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May 30, 2008

Clay Henderson
407 244 1103
clay.henderson@hklaw.com

Hon. Rodney J. Long, Chair
Alachua County Board of County Commissioners
P.O. Box 2877
Gainesville, Florida 32602

Re: Plum Creek Timberlands Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Dear Chairman Long:

This letter is a follow up to my letter to you of December 18, 2207 concerning Plum Creek's proposed land use amendment within the City of Gainesville.

On September 11, 2007, the Board of County Commissioners sent a letter to the City of Gainesville expressing concerns about the a land use amendment sought by Plum Creek Timberland for approximately 1,700 acres of land it owns bisected by SR 121 north of US 441 in Gainesville.

In December, the Gainesville City Commission voted to initiate land use amendments for the Plum Creek property. The vote was taken after two extensive public hearings which resulted in substantial changes to the original petition. Those changes have resulted in development of significant policies which mirror the Conservation and Open Space Element of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan.

On June 9, 2008, the City Commission will formally take up the comprehensive plan amendment on first reading for transmittal. The proposed ordinance reflects numerous changes prompted by comments from your Environmental Protection Department and several meetings with them as well. Key components of that proposed ordinance are as follows:

- Substantially all wetlands will be protected.
- 90% of floodplains will be protected.
- Species protected by Alachua County will be surveyed to determine suitable habitat.
- At least 40% and up to 50% of upland habitat will be protected.
- The project will utilize Low Impact Development practices to protect hydrology.
- Single family density of 1.25 units per acre.
- The project will utilize traditional neighborhood development design and smart growth techniques to promote compact urban development.

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By application of these policies, approximately 63% of the property will be protected as a conservation management area through a permanent conservation easement.

For all of the above reasons, we request that the Board of County Commission consider withdrawing its letter of opposition to the Plum Creek comprehensive plan amendment. At this stage in the process we believe it is important for the City Commission to know that the County Commission will not object to these amendments as they work their way through the process.

Again, we appreciate the important input that Mike Drummond and Steve Hofstetter of Environmental Protection Department have given to this project and look forward to continuing to work with you and your staff on developing innovative techniques for implementing strategic ecosystems in Alachua County.

Sincerely,

HOLLAND & KNIGHT, LLP



Clay Henderson

Enclosure

cc: Commissioner Paula DeLaney
Commissioner Lee Pinkoson
Commissioner Mike Byerly
Commissioner Cynthia Chestnut
Mayor Pegeen Hanrahan
Mike Drummond
Steve Hofstetter
Todd Powell

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