



Florida Stewardship Foundation

One Park Place, Suite 240, 621 N.W. 53rd Street, Boca Raton, Florida 33487
Phone: (561) 995-1474 FAX: (561) 995-1475 Email: info@fl-stewardship.com
Internet sites: <http://fl-stewardship.com>, <http://us-farm.com> & <http://privatelands.org>

Rural Lands Stewardship Council Meeting

April 11, 1-3 p.m.
Tallahassee

Meeting Summary

Attendance:

Council Members:

Chuck Aller	Director, Office of Agricultural Water Policy, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Tallahassee
Mike Busha	Executive Director, Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, Stuart
Eric Draper	Conservation Director, Florida Audubon, Tallahassee
Rick Drummond	Growth Management Director, Alachua County Growth Management Department, Gainesville
Craig Evans	President, Florida Stewardship Foundation, Boca Raton
Val Hubbard	Division Manager, Comprehensive and Environmental Planning, Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department, Tallahassee
Chuck Littlejohn	Executive Director, Florida Land Council, Tallahassee
Palmer Mason	Governmental Liaison, Florida Association of Counties, Tallahassee
Sue Mullins	Government Relations Manager, The Nature Conservancy, Tallahassee
Charles Pattison	Executive Director, 1000 Friends of Florida, Tallahassee
Al Reynolds	President and CEO, Wilson-Miller (planning, engineering & design), Naples
Steven Seibert	Secretary, Florida Department of Community Affairs, Tallahassee
Denver Stutler	Chief of Staff, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Tallahassee

Guests:

Walker Banning	Department of Community Affairs, Tallahassee
Jon Bussey	Department of Community Affairs, Tallahassee
Shawn College	Hillsborough County Planning Commission, Tampa
Terry Flora	Collier Enterprises, Naples
Mark Glisson	Department of Environmental Protection, Tallahassee
Tom Jones	Barron Collier, Immokalee
Brenda Menendez	Department of Community Affairs, Tallahassee
Michael Peltier	Naples Daily News, Tallahassee office
Jim Quinn	Department of Community Affairs, Tallahassee
Cari Roth	Department of Community Affairs, Tallahassee
Mike Taylor	Collier Enterprises, Naples

Absent:

Allison DeFoor	General Counsel, Tidewater Consulting, Tallahassee, and counsel to Hershoff, Lupino & Mulick in the Florida Keys
Chris Doolin	Vice President, Robert P. Jones & Associates; Legislative Consultant to the Small County Coalition, Tallahassee
Dave Fisk	Deputy Executive Director, St. John's River Water Management District, Palatka
Phil Leary	Governmental Liaison, Florida Farm Bureau Federation, Gainesville

Meeting Summary

1. Introductions
2. Overview of council's role
 - Engender cooperation among conservation and agricultural groups and agencies at all levels of government to coordinate actions throughout Florida to—
 - Create viable rural economies,
 - Protect and maintain ecological values; and
 - Promote land use patterns that retain rural character.
 - Reach consensus on and work to develop policies, procedures and guidelines that will promote the implementation of the “Rural Lands Stewardship Program.”
 - Help in reaching a reasonable accommodation of all interests in and a practical approach to the conservation of rural lands in places where land use controversies have been sparked.
 - Help in developing “innovative and flexible planning and development strategies and creative land use planning techniques” that are appropriate for rural areas.
 - Help in encouraging counties to launch pilot projects to test out and implement the Rural Lands Stewardship Program.
3. PowerPoint Presentation by Al Reynolds – *The Immokalee Area Study and Rural Lands Stewardship* -- describing the Rural Stewardship Program and "stewardship credit" system being developed for 195,000-acre Immokalee Study Area in Collier County
4. Discussion of PowerPoint presentation and Collier County effort.
5. General discussion about the Rural Lands Stewardship Program and the role of the council. See next page, “Promoting the Rural Lands Stewardship Program.”
6. Next meeting – immediately following the Florida Association of Counties’ annual meeting on Marco Island, June 26-28. Place and time to be announced.

Promoting the Rural Lands Stewardship Program

Two items relating to the Rural Lands Stewardship Program are included on the Department of Community Affairs, Division of Community Planning's web site.

The first item is a one-page description of the Stewardship Area program (this is a slightly revised version of the story that appeared in a recent issue of "Community Planning," the Division's newsletter).

The second item is a PowerPoint presentation explaining the Stewardship Area program. Both items are located at:

<http://www.dca.state.fl.us/fdcp/DCP/resources/publications/index.htm>

If you have suggestions for expanding the slide show to include additional information and important points about the program, or suggestions for additional material to post on the web site, please contact Walker Bannin, Community Program Administrator, Department of Community Affairs, 2555 Shumard Oak Boulevard, Tallahassee, FL 32399-2100, phone 850-487-4545, email Walker.Banning@dca.state.fl.us

How Well Do Existing Rural Policies Work?

At the suggestion of Charles Pattison, Executive Director of 1000 Friends of Florida, the Department of Community Affairs agreed to prepare a summary of sample local comprehensive plan policies (based on geography and size) dealing with rural and agricultural issues so that it will be possible to discuss these policies – and the good and the bad -- from different perspectives. This summary will include Collier, Hillsborough and Alachua counties, as well as other important rural and urbanizing rural counties. No time table was agreed to for preparation of the summary, which will be prepared by the Bureau of State Planning, Division of Resource Planning and Management.

The Following Suggestions Were Made by Participants in the April 11 Meeting

(Note: DCA = Department of Community Affairs; DOACS = Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services)

1. Promote the Following Features and Benefits of the Program:

- It will help solve growth management problems of counties
- It provides a focal point for development in rural areas
- It provides for reasonable development that is compatible with the maintenance of an agricultural and rural economy, and makes sure that certain lands are protected for this purpose. This explains WHY the rural lands stewardship program is being promoted and include:

- (1) retention of agricultural activities in stewardship sending areas;
- (2) directing incompatible uses away from wetlands and upland habitat(s);
- (3) appropriate conversion of rural lands to other uses; and
- (4) discouraging sprawl.

- It provides an incentive for “innovative” development in rural areas
- It’s an iterative process at the local level, which includes property owners, county citizens and local government collaborating together
- Shows DCA’s commitment to a county without being a “DCA program”.
- Allows more freedom to innovate at the local level with less oversight by DCA
- Allows DCA to say “yes” to local communities and to approve their planning changes
- Allows new and creative thinking
- It’s adaptable to many different types of situations
- Assists communities to establish a local vision, look at obstacles and then plan their amendments
- Provides an alternative to 5 and 10-acre lot developments, which finally pushes the urban line out and usually does not meet a county’s goals
- The program will institutionalize good planning for counties

2. Ways to Encourage Communities to Participate:

- DCA should partner with DOACS to get the word out about Alan Reynold's Collier study/ proposal. It is DOACS after all that has employees on the ground all over the state and could be the first line of contact to landowners and even county staff at various levels. If the two agencies entered into an agreement on what and how to package the program, they could be twice as effective (and expedient) in getting broader participation.
- Create a “success story” that we can sell to market the concept.
- Show that it is flexible.
- Convince property owners of the benefits of the program.
- Show that this sophisticated transfer of development rights (credits) works.
- Promote the value of the empirical base of the data collection
- Show that this data collection is better than the National Land Value formula. It is incredible.
- Funds need to be made available (especially to small counties) to do this.
- Explode the myth that development of 1, 5, 10-acre lots protects rural land; show the scenario and the cost of not doing it
- Have AI give more presentations to demonstrate a tool that is useful to help communities get started and be successful
- Evaluate which 5-10 counties may be “ready” and hold stakeholder workshops in each target promotional activities to them
- Show that this 1 piece of legislation can be adapted in many ways
- Hold presentations to educate citizens
- Show counties how to create a market for credits.
- Help DCA create a “success story” for a pilot program

3. Next Steps for the Council:

- Al Reynold's presentation is now available on CD and is being sent out to council members.
- Make available copy of the Collier County study, if possible, in the next 30-60 days.
- Continue to communicate through (short) emails (As Denver said: better to send 3 short emails than 1 long one)
- Develop guidelines for DCA and the counties through email etc.
- Re: RFLP Act: Work with legislators to obtain funding next year. Especially work with Senator Lisa Carleton, who opposed a House proposal to provide \$25 million in funding this year.

4. Upcoming Conference, June 26-28, Marco Island, Florida

- A panel discussion on rural land preservation tools is included on the agenda for the annual meeting of the Florida Association of Counties. Panelists include Agriculture Commissioner Charlie Bronson, DCA Secretary Steven Seibert (who will discuss the Rural Lands Stewardship Program) and a representative of the American Farmland Trust.
- Schedule face time for Secretary Seibert with the City and County Managers Association.
- A workshop immediately following the Florida Association of Counties annual meeting is under consideration for June 28 or 29 Collier County. Purpose of the workshop would be to give county officials an opportunity to see Al Reynold's PowerPoint presentation and to discuss the Rural Lands Stewardship Program further.
- Include Craig's presentation on the Economics of Rural Land at the conference
- Highlight other success products such as Sarasota County, Horizon West and E. Hillsborough County: show what fits and doesn't
- Use Collier County's product as an example of the first success story

5. Topics Not Discussed, But on which Input from the Council is Requested

- Should the council work to develop guidelines that can be used by local governments to maintain rural character and to foster sound rural development at the proper locations within rural areas? (These are the kinds of guidelines and standards that you would expect to see in a comp plan amendment establishing a Stewardship Area.) What are some of these guidelines?
- What topics should be discussed (and considered) in writing the DCA/county agreement that is entered into before the county amends its comp plan to establish a Stewardship Area? What provisions should the agreement contain?