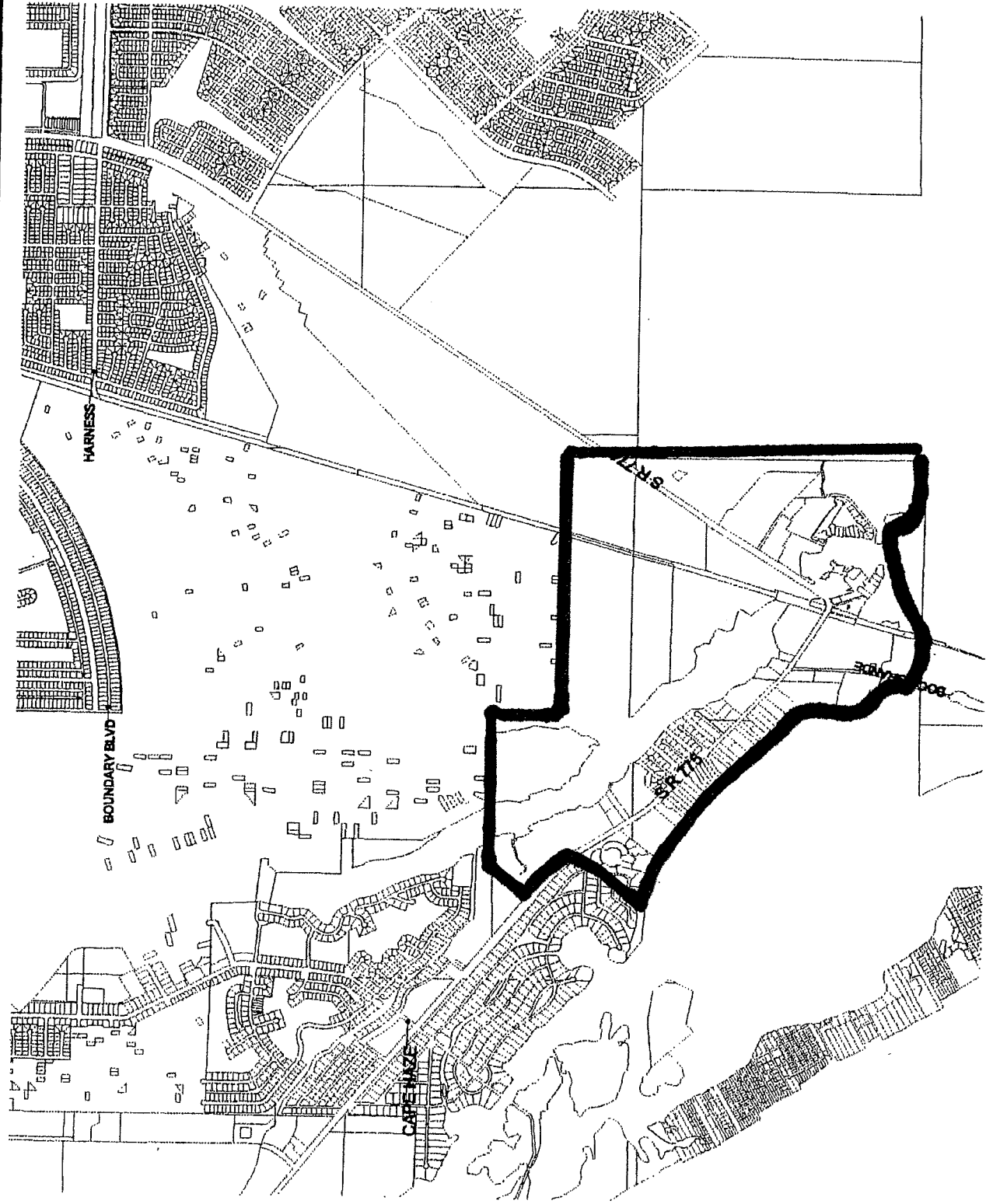


FIG. 1

PLACIDA COMMUNITY PLAN



PROJECT BOUNDARY →

PLACIDA HARBOR

LEGEND

- PROPOSED ROAD 
 - PROPOSED SIDEWALK 
 - PROPOSED SIDEWALK/BICYCLE TRAIL 
 - FUTURE SIDEWALK 
 - PROPOSED ADDITIONAL SHELL PARKING 
 - FUTURE FIRE HYDRANTS 
 - FUTURE STREET LIGHTS 
- NOTE:
STREET LIGHTS ON BRIDGE ARE PROPOSED



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REFERENCE NO.
1120EX07
DRAWING CURRENT AS OF: 07/31/02

FIG. 2



II. CURRENT CONDITIONS

Existing Land Uses

As you enter the Placida area heading south along C.R. 775, south of the Cape Haze Subdivision, you will notice the Placida Harbour Club to the right and undeveloped



land to the left (proposed location of the 132 unit cluster housing project called Coral Creek Landing). The Placida Harbour Club frontage is nicely landscaped with a meandering decorative wall set back from the roadway. Preliminary plans for the Coral Creek Landing project call for a 25 foot landscape buffer along C.R. 775.

Proceeding further south, you will encounter residential communities on the left and right roadways, including Placida Bay and Placida Point. The frontage along this stretch is well buffered with natural vegetation and landscaping.



At the southern end of the Placida Bay and Placida Point subdivisions, you will find the Hidden Bay Beach Club parking facilities on the left and the ferry dock and Gazebo on the right. Both of these facilities are setback far from the roadway providing a suitable visual buffer.



Continuing south to the Boca Grande Causeway you pass more single family residences with older home set back close to the waterfront on the right side of the roadway. The proposed 9 lot Thunderation Landings will replace some existing single family residences on the left side of the roadway.



At the intersecting of the Boca Grande Causeway you will find the Charlotte County boat ramp facility on the southwest corner. The southeast corner is occupied by the Boca Grand Corporate Conference Center, which includes the former Mercury Outboard Testing Facilities. On the northeast side of the intersection, the Boca Grande Tours has its

office and rentals. The surrounding area on the north side of C.R. 775 is mostly undeveloped residentially zoned land abutting Coral Creek.



At the intersection of C.R. 775 and C.R. 771, Fishery Road leads south to the Fishery Restaurant, The Albritton Gallery, and a small residential waterfront community. The abandoned Seaboard Coastline Railroad runs between The Fishery and Boca Grande Corporate Conference Center properties and provides public access to the fishing pier.



Once you cross the existing Coral Creek Bridge and head north along C.R. 771, you will notice the Waypoint Grande condominium project under construction on the right side of the roadway. The project consists of 100 condominium units with 4 story buildings 54 feet high.

Traveling further north along C.R. 771, Gasparilla Marina is located to the right and the Coral Creek Club golf course to the left. Gasparilla Marina has recently received approval for expansion of their facilities to include additional dry boat storage, restrooms additional parking and a future restaurant complex. In addition to the marina expansion, the Coral Creek Angler's Club has been approved which will include 18 single family lots and 28 cluster homes with amenities. The Coral Creek Club Golf Course provides significant landscape buffering along the C.R. 771 frontage.



Gasparilla Mobile home park is located north of Gasparilla Marina and across from the golf course. Just past the mobile home park is the entrance to the Coral Creek Club golf course on the left.





North of the golf course entrance to the limit of the study area, the surrounding properties consist of unimproved land. The remaining land on the west side of the roadway adjacent to the golf course has received preliminary approval for 18 clustered multi-family units and 38 single family lots as part of the Coral Creek Reserve.

Zoning and Future Land Use Classification

The existing zoning within the project area is consistent with the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). Existing land uses are also compatible with the existing zoning districts and future land use designations as illustrated on the FLUM. (see figure 3)

Existing Utilities

Charlotte County Utilities (CCU) and Gasparilla Island Water Association (GIWA) maintain water mains in the area. Gasparilla Island Water Association currently controls part of Placida as franchise area; however, CCU is currently negotiating to acquire service rights for the entire mainland area of Placida. There are no fire hydrants along the public right of way within the project area.

CCU maintains sewer force mains along C.R. 775 and C.R. 771. Many of the older developments are on septic system while newer developments have provided on-site collections system with lift station transferring flows to the force mains within the public right of way.

Street Lighting is provided within some of the private developments; however, there are no street lights along the C.R. 775 and C.R. 771 corridor.

Current Issues

The impetus for this Study was generated through several issues raised by a broad range of property owners. Two issues in particular sparked the need for closer examination concerning the future development in the area.

One of the major issues was the 54' building heights approved for the Waypoint Grande condominium project. Many residents questioned the compatibility of the buildings with the desired character of the area. Charlotte County staff and elected officials acted promptly to the community's concerns pertaining to building height limitations. Since holding community workshops, the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners has adopted a provision limiting height to 35' on future developments located within 1200' of the waterfront.












A second issue which prompted the County to take action toward developing a Community Plan was parking at the Charlotte County boat ramp facility. Many residents

complained that out of area boaters were parking their vehicles and boat trailers within the County right of way. The popularity of the boat ramp facility outnumbered the parking spaces available. Business owners and residences complained of having their driveway and mailboxes blocked. Issues of public safety were also raised.

With the understanding that the rapid growth of the area would only magnify the problems and concerns expressed above, Charlotte County moved forward with the Placida Community Plan. The following is a description of the visioning process which was used to formulate the basis for this Plan.

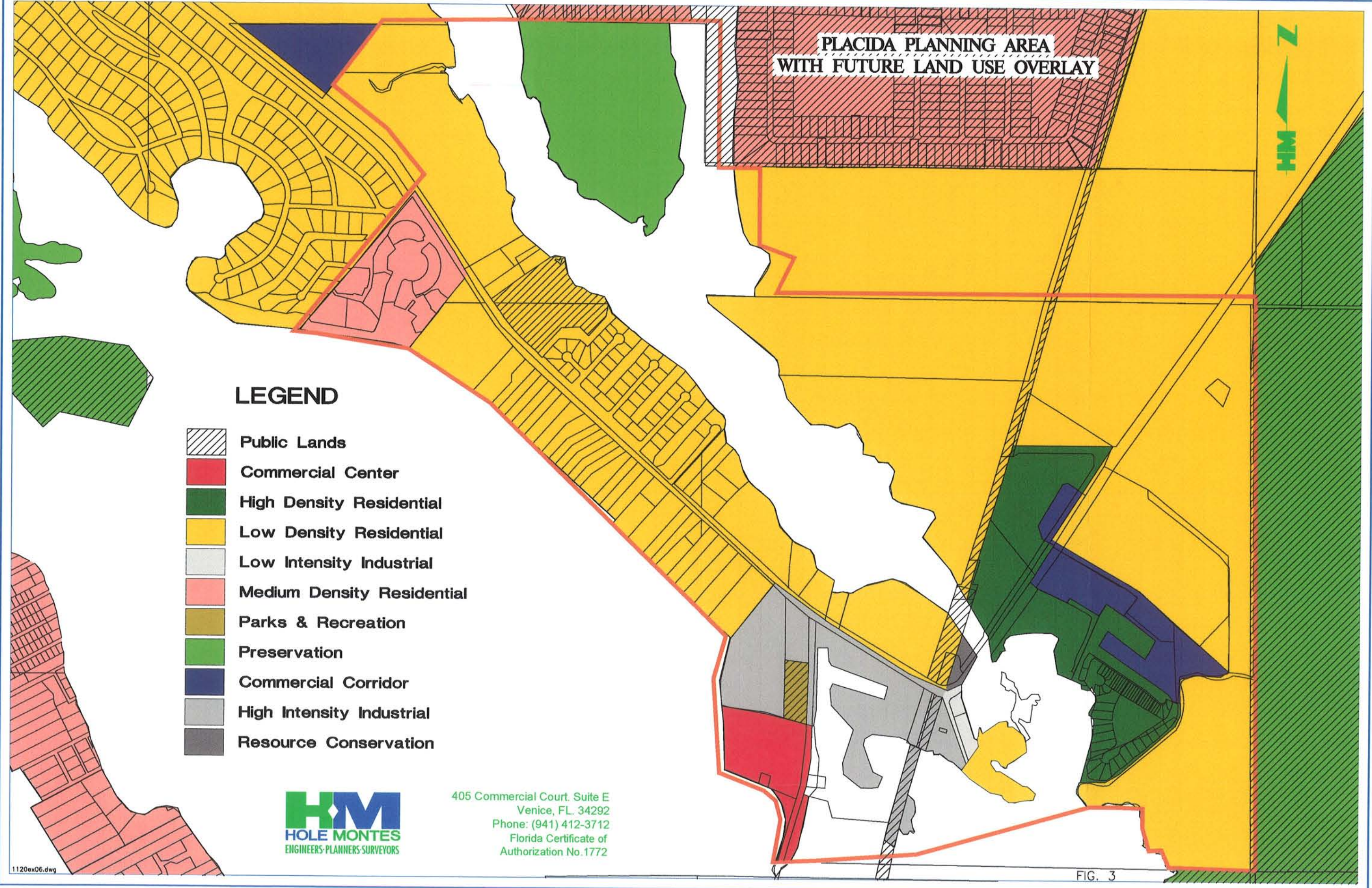
**PLACIDA PLANNING AREA
WITH FUTURE LAND USE OVERLAY**

LEGEND

-  Public Lands
-  Commercial Center
-  High Density Residential
-  Low Density Residential
-  Low Intensity Industrial
-  Medium Density Residential
-  Parks & Recreation
-  Preservation
-  Commercial Corridor
-  High Intensity Industrial
-  Resource Conservation



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III. THE VISIONING PROCESS

The onset of the Placida Area visioning process involved becoming familiar with the Placida community by conducting site visits and windshield surveys. Existing data were collected including information provided by Charlotte County staff. This information included but was not limited to the following list:

- a. County Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Regulations and Zoning
- b. Aerial photography
- c. Property ownership maps
- d. Future Land Use and Zoning maps
- e. Maps showing publicly owned properties
- f. Maps showing environmental features (e.g., wetlands, habitat, vegetation, storm surge, etc.) in the Comprehensive Plan or its supporting documentation.
- g. Plans and information regarding the southern portions of CR 775, CR 771, and proposed bike trail
- h. Notes or minutes from prior meetings with the area residents
- i. Development plans and applications
- j. Applicable free-standing ordinances
- k. Report or studies relating to the Placida area.
- l. Topographic maps.
- m. Materials pertaining to pending court cases involving land use or zoning in the Placida Study Area.
- n. Planned improvement projects in the Placida Study Area.

Ad Hoc Committee

An Ad Hoc committee was established to seek input as to the desired future character of the area, the community goals and any other specific issues of concern. The committee members as appointed by Commissioner Mac Horton included the following Placida Community residents:

- Ms. Marian Schneider – Grande Tours
- Mr. Thomas Knight – Boca Grande Corporate Conference Center
- Mr. Jim Cooper – Gasparilla Island Bridge Authority
- Ms. Sharon Merrill – Area Realtor
- Mr. Ray Villela – Placida Harbour Club
- Mr. Gary Albritton – The Fishery Restaurant
- Mr. Earl Schworm – Area Resident
- Ms. Ann Dever

An initial Ad Hoc Committee meeting was held on March 14th, 2002. The results of the meeting are summarized below:

- The primary impetus among members of the community to undertake a community plan was the proposed mid-rise development on the O. T. Sega property. Since our earlier meetings with the County staff to discuss the project, the County has adopted a provision limiting height to 35' on properties located within 1,200 feet of the waterfront. This has essentially eliminated the original major issue, although others still exist and the community remains interested in pursuing its Plan.
- One of the issues noted by the Ad Hoc Committee is the need for improved regulations pertaining to the buffering of nonresidential accessory structures, such as boathouses or boat storage structures, so that they are compatible with the character of the area, do not adversely affect adjoining properties, and are not unsightly as viewed from the public right-of-way.
- The Ad Hoc Committee was in general agreement that, while it would like to encourage the "Old Florida Style" of architecture for residential and nonresidential development within the community, such style should not be mandatory.
- The Committee agreed that while portions of the area in the vicinity of the juncture of County Roads 775 and 771 are shown as Industrial and/or Light Industrial on the Future Land Use Map and are zoned similarly, the use of "industrial" designations may not be the most appropriate. This is because such land use and zoning designations may allow uses never anticipated nor appropriate to the area. These areas will be reviewed and analyzed to determine if other land use and zoning designations may be more appropriate. One suggestion was to update the zoning (and presumably the Future Land Use Map) to provide for more of a marine/fishing commercial orientation.
- While there was no specific directive to consider historical designation for any particular area, it appears that this may be something to be considered in the future.
- There was some interest in aesthetic considerations such as limiting billboards and providing street lamps and entryway signs to the community.
- One of the greatest concerns, now that the height issue has been addressed, is the new bridge itself. These concerns centered around the increased speed that is likely due to the new bridge alignment, and concerns regarding access to the "village" commercial area. The Committee members were interested in having some form of caution sign posted before the bridge – a sign that would be in character with the community, not just a road sign.

- There appeared to be an interest in a unified approach to landscaping to be provided by the County along the right-of-way of County Roads 771 and 775, but the members noted that they would not be interested in high cost/high maintenance types of landscaping or trees.
- The Committee members discussed the need to recognize that input from the public at large probably needs to be accepted, but most credence should be given to comments and input received from Placida residents and property owners.

Following the initial meeting of the Adhoc Committee, review and preliminary analysis of the topics and issues were undertaken. First brought up at the meeting, these issues were also identified in an April 1st letter from Mr. Gary Albritton, a member of the committee, as follows:

- New Bridge, access to existing businesses or residences and parking
- Existing County boat ramp at the causeway and parking
- Sidewalks/bike paths
- Street lighting
- Fire protection
- Placida Road posted speed limit
- Planting/landscape
- Community signs
- Overall community "look"

As part of the analysis, various entities within Charlotte County were contacted, as well as other parties, to explore a common ground approach to finding a solution.

In regard to **Street lighting**, the committee wanted lights along Placida, CR771 and the causeway. To accomplish this, two solutions are possible. One is through ad valorem taxation, as administered by Charlotte County Public Works and the second one is through improvement (widening) of the respective roadways, a capital improvements project.

Sidewalks/Bike paths for this community could be accomplished either through an MSBU or by improving (widening) the roads, similar with the lighting.

On both these issues, Mr. Tom O'Kane, Public Works Director, was contacted to discuss a solution.

The issue of **fire protection** (fire Hydrants), was discussed with Charlotte County Utilities (CCU) and with Gasparilla Island Water Association (GIWA), both having water lines in the vicinity. According with Mr. Michael Saunders of CCU, the County has a 10" line along Placida, capable of serving this area. The service franchise for the Placida area is currently awarded to GIWA, which has scheduled a meeting to discuss turning over the Placida area to the County.

A second Ad Hoc committee meeting was held on May 13th, 2002. The meeting solidified the issues which would be the basis for the Visioning Session to be held with the entire community. The outcome of the meeting included the following refined list of concerns:

- The Boat Ramp at the causeway, parking problems associated with it and implementation of fines for illegal parking
- Signs to advise motorists they are entering the Placida Community
- Sidewalks on both CR775 and CR771, from the bridge to the north limits of the community
- The possibility of a bike trail that will connect the Pioneer Trail with the Boca Grande bike trail
- Street lighting for the Placida community along CR775 and CR771
- Parking for Pioneer Trail
- Status of the design and construction of the Coral Creek Bridge Project
- Access to existing businesses and homes from the new bridge alignment
- Landscaping of both CR775 and CR771 within the community
- Speed limits within the Placida Community
- Water, sewer and especially fire protection for the community

Visioning Session

As a component of the Placida Community Plan process, a visioning session for the residents, businesses, and properties owners to provide input, direction and guidance for the plan was held at the Boca Grande Corporate Conference Center on June 18th, 2002 at 5:00 PM and lasted until 7:30 PM.

Flyers we mailed out on June 7th, 2002 using a mailing address list provided by Charlotte County based on Charlotte County GIS database of property owners within the Placida planning area boundary (Ref. Invitation in Appendix).

The Session was conducted in the following format:

- Guests were welcomed as they entered the meeting room and asked to sign in. The session agenda (Ref. Agenda in Appendix) was handed out to each guest.
- The Session was opened by an Introduction explaining the purpose of the meeting and an explanation of the planning process leading up to the visioning session.
- Guests were asked to fill out an evaluation survey consisting of the topics of discussion as determined by the As Hoc Committee process. The evaluation survey forms allowed the guests to rank the individual topics in order of importance and allowed for submittal of additional comments.
- The issues of importance to the community as determined through the Ad Hoc Committee process were discussed in an open forum with the use of a facilitator. The facilitator encouraged input on the individual topics of discussion to elicit a consensus for developing the Placida Community Plan goals, objectives and recommendations.
- The facilitator ended the meeting with a review of the consensus items for inclusions in the Placida Community Plan.

Approximately 120 notices were sent to the community. Thirty four (34) people attended the visioning session. Thirty (30) questionnaires were completed and returned. The evaluation survey and results are included in the plan's appendix.

IV. RESULTS OF THE VISIONING PROCESS

The input from the residents attending the visioning meeting was chronicled in meeting notes and was used in combination with the responses received from the questionnaires handed out at the meeting to formulate the results of the visioning process. The following is a summary of these results:

Boat Ramp - The consensus of the residents is that they do not want additional ramps or parking associated with the County facility. They would like to see the implementation of No Parking signs and associated fines for the area along C.R. 775 and C. R. 771 from Thunderation Landings to the northern boundary of Gasparilla Mobile Home Park. Ms. Laura Kleis-Hoeft, Director of Parks and Recreation Department, notified attendants that there would be a Public Hearing on June 25, 2002 at the Board of County Commissioners meeting to consider an ordinance to post the signs and impose fines for violators. Proposed fine amount was suggested by the residents at \$100. One suggestion from the residents of Placida Pointe, included requiring Charlotte County residents to obtain a free sticker to use the boat ramp while out of county boaters would be required to purchase a sticker to use the boat ramp parking facility. **This item ranked as the number one priority of the residents.**

Welcome Signs - This issue has become moot because of the recent installation of welcome signs by the Charlotte County Tourist Development Bureau. "Placida Welcomes You" signs have been placed at the corner of C.R. 775 and Gaspar Drive as you enter the community from the north along C.R. 775 and along C.R. 771 as you enter the community from the north.



Sidewalks – The Ad Hoc committee recommended extending sidewalks along the entire length of the project corridor on C.R. 775 and C.R.771. The majority of responses to the questionnaire agreed with the Ad Hoc committee. The consensus was that they preferred a meandering sidewalk over a parallel alignment with the roadway (including turnout for benches and incorporation with the landscape). Extending the sidewalk as part of the proposed Coral Creek Bridge project was desirable in that it would provide a funding source and would expedite the timeframe for completion. The alignment of the sidewalk would be along the northeast side of C.R. 775 and the northwest side of C.R. 771.

The extension of the sidewalk beyond that intended by the bridge project to the boundary of the community, could be completed as a second phase, funded from a special assessment or other source. A recommendation to investigate the use of the County's Bed/Tourist tax was suggested.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Trails – This subject received modest support but there were some that thought the issue was not important. The County Public Works Director, Mr. Tom O'Kane informed guests that the Phase III of the Pioneer Trail would be combined with the Coral Creek Bridge project so as to accelerate the construction from the year 2005 to 2003. The Pioneer Trail will follow the proposed sidewalk as describe above (Ref. Pioneer Trail Phase III Map in Appendix).

An extensive discussion was conducted regarding extending the bicycle path to Gasparilla Island over the causeway. Several issues were raised against extending the bike path including the following:

- Limited right of way
- Limited space on the existing bridges
- No plans for widening the bridge in the near to distant future
- Liability issues associate with extending the bike path to the toll bridge.

It was the consensus of the group not to extend the bicycle path to the Boca Grande Causeway beyond C.R. 775.

Street Lighting – The County will be installing ornamental lighting on the proposed Coral Creek Bridge. The consensus of the attendees was for the lighting along CR 775 and CR 771 to be ornamental to and match the bridge lighting.

Landscaping – The group felt that was that landscaping along the corridor in conjunction with the street lighting and sidewalks is desirable. They preferred minimal landscaping with native plants. One suggestion was to provide landscaping similar to the San Casa sidewalk project.

Speed Limits/Traffic Control – The issue of controlling the speed along the C.R. 775 and C.R. 771 corridor is a very popular issue with the residents. The proposed Coral Creek Bridge project is designed for 45 mph but the posted speed will be restricted to 35 mph. Although the consensus recognizes speeding as a problem, they do not want to reduce the speed limit. There was a consensus that no passing zones (double yellow lines) be extended along the entire Placida corridor. Flashing yellow lights at the entrance to the community were also suggested. Many recommended increased visibility of County Sheriff's vehicles and enforcement of the existing speed limits.

Water/Fire Protection – The Ad Hoc committee voiced a need for improved water service and fire protection. Charlotte County Utilities (CCU) and the Gasparilla Island Water Association are currently working on an agreement for CCU to take over responsibility of the lines on the mainland (Placida) and is willing to provide additional hydrants along the project corridor. The Community supported the proposed improved water service and fire protection.

Other Issues – The issue of increased parking needs was addressed by Mr. Tom O'Kane. Additional parking will be provided by the Coral Creek Bridge project in conjunction with the Pioneer Trail. Additional parking will also be provided in the abandoned right of way to the existing roadway west of Coral Creek as part of the bridge project. The additional parking will be shell surface.

A question regarding billboards was raised. Many attendees agreed that billboards should be banned from the area.

V. COMMUNITY RECOMMENDATIONS

Boat Ramp

To improve public safety, parking along C.R. 775 and C.R. 771 should be discouraged by implementing the following:

- Install No Parking signs along C.R. 775 and C.R. 771 from Thunderation Landings to the northern limits of the Gasparilla Mobile Home Park.
- Impose \$100 fine for illegal parking.
- Increase fines if not effective
- Increase fines for repeat offenders
- Provide increased presence and enforcement of illegal parking by Charlotte County Sheriff's Office.
- Consider requiring a permit to use the boat facility, providing a vehicular decal to identify permit holders. This permit would be free for Charlotte County residents.

Sidewalks

Install sidewalks along the C.R. 775 and C.R. 771 corridor as follows:

- Sidewalks should be included within the Coral Creek Bridge project to the greatest extent possible.
- Coral Creek Bridge sidewalks should join with the Cape Haze Pioneer Trail to as to provide continuity and uninterrupted pathway for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Sidewalks along the corridor should meander(non-linear) in concert with the natural topography and landscape as well as with the proposed lighting and landscape improvements.
- Turnouts should be incorporated within the sidewalk system, providing rest areas and benches. The locations of the turnout should be in the proximity to subdivision entrances and possible future bus stop locations.
- The sidewalk should be constructed along the northeast side of C.R. 775 and the northwest side of C.R. 771 to provide continuity with the Cape Haze Pioneer Trail and to limit crossings of C.R. 775 and C.R. 771.
- The extension of sidewalks to the boundary of the Placida Community , should be funded through extension of the 1% sales tax.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Trails

Thee following bicycle/pedestrian trail improvements are recommended:

- Endorse the inclusion of Phase III of the Cape Haze Pioneer Trail into the Coral Creek Bridge project, such that construction of the last leg of the trail will be completed 2 years ahead of schedule.
- Coordinate with the Gasparilla Island Bridge Authority on future long term plans for connecting the bicycle paths from the mainland to Boca Grande.

Street Lighting

To provide an aesthetic and distinctive appearance along C.R. 775 and C.R. 771 the following recommendations should be implemented:

- Street Lighting should be installed along CR 771 and CR 775 to the north limits of Placida, as part of the Coral Creek Bridge project to the greatest extent possible.
- All street lighting within the Placida Community area should be ornamental and unified in style.

Landscaping

The Placida Community recommends landscaping along CR 775 and CR 771 as follows:

- Provide additional landscaping around the welcome signs at the entry to the community.
- Provide landscaping in conjunction with the proposed sidewalks, using native plant species. Selection of a flowering tree specie(s), one or more palm species, xeriscape and native vegetation types should be selected to unify the community.
- Landscape plantings should be provided in clusters at the bridge approaches.
- Street furniture such as benches and trash receptacles should match the style of the street lighting.

Speed Limits/Traffic Control

To increase safety along C.R. 775 and C.R. 771, the following traffic safety recommendations should be considered:

- Maintain the 45 mph speed limit prior to the approaches to the Coral Creek Bridge.
- Endorse the proposed 35 mph speed limit for the Coral Creek Bridge.
- Extend "No Passing" zones along the corridor including:
 - No Passing signs
 - Double Yellow pavement markings
 - Flashing yellow warning lights at entrance to community
- Increase enforcement of speed limits by the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office.

Water/Fire Protection

Fire hydrants are recommended to be installed along the C.R. 775 and C.R. 771 corridor, with the stipulation that Charlotte County Utilities take over of water service for the Placida area from Gasparilla Island Water Association within the Placida Community Plan area.

- Also, sewer service for the Placida area in the foreseeable future is recommended.

Billboards

- Billboards should be restricted within the Placida Community Plan boundary.

Community Parking

- Additional parking should be provided within the existing County right of way of the soon to be abandoned C.R. 775 , south of Coral Creek.
- Parking for the Cape Haze Pioneer Trail should be included within the plans for the Coral Creek Bridge project.
- All parking surfaces should be shell.
- All parking should be lighted.

**MEETING
SUMMARIES**



MEMORANDUM

To: Tom Cookingham, Director – Charlotte County Community Development
From: Dorian J. Popescu, P.E., Hole Montes, Inc.
Date: March 22, 2002
Subject: Placida Community Planning

Weekly Report #1

- Our Team has visited and toured the community on two prior occasions to acquire a feeling for the existing community character. Photographs were taken of properties to provide a record of our observations.
- On March 14, 2002, Bill Brisson, Gene Engman and Dorian Popescu visited the community and met with members of the Ad Hoc Committee and Mr. Tom Smith of the County to discuss and identify the topics of interest and issues of concern among the members. The following summarize the results of that meeting:
 1. The primary impetus among members of the community to undertake a community plan was the proposed mid-rise development on the O. T. Segal property. Since our earlier meetings with the County staff to discuss the project, the County has adopted a provision limiting height to 35' on properties located within 1,200 feet of the waterfront. This has essentially eliminated the original major issue, although others still exist and the community remains interested in pursuing its Plan.
 2. One of the issues noted by the Ad Hoc Committee is the need for improved regulations pertaining to the buffering of nonresidential accessory structures, such as boathouses or boat storage structures, so that they are compatible with the character of the area, do not adversely affect adjoining properties, and are not unsightly as viewed from the public right-of-way.
 3. The Ad Hoc Committee was in general agreement that, while it would like to encourage the "Old Florida Style" of architecture for residential and nonresidential development within the community, such style should not be mandatory.
 4. The Ad Hoc Committee also agreed that while portions of the area in the vicinity of the juncture of County Roads 775 and 771 are shown as Industrial and/or Light Industrial on the Future Land Use Map and are zoned similarly, the use of "industrial" designations may not be the most appropriate. This is because such land use and zoning designations may allow uses never anticipated nor appropriate to the area. These areas will be reviewed and analyzed to determine if other land use and zoning designations may be more appropriate. One suggestion was to update the zoning (and presumably the Future Land Use Map) to provide for more of a marine/fishing commercial orientation.
 5. While there was no specific directive to consider historical designation for any particular area, it appears that this may be something to be considered in the future.

6. There was some interest in aesthetic considerations such as limiting billboards and providing street lamps and entryway signs to the community.
7. One of the greatest concerns, now that the height issue has been addressed, is the new bridge itself. These concerns centered around the increased speed that is likely due to the design of the new bridge, and access to the "village" commercial area. The Committee members were interested in having some form of caution sign posted before the bridge – a sign that would be in character with the community, not just a road sign.
8. There appeared to be an interest in a unified approach to landscaping to be provided by the County along the right-of-way of County Roads 771 and 775, but the members noted that they would not be interested in high cost/high maintenance types of landscaping or trees.
9. The Committee members discussed the need to recognize that input from the public at large probably needs to be accepted, but most credence should be given to comments and input received from Placida resident property owners.

Look Ahead 2 Weeks:

Item No.	Action	Responsible Party
a	Complete data collection, as necessary	
b	Preliminary analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and analyze the comp. plan, the land development & current and future land uses and zoning 	



MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. Tom Cookingham, Director- Charlotte County Community Development
From: Dorian Popescu
Date: May, 06 2002
Subject: Placida Community Planning

REPORT#2

Following the initial meeting of the Adhoc Committee on March 14, our team has started the review and preliminary analysis of the topics and issues. First brought up at the meeting, these issues were also identified in an April 1st letter from Mr. Gary Albritton, a member of the committee, as follows:

- New Bridge, access to existing businesses or residences and parking
- Existing County boat ramp at the causeway and parking
- Sidewalks/bike paths
- Street lighting
- Fire protection
- Placida Road posted speed limit
- Planting/landscape
- Community signs
- Overall community "look"

As part of our analysis, we have contacted various entities within Charlotte County, as well as other parties and explored a common ground approach to finding a solution.

In regard to **Street lighting**, the committee would like to see lights along Placida, CR771 and the causeway. To accomplish this we see two solutions, one is through ad valorem taxation, as administered by Charlotte County Public Works and the second one is through improvement (widening) of the respective roadways, a capital improvements project.

Sidewalks/Bike paths for this community could be accomplished either through an MSBU or by improving (widening) the roads, similar with the lighting.

On both these issues we have contacted Mr. Tom O'Kane, Public Works Director and should have a solution shortly.

The issue of **fire protection** (fire Hydrants), was discussed with Charlotte County Utilities (CCU) and with Gasparilla Island Water Association (GIWA), both having water lines in the vicinity. According with Mr. Michael Saunders of CCU, the County has a 10" line along Placida, capable of serving this area. The service franchise for the Placida area is currently awarded to GIWA, which has scheduled a meeting to discuss turning over the Placida area to the County. We will keep you posted on the outcome.

These issues and all the other issues will be further clarified and discussed at the second meeting with the Adhoc committee, scheduled for Monday, May 13 2002.

Tentatively, we have scheduled the Visioning session with the Placida community for May 28.

cc: Elliot L. Kampert, Charlotte County
Tom Smith, Charlotte County
Gene Engman, Adley, Brisson, Engman
Bob Duane, Hole Montes, Inc.

Visioning Session – Placida Community Planning
Tuesday, June 18th, 2002

Attendees: Tom O’Kane, Charlotte County Public Works Director, Tom Cookingham, Charlotte County Development Director, Laura Kleiss Hoft, Charlotte County Parks and Recreation Director, Gene Engman, Adley, Brisson & Engman, Dorian Popescu, Hole Montes, Inc., Kreg Maheu, Hole Montes, Inc.

Approximately 120 notices were sent to Placida residents, and there were 34 residents present.

1. Boat Ramps – no additional ramps needed.
2. Existing Ramp Parking – Currently there are 90 parking spaces available. No Parking signs need to be installed on both sides of 775/771. It was requested that fines be imposed on violators. Laura Kleiss-Hoft suggested \$100 fine would be sufficient.
3. Welcome Signs – Tourist Bureau has already installed and everyone likes them. They have requested landscaping the area around them.
4. Sidewalks – Ad Hoc committee requested extending them through entire community on the inside. Meandering preferred over parallel to the road. Funding would have to come from Special Assessment (Resident Tom Knight commented that residents are already assessed, Tom O’Kane not familiar with that). Mention was made to investigate funding through Bed/Tourist tax \$.
5. Bike Trails – Currently scheduled, Pioneer Trail will go almost to Boca Grande Causeway. Discussion ensued over whether to extend it to Gasparilla Island. Many easement/Liability issues were brought up for not extending it. Some felt that you should not encourage extending it if danger to bikers/pedestrians.
6. Street Lighting – Tom O’Kane noted that County will be installing ornamental lighting on bridge and that he is not opposed to including lighting for sidewalks within his plan. Consensus is for lighting to be ornamental.
7. Landscaping – Ad Hoc requested landscaping on CR 775/771. Group wants landscaping minimal and native plantings used.
8. Speed Limits/Traffic Control – Bridge is set for 35 mph. No Passing Zone requested. It was mentioned that a flashing yellow requested on both entrances to Community. Enforcement was foremost concern. Residents feel that area is a speedway.
9. Water Service – Ad Hoc voiced need for better water service/fire protection. It was noted that new fire station is currently underway, just north of Placida, on CR 775.
10. Other issues – questioned billboards on Placida. Noted that ruling was recently passed to allow billboards on 775 only. Also, Placida Point residents voiced concern over not being represented on Ad Hoc Committee. It was explained how committee was formed and an apology for excluding them was extended.
11. Parking - County is currently addressing increased parking needs issues. It was requested that any additional parking be shell based. There is a meeting scheduled for Tuesday, June 25th at 10:30a.m. to address parking needs, County encouraged people to attend.

SCHEDULE

**Charlotte County, Florida
Placida Community Planning
Professional Services Schedule**

Tasks	2001					2002							
	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Notice to Proceed	● 12/3/01												
A. Initial Site Visit	● 12/27/01												
B. Initial Meeting with Ad Hoc Comm.		● 1/9/02											
C. Data Collection													
D. Preliminary Analysis													
E. Meeting with Ad Hoc Comm.				● 3/1/02									
F. Visioning Session				● 3/15/02									
G. Preliminary Report and Recommendations													
H. Meeting with Ad Hoc Comm.									● 4/15/02				
I. Revise Report													
J. Presentation to Planning and Zoning Board													● 5/6/02
K. Presentation to Board of County Commissioners													● 5/14/01
L. Deliver Final Product													● 5/30/02

**SIGN IN
SHEETS**

SIGN-IN SHEET
 PLACIDA COMMUNITY PLANNING
 VISIONING WORKSHOP

(34 Total Attendance

Date: June 18, 2002

	Name	Address	Telephone #	Fax #	Email Address
1	DENNIS + ANGEL LORD	PLACIDA POINT ENGLEWOOD	473-7533	475-0416	
2	Jim Cooper	PO Box 1918 BOCA GRANDE 33421	697-2271	697-5629	Jim.Gibb@GLS3C.com
3	Ann M. Devier	300 Coral Ck Dr. Florida	698-1904		Dev@gl3c.com
4	JOANNE ALLEN	12440 Placida Rd	697-7001	697-7001	ALLEN@GLS3C.COM
5	GENE & PAT EILER	12450 Florida Rd	697-1364	697-7831	PAGENNE@GLS3C.COM
6	Thomas a. King	12555 PLACIDA RD	697-3747	697-6599	
7	LARRY MULKEY	P.O. BOX 559 GARDENC 13060	697-0945	697-2497	LPMULKEY@HOTMAIL.COM
8	Marian Schmeddy	12575 Placida Rd,	697 8825	same	CAPT MARIAN @ grandb6
9	THOMAS F. OKANE, JR.	7000 FLORIDA ST.	575-3600		
10	Clark Gillaspie	14555 Gasparilla Rd.	697-8866	697-6702	Clark G C Boes Vista.com

SIGN IN SHEET
PLACIDA COMMUNITY PLANNING
VISIONING WORKSHOP

	Name	Address	Telephone	Fax #	Email Address
11	Tim Roberts	13025 VIA AURELIA	698-4139		ERTex@aol.com
12	Rudy Reinecke	13120 Placida Pt. Cir	697-1016		RSREINECKE@aol.com
13	Bill Blacksher	11000 Placida Rd, #1503	697-1350		BBLACKSHER@aol.com
14	VIVIAN GROSS	13065 VIA FLAVIA	697-9790		Placesta-
15	GRABER GROSS	" " "	" "		"
16	Jane Jucenow	ADLEY BRISSON/EUSMAN	1997 Independence Bldg 941 360 1320	941 360 1932	
17	M+M. B. Jurgels	13045 Via Caran Placida	941-697-6438		
18	Tom Coolenmyham	18500 Murdock Cir	941-623-1006		tom.coolenmyham@charlottefl.com
19	Jacques Cloutier	1901 PZ Tamiami Trill	941-493-7600		
20	Melissa Knight	P.O. Box 36 Placida	697-2898		
21	GARY ALBRITTON	P.O. Box 95 Placida	697-2451	697-6802	FLARTIST@sunline.net

SIGN UP SHEET
PLACIDA COMMUNITY PLANNING
VISIONING WORKSHOP

	Name	Address	Telephone	Fax #	Email Address
22	Jennifer Rie	13130 Placida Pt Ct	697-9158		
23	Melores Bernette	13120 Placida Pt Ct	697-1016		fsreinecke@aol.com
24	Mr. Daniel				
25	EARL SCHWAB	Box 519 PLACIDA	697-4555		
26	DON NAGLE	2001 GOSPARILLA RD & 56	697-3508		
27	BOB NELSON	RD BOX 953 Gosparilla Merina	964-5650		gn@g02box.com
28	Bred Grace	15001 Gosparilla Rd.	697-2280		
29	CHARLES + SHARON MERRILL	P.O. Box 1 KANON	697-8010		
30					
31					
32					

**NEWSPAPER
ARTICLES**

OUR TOWN

Community growth delayed

Commissioner backs suspension of development in Placida

By **TED CARTER**
STAFF WRITER

County Commissioner Mac Horton hesitates to use the term "moratorium" to describe the county planning chief's call for a halt to accepting development applications for the Placida area.

The commissioner whose district includes the rapidly growing Placida area nonetheless sees merit in Community Development Director Tom

Cookingham's call for a suspension of development applications until a plan to guide the area's growth is in place.

"We may be coming up with restrictions," he said. "If we're going to do that, we need to do it before we get a whole lot of applications" for development.

What's more, Horton said, it could be time to apply the same thinking to the areas of the Murdock community slat-

ed for rezoning from residential to light industrial.

Horton said he wants to raise the Placida issue during the commission comment period of today's regular meeting at the Murdock Center.

Cookingham advised the county attorney in an e-mail last week: "In order to complete the community plan for the Placida area and to ensure the applicability of plan recommendations, it will be nec-

essary to suspend development applications until the plan is approved. Consequently, I have been approached by interested parties with the idea of enacting a building moratorium in the Placida planning area."

Cookingham declined to detail his reasons for suggesting a suspension of development applications, saying only that he wants to hire a consultant to look at the area and

come up with a growth plan that reflects current growth trends there. He said a current backlog of work would make it difficult for his staff to tackle the growth plan.

Horton said he thinks the development suspension is a way to ensure the Placida area does not look vastly different between now and when the growth plan is in effect. He

See **GROWTH**, page 4

★ GROWTH

From page 1

said this could occur if rezonings were granted that allow higher building heights in the area.

"Let's don't do these rezonings until we know what we're going to do," Horton said.

"I don't want the process to dictate what the community standards are.

"Doing that would only compound the problem," Horton said. "Let's just slow things down."

He said he does not want a repeat of what recently occurred while an ordinance restricting billboards was under consideration. At that time the county received a rush

of last-minute applications to put up billboards.

Horton said he supports a call by Commissioner Matt DeBoer to halt issuance of building permits within the area of Murdock the county plans to rezone to light industrial. "I know the two are inter-related," Horton said of the pending land-use changes in Murdock and the likelihood of new land-use designations in Placida.

The county has filed a change-of-land-use plan with the state Department of Community Affairs. Once the state planning agency completes its evaluation of the land-use change, the county intends to rezone the area of Murdock from about Toledo

Blade to the U.S. 41 and State Road 776 intersection from multi-family to single-family use.

DeBoer said it probably will be two months before the Department of Community Affairs completes its review. He said in the meantime he fears the county will continue to issue residential building permits for the area. Two residential permits have been issued since the county filed the notice of land-use change with the state.

"We're going to have to buy those homes with tax dollars," DeBoer said, explaining the houses wouldn't be allowed to remain as a non-conforming use in an area zoned for light industrial.

10/16/01

Placida planning nearing forefront

By STEVE REILLY
STAFF WRITER

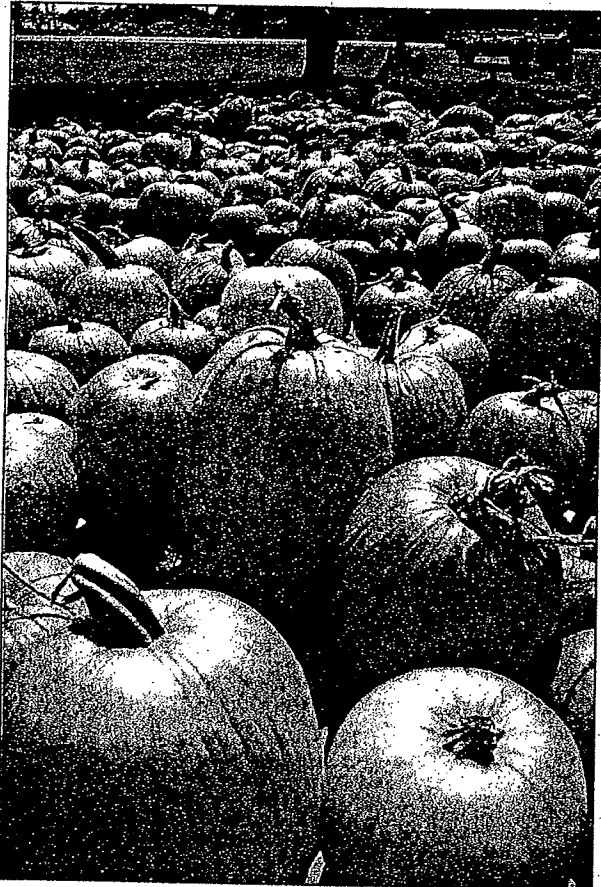
PLACIDA — Charlotte County is looking to help guide the shape of Placida's future.

Since June, county staff has been holding community meetings and working with a citizens committee of Placida residents and property owners to learn what issues citizens see facing Placida. County commissioners will be given an update at their Oct. 25 meeting on what planning citizens want to see.

The Placida area has seen fast and changing, up-scale development over the past few years, but working on a development plan could have value mapping out the future of the area, assistant administrator Pam Frangaccio said Monday.

"I think it can have value, if we tackle some of the harder issues," Frangaccio said, citing height restrictions, architectural guidelines and

Please see PLACIDA, page 5.



Sun photo by Jeffrey Langlois

ONE SIZE FITS ALL

Pumpkins of all shapes and sizes wait to be taken home from the Englewood United Methodist Church. The pumpkin patch at the church, 700 E. Dearborn St., is open daily.

★ PLACIDA

From page 1

setbacks as some of the zoning issues raised by residents and property owners. "I don't think you will see wholesale changes in the land uses. That is not coming from the citizens."

County staff, however, will present a list of concerns that includes:

- Community involvement with the replacement of the Coral Creek bridge, located at the junction of County Road 775 and County Road 771. Placida residents are also interested in seeing the county completing the final phase of the Cape Haze Pioneer Trail, which runs parallel to C.R. 771 and stretches from the C.R. 771-State Road 776 intersection to the Coral Creek bridge.

- Zoning restrictions on billboards and the height of multi-family condominium and other units.

- Greater code enforcement and clean-up efforts, such as what the county has held in Englewood East, Grove City

and other areas of the county.

- Greater access to publicly owned spoil islands, as well as considering the acquisition of other undeveloped coastal properties.

- Creating a "community identity" with signage and landscaping that will reflect the history and ecology of Placida.

The citizens also would like to see the county address further its boating ramp needs and operations in the Placida area.

A staff report suggests citizens view the county making zoning and rezoning decisions without looking at the cumulative impacts of new developments on the area. The citizens would like to see a master plan development that would shape future growth.

"It would have been good if we took a look at the impacts of what zoning allows in Placida when we first did the (comprehensive plan)," Commissioner Mac Horton said Monday. "But I don't think it's too late."

You can e-mail Steve Reilly at reilly@sun-herald.com



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d Mahata

JACK ALEXANDER: ROTONDA COLUMNIST, PAGE 2

Wartime mindset needed now

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2001

THE ENGLEWOOD SUN

OUR TOWN

Our Town Page 8 E

LOCAL/REGIONAL NEWS

The Sun /Thursday, October 25, 2001

Charlotte pursuing Placida planning

By STEVE REILLY

STAFF WRITER

ENGLEWOOD — Mike Post made an impression on Charlotte County commissioners Tuesday.

County commissioners gave unanimous support Tuesday for a community planning effort in the Placida area at the junction of County Roads 771 and 775 that could see new restrictions and development guidelines for the area.

Post, a South Gulf Cove resident, supported the planning effort, but he told commissioners Tuesday whatever happens in Placida may have a ripple

effect on Englewood and other Cape Haze communities, including South Gulf Cove.

"It seems to me that any community plan might improve the whole Cape Haze peninsula," Post suggested. In 1996, while he served as president of the South Gulf Cove Association, Post said he approached county officials about a community plan, but he suggested that request fell on deaf ears five years ago.

"Plans should not take place without consideration of other communities," he said. "If it isn't right for Placida, then it probably isn't right for other

communities."

Commissioners agreed.

"While I embrace (the Placida community plan), this does not include enough," said Commissioner Mac Horton, after reviewing the boundaries of properties the plan will affect. Commissioner Sara Devos echoed Horton's sentiments.

"As I've stated repeatedly, we need to address a much larger area, but I don't want to hold this up," Devos said.

Assistant county administrator Pam Brangaccio and Community Development director Tom Cookingham

updated commissioners on workshops and meetings held with county staff and Placida citizens. Brangaccio also said staff was already addressing many of the citizens' concerns, such as preparing public input meetings for the construction of a new bridge over Coral Creek at the junction of C.R. 771 and C.R. 775.

Among the larger issues in Placida, Brangaccio said the consensus among the citizens suggests they do not want to see increased development densities and would like to see stronger height and setback restrictions. Cookingham told commis-

sioners the goal of the community plan would be to "get the best and most from the least amount of change" of zoning and land use ordinances, such as expanding a height restriction affecting properties along Coral Creek.

As an example, Cookingham pointed out how the county's existing ordinance on height restrictions for waterfront properties has proven ineffective due to changes in FEMA regulations and other factors. He also said staff wants to propose ordinances that will have county-wide applicability.

Commissioner Matt DeBoer expressed some concern over Placida landowners claiming the county is "taking" their rights away with any additional zoning and land use restrictions. County attorney Kenée Lee assured DeBoer that would not be the case, unless the property owner had permits or other forms of vested rights.

The proposals are scheduled to go before the county's Planning and Zoning Board in November, Cookingham said. Brangaccio added the goal is to bring the new ordinances before commissioners in December. You can e-mail Steve Reilly at reilly@sun-herald.com

Residents oppose delaying lawsuit

Developers sued
Charlotte over its
rejection of a plan for
high-rises in Placida.

By LAWRENCE WISE

lawrence.wise@heraldtribune.com

PLACIDA — Homeowners near the proposed Coral Creek Landing condominiums don't want a judge to delay a lawsuit they hope will prevent tall buildings in their neighborhood.

In a court hearing scheduled for Friday, the Placida Harbor Club will oppose delaying the lawsuit, president Ruy Villela said. The club is an intervener in the lawsuit, which the developers filed against the county after the commissioners rejected their rezoning request.

County officials could not be reached for comment about the delay.

Rob Berntsson, the developers' attorney, wants to delay the lawsuit in hopes county officials will approve a new proposal for scaled-down buildings.

11/16/01

The plan developers have submitted reduces the height of the buildings from the first floor starting 50 feet above ground to starting 35 feet to 38 feet, which is more consistent with surrounding buildings, Berntsson said. Developers are proposing about the same number of units, 140 on the 40-acre site between Coral Creek and State Road 775.

Developers are awaiting a hearing before the Zoning Appeals Board, which must approve a special exception for the "cluster" housing. The board is scheduled to hear the case Dec. 12. The County Commission eventually will vote on the board's recommendation.

Developers do not need the county to approve a rezoning for the shorter buildings, as they did for the taller ones. The Charlotte County commissioners shot down the original proposal in June, prompting development owners OTSEGO Holdings LLC and Gasparilla V LLC to file the suit in hopes a judge will overturn their decision.

Villela, unaware the developer had submitted new plans, declined to comment on whether the Placida Harbor Club would be satisfied with the shorter buildings.

"What he wanted to do before, we were adamantly opposed to," Villela said.

However, he did say he didn't think the developer should be allowed to pursue one plan in court while the county is considering a second proposal.

11/16/01

Placida complex goes public

It's not just for Brunswick execs anymore

By JASON HALL

jason.hall@heraldtribune.com

PLACIDA — The new Boca Grande Corporate Conference Center isn't really that new after all.

In fact, the center at Placida has been there for almost 30 years — but it's only been open to the public for about a month.

"It's hasn't changed a bit," manager Tom Knight said. "Just the name has changed."

The center used to be called the Mercabo Conference Center, and it was owned and used exclusively by Brunswick Corp. since it was built in the early 1970s.

Six months ago, Boca Grande millionaire Brad Kelly bought it, the marine engine testing facility next door and all of the gorgeous waterfront land for \$13.6 million.

Brunswick plans to move its main testing and corporate re-

"My ancestors here go back to the 18th century. I grew up on Boca Grande."

TOM KNIGHT
Center manager

treat operations elsewhere, but hasn't said where.

The conference center is unchanged, with one exception. It's now open to anyone who wants to use it, not just Brunswick executives.

Knight, who has managed the center since it opened, resigned from Brunswick when Kelly offered him the job of staying in Placida, reopening and running the center.

"My ancestors here go back to the 18th century," Knight said, explaining his decision to stay. "I

grew up on Boca Grande."

The motel-style center has 30 guest rooms and 56 beds, two large conference rooms, exhibit space, an exercise room, lounge areas and a cafeteria.

Kelly hired Eric Oberg, former chef at Boca Grande's Pink Elephant restaurant, to run the food operations.

The center is the only full-service retreat of its kind between Sarasota and Fort Myers. Its waterfront location and proximity to tony Boca Grande will be a big selling point.

"A lot of CEOs know Boca Grande and have visited," Knight said. "It will be a very big plus."

Mercury, Brunswick's marine division, will continue to occupy and use the engine testing facility until May. After that, Knight said the center might expand its

PLEASE SEE CENTER ON 3D

Placida center goes public

CENTER FROM 1D

offerings.

For now, the center is trying to get its name out as a public, not private, destination. Knight said he's concentrating his marketing efforts in the marine industry, but is open to small and large parties from around Southwest Florida or from overseas.

Knight also will open the center's conference rooms to local companies.

The center's first major guest was a contingent from

Powerboat magazine. It spent a week at the center in October, testing boats by 27 manufacturers for the January issue.

Linda Pierce, the Englewood Chamber of Commerce's executive director, said a group of chamber officials toured the complex last week, many for the first time.

"It lends itself to the community so well for possible seminars and workshops," she said.

"We were really excited about it. As with anything, it's going to take some time to develop."

Board to discuss Coral Creek Landings

PLACIDA — A revised proposal for the Coral Creek Landings development will go before the Charlotte County Zoning Appeals board today.

Some Placida residents balked at a previous proposal, in which the developer planned to build 50-foot-tall condominium buildings. The site is located east of Placida Road and west of Coral Creek off County Road 775.

The new proposal, which requires a special exception, would build cluster townhouses 35 to 38 feet high on the 40-acre site.

Charlotte County commissioners will not have to approval the special exception. In June, the commissioners decided to reject the previous proposal.

Developers, OTSEGO Holdings LLC and Gasparilla LLC, have begun a lawsuit to attempt to overturn the commissioners' decision on the 50-foot-tall condos.

On Nov. 16, a judge allowed the developers to delay litigation until Feb. 1. Attorneys for the developers have said they will drop the lawsuit if the new proposal is approved.

Construction begins on Placida condos

STAFF REPORT

PLACIDA — Groundbreaking on Boca Vista Harbor, a 99-unit waterfront condominium development, will be today in Placida.

BVH Development Inc. will build the complex, which is owned by Ramar Group Companies Inc. of Sarasota.

The condominiums are the first to be constructed in Placida, the former site of a fishing

village. The development is across the road from the Coral Creek Country Club and adjacent to Gasparilla Marina on County Road 771.

Each of the five buildings will be six stories high. Most of the units will be two-bedroom, two-bath with a lanai and private garage. Two penthouses will also be built.

All of the units overlook Gasparilla Sound and the Boca Grande causeway.

**VISIONING
SESSION FLYER**



PLACIDA COMMUNITY PLANNING PROJECT
VISIONING SESSION

You are cordially invited to attend a Visioning Session for the future development of the Placida Community.

Please take this opportunity to provide your thoughts and ideas on how you envision Placida in the future.

Topics of Discussion include:

- ❖ The Boat Ramp at the causeway, parking problems associated with it and implementation of fines for illegal parking*
- ❖ Signs to advise motorists they are entering the Placida Community*
- ❖ Sidewalks on both CR775 and CR774, from the bridge to the north limits of the community*
- ❖ The possibility of a bike trail that will connect the Pioneer Trail with the Boca Grande bike trail*
- ❖ Street lighting for the Placida community along CR775 and CR774*
- ❖ Parking for Pioneer Trail*
- ❖ Status of the design and construction of the Coral Creek Bridge Project*
- ❖ Access to existing businesses and homes from the new bridge alignment*
- ❖ Landscaping of both CR775 and CR774 within the community*
- ❖ Speed limits within the Placida Community*
- ❖ Water, sewer and especially fire protection for the community*

*Location: Boca Grande Corporate Conference Center
Placida, Florida*

Date: June 18th, 2002

Time: 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

For more information please call Hole Montes, Inc. at 941-412-3712



**VISIONING
SESSION
AGENDA**

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PLACIDA COMMUNITY PLANNING PROJECT

VISIONING SESSION

June 18, 2002, 5:00 PM

Boca Grande Corporate Conference Center

AGENDA

- I. Welcome and Sign-in
- II. Introduction
- III. Evaluation Survey
- IV. Topics of Discussion
 - Boat Ramp
 - Community Welcome Signs
 - Sidewalks
 - Bike Trails
 - Pioneer Trail Extension
 - Boca Grande Causeway
 - Pier Ferry
 - Street Lighting
 - Parking
 - Coral Creek Bridge Project
 - Status
 - Access to Businesses/Homes
 - Landscaping
 - Speed Limits
 - Warning Signs
 - Utilities
 - Water
 - Fire Protection
 - GIWA/CCU Agreement
 - Sewer
 - Other Issues
- V. Wrap Up

**VISIONING
SESSION
RESULTS**

Placida Planning Visioning Workshop Results
June 17th, 2002

	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	No Opinion
Boat Ramp Parking	20	4	3		
Placida Welcome Signs		Tourist Bureau had installed signs prior to meeting.			
Sidewalks for CR 775 and CR 771	11	5	8	3	
Bicycle/Pedestrian Trails	11	5	4	7	
Street Lighting for CR 775/771	11	12	3	1	
Landscaping for CR 775/771	6	7	9	3	
Speed Limits/Traffic Control	17	4	3	2	
Public Water & Fire Protection	11	5	3		
Public Sewer	10	3	7	3	

**PIONEER TRAIL
MAP**

STATE RD. 776

TOWN OF M'CALL

CAPE HAZE PIONEER TRAIL
 Help Protect the Park
 Follow these Rules

The trail is only open during dawn to dusk.
 You are entering a natural area.

- Respect and protect wildlife and all natural features.
- Put litter in designated containers.
- Glass containers prohibited.
- Show courtesy and respect for all trail users.

Safety is our highest priority.

- Obey all traffic signs and signals.
- Keep to the right, pass on the left.
- Headphones are not permitted.
- Stay on designated trails.
- Leave no trace.
- Look for and yield to other trail users.
- For your safety, please do not drink and ride.

Cyclists/skaters have special responsibilities.

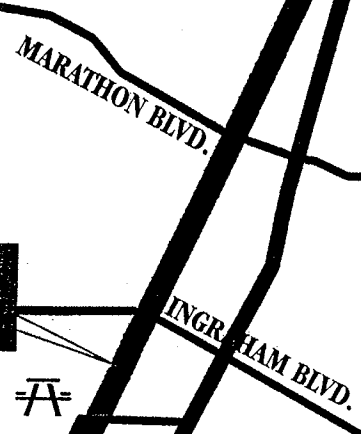
- Use of helmets and other protective gear required.
- Keep speed moderate and maintain control.
- Give audible signal when passing.
- Yield to pedestrians.
- No racing.

Motorized vehicles (except electric wheelchairs for the disabled, maintenance, law enforcement and emergency vehicles) are not allowed.

Trailhead

ROTONDA BLVD. EAST

PHASE I
Completed 1999



PHASE II
2001 Construction

HARNESS RD.

COUNTY RD 771

PHASE III
2005 Construction

BOCA GRANDE CAUSEWAY

TOWN OF PLACIDA

Cape Haze
Pioneer Trail

