

**ESTERO COMMUNITY PLANNING PANEL**  
**Minutes of Public Meeting #156 - December 16, 2013**  
**Estero Community Park, Estero, Florida**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The Meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by ECPP Chairman Lienesch.

Panel Members present: Jack Lienesch, Chairman; Estero Community Association, Roger Strelow, ECCL; John Goodrich, ECCL, Paul Roberts, Estero Development Community; Jeff Maas, Estero Chamber of Commerce, Neal Noethlich, Emeritus Chairman, Greg Toth, Founding member, Howard Levitan, Secretary, and Bev MacNellis, Treasurer. Absent was Ned Dewhirst, Estero Development Community.

Present were several representatives of the Lee Memorial Hospital System ("LMHS") including Lisa Sgarlata, Dave Kistel and Mary Briggs, along with Russell Schropp, Esq. from the Henderson Franklin law firm, Laura DeJohn (from Johnson Engineering), Engineer Dana Hume, and traffic consultant Stephen Leung. Also present were Bill Prysi, Chairman of EDRC, and Adele Amico, member of the public.

Public Notice: Secretary Levitan reported that the meeting notice was posted on the ECPP website. The Agenda has been posted for over a week on the website although it has changed over time. He noted that a quorum of the ECPP was present for this meeting.

Minutes of the Prior Meeting. Chairman Lienesch noted that the minutes of the November 18, 2013 meeting were prepared by Secretary Levitan, had been vetted by the Panel, and the updated version is posted on our ECPP website. Motion was made, seconded and unanimously passed to accept the November minutes as posted.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer MacNellis presented her Treasurers' Report, and reported a balance of \$384.03, plus two \$100 checks to deposit. There is a bill for insurance coverage which will be paid by ECCL subject to repayment when ECPP has money available as per the prior agreement. Motion made, seconded and unanimously passed to accept the Treasurer's Report as made.

**PRESENTATIONS:** Lee Memorial Hospital System.

- a. Laura DeJohn Director of Planning of Johnson Engineering made the presentation on behalf of the LMHS. Russell Schropp, Esq. of the Henderson Franklin Law Firm representing LMHS led off the discussion and introduced Mrs. DeJohn. Mr. Schropp explained that this request involves a Notice of Proposed Change ("NOPC") to the Coconut Point DRI and an amendment to the Coconut Point MPD zoning both to provide for the development of an acute care hospital and provide flexibility for the mix of office use. The DRI changes have already been approved by the Regional

Planning Council. The Certificate of Need issues with ACA are ongoing, however LMHS wants to proceed on the zoning changes to be prepared in the event that they are successful on their appeal.

- b. The site is Tract 3A of the Coconut Point MPD which is a 31 acre parcel south of Coconut Road across the street from the Mirasol Development and the Bonita Springs Community Health Center. It is currently within the Urban Community use designation under the FLUM Map portion of the Lee Comprehensive Plan.
- c. The request is to amend the MPD and the Coconut Point DRI to add a hospital and a heliport, increase medical office use from 104,333 sf to 234,000 sf, and to extend compliance dates for the project buildout from 2019 to 2024. The requests have been found sufficient by Lee County Staff and a public hearing before the HEX will occur in January. Both requests will be subject to the Estero Plan provisions and the Coconut Point DRG standards. Mrs. DeJohn stated that while they are still looking at the project from the 30,000 foot level, they expect that all standards will be met, except for the need for a height deviation from 3 stories or 60 feet needed for the planned 80 bed hospital to a maximum of 6 stories 90 feet should the hospital expand to 180 beds. LMHS wants to know at the outset that they can design the elements of the building so that in the future they could expand to a full 180 beds on a vertical basis.
- d. Mrs. DeJohn went on to state that they have met with the Mirasol community adjacent to them to discuss emergency access which is as far as possible from the Mirasol entrance. They have sent letters to all surrounding areas.
- e. Chairman Lienesch noted that, at the meeting with Mirasol, representatives of Spring Run, Mirasol, Shadow Wood, the Residences and Pelican Landing were present and had positive feedback. The representatives of Mirasol were specifically invited to the Panel Meeting to address any concerns following that meeting, but none was present. Chairman Lienesch then asked the Panel for any comments that they may have about these requests.
- f. Paul Roberts stated that the height might be somewhat of an issue. Dave Kistel from LMHS stated that from a patient care and internal movement standpoint the hospital is much more efficient on a vertical basis than as a lower, more campus like horizontal structure. When expanded, the structure goes to 5 floors plus a mechanic 6th floor. It clearly needed to be a vertical structure for patient clinical reasons. They also want to have space for an adjacent medical office building to support the hospital, close enough for efficient use.
- g. Jeff Maas: Questioned as to whether there is a need to offset the increase in office space. Mrs. DeJohn said that the uses allowed in the DRI for this parcel are limited by a maximum trip generation factor of 614 net, new external trips. Thus, any increase in medical office space in Tract 3A would require some corresponding

decrease in other uses. Having this limit will allow development of various uses within that parcel while still allowing flexibility among these uses.

- h. Roger Strelow commented on the height and the impact of the hospital building on surrounding communities. The height will be seen from many surrounding areas, not just Mirasol. He asked if they have done an analysis of the height from various points of view. Laura DeJohn said it is too preliminary since they have not done any architecture for the building. Strelow asked if they could provide some analysis based even on their preliminary thinking. It would be useful to the residents of that area even on an initial basis.
- i. Greg Toth stated that he agrees with Strelow with respect to the height being a key issue for the surrounding community, but he understands that the residents of Estero overwhelming want a hospital in the southern end of their community.
- j. Neal Noethlich asked for confirmation that the third floor was all patients in their design for the initial 80 bed hospital. A representative of LMHS replied that on the second floor there would be intensive care and surgery with the third floor as acute care beds. The emergency room involves short term treatment on the first floor. Neal Noethlich then asked about the ingress and egress to and from the hospital. Public access is off of Via Coconut, with the emergency access coming from the south off of US 41. The existing access points off of Coconut Rd., Via Coconut, and Pelican Colony Blvd. are all planned and exist along with the interconnect to the BCHC. It is not likely that there would be a signal at Pelican Colony Blvd. and US 41, so this road would continue as a right in, right out on both sides of US 41. It was suggested that a traffic light at that point might be too close to the signal at Coconut Road.
- k. Chairman Lienesch asked about the ambulance path from the north? The statement was made that it was likely that any ambulance arriving from the north will come down Via Coconut and back up Pelican Colony Blvd. Also there is a current helipad at BCHC, so they will have to coordinate the heliport for the hospital with BCHC.
- l. Secretary Levitan asked on behalf of the communities adjacent to the hospital, that LMHS should plan to buffer Via Coconut Drive as much as possible with a high berm and extensive plantings to minimize the visual aspects of the height of the building if possible.
- m. John Goodrich noted that while a 90 foot structure would be difficult for residents of Estero based on past development, there is very good community support for such a high structure if it were used for a hospital.
- n. Chairman Lienesch summarized the feelings of the Planning Panel and found broad support for the hospital use, and for the potential medical office building. He stated that the Panel wanted to limit the 90 foot deviation specifically to the hospital use.

- o. There followed a general discussion concerning the overall limits on office uses in the Coconut Point DRI. Greg Toth felt that the office uses overall in the DRI seem to keep getting larger, and we need to look at this on an overall basis. Traffic count is the key to the office or retail uses left in the DRI. Roger Strelow stated that he does not feel that there is a lot of pressure within the whole DRI. The former Art District might have really stretched the envelope from a traffic standpoint. Questions were raised about the rest of the DRI from a traffic standpoint, such as the proposed ALF structure. Russell Schropp stated that the limit on traffic generation is as to their Tract 3A, not the rest of the CP DRI.
- p. Chairman Lienesch again stated that there was overall support for this project by the Panel.

### **ECPP Issues.**

1. EDRC and ECPP Issues. A discussion ensued about whether a public hearing is still necessary even after the CP DRA has reviewed a project for purposes of the CP DRG. In the past with respect to the retail developments, the CP Town Center DRA did the reviews and just reported to EDRC on a quarterly basis. However, as to the other parcels within the CP DRI, they still had to have a public hearing before DOs were issued. Bill Prysi wanted it to be clear that the CP DRG does not define Chapter 33 of the LDC. The procedure that he believes is appropriate is that before a development order is released by the County, the CP DRG would state in their letter of comment or approval that the next step would be a public hearing before the EDRC. Neal Noethlich commented that the only change is that the process would allow a DO submission to staff prior to having a public meeting. Finally, there was a short discussion about the need to add back public participation language into the Community Plan.
2. RaceTrac. There appears to be some controversy between the Estero organizations here. Neal Noethlich has asked to postpone this discussion for a month until he can discuss this with all parties affected. We will bring this up again on January 27th at the next meeting.
3. HEX Hearing on Hess. The hearing will be held on January 18th. Bill Prysi and Jack Lienesch will be testifying. Jack Lienesch will testify on behalf of the ECPP. Toth feels that the Hess position is ridiculous. Our standards are not suggestions. They are trying to present this as a hardship for Hess to convert from a pylon sign to a monument, even though all other gas stations in Estero had to comply (like the nearby Shell and Mobil stations). The EDRC rejected the pole sign as planned, but would have agreed to moving the monument sign closer to the roadway if they built that design. The EDRC feels that the current standard of 15 feet setback for the sign is too far. Donna Marie Collins is the new Chief Hearing Examiner and she has good experience with our standards for the Community Plan and LDC provisions.

4. Estero Oaks MPD. This property along the northwest side of Estero Parkway and Three Oaks was owned by Oakbrook Properties. A potential purchaser has proposed to build a residential development on this property. The land is not in the Estero Planning District. We have received notification from the Staff about this happening, and the developers may want to present to the Panel on an information basis since it is so close to our district.
5. Chairman Lienesch reported that he had contact with someone who wants to have a series of concerts and other events on the Estero on the River property three days a week during Season. There is a LDC provisions governing temporary permits. The person renting the property from DeJamoos is inquiring how we might feel about this subject. Jack Lienesch says we are going to see something on this proposal at the January meeting, and that we may indeed hold a public hearing.
6. The EDRC meeting is scheduled for January 8th. Ned Dewhirst will be bringing a proposal regarding Mirasol.
7. The final Community Plan workshop will be on January 13th at 6:00 p.m. at the Community Park (SUBSEQUENTLY RESCHEDULED FOR THE 27<sup>th</sup>).
8. The next meeting is scheduled for January 27th at 5:00 p.m. at the Estero Community Center.
9. The Meeting was adjourned at 6:36 p.m. by Chairman Lienesch.

Respectfully submitted,

Howard J. Levitan, Secretary