

Miller, Janet M.

From: Les Cochran [Les@stepupinc.com]
Sent: Monday, May 14, 2007 3:48 PM
To: nandress@comcast.net; ringe@landsolutions.net; rawessel@sccf.org; Lmt7979@hotmail.com; snook00@earthlink.net; carleton819@aol.com; Susanmte@leeschools.net; Mann, Frank; Miller, Janet M.; Lmt979@hotmail.com
Subject: The Fountains project

LPA Colleagues:

As many of you know, I have a long-standing, out-of-town commitment and will be unable to attend the LPA meeting on May 21, 2007. Because of the significance of The Fountains project, I want to share my perspectives and ask that my statement be officially entered into the minutes of the May 21 meeting.

The Fountains presents a well-conceived concept for a totally integrated public community. South Star Development Partners has developed a strong team approach that results in an appealing approach to building an urban community. They have proposed to make land available for public services, particularly schools, fire, and transportation; and have made a substantial financial commitment to address infrastructure needs. The project has something of value for many publics and may likely be desired by some.

While there are many positive aspects of The Fountains, it compounds existing concerns (transportation, water, etc.) and raises more serious issues regarding the availability and use of DR/GR land. Beyond its overall conceptual framework, the project is fundamentally flawed. It proposes the construction of over four thousand housing units that extend urban sprawl at the expense of critical DR/GR land. It plans to address regional "wants" (Olympic pool, University facilities, hotel, etc.) in an area that is composed of a substantial amount of DR/GR land. These desires need to be fulfilled elsewhere in Lee County without the loss of DR/GR land. Further, while the planned public golf course meets some needs, it has a substantial negative impact on water supply and usage in this area.

The Fountains addresses important low- and moderate-cost housing needs and local shopping and restaurant needs, but its comprehensive nature to provide for numerous community/regional wants/interests simply exceeds the capacity and wise use of the site. It is for these reasons that I am opposed to land reclassifications in this area that diminish the current level of DG/GR land designed to protect groundwater supply and limit urban sprawl. Any projects approved for this area should be consistent with existing broad parameters. Within this context, I would suggest a project greatly reduced in scope that focuses on the construction of a Town Center with accompanying low- and moderate-cost housing.

Sincerely,

Les Cochran

5/30/2007