

# **Board of County Commissioners**

## **Agenda Request**

Date of Meeting: April 7, 2009

Date Submitted: March 24, 2009

To: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board

From: Lynn Artz, County Commissioner, District 5

Subject: Request Board Approval to Schedule a Workshop to Explore Alternatives to the Development and Proposed Sewering of Wakulla Gardens

---

### **Statement of Issue:**

This agenda item requests Board approval to schedule a workshop to explore alternatives to the development (as platted) and proposed sewerage of Wakulla Gardens.

### **Background/Description:**

Wakulla Gardens is a platted subdivision containing 5 units and 3,738 platted lots. It was platted between 1961 and 1965 with no infrastructure improvements or stormwater management. Typical lots within Wakulla Gardens are 50' wide and 100' deep. Construction consists primarily of 900-1300 sq ft single-family residences (though mobile homes are allowed in Unit 3). Units 2-4 and portions of 1 & 5 have water service. There are no paved roads, no sewer service, no stormwater treatment, and no conservation areas. Approximately 2500 lots are considered buildable. Roughly 900 residences are in place.

In 2008, the previous Board directed staff to research funding options for infrastructure improvements. Full build out was assumed. The cost for providing sewer to all the residences in Wakulla Gardens was estimated at \$14,000,000. Paving, curbing, sidewalks, stormwater, and streetlighting for 22 miles of roads would add nearly \$5 million more to the cost. Consultants were hired to develop a plan for running sewer to and throughout Wakulla Gardens. Wakulla County is currently poised to borrow \$20 million dollars to upgrade the County's wastewater treatment plant to AWT and extend sewer to Wakulla Gardens.

However, there are alternatives that the County, or at least this Board, have not considered, such as redesigning the subdivision to reduce the density, cluster residential development, and increase the open space. This approach has been used elsewhere in Florida where other counties have inherited antiquated platted subdivisions lacking infrastructure on an even large scale.

One important advantage of such an approach is that infrastructure can be provided more efficiently. Having fewer and more clustered homes in Wakulla Gardens would reduce the costs of running sewer lines to homes in the subdivision (and also reduce paving costs). Further, it would allow consideration of even more efficient approaches to wastewater treatment including cluster systems and artificial or constructed wetlands, both of which can provide onsite wastewater treatment to

Agenda Request: Request Board Approval to Schedule a Workshop to Explore Alternatives to the Development and Proposed Sewering of Wakulla Gardens

April 7, 2009

Page 2

---

AWT standards for dramatically reduced cost. Most importantly, having fewer homes and more open space in this environmentally sensitive area will better protect ground water quality.

**Analysis:**

Before the County commits to borrowing \$20 million dollars to run sewer to and throughout Wakulla Gardens, it would be prudent to explore alternatives that would better protect water quality and more efficiently provide needed infrastructure to Wakulla Gardens.

**Options:**

1. Direct staff to schedule a workshop in mid-April to explore alternatives to the full build out and proposed sewerage of Wakulla Gardens. The purpose of the workshop will be to discuss the information found at the links listed as attachments (as well as additional information and proposals that will be collected between now and the workshop).
2. Do not direct staff to schedule a workshop to explore alternatives to the full build out and proposed sewerage of Wakulla Gardens.
3. Board direction.

**Recommendation:**

Option #1

**Attachment(s):**

1. <http://charlottecountyfl.com/MurdockVillage/> including ...  
<http://www.charlottecountyfl.com/MurdockVillage/MVinitiativeFAQs/>  
<http://www.charlottefl.com/outreach/murdockvillage/ULIPlattedLandsDevelopmentStrategy.pdf>
2. <http://www.nefrpc.org/pdfs/whitePapers/subdivisions.pdf>
3. <http://www.capecoral.net/Portals/0/docs/EDO/Evalueserve%20Pre-Platted%20Land%20Research.pdf>
4. <http://floridalandscams.wordpress.com/2008/08/25/a-history-of-florida-land-scams/>
5. <http://www.spikowski.com/landscam.htm>  
[<http://jpe.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/19/1/27>]