

Public Comment
CPA 22-06 Calusa Creek Ranch
Text Amendment

Combined with Public
Comment for CPA 23-12, The
Ranch FLUM

From: villagebootery@comcast.net
To: [Comish](#)
Subject: JWA Ranch, Calusa Creek Ranch
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2023 12:26:18 PM
Attachments: [letter2.docx](#)



Dear Commissioners of Martin County,

This letter is in response to the proposals presented to the LPA last Thursday by JWA Ranch concerning two amendments to the Rural Lifestyle Designation.

Thank you for your consideration,

Benjamin Schuemann

Benjamin T. Schuemann

Schuemann Farm

Indiantown, FL

November 13, 2023

Martin County Commissioners and the Local Planning Agency of Martin County

Dear members of the Local Planning Agency of Martin County

On Thursday, November, 16 2023 two proposed amendments will be brought forth to the agency concerning changes to the Martin County Comprehensive Growth Plan. The Calusa Creek Ranch project, which seeks to designate 3902 acres of agricultural land for Rural Lifestyle use. The applicant seeks a Future Land Use Map change *and* a Comprehensive Plan text amendment to **expand** the Rural Lifestyle designation to apply to more acreage in the County's western farmlands.

The Calusa Creek Ranch is a diverse land with lush palm trees, freshwater marshes and towering cypress domes, it was first surveyed in 1845 and is home to a variety of wildlife, including the Ocala Turkey, a breed unique to Florida. The Ocala turkey's most significant threat is human development and land conversion. According to Calusa Creek's own website, Calusa Creek has always been appreciated for its beauty, diversity and wildlife. Tribes such as the local Cherokee and Seminoles Indians favored areas near Lake Okechobee, such as Calusa Creek, because of the diverse game and readily available clean water. The ranch is also home to a herd of over 850 Brangus cattle.

The Rural Lifestyle designation approved by Commissioners Harold Jenkins, Doug Smith and Stacey Hetherington is available for any property of 1,000 or more contiguous acres adjacent to the primary or secondary Urban Services District or a freestanding USD. The Calusa Creek Ranch amendment would eliminate the requirement for property to be adjacent to a USD and would allow the Rural Lifestyle designation to be applied to property within 6,000 feet of the USD if the property is a minimum of 3,000 acres. Furthermore, The Calusa Creek Ranch proposal would change the text of the Comprehensive Plan to allow for density in excess of one unit per 20 acres, although a proposed maximum density is not specified . . . the proposal provides that maximum density will be the "density allowed in the P.U.D".

It is vital that the leadership in Martin County honor our agricultural heritage by preserving our ranch lands and natural resources. The Martin County Comprehensive

Growth Plan was created in 1982 to protect the environment and guide growth and development. By allowing the developer these major amendment changes would be unethical and go against everything the Comprehensive Growth Plan stands for! It will open wide the doors to the "Browardization" of Martin County, a fear that our good residents have fought so hard to avoid. The Rural Lifestyle Amendment was unpopular from the beginning and amending it even further, to allow urban sprawl to go unchecked, would be dishonest. The Rural Lifestyle Designation must be limited -- not expanded.

I urge the Planning Agency to strongly encourage the County Commissioners to reject these amendment proposals from JWA Ranch LLC. Thank you for your consideration.

Benjamin T. Schuemann

Clyde Dulin

From: Greg Braun <execdirector@theguardiansofmartincounty.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 11:06 PM
To: Clyde Dulin
Cc: Paul Schilling; pschilling@martin.fl.us; legal@theguardiansofmartincounty.com; powens@1000fof.org
Subject: The Ranch - CPA 22-06 and 23-12
Attachments: Guardians Position Paper on golf courses outside the USB - rev 11-14-23.pdf

**Caution: This email originated from an external source.
Be Suspicious of Attachments, Links, and Requests for Login Information**

Greetings Clyde: The Guardians of Martin County have reviewed documents related to the request to amend the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan to authorize the construction of residences, golf villas and two golf courses on lands outside the County's Urban Service Districts for a project called "The Ranch".

After several contentious public hearings, the approval of the Rural Lifestyle Zoning was conditioned upon applicants having a minimum 1,000 acres and being adjacent to an urban service district. As noted in the Staff Report, this proposed project does not meet both of these criteria.

The Guardians have recently investigated the status of golf courses in Martin County, and attached is a Position Paper that we have developed regarding golf courses that are proposed for locations outside USD boundaries. We are concerned that the proposed Ranch PUD will require public services that are most cost-effectively provided to properties that are within the USD.

We request that the County require that a permanent conservation easement (that will be held by a third-party conservation entity) or deed restrictions be imposed on all portions of the subject property that are not otherwise protected through upland and/or wetland Preserve Area Management Plans.

Please add this correspondence and the attached Position Paper as public input for the LPA mtg on November 16, at which CPA 22-06 and 23-12 will be discussed, and forward this information to members of the LPA for their consideration. Thank you.

Greg Braun
Executive Director
The Guardians of Martin County

Please use this address for all Guardians-related emails



**Executive Summary of Guardians Position on Golf Courses proposed on lands outside Martin County's Urban Services Districts
November 14, 2023**

Public and private golf courses provide open space and recreational opportunities for thousands of residents and visitors to Martin County. The approximately 30 golf courses in Martin County occupy approximately 12,000 acres and provide habitat for a variety of native flora and fauna and serve other environmental purposes (e.g., stormwater retention, groundwater recharge etc.).

Several recent requests that public water and/or sewer services be extended outside Martin County's Urban Service Districts to serve golf course projects have caused the Guardians to investigate potential ramifications of these public services extensions. Due to the increase in property values that are realized once utility services are provided, the Guardians are concerned that without more thorough protection, the properties will be more attractive for future conversion to residential or other higher-intensity uses.

Conservation

For projects that involve the extension of water and/or sewer utilities outside the USDs, the Guardians believe that permanent conservation easements or deed restrictions should be required for the portions of all new golf course projects that are not permanently protected through Preserve Area Management Plans (PAMPs). The Guardians suggest that the requirement for permanent conservation easements could be conditions associated with the County's Planned Unit Development (PUD) approval.

Water Supply

To the extent allowed by State law and/or rules of the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), the Guardians encourage use of surface water waters from the C-44 Reservoir, the C-44 Canal, Lake Okeechobee and reclaimed water for irrigation of golf courses in preference to withdrawals from the surficial aquifer.

Water Quality

To the extent allowed by law, and to prevent further degradation of surface waters, the Guardians request that Martin County require continuous water quality monitoring as conditions of Planned Unit Development (PUD) approvals when local approvals are sought for new projects, including but not limited to golf courses, at locations where these proposed facilities will discharge into water bodies that are designated as Impaired. If monitoring reveals that discharges from the property do not meet the applicable water quality standard and/or are resulting in adverse water quality impacts in the downstream receiving water body, the property owners shall have the responsibility to retrofit their system to prevent degradation of waters of the state. Monitoring can cease or be scaled back after construction has been completed and the facility has operated for five years if no degradation is observed.



**Guardians position on Golf Courses proposed on lands outside Martin County's
Urban Services Districts
November 13, 2023**

Since its roots in Scotland in the middle ages, the sport of golf has spread widely, with golf currently being played in all states in the U.S., in most foreign countries and on all continents, including at outposts in Antarctica¹. It is physically and mentally challenging, and stimulates participants to exercise their physical and competitive skills.

With approximately 1250 golf courses², Florida has more golf courses than any other state in the country. In Florida, a favorable climate and diverse landscapes from oceanfront to the panhandle offer golfers a seeming infinite variety of courses, most of which are in close proximity to major urban centers. In Florida, Palm Beach County leads the pack, with 160 courses³.

Using U.S. Census Bureau statistics for 2022 (the most recent year available)⁴, with 29 existing golf courses in Martin County, the County has a higher ratio of golf courses to population (5,586 residents/golf course) than Palm Beach County (9,490 residents/golf course), which is likely one of the highest in the state, and possibly one of the highest in the country and the world.

Based on the popularity of golf in Martin County and its positive economic benefits and potential environmental concerns, on June 6, 2023, subject experts Dr. Bryan Unruh (University of Florida), Mike Davis (past CEO of the United States Golf Association) and Thomas Barrett (Director of Agronomy, McArthur Golf Club) made a presentation at a meeting of the Martin County Board of County Commissioners focused on Best Management Practices. (see Agenda Item DEPT-6 Agenda Item: 23-0864; and the video recording at https://martin.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=24 beginning at 2:06).

In spite of a recent increased local interest in building new golf courses in Martin County, in recent years, golf has been going through challenging times.

¹ <https://blog.thesocialgolfer.com/golfing-in-antarctica/>

² <https://tellymoregolf.com/beginners/states-with-the-most-golf-courses>

³ <https://golfweek.usatoday.com/2021/06/24/pgs-tour-tiger-woods-jack-nicklaus-brooks-koepka-rory-mcilroy-palm-beach-county/>

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau,
<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/martincountyflorida,palmbeachcountyflorida/PST045222>

Following previous increases, there was a peak of 30 million golfers in 2005⁵.

By 2011, however, the number of golfers in the U.S. had dropped to 25.7 million, a 16% decrease in participation over an eight-year span⁶. This decline in the popularity of golf continued during the last decade⁷. In the years immediately preceding the pandemic, golf in the U.S. was waning, with increasing costs for participants, reduced amounts of available time and other factors contributing to this decline⁸.

In 1000 Friends of Florida's 2021 Special Report Golf Course Redevelopment or Repurposing in Florida (J. Gloster, 2021) stated "We are entering an era where most people prefer other, less time-consuming recreation and entertainment, frequently in digital forms. Additionally, longer working hours have reduced Americans' leisure time to an average of 2.5 hours per day, not enough time for many to play "a sport that takes between 3 and ½ and five and ½ hours to play"⁹.

The COVID pandemic, on the other hand, resulted in an increased interest in golf, with many people seeking recreational opportunities that took them outdoors, in activities that were comparatively low in risk for transmission of the virus. Golf courses adopted strategies to further minimize this risk¹⁰, and golf was again on the up-swing, literally.

Golf Courses in Martin County

A recent inventory of golf courses in Martin County performed by the Guardians has revealed that there are 30 existing golf courses in the County and six that are either under construction or for which approvals are being sought (Appendix 1 and Figure 1).

These existing and proposed courses vary considerably in size, from small courses less than 100 acres (i.e., Palm Lakes, Miles Grant, Jupiter Island) to larger courses in excess of 400 acres (i.e., McArthur, Atlantic Fields/Discovery, 3-Lakes, The Ranch).

5 Crompton, John L. 2020. , *Implications of the Rise and Decline of Golf*, PARKS & RECREATION, THE NRPA'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE (Jun. 25, 2020), <https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreationmagazine/2020/july/implications-of-the-rise-and-decline-of-golf/>.

⁶ Conant, Blake Jeffrey, 2009., *Bankrupt Golf Courses: An Historical Analysis and Strategies for Repurposing*, University of Georgia, https://getd.libs.uga.edu/pdfs/conant_blake_j_201305_mla.pdf at 11.

⁷ Burke, Kathleen, 2017. *Playing Golf Has Gone the Way of the 3-Hour Martini Lunch—Trump Being the Exception*, MARKETWATCH (Mar. 29, 2017, 7:53 PM), <https://www.marketwatch.com/story/why-golf-has-gone-the-way-of-the-three-martini-lunch-2016-07-13>.

⁸ Tuttle, Brad, 2014. Fore! No, Make that Five! 5 Reasons Golf is in a Hole". In Money, <https://money.com/golf-dying-tiger-woods-elitist/>

⁹ Benfield, F. Kaid 2015. *Could Placemaking Become New Golf? Repurposing Obsolete Courses*, SMART CITIES DIVE (updated Mar. 16, 2015), https://www.huffpost.com/entry/could-placemaking-become_b_6873934.

¹⁰ <https://golf.com/news/golf-course-combat-coronavirus/>

These sizes are consistent with nationwide averages, which is typically approximately 170 acres, not including any surrounding residential or resort development, which often increases project size to a minimum of 300 acres ¹¹.

Nearly all golf courses in Martin County are privately owned and operated, often by homeowner's associations. Two (i.e., Sailfish Sands and Summerfield) are properties owned by Martin County. They also vary considerably in age, with several (e.g., Palm Lakes, Jupiter Island) having been constructed decades ago, and several others (e.g., McArthur West, Atlantic Fields/Discovery, 3-Lakes, The Ranch, Rolling Sands) either being under construction or for which approval for construction has been applied.

In total, these existing and proposed courses occupy approximately 12,000 acres, many of which include County-mandated upland and/or wetland preserves, which provide habitat for a variety of native flora and fauna, including some endangered or threatened species (e.g., Florida scrub-jays, gopher tortoises), store/retain stormwater, and recharge the surficial aquifer.

Environmental values are further enhanced on those courses that are certified in Audubon International's Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses (<https://auduboninternational.org/acsp-for-golf/>), a voluntary program which accredits specific golf courses that go above and beyond minimum environmental and/or ecological requirements to meet the program's criteria. It is noted this Cooperative Sanctuary program is administered by Audubon International, which is not affiliated with the National Audubon Society. Two golf courses in Martin County (i.e., Loblolly Golf Club and Sailfish Point) are presently certified by Audubon International (https://directory.auduboninternational.org/directory?memberCategory=acsp&city=&state=FLORIDA&country=United%20States%20of%20America&zipcode=¤t_page=4) Two others, Harbour Ridge and The Floridian, are just across the county's boundary in St. Lucie County. Several additional golf courses certified by Audubon International are present in Palm Beach County.

Many of the existing golf courses in Martin County are either a valuable component of a residential development or have residences overlooking their fairways, tees, greens or preserves.

Golf Courses and Martin County's Comprehensive Growth Management Plan (Comp Plan, CGMP)

A key philosophy in Martin County's Comp Plan is the recognition that public services (e.g., potable water, sewer, emergency services etc.) can be provided most cost-effectively where population densities are the highest. By restricting development projects that need public services to areas within the primary or secondary Urban Service Districts (USDs), the County is able to provide those services at a lower cost than if the same development projects were to be serviced outside the USBs.

¹¹ Conant, Blake Jeffrey, 2009., *Bankrupt Golf Courses: An Historical Analysis and Strategies for Repurposing*, University of Georgia, https://getd.libs.uga.edu/pdfs/conant_blake_j_201305_mla.pdf at 11.

Golf courses, whether publicly-owned or privately-owned are an allowable use on lands outside the USBs (Land Development Regulations, Vol 2, Div 3, Sec 3.11). Golf courses, by their nature, require large areas of land, often provide valuable habitat for native flora and fauna, and have a high ratio of open space to impervious area.

Many golf courses in Martin County are key features of residential developments. Some of Martin County's most prestigious developments consist of residences that front golf courses, and the use of those golf courses by residents promotes physical and mental health and prevents or reduces the need for off-site impacts on roads, traffic, and other public services.

During the early years of the pandemic, several golf courses were proposed to be constructed at locations outside Martin County's USD boundaries. While, as noted above, golf courses are allowed outside the USBs, several proposed courses have requested that public water and sewer services be extended outside the USD to serve their facilities. Many golf courses have water requirements, either for irrigation and/or wastewater treatment, that exceed the limits that are allowed for facilities outside the USBs in Martin. Connecting to public water services in these situations is logical, as, in general, there is less potential for water quality related problems when compared to stand-alone water treatment systems. And furthermore, re-claimed water (i.e., water that has been treated through a public wastewater treatment system) is then available for irrigation and other non-potable purposes.

Problems arise, however, when, in spite of the best intentions, outside factors result in the failure of golf course/country club projects. Property owners who paid higher prices to live "overlooking the golf course", may, rightfully so, object to a change of land use if the golf course amid their development is proposed for a different use, particularly if that land use is of higher intensity (e.g., residential).

Golf courses are expensive to operate and maintain, and whole-course renovations, which are occasionally necessary, are exceedingly expensive. In a sign of troubling economic times, some courses have encountered financial challenges too severe to overcome, and have ceased to operate. In these cases, what happens next can vary considerably.

In February 2022, a request by Mattamy Homes to construct a 282-unit residential complex on the site of the former 45-year old defunct Sherbrooke golf course in Palm Beach County was rejected by the County's Planning, Zoning and Building Department after hundreds of residents and concerned citizens voiced opposition to the project, citing concerns about traffic, loss of open space and other quality of life impacts¹². Similar situations have likely occurred elsewhere.

¹² (Palm Beach Post, 2021) Palm Beach Post, <https://www.palmbeachpost.com/story/news/local/lakeworth/2021/08/06/sherbrooke-residents-dont-want-new-homes-old-golf-course/5496631001/>

Statement of Problems/Opportunities

In Martin County, where residents have consistently elected county commissioners who have run on platforms of “not moving the urban services district boundary”, there are concerns that, after public water and/or wastewater services are extended to serve a new facility, there may, at some time in the future, be a request to change the land use from golf course to a higher intensity residential.

To reduce the likelihood of this eventuality, and to promote the permanent “green” connotation of golf courses, the Guardians believe that permanent conservation easements or deed restrictions should be required for the portions of all new golf course projects that are not permanently protected through Preserve Area Management Plans (PAMPs) whenever those projects are proposed to be constructed outside the County’s Urban Services Districts if the projects involve the extension of water and/or sewer utilities outside the USDs.

Water Supply

Golf Courses require substantial amounts of water for irrigation. The United States Golf Association reported that: “From 2003-2005, the average water use for golf course irrigation in the U.S. was estimated to be 2,312,701 acre-feet per year. That equates to approximately 2.08 billion gallons of water per day for golf course irrigation in the U.S.”¹³. In peninsular Florida, where most water withdrawals are from the shallow, “surficial” aquifer, water is a precious commodity. While there may be some comfort in knowing that water withdrawals for golf courses are likely less than what may have been permitted for golf courses that are constructed on previously-existing agricultural lands, groundwater withdrawals have the potential to negatively affect limited sub-surface water supplies.

In Martin County, rainfall typically results in an over-abundance of water during the rainy season (typically May-October) and the need for irrigation during the dry season (typically November-April), during times that the surficial aquifer may be in a depressed condition. The State of Florida and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) has determined that Martin County is within a “Water Resource Caution Area”, which Rule 62-40.210(39), F.A.C., defines as: “.. a geographic area identified by a District as having existing water resource problems or an area in which water resource problems are projected to develop during the next twenty years”¹⁴.

¹³ Lyman, Gregory T., 2012. How Much Water Does Golf Use and Where Does It Come From? Presented by the U.S. Golf Association.

¹⁴ Rule 62-40.210(39), F.A.C.

In 2023, The Guardians recognize that the existing surface water management system in Martin County is highly managed. Discharges from Lake Okeechobee via the C-44 Canal to the South Fork of the St. Lucie River are managed through a complex inter-relationship between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the SFWMD. Situated on approximately 12,000 acres, the C-44 Reservoir and its associated Stormwater Treatment Area (STA), are a regional water management facility that is used primarily to accommodate water from the local basin and treat it before discharging it to the C-44 ¹⁵.

Fresh water from the Lake Okeechobee and C-44 watersheds have elevated levels of nutrients (e.g., nitrogen, phosphorus). Use of nutrient-enhanced waters for irrigation reduces the need for fertilizers.

The Guardians encourage use of surface water waters from the C-44 Reservoir, the C-44 Canal, the Lake Okeechobee Service Area or reclaimed water for irrigation of golf courses, in preference to water withdrawals from the surficial aquifer. It is recognized that the ability to use these waters for golf course irrigation may be affected by the designation of these areas by SFWMD as a “Closed Basin”¹⁶.

Water Quality

Most golf courses require the use of chemicals (e.g., fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, etc.) to keep their facilities green and aesthetically appealing. Rain-water run-off from golf courses has the potential to carry these chemicals, and/or their break-down constituents, into surface waters, both on-site and potentially to off-site locations.

The construction and/or operation of golf courses has the potential to cause adverse water quality impacts in downstream receiving waters. As a close-to-home example, in 2018, unauthorized discharge into the South Fork of the St. Lucie River during the construction of the Grove XXIII Golf Course resulted in fines levied by the South Florida Water Management District¹⁷

In recognition of Florida’s unique geology, topography and environment, and the potential for golf courses to adversely affect water quality, the Florida Chapter of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America worked with professionals from the University of Florida and others to develop a manual on the “Best Management Practices for the Enhancement of Environmental Quality on Florida Golf Courses”¹⁸. The potential for adverse downstream water quality impacts from golf courses can be lessened when/if the owner conscientiously implements these Best Management Practices (BMPs).

¹⁵ SFWMD, 2020 C-44 Reservoir and Stormwater Treatment Area Factsheet

¹⁶ SFWMD, Environmental Resource Permit Applicant’s Handbook and Basis of Review

¹⁷ Club and Resort Business, 2018. <https://clubandresortbusiness.com/grove-xxiii-developer-fined-polluting-st-lucie-river/>

¹⁸ Florida Chapter of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, Best Management Practices for the Enhancement of Environmental Quality on Florida Golf Courses

Adherence to golf course BMPs is currently voluntary in Florida, with the exception of those courses that discharge into waters that have been declared by the State of Florida as “Impaired”¹⁹.

The Guardians recognize that the State of Florida, through its rules implemented by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and/or SFWMD attempt to protect surface waters from adverse impacts. Unfortunately, several surface waters in Martin County have been designated as “Impaired”. These include the St. Lucie River and portions of the Indian River Lagoon, for which Basin Action Management Plans (BMAPs) have been developed in an attempt to address water quality deficiencies. While State efforts may be underway to revise water quality standards, the extent to which any such revisions will have a marked effect on improving water quality is unknown.

Protection of receiving waters could be further enhanced if golf course owners/designers would engineer on-site storage systems to preclude off-site discharges, ideally, or at least to exceed the levels presently required for on-site retention.

Martin County recently submitted a grant application in which they requested federal funding, which, if approved, would allow the county to significantly enhance their water quality monitoring program.

While the Guardians support the County’s request for funding for enhanced water quality monitoring, we believe that new sources of potential pollution, in this case golf courses, should be required to perform intensive water quality monitoring at their own expense rather than as financial burden to the County and its taxpayers.

Water quality monitoring by the Ft. Pierce-based Ocean Research & Conservation Organization (ORCA)²⁰ and Florida Atlantic University’s Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute (HBOI)²¹ have shown the value in conducting real-time continuous water quality monitoring. While their monitoring equipment may differ (i.e., Kilroys for ORCA and LOBOs for HBOI) the reliability of data collected by continuous recorders is exponentially more enlightening than analyses of “grab samples” that are collected and analyzed quarterly or semi-annually.

¹⁹ Chapter 62-303 F.A. C.

²⁰ Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute, Florida Atlantic University, Land/Ocean Biogeochemical Observatory. <http://fau.loboviz.com/>

²¹ Ocean Research & Conservation Association, Kilroy Mapping and Monitoring, <https://www.teamorca.org/monitoring-mapping/>

Because golf courses are subject to regulation by the State of Florida, and Martin County's authority to regulate these facilities may be affected by Section 403.9339 F.S., the Guardians request that the County require continuous water quality monitoring as conditions of a PUD agreement when local approvals are sought for new projects, including but not limited to golf courses, at locations where these proposed facilities will discharge into water bodies that are designated as Impaired.

Monitoring is requested not just for the sake of getting water quality data. Conditions of development approval must contain provisions that require that appropriate modifications to water management systems be designed and implemented if the monitoring reveals that discharges from the facility do not meet the applicable water quality standard and/or are having adverse water quality impacts in the downstream receiving water body.

The quality of surface waters in Martin County is directly tied to our economy, our environment, and our ability to pursue recreational activities. We cannot wait for the years/decades to tick by as Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan projects are designed and implemented.

The Guardians believe that Martin County has the authority and responsibility to take actions to prevent further degradation and permanently protect environmentally-valuable open spaces.

Appendix 1
Existing and **Proposed** Golf Courses in Martin County

Map Loc'n #	Golf Course Name	General Location	Public Private	Gross Acres (Est) ²	W/in primary or secondary USB?	Comments
1	Palm Lakes Golf Club	North River Shores: West of US-1, North of Roosevelt Bridge	Private	~ 70	Primary	W/in residential area
2	Jensen Beach Golf Club ¹	North of Jensen Bch Blvd, E of US-1	Private	~ 300	Primary	Part of PUD
3	Sailfish Sands	Stuart; SE of Witham Field	Public	~ 310	Primary	County-owned
4	Monarch Country Club ¹	Palm City; N of Monterey Rd	Private	~ 310	Primary	Part of PUD
5	Martin Downs Golf Club ¹	Palm City, NW of Monterey Rd and west of High Meadows Ave	Private	~ 300	Primary	Part of PUD
6	Hammock Creek Golf Club ¹	Palm City; East of High Meadows Ave	Private	~ 365	Primary	Part of PUD
7	Piper's Landing	Palm City, East & west of Mapp Rd south of Martin Hwy	Private	~ 135	Primary	Part of PUD
8	Willoughby ¹	Stuart; east of Willoughby Blvd	Private	~ 150	Primary	Part of PUD
9	Indian River Plantation	Hutchinson Island	Private	~ 70	Primary	Part of PUD
10	Sailfish Point	Southern tip of Hutchinson Island	Private	~ 125	Primary	Part of PUD
11	Stuart Yacht & Country Club	Port Salerno; East of Dixie Highway, north of St. Lucie Blvd	Private	~ 100	Primary	Part of PUD
12	Miles Grant	Port Salerno; East of A1A north of Cove Rd	Private	~ 65	Primary	Part of PUD
13	Mariner Sands ¹	Port Salerno; between US 1 and A1A	Private	~ 200	Primary	Part of PUD
14	Summerfield ¹	Port Salerno; West of US 1 South of Cove Rd	Private	~ 200	Primary	Part of PUD; County owned; Leased to Summerfield HOA

15	The Florida Club	Tropical Farms; between Turnpike, Kanner Hwy & Pratt-Whitney Rd	Private	~ 140	Primary	Part of PUD
16	Lost Lake ¹	Port Salerno/Hobe Sound; north of Seabranh Blvd	Private	~ 130	Primary	Part of PUD
17	Heritage Ridge ¹	Hobe Sound; Between US 1 & A1A north & south of SE Heritage Blvd	Private	~ 100	Primary	Part of PUD
18	Loblolly ¹	Hobe Sound; Between A1A & SE Gomez Ave north of Osprey St.	Private	~ 115	Primary	Part of PUD
19	McArthur (East)	Hobe Sound; W of US 1, S of Poinciana Gardens & N of The Medalist	Private	~ 400	Primary	Part of PUD
20	McArthur (West)	Hobe Sound; West of US 1, S of Poinciana Gardens & N of The Medalist	Private	~ 500	Secondary	Part of PUD
21	The Medalist	Hobe Sound; West of US 1 south of Poinciana Gardens & south of McArthur	Private	~ 290	Primary	Part of PUD
22	Jupiter Island	Jupiter Island; south of Bridge Rd	Private	~ 85	Primary	Pre-dates PUD
23	Hobe Sound Golf Club	Hobe Sound; North of Bridge Rd, west of US 1	Private	~ 120	Primary	Part of PUD
24	Grove XXIII	Hobe Sound; North of Bridge Rd., East of I-95	Private	~ 200	Outside	Part of PUD
25	Jupiter Hills	SE Martin County; west of US 1 north of County Line Rd	Private	~ 225	Primary	Part of PUD
26	Ranch Colony/Dye Preserve	Ranch Colony	Private	~ 150	Outside	Part of PUD
27	Jonathan's Landing – Old Trail	Ranch Colony	Private	~ 260	Outside	Part of PUD
28	South Fork High School	Tropical Farms: West of I-95 & FL Turnpike, East of Pratt-Whitney Rd.	County	< 5	Secondary	County-owned
29	The Cape Club of Palm City	Stuart West – west of Palm City	Private	~ 200	Outside	Part of PUD
30	Indianwood	Indiantown	Private	~ 135	Primary	Part of PUD

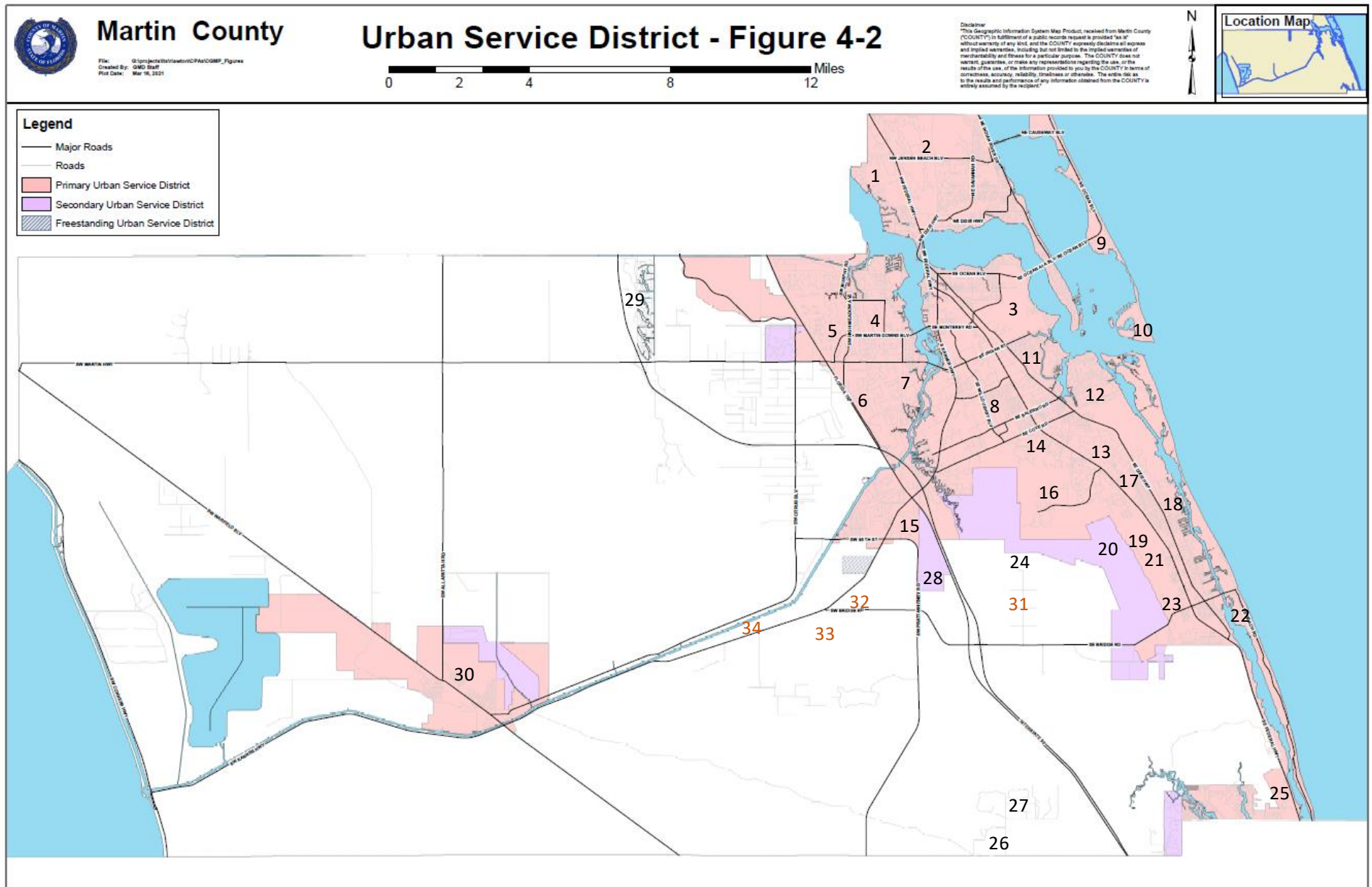
	Proposed					
31	Atlantic Fields/Discovery Land ¹	Hobe Sound; North of Bridge Rd, east of I-95	Private	~1,000	Outside	Part of PUD
32	3-Lakes (3 courses)	Tropical Farms; North of Bridge Rd, east of intersection with Kanner Hwy	Private	~ 1,200	Outside	Proposed; Part of PUD
33	The Ranch	Tropical Farms; South of Bridge Rd & Kanner Hwy south of C-44	Private	~ 3,900	Outside	Proposed; Part of PUD
34	Rolling Sands	North of Kanner Hwy, west of The Ranch	Private	~ 240	Outside	Proposed; Part of PUD

¹ Acreage calculation includes residences

² Includes wetlands, upland preserves, and wetland preserves

Figure 1

Location of Existing (shown in black) and **Proposed (shown in brown)** Golf Courses in Martin County in relation to Urban Service District boundaries
For golf course names, see Table 1



From: [The Guardians of Martin County](#)
To: [Sarah Heard](#)
Subject: Save the Date: County Commission Meeting on Tuesday, Dec., 5th – time TBD
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2023 2:50:09 PM



[View this email in your browser](#)





[Source: Staff Report for Calusa Ranch Comp Plan Text Amendment.](#)

6,000 foot new extension (swirled area) to the USD for contiguous development under proposed RLZ amendment, as well as the Calusa Ranch.

On Tuesday, December 5th the County Commission is scheduled to consider two new requests to amend the Comprehensive Plan for Rural Lifestyle Zoning (RLZ) land use. This change will allow development on Calusa Ranch, a 3,900+-acre tract outside the Urban Service District, located on both sides of Kanner Highway near the western terminus of Bridge Rd. Note that part of Calusa is adjacent to the St. Lucie Canal.

Presently, Calusa Ranch does not have access to municipal water or wastewater services.

The request is for;

1. 175 homes, two golf courses, 24 golf course cottages and dormitory housing for staff support;

2. Multi-slip docking facilities on the St. Lucie canal;
3. A general store;
4. To extend RLS Developments to 6,000 feet from the USD for parcels over 3,000 acres (Indiantown excepted).

County staff made the determination that these RLZ changes would allow Calusa revenue-generating “support establishments” (i.e. spa, racquet club, gym, event facilities, marina, etc.). The County does not consider the project to be urban sprawl and Calusa will not result in an increase of traffic on Kanner Highway! Incredulous!

To date, the Guardians’ request to require permanent conservation easements on open land that would not otherwise be protected has been ignored.

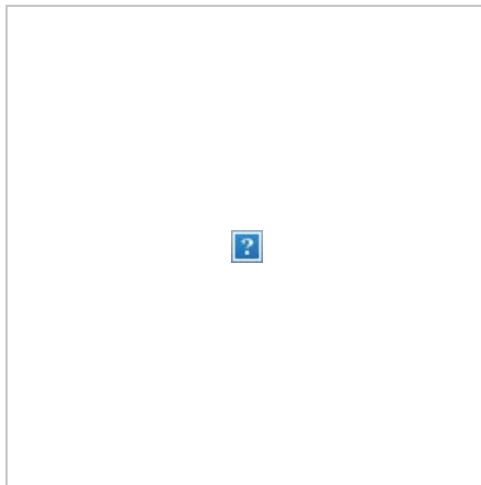
For anyone who is interested to learn more of the details of the proposed project, see the Agenda items for the Local Planning Agency for Calusa Ranch on November 14, 2023 here [Comp Plan Text Amendment](#) and [Future Land Use Map Amendment](#).

The Guardians will be sending out a detailed ‘call to action’ during the week of 11/27, but please set aside some time on December 5th, and the days leading up to it, to let the county commissioners know how you feel about these amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.

There appears to be a rush to get this approved, but in recognition of this time of the year, it looks to us like a turkey!

Please share this message with your friends and neighbors!

Live Responsibly, Protect Our Future.



Share

Tweet

Forward



A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES AT 1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352) OR <http://www.FloridaConsumerHelp.com>. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. THE GUARDIANS OF MARTIN COUNTY, A NOT-FOR-PROFIT 501(c)3 ENTITY. REGISTRATION# CH30115.

Copyright © 2023 The Guardians of Martin County, All rights reserved.

You are receiving this email because of your relationship to The Guardians of Martin County

Our mailing address is:

The Guardians of Martin County
P.O. BOX 1489
Hobe Sound, FL 33475

[Add us to your address book](#)

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)

From: [Ellen Dwinell](#)
To: [Sarah Heard](#)
Subject: Comp plan
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 5:40:49 PM

This Email Sent From External Sender

Please vote against changing the comp plan in any way. Martin County is special , because it is. Not ruined YET.

From: [SHARON](#)
To: [Comish](#)
Subject: CPA 22-06 and changes to the Rural Lifestyle designation
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 3:50:01 PM



Commissioner Heard,

After reading the proposed text amendment to the Rural Lifestyle designation, prompted by the developer who just purchased 3000+ acres for \$50M, I am very concerned about the strength of our RL amendment to have any real impact on managing the growth and impact of large developments and what and where it can be applied. Additionally the county staff has proposed wording changes to the RL amendment not requested that weaken the RL amendment.

The changes below that are proposed by MC Staff are the most problematic and should not be allowed. You were elected to use your judgement.. You have the power to reject the staff's proposed changes.

Changing the wording from minimum to "a portion" the amount to acreage (touching an urban service boundary) required to allow the land to be classified as eligible opens the opportunity for very relaxed standard for the property to be eligible.

Changing the wording from planned unit development to "Rural Lifestyle future land use designations" as the boundary from which utilities provided by the development within the RL amendment can service/extend again allows for very relaxed standard for the boundary.

That is in addition to the fact that property within 6000 ft of our urban/freestanding service boundary to qualify. Again, we are weakening the requirements to development and eroding the strength of our regulations that have preserve our quality of life.

MC is trying to get it's citizen to eat and elephant one bite at a time. Before long our regulations will be so weak that you will not have any power to reject developers request and the growth will go unchecked and our vision for MC will change .

I expect each of you to reject this proposal and any changes to the RL Amendment. You were elected to use your judgement. Is your staff looking for a reason to reject this proposal? What is the real power of our Urban Service district? Does it not have any provisions for rejecting this request?

Regards,
Sharon McGinnis
Rocky Point

From: [Deana Peterson](#)
To: [Comish](#)
Subject: Please vote NO
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 8:27:44 PM

This Email Sent From External Sender

Dear County Commissioners,

It is my understanding that on December 5, 2023, you will consider two Comprehensive Plan Amendments -- a text amendment and a Future Land Use Map amendment -- to expand acreage designated for Rural Lifestyle use. The text amendment eliminates the requirement that Rural Lifestyle communities be adjacent to an Urban Services District if the property is at least 3,000 acres and is 6,000 feet (more than a mile) from an urban services boundary. The FLUM amendment is for the Calusa Creek Ranch project consisting of 175 homes, two golf courses, 24 golf cottages (up to 6 bedrooms each), employee dormitories, multi-family dock facility on the St. Lucie Canal, and other "amenities."

We must stop overdevelopment of farmland and rural conservation land.

We need rural lands and space for migratory birds, endangered panthers, and so many more animals that depend on this rural land. Golf courses and pickle ball courts are not green spaces

We were sold a bill of goods by commissioners delaying the vote on the initial changes to the comp plan to then change their vote after the election. We were also told it would be limited. Not many acres qualified. Seems we were lied to. Please please please stop this rampant overwhelming development. Please protect green space for future generations.

Thank you!
Deana

Deana Peterson
RE/MAX of Stuart
(772) 631-0643

From: [April watson](#)
To: [Comish](#)
Subject: Rural lifestyle
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 8:20:15 PM

This Email Sent From External Sender

Good evening,

I'm hoping you take the time to read the emails that I'm praying your constituents are sending regarding the heavy development of our county. I understand we have a comp plan and I'm pretty certain we have surpassed it!

If anyone is arguing the affordable housing prices that is a joke! What do you consider affordable? If they are arguing the fact there is no houses available that is a joke! There are over 800 available on realtor.com!

The county put in the urban services to help protect our agriculture community which is slowly diminishing before our eyes.

Our roads can not support the growth that has surpassed the 2% that has been the habitual responsible amount.

Our taxes have done nothing but increase since this commission has taken office! I have heard campaign slogans that have been broken time and time again once that commissioner has gotten in to office.

I'm praying enough is enough and we stop the over growth of our community and over taxation of our citizens. Let's take a stand against the developers and stop allowing them free access to any and all of our land!

Let's try to save what little agriculture we have left and make Martin County great once again. The place your citizens are proud to be a member of and willing to stand up for what is just.

~April
Martin County Resident

From: [Krysten Brown](#)
To: [Comish](#)
Subject: Reject the Calusa Creek Comprehensive Plan Amendments
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2023 1:41:00 PM

This Email Sent From External Sender

To whom it is concerned,

As a Martin county resident who raises outside of city limits in “rural” Martin County I am asking you to reject the Calusa Creek Comprehensive Plan amendment that would allow for a large influx of homes and yet another golf course. We live in rural communities because we seek and prefer the small town feel and do not welcome this kind of change. Please serve us your current constituents by not allow for this imposition.

Kind Regards,
Krysten Brown

From: [Judy Holden](#)
To: [Comish](#)
Subject: comprehensive plan ammendments
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2023 1:03:10 PM



Do not vote for the two comprehensive plan amendments. We must stop overdevelopment of farmland and rural conservation land.

--

*Judy Holden
102 Black Bear Trail
Hobe Sound, FL 33455
C: 203.912.3142*

From: [sarah heard](#)
To: [Sarah Heard](#)
Subject: Fwd: BOCC may expand Rural Lifestyle
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2023 7:35:05 AM



----- Forwarded message -----

From: Virginia Sherlock <vsherlock@lshlaw.net>
Date: Mon, Nov 27, 2023 at 6:33 PM
Subject: BOCC may expand Rural Lifestyle
To: Virginia Sherlock <vsherlock@lshlaw.net>
CC: Virginia Sherlock <vsherlock@lshlaw.net>

On December 5, 2023, the Martin County Board of County Commissioners will consider two Comprehensive Plan Amendments -- a text amendment and a Future Land Use Map amendment -- to expand acreage designated for Rural Lifestyle use. The text amendment eliminates the requirement that Rural Lifestyle communities be adjacent to an Urban Services District if the property is at least 3,000 acres and is 6,000 feet (more than a mile) from an urban services boundary. The FLUM amendment is for the Calusa Creek Ranch project consisting of 175 homes, two golf courses, 24 golf cottages (up to 6 bedrooms each), employee dormitories, multi-family dock facility on the St. Lucie Canal, and other "amenities."

Please let Commissioners know that enough is enough! We must stop overdevelopment of farmland and rural conservation land.

Please attend the meeting at 9:00 a.m. on December 5 at the County Administration Center or send an e-mail to commissioners at comish@martin.fl.us.

Ginny Sherlock

LITTMAN, SHERLOCK & HEIMS, P.A.

P.O. Box 1197

Stuart, FL 34995

Telephone: (772) 287-0200

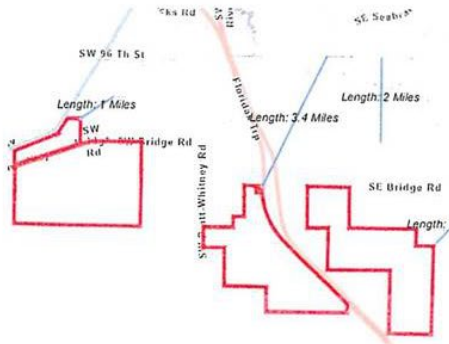
Facsimile: (772) 872-5152

www.lshlaw.net

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

Enough Traffic - Enough Golf Courses - Enough Pollution - Enough Taxes

Tell Martin County Commissioners to reject the Calusa Creek Ranch amendments to our Comprehensive Growth Management Plan. On December 5, 2023, Commissioners will vote on proposed Amendments CPA22-06 and CPA23-12 which would revise the Rural Lifestyle land use designation to expand development and suburbanize more agricultural land in western Martin County. Attend the meeting at the Administration Center, 2401 SE Monterey Road, Stuart, Florida, at 9:00 a.m. to speak out for the Martin County Difference.



Commissioners are being asked to eliminate the requirement that land designated for Rural Lifestyle use be adjacent to an Urban Services District, allowing parcels of at least 3,000 acres to be designated for Rural Lifestyle use if an urban services boundary is within 6,000 feet. Calusa Creek Ranch wants to build 175 homes, 24 golf cottages, employee dormitories, two golf courses, a multi-slip boat docking facility, and other amenities on 3,902 acres off SW Bridge Road and SW Kanner Highway bordering the St. Lucie Canal.

The Calusa Creek Ranch amendments take Rural Lifestyle more than a mile outside the Urban Services District into farmlands, wetlands, marshes and cattle grazing land in western Martin County and will change our Comp Plan and development patterns forever. **The project is not allowed under current rules. Calusa Creek Ranch wants Commissioners to change the rules for this development and others that follow.**

The cost to Martin County residents is enormous.

Ask anyone who tells you that growth pays for itself to explain why our taxes are increasing year after year as development booms.

Ask anyone who loves Martin County to explain how important it is to preserve water quality, wildlife habitat, native vegetation, free-flowing roadways, our urban boundaries and community character that make Martin County different from counties to our north and south.

Tell Commissioners that Enough is Enough! Reject the Calusa Creek Ranch Comp Plan Amendments.

Say "NO" to expanding Rural Lifestyle. Say "YES" to the Martin County Difference.

From: [Janet Jorden](#)
To: [Comish](#)
Subject: Rural Lifestyle?
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 4:49:37 PM



Dear Commissioners,

I have just learned that next Tuesday, December 5th, there will be two new requests to further amend the Martin County Comprehensive Plan so a new development can be included in the Rural Lifestyle Zoning. Really, do we actually need more golf courses? Urban sprawl? Further pollution to our waterways from fertilizers and herbicides?

I am adamantly opposed to these further changes, and will certainly do my best to see that any commissioner who votes in favor of this is not re-elected when their term is up. We, the voters of Martin County, have found it difficult in the past to rid ourselves of commissioners whose sole purpose appears to be destruction of Martin County. Perhaps this blatant attempt to change the entire character of our county will be the wake up call many need to finally open their eyes to the impending destruction leading to a new era of Martin County for the rich and famous only.

Thank you all for your service, and I remain hopeful that this ridiculous development, Calusa Ranch, will never see the light of day!

Very truly yours,

Janet Jorden
5299 SE Horseshoe Point Rd
Stuart, FL 34997