

Given that this is one of the biggest land use decisions in our city ever, it is crucial to take a 10-20-50 year perspective. How will our decisions today impact what our community's quality of life as we progress into the future?

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Comments by
WOW
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Will future generations admire the wisdom of default use for this land – low density piecemeal single family cul-de-sac sub-divisions that have marked our development patterns in the past? ^{The larger picture is} Development that puts great strain on our transportation infrastructure, clogs our roads, creates acres of impervious surfaces (streets, driveways, structural footprints) and uses mega-gallons of lawn-garden chemical applications that degrade the storm water and groundwater within the entire region. The inefficient use of the land exacts a heavy toll on our wildlife and the ecological equilibrium. In general, basic public services - fire, police and emergency services, utility delivery, schools - all strain at efficient delivery with this kind of development expansion at the urban fringe. And count on it: We all pay for it, particularly the traditional and established parts of our city as our services and needed infrastructure maintenance goes wanting – and economic vibrancy diminishes.)

Ben with me - ^{although} address the future

Let's try to assimilate the character and needs of our economic future for a moment, as outlined by a report "Linking the New Economy to the Livable Community" developed by The James Irvine Foundation:

- There has been a profound shift from the mass-production system to a new model of flexible specialization, with an emphasis on more diversified economic structure and smaller-scale economic units (55% work in small companies, less than 100). No net job increase within Fortune 500 in last ten years.
- There is a growing fit between where the New Economy is headed and the aspirations of the Livable Communities Movement
- Reintegration of work and home life:
- The home will become the center of many aspects of human life rather than a dormitory and place to spend the weekends – A way of life in which the work, family, and social environment merge in mixed-use neighborhoods and town centers. Author Charles Handy says, "Now for the first time in human experience, we have a chance to shape work to suit the way we live instead of shaping our live to fit our work. We would be mad to miss the chance."

What does the New Economy value about the tangible aspects of place?

- Distinctive quality of life (Quality of life has become a community's most valuable economic asset!)
- Vital Centers which offer lively amenities and opportunities for interaction and creativity – The proximity, density, and publicness that stimulate interaction and community identity – places to eat and drink, meeting facilities, recreation space and parks and plazas, health clubs, business service centers, libraries.
- The New Economy values the natural environment as a crucial quality of life component – environmental preservation and greenspace both within and surrounding developed areas. “New Economists” are entrepreneurs by day, and environmentalists by night. The New Economy brings the potential for quality development that is more compatible with environmental preservation and conservation.

Now in context with the above vision of the future...

- Does continued emphasis of piecemeal low density subdivisions within such a large expanse of City land make sense - Development that the owners have by right? In my estimation – No
- Does it make sense to plan for the land's future holistically and in consideration of adjacent neighborhoods and the entire community – Of course it does!
- Have the current plans as set forth by the owners/developers met this vision at this moment in time – No
- Have some of their efforts been constructive? Yes. They have, it seems to me, retained very respectable professional consultants that have evaluated hydrological factors well and have proposed meaningful strategies to monitor and mitigate stress to the systems. Their wetland analysis and buffering appears sensible. And some of their mixed-use proposals are appreciated.

For any ultimate ^{PD} approval I would have need of the following shifts in direction:

- A smaller development footprint with more compact mixed-use development within that footprint. State-of-the-art traditional neighborhood design principles should be applied that help create community and foster the living-work-play space sought by the new economics coupled with a significant reduction in the number of sprawling low density single family homes. The smaller footprint, more dense design would...

- Include a grid street network
- Create localized densities that work for transit, *to include*
- Allow for a significant increase in upland open space to compliment wetland preservation and provide for:
 - Both passive and active recreation
 - Thoughtful preservation of natural areas, wildlife habitat and wildlife corridors
 - An extensive network of bicycle/pedestrian trails
- Set aside space within development areas for future (undetermined?) public buildings, e.g. libraries, civic centers, police sub station, etc.
- Inclusive housing that plans for meeting the needs of a wide range of citizens.
- Development patterns considerate of the privacy of nearby retirement communities.
- An emphasis on local business and retail within the village center and limited big box development along US 441 (Plan for use of underutilized strip centers already in place to the south)

The owners/developers/community have three potential options:

- 1) Continue to evolve the present PD with the adjusted due date
- 2) Start fresh with a new PD, with a new sense of vigor and determination *+VISION*
- 3) Fall back to the generic subdivision development granted by present codes, a *suburban sprawl* continuum of the kind of decisions that has made Jacksonville and Orlando such wonderful places to live in

I wish to do everything I can to encourage the owners to do the right thing, at least, as I understand it.

Option 2, a new PD, with an improved vision of quality development, offers that best *choice* ~~option~~ in my opinion. However, I would also give them the choice of Option 1, evolving to a higher level quality and detail within the current PD by approving the time extension with the clear understanding that my expectations are very high for final approval, *I'm skeptical particularly given the limited time frame.*

I challenge the owners, developers, planners, commissioners, and the entire community to think out of the box, and forge a direction that builds community, responsibility and quality of life rather than stress and inequity ~~in the decades to come.~~

of classic suburban sprawl.