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The Lee Communities Coalition Applauds Commission's Decision to Send Comp Plan and LDC Changes Back to Staff

Vote Shows that Public Outcry is Being Heard

On Tuesday, the Lee County Commission voted to hold off on making proposed changes to the Lee County Comprehensive Plan (Amendment CPA2026-00005) and revisions to the Land Development Code (LDC) that would entirely eliminate community specific planning across Lee County and create one-size-fits-all rules for development.

The vote came with a mandate that county planning staff develop a revised timeline for revisions that include robust public outreach and communication to educate communities about the changes. The motion to put the process on hold was made by Commissioner Kevin Ruane and seconded by Commissioner David Mulicka and, after lengthy discussion, passed.

"I can tell you I'm not going to be done {reviewing the documents} by Oct. 7 and the community is as enraged as I've ever heard them before, so I don't want anyone to feel like we're rushing it," Ruane said, adding that he didn't see "the 9-1-1 urgency" to pass these changes now.

Ruane and other commissioners commented that they were still parsing through 400 pages of documents and trying to make sense of the changes while also responding to constituent phone calls and emails.

"I'm on the record saying I was proud to second the motion on April first last year that we wanted to DOGE things up and we wanted to get government out of the way and be easier to do business with in Lee County... {but} I never in a million years would have thought that meant deleting the names of the communities out of the Plan altogether," Mulicka said. "I thought we were just trying to make things consistent."

While The Lee Communities Coalition (TLCC) applauded the pause, it cautioned that there was still much work ahead.

“We want to commend Commissioners Ruane and Mulicka for their sensible approach to this issue that recognizes the community uproar over how the process has been handled and the need to slow things down,” said Nadine Slimak, Coalition Coordinator and long-time Board Member for the Greater Pine Island Civic Association — where the first Community Plan was developed. “Clearly, it’s not just a handful of folks who have concerns. Our Coalition alone includes residents from Buckingham to Captiva and all points in-between.

“We’d like thank the commission for recognizing the need for county staff to meet with affected communities and the need for a simple outline of changes written in layman’s terms. But we maintain that this whole process should be put on hold until the state-mandated review of the Lee Comprehensive Plan is due in 2028. That’s the ideal time to sit down community-by-community and talk about what’s working and what’s not.

“Our communities are filled with reasonable people who can work together. After all, we spent years working together to develop growth and zoning rules that allow for development while keeping the character of our individual communities intact. Why would the County think we are suddenly unable to work with them again?”

About

The Lee Communities Coalition is an alliance of civic and community organizations working together to preserve meaningful citizen participation and community-specific planning in unincorporated Lee County. Lee County’s communities may be different, but our local voices deserve to remain involved in all of the decisions that shape them.

Coalition Members

- Greater Pine Island Civic Association
- Matlacha Civic Association
- Buckingham Community Association, Inc.
- Alva, Inc.
- Captiva Civic Association
- Captiva Community Panel
- Concerned Citizens of Bayshore Community, Inc.
- Greater Pine Island Water Association