



## City of Eustis

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### Minutes of City of Eustis/Lake County Commission Planning Work Group Meeting

Monday, April 19, 2021

Call to Order: 1:30 p.m.

Present: City of Eustis – Mayor Michael Holland, City Attorney Derek Schroth and Development Services Director Lori Barnes

Lake County – Board Chairman Sean Parks, County Attorney Melanie Marsh and Planning Director Tim McClendon

Present in audience: County Commissioner Leslie Campione, City Manager Ron Neibert, City Commissioners Willie Hawkins, Emily Lee and Nan Cobb

#### Introduction

Mayor Michael Holland called the meeting to order and announced the purpose of the meeting was to try and lay the groundwork for moving forward.

Chairman Sean Parks expressed his pleasure at being selected to represent the County and support for moving quickly. He introduced Tim Maslow, City of Groveland. He suggested setting some ground rules and possibly reaching a few points of agreement.

Tim Maslow, Community Economic Development Director, City of Groveland, introduced himself and noted they have recently adopted a form-based code and cited their emphasis on conservation of natural spaces, agriculture and walkable communities. He noted their new categories including hamlet. He cited his previous expertise with other agencies and expressed his willingness to help wherever he can.

Lori Barnes, City Development Services Director clarified some issues as follows: 1) The City does not utilize gross density, it calculates based on net density. She explained that the draft agreement mentioned gross density as that is what the property owner was willing to negotiate on. She added that water bodies and wetlands are not included in calculations; 2) The form-based code has different provisions for urban, suburban and rural developments. She clarified that the City's rural design standards are different than its suburban design standards. 3) Site design standards – She explained that there are standards that are City-wide; however, then there are specific design standards for the rural design district.

Tim McClendon, Lake County Planning Director, thanked her for the clarifications.

Mr. Parks asked for clarification of the City's PD category.

Ms. Barnes explained that a planned development is not a land use category in the City. It is an approval process. If an applicant wants to use the planned development approval process, they can. They would have to explain what makes their project unique and why it does not fit the City's regulations. They would also have to identify for a larger scale project the cause for certain uses and obtain their entitlements at a high level before they come in for subdivision plat approval. She stated the City does not have a planned development land use designation.

Mr. Parks commented on how the planned development could be utilized and asked if that could be part of the negotiations.

Mayor Holland agreed that could be used as a basis for an agreement to keep the City from having to negotiate every annexation.

Mr. Maslow confirmed that the area under consideration is in the Wekiva Protection area with Ms. Barnes reviewing the City's existing standards to protect the Wekiva Protection area.

Discussion was held regarding the joint planning boundary and uses within the boundary dating from 1987.

Mr. Parks confirmed that it was not the intent of the meeting to discuss the handling of enclaves with Mayor Holland indicating that would probably require a face to face meeting between the Commissions. He added it would require the City selling itself to the residents.

Mr. Parks discussed the County's Wellness Way project where they had approximately 29 property owners who were willing to sit down and discuss designating their property's land use. He commented on his recent discussions with the land owners in the Thrill Hill area.

Mayor Holland commented on various areas of environmental concern with Mr. Parks further discussing Wellness Way and how they are protecting various features of the area.

Discussion was held regarding issues with Thrill Hill Road and improvements that are needed and how any plan needs to address maintenance of the roads for the area.

Chairman Parks commented on how the property owners within Wellness Way had agreed to how the roads would be funded citing a clay road in that area that is being kept as a clay road to facilitate training for cyclists. Comments were made regarding whether or not the Thrill Hill area is used by cyclists.

Discussion was held regarding the difficulties in other areas where developments were placed on roads that could not handle the additional traffic and the overall difficulty with traffic in the County.



Discussion was held regarding utilities for the Thrill Hill area with Ms. Barnes indicating they are only a little over a mile away from existing City utilities and that the Wekiva Protection Area regulations require that development in that area be on central sewer.

Chairman Parks commented on the possibility of utilizing high performance septic systems for clusters of development which might reduce the amount of needed density to pay for the utilities.

Ms. Barnes indicated the City has capacity available to serve the area once it develops even at the maximum density. She explained that, prior to submitting an annexation request to the Commission, staff does a preliminary utility calculation and a preliminary traffic impact calculation. Once they get to preliminary subdivision plat, then they have professional studies performed.

Chairman Parks asked where the utilities currently exist with Ms. Barnes indicating on the map. Chairman Parks questioned the possibility of utilizing a district system rather than extending the lines which might reduce the needed density.

Mr. Maslow concurred and recommended the City do a cost analysis for those types of septic systems.

Mayor Holland asked if the high functioning district system would be allowed in the Wekiva area with Ms. Barnes responding that the City's comprehensive plan encourages the use of central sewer and stated her feeling that, if they can provide central sewer, they should.

Mr. Maslow asked if the City is looking to get a specific density with Ms. Barnes indicating the property owner has indicated they would be willing to accept three units per gross acre.

Discussion was held regarding if there are any wetlands in the subject area with Ms. Barnes stating the possibility there is a small area of wetlands on the southwest corner of the site. She also explained there are other studies that would be required in the Wekiva protection area. She clarified that there are actually three separate property owners that have requested annexation in the area.

Ms. Barnes then asked if they are proposing they jointly create a sector plan with Chairman Parks explaining it would be an "area plan". He indicated that the Wellness Way plan included expedited state review.

Ms. Barnes asked how long it took to develop the Wellness Way plan with Chairman Parks indicating it took a number of years due to Cemex suing the County which held up development of the plan.

Mr. Maslow cited the need for the County to analyze the number of property owners and sizes of the tracts in the area. He then asked what would the City like to see in the area.

Ms. Barnes explained how the form-based code functions and cited the applicable sections of the City's code.

Mr. Maslow asked if the applicants have submitted a plan for the development with Ms. Barnes explaining they do not have a concept plan at this time as that is not required for an annexation application.

Ms. Barnes stated that the City does not require a conceptual plan. She explained that it is a large investment for an owner to put into a property before even knowing if they will get the requested land use designation. She stated that the City's code specifically states you are not guaranteed to obtain the maximum density. She stated that site specifics will determine the actual allowable density. She then stated that tying a development plan to a specific land use designation can be done; however, it does not tie the property owner to that plan in perpetuity.

Derek Schroth, City Attorney, noted that the applications are public so the likelihood of them agreeing to something different may not be very high. He cited the one property owner's current lawsuit against the County.

Ms. Barnes commented on the City's mixed commercial/residential land use district. She stated that an applicant might bring in one concept plan but then later bring in a totally different plan. She explained how the City analyzes a submitted plan to insure it is compatible with the surrounding area. She presented maps showing the existing land use and design district designations. She explained Chapter 109 shows what lot typologies are allowed in each design district designation.

Mayor Holland commented on the City Commission's frustration with having to annex property before knowing what is planned. He questioned if other cities require a plan in advance.

Mr. Schroth indicated some cities do require a concept plan at the beginning. He stated the Commission has the discretion to add that requirement to the code.

Chairman Parks agreed stating his desire to know what is being proposed prior to approving an annexation. He commented on whether or not the applicants would be willing to go through a little longer process in order to get approval.

Discussion was held regarding the need for more specificity upfront with Mr. Maslow indicating that a concept plan is less expensive than a preliminary subdivision plan. He opined that a concept plan could provide more comfort for the residents.

Mayor Holland commented that any large scale annexation, particularly in the protected areas, is probably going to cause controversy. He commented on areas that have developed too fast and cited the need to insure that any developments look good.

Further discussion was held regarding how other areas have developed and the need to agree on larger area developments.

Discussion was held regarding resident desire for larger buffers and the need for greenbelts and wildlife corridors to preserve some of the open space and the possibility of having a density transfer system.



Discussion was held regarding the benefit of establishing an area plan upfront which will facilitate later annexations.

Mayor Holland and Chairman Parks commented on the negative impact of lawsuits and their desire to avoid those.

Mayor Holland asked Mr. Maslow to bring back some suggestions for an area plan.

Discussion was held regarding scheduling the next meeting.

Mayor Holland asked about the progress on the connectivity for the subject property with Chairman Parks stating they have asked for clarification from DEP with one of the attorneys asking some constitutionality questions. He stated they are awaiting a response from DEP before further action is taken.

Chairman Parks suggested contacting the property owners regarding their willingness to participate in development of an area plan. He also suggested scheduling time to insure the process moves forward quickly. He stated that ideally they can work with the residents to develop a plan.

**CONSENSUS:** It was a consensus of the work for Mr. Maslow to bring back his recommendations following discussions with Ms. Barnes and Mr. McClendon and for Chairman Parks and Mayor Holland to speak to the property owners regarding their willingness to go through the area plan process.


Melanie Marsh, County Attorney, recommended that Chairman Park not meet with the Harpers due to their existing lawsuit.


It was a consensus for the group to meet at 1:30 p.m. on April 26<sup>th</sup> again in the City Commission Room.

Discussion was held regarding the County park and its history.

Mayor Holland and Tim Maslow agreed to meet and take a tour of the subject properties.

The meeting adjourned at 2:46 p.m.

  
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MARY C. MONTEZ  
City Clerk  
City of Eustis

  
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MICHAEL L. HOLLAND  
Mayor  
City of Eustis