



ALVA

A Living Vision of Alva

Alva Inc. is dedicated to preserving the tranquility and beauty of Alva
P O. Box 2022, Alva FL 33920 www.alvafl.org

January 28 2011

Mr. Paul O'Connor, AICP
Director, Planning Division
Department of Community Development
P.O. Box 398
Fort Myers FL 33902

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Dear Paul:

Thank you for your letter of November 30th. I would like to share with you our recent activities and provide other general comments.

As you may know the request to work toward a common community plan outlined in Ms. Gibbs' letter of July 20th was presented at our August meeting by Ms. Ebaugh and Mr. Noble. It was well received by the Alva Inc. members.

Based on the request, over the past few months Alva Inc, with Dr. Jerry Murphy's assistance, reviewed the submitted North Olga Plan and incorporated the vast majority of its goals, objectives and policies within the draft Alva plan. These activities were accomplished at advertised open meetings and were further vetted on www.alvafl.org and with Alva Inc. Newsletter (distribution: approximately 500 Alva families). This draft Alva plan has recently been submitted to your staff and offered to Dr. Van Roekel, President of the North Olga Planning Panel.

While the offer to work with the North Olga Planning Panel stands with ALVA Inc., I would like to clarify that, to date, there has been neither acceptance of the offer nor scheduling of the collaborative workshops to build a unified community plan that Ms. Gibbs spoke of in her letter.

Your letter confused us as it talked about two community plans rather than the one plan in Ms. Gibbs' letter, and we feel the need to comment - our goal of one community plan remains. Further, we offer the comment below on Ms. Gibbs' statement that there exist "two distinct areas", and your statement regarding the "distinct characteristics".

The preponderance of residents consider it one area containing rural lands and the Alva Village. The village is unique and necessitates its own sub-plan or overlay. If there is an area (in addition to the Alva Village) that anyone proposes should have a special overlay it should be brought forward. That being said, *the overwhelming majority of residents contend little if any distinction exists within all the rural lands north of the river between SR 31 and the county lines, and none that would warrant separate treatment or two community plans.* With the exception of a county line, one could easily extend the comment to include Bayshore and West Hendry County.

Alva residents love their community. They work in consonance with their neighbors in Bayshore and West Hendry County to retain our rural quality of life. Alva residents are proud of the Alva name. Generations have lived under it. *Alva residents do not distinguish areas east and west of the regional park.* Representative of the entire area, the Alva Inc. board members reside throughout the Alva area, with over half residing west of the regional park. *Removing areas of Alva from Alva would deprive residents of the heritage they love, respect and defend.*

We respectfully suggest the following:

- Neither “two distinct areas” nor “distinct characteristics” exist in the minds of the vast majority of Alva residents regarding the rural area north of the river – a need that overrides the will of the community should be proven before establishing a separation.
- Any meetings to address planning in this area should be open to all residents and well advertised to include road signage, local newspapers, the Alva Inc. Newsletter and www.alvafl.org . Roberts Rules of Order or a similar process should be used to conduct meetings.
- If an organization is to receive taxpayer funds for community planning, in addition to the Sunshine Law considerations noted above, *membership of the organization should be open to all area residents, and officers/board members should be elected by the open membership at large.*

We look forward to the collaborative workshops to build a unified community plan as Ms. Gibbs discussed.

Sincerely,


Ruby Daniels
President

Cc: Commissioner Frank Mann
Commissioner Tammy Hall
Commissioner Brian Bigelow
Commissioner John Manning
Commissioner Ray Judah
Mary Gibbs
Matt Noble
Kathie Ebaugh
Dr. Dennis Van Roekel
Alexis Crespo
Dr. Jerry Murphy
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