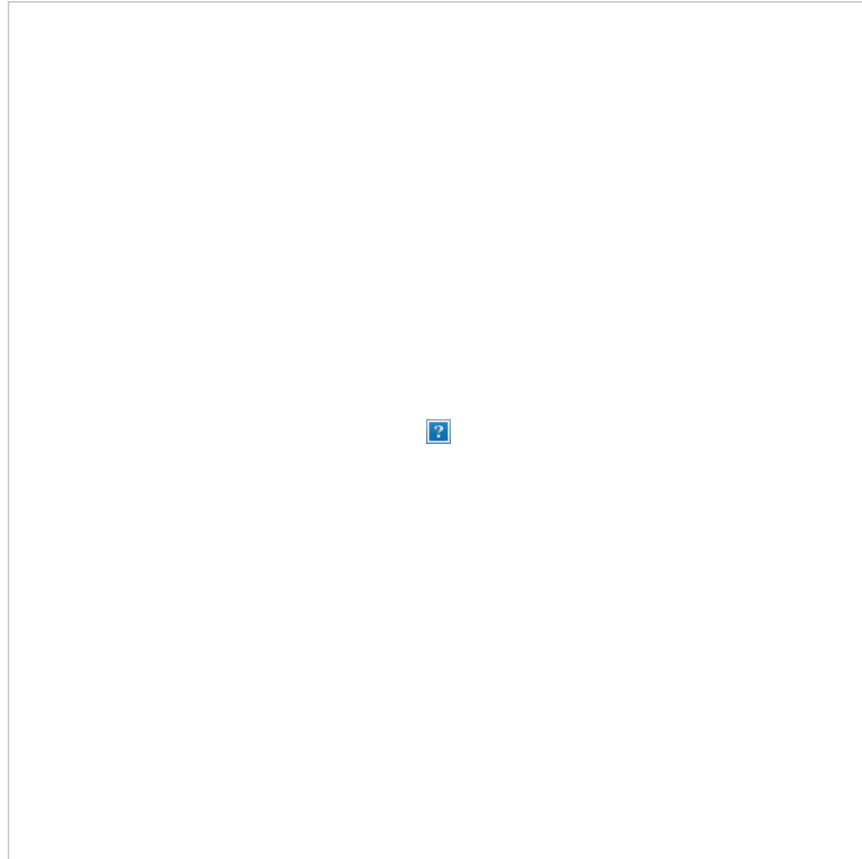


From: [The Guardians of Martin County](#)
To: [Sarah Heard](#)
Subject: Community Updates from Commissioner Heard 10/30/2024
Date: Wednesday, November 6, 2024 9:33:25 AM



[View this email in your browser](#)

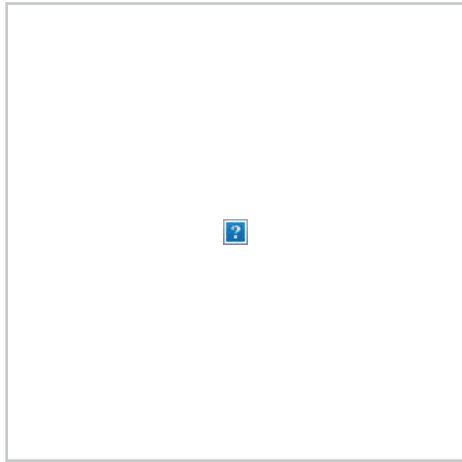


The Guardians continue engagement with [Martin County](#) regarding proposed amendments to the County's [Comprehensive Growth Management Plan \(Comp Plan\)](#) that have the potential to adversely affect the quality of life that we all cherish.

See Commissioner Sarah Heard's summary below describing recent actions taken by the County Commission.

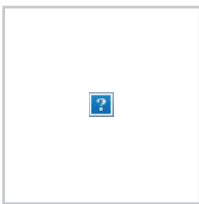
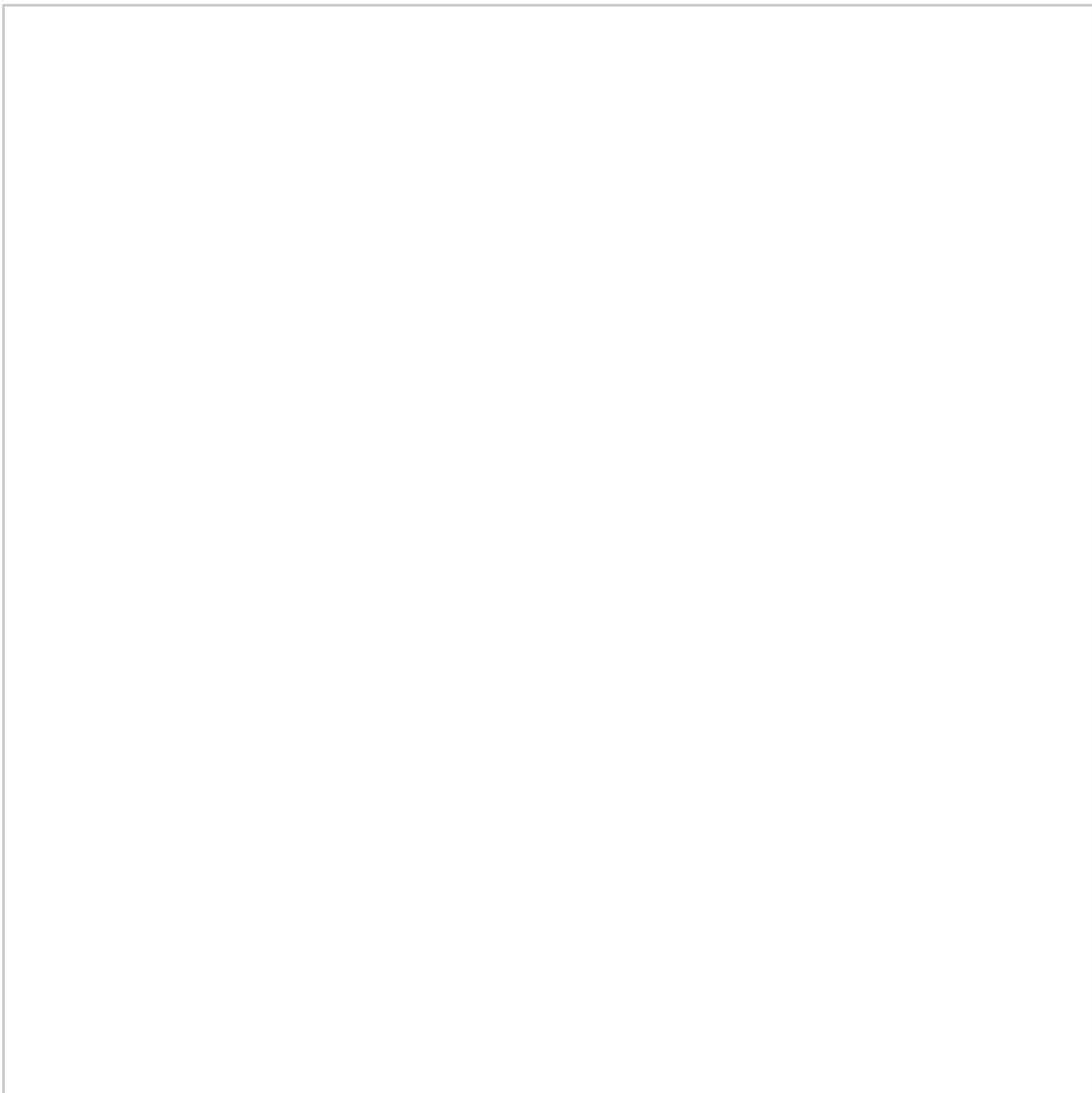
The Guardians provided comments on several of the proposed Comp Plan Amendments that have now been transmitted to Tallahassee for review by various state agencies. It is our understanding that commissioners-elect Blake Capps (District 3) and Eileen Vargas (District 1) will likely have taken their seats prior to a future adoption hearing.

Live Responsibly, Protect Our Future.



Commissioner Heard's Newsletter

**Martin County Commissioner Sarah Heard
District 4 Newsletter - October 30, 2024**



Contact Information

Commissioner Sarah Heard

 sheard@martin.fl.us

Executive Aide Sarah Philion

comaide4@martin.fl.us

(772) 221-2358

Dear Friends,

October 9th was a cruel and destructive day for many homeowners in Martin County, especially hundreds of homeowners in District 4. We have seldom experienced ravaging tornados in Florida but 3 monstrous tornados, spawned by Hurricane Milton, wiped out neighborhoods on that day. Especially hard hit were Manatee Lakes, New Monrovia, The Preserve, Mariner Sands, Port Salerno and Rocky Point.

So many first hand accounts are terrifying. With no warning, front doors exploded, windows exploded, glass flying everywhere, furniture hurtling by, cars flipped over like toys, roofs exploding overhead and vanishing. Miraculously, in the midst of all that powerful mayhem, no one was killed. But, lots of folks

lost their worldly goods and the homes that held them.

Martin County makes me most proud and thankful as we respond to emergencies. The outpouring of love and support and aid has been wonderful.

The path of the storm's destruction was really uneven in Martin County. For 90% of our residents the tornadoes had no impact. But, for many the deprivation and destruction and realization are just beginning. The road to recovery will be long and hard.

I want all residents to know that recovery in these damaged neighborhoods is Martin County's top priority. Keeping these neighborhoods intact and rebuilding are our top priority. We will see you through this. We will keep you safe and sound.

Resources are available. We will help you connect to them. Please call our office if you need information or help. 772-221-2358.

Here are some critical resources including links and phone numbers.

[FEMA](https://www.fema.gov) 800-621-3362

[Hope Florida](https://www.hopeflorida.com) 833-438-4673

[United Way](https://www.unitedway.org) 772-283-4800

[House of Hope](https://www.houseofhope.org) 772-286-4673

[Elevate Hope](https://www.elevatehope.com)

[Salvation Army](https://www.salvationarmyusa.org) 772-228-1471

Martin County Human Services SHIP Assistance, 772-288-5456

[Covenant Fellowship Baptist Church](https://www.covenantfellowshipbaptistchurch.com)

[Catholic Charities](https://www.catholiccharities.org) 561-345-2000

Senator Gayle Harrell, 772-221-4019

Representative Toby Overdorf, 772-221-4961

John Snyder, 772-403-1064

We are sorry for your losses.

We are determined to help in every way possible. We have been faithfully and diligently removing storm debris daily since the hurricane. Martin County will remove all of your storm debris for free but it needs to be put in our right of way in order for us to take it away. We cannot trespass on your private property. We will do as many sweeps as necessary to clean up the hardest hit neighborhoods.

Sarah Heard

Board Summary from 09/24/2024

CNST-13 was a request to terminate the Palm City Boys and Girls Club lease. It was formerly a Martin County fire station. It was leased to the Boys and Girls Club in 2006. They will be moving their services to the newly constructed Boys and Girls Club on Martin Luther King Boulevard in Stuart.

The future of the buildings and property in Palm City are unknown at present.

PH-8 was a public hearing to consider transmittal of Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) 23-09, Martin Commerce Park.

This was a proposal to allow a 167 acre parcel of land located between I-95 and SW 84th Avenue on the South side of SW Martin Highway to be appointed a Freestanding Urban Services District and to allow the extension of municipal water and sewer to leapfrog over agricultural lands to provide these urban services. No more than 1,100,000 square feet of industrial uses are proposed on 101 of these

167 acres.

Policy 4.13A.10 requires that industrial development in Martin County only is allowed within the Primary Urban Services District, which is miles away from this site.

The 1,717 acre Ag Tec parcel was approved by the majority Board in 2010. It remains vacant. It is owned by Ashley Capital, the owner of this 167 acre parcel.

The Commercial and Industrial Land Analysis, ordered by the majority Board and completed in 2023 concludes that the County has a significant inventory of industrial land for the present and the future. In fact, the acreage of vacant industrial land is more than twice the acreage of developed industrial land in the County.

Since 2011, only an average of 9 acres of industrial land are developed each year.

Ciampi, Hetherington, Jenkins and Smith voted to approve. Heard opposed.

PH-9 was a request to consider transmittal of Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) 23-10, Martin Commerce Park, a Future Land Use Map amendment.

This was a request to amend the Future Land Use Map, to change the designation of 167 acres of land from Agricultural and Agricultural Ranchette to Industrial.

All the adjacent future land uses are agricultural and agricultural ranchette.

There are 4 criteria to consider when changing the future land use designation of a parcel. At least ONE must be met in order to recommend approval of the change.

- a. Past changes in land use designations in the general area make the proposed use logical and consistent with these uses and adequate public facilities are available; or
- b. Growth in the area has altered the character of the area such that the proposed request is now reasonable and consistent with area land use characteristics; or
- c. The proposed change would correct what would otherwise appear to be an inappropriately assigned land use designation; or
- d. The proposed change would fulfill a public service that enhances the health, safety or general welfare of County residents.

None of the criteria has been met.

Further, the proposal meets all of the criteria for defining urban sprawl.

Ciampi, Hetherington, Jenkins and Smith voted to approve. Heard opposed.

Board Summary from 10/22/2024

CNST-8 was a request for approval of an agricultural easement from Becker B-14 Grove as a condition of approval for the Discovery Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning agreement.

As a special condition of the Discovery PUD zoning agreement, Becker is required to place the 846 acre Becker Tree Farm parcel into a permanent agricultural easement.

The deed for the easement is to be granted to Martin County and Conservation Florida, a non-profit corporation.

Our October 22, 2024 meeting included the transmittal of our Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) which was a re-write of our Comprehensive Plan. The state requires that all jurisdictions that have Comprehensive Plans conduct an EAR every 7 or so years to guarantee that each Comprehensive Plan is compliant with all changes to the Florida Statutes in the preceding 7 years.

PH-1 was a public hearing to transmit the EAR for Chapter 4, the Future Land Use Element. Chapter 4 is considered the most important in the Comprehensive Plan. One of the most critical features of Chapter 4 is the methodology requirements of the Residential Capacity Analysis, which is used to determine when, where and how to expand the Urban Services Districts when necessary. There are currently 10 and 15 year triggers that demand actions on these decisions.

The EAR does away with the requirement that the Residential Capacity Analysis be used to determine expansion of the Urban Boundaries.

Now, instead, policy for expansions is vaguely worded in Policy 4.7. To regulate urban sprawl by directing growth in a timely and efficient manner to areas with urban public facilities and services, where they are programmed to be available, at the levels of service adopted in this Plan.

No data, analysis, metrics, methodologies are provided to plan our future development.

Wetland delineation is changing, too. Maps will no longer be used. Nor will hydric soils be evaluated. Instead, flyovers and remote and drone observations will generally inform us where wetlands exist.

Table 4-1 contains disturbing information. Though we don't allow any impacts to wetlands, between 2017 and 2024, nearly 1500 acres of wetlands disappeared. Between 2009 and 2024, 57,000 acres were developed in Martin County, according to table 4-1.

The airtight planning policies of Chapter 4 have guided and protected residents and resources for over 40 years. This EAR amendment does away with too many of our protections.

PH-4 was the EAR amendment to Chapter 5, the Transportation Element.

Roads in Martin County are given Level of Service ratings from A (free flow) to B (reasonably free flow) to C (stable flow) to D (approaching unstable flow) to E (unstable flow) to F (forced or breakdown flow). Martin County targets LOS D as our tolerable goal. Surely we should raise our standards.

PH-5 was the EAR amendment to Chapter 14, our Capital Improvements Element.

Among the changes to Chapter 14 are basic life support and fire response times from 6 minutes 90% of the time in Urban Areas to advanced life support in 8 minutes 90% of the time in Urban Areas.

Similarly, basic life support and fire response in Rural areas goes from 15 minutes 90% of the time to Advanced Life Support in 20 minutes 90% of the time.

PH-7 was the EAR amendment to Chapter 6, the Housing Element.

Included in this chapter's changes are elimination of the Vacant Residential Lands Inventory and Residential Capacity Analysis as planning requirements.

PH-8 was the EAR amendment to Chapter 7, the Recreation Element.

Included in this chapter's changes are directions to encourage Planned Unit Development (PUD) Zoning in development review instead of relying upon the requirements of straight zoning.

All of the EAR amendments will be transmitted to Tallahassee for review. Staff expects state reviews to be completed in early 2025. They will then be considered by the new Board for adoption.

PH-17 was an item to consider adoption of Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) 24-23, Three Lakes Golf Club.

Three Lakes Golf Club is another of the developments outside the Urban Boundary that are permitted under the new Rural Lifestyles land use.

Golf cottages are allowed in the Rural Lifestyle land use. They are for the use of the members and their guests. They do not count toward the maximum gross density. 54 golf cottages are allowed with up to 324 bedrooms.

This amendment was to allow each cottage to have up to 12 bedrooms, doubling current capacity of 6 bedrooms each.

Ciampi, Hetherington, Jenkins and Smith voted to approve. Heard opposed.

[DPQJ-1](#) was a request for an amendment to the Three Lakes Golf Club Planned Unit Development (PUD).

This project is approximately 1219 acres and is located west and east of Kanner Highway approximately 2.4 miles southwest of I-95.

The majority Board approved 2 golf courses, a golf clubhouse and 14 accessory golf cottages in June 2023, utilizing well and septic systems.

In February 2024, the Board majority approved the future land use change from agricultural to rural lifestyle.

In June 2024, the Board majority approved the extension of municipal water and sewer to the entire property.

This is the first amendment to the proposed PUD. Improvements on this property now include a helipad, and employee dormitory for 70 workers, 48 cottages (that do not count toward maximum density) with 262 bedrooms (averaging 6770 square feet each), tennis courts, pickleball courts, a 19,000 square foot spa, yoga studio, pools, one 30,000 square foot clubhouse, one 33,000 square foot clubhouse, and a bridge over Kanner Highway, connecting the east and west sections of the property.

Ciampi, Jenkins, and Smith voted to approve. Heard and Hetherington opposed, with Hetherington objecting to the change from a tunnel under Kanner to a bridge over Kanner.

[DPQJ-2](#) was a request for approval of the first amendment to The Ranch Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning agreement.

The subject site is located south and west of the intersection of SW Kanner Highway and SW Bridge Road. The site includes approximately 3460 acres on the south side of Kanner and 442 acres on the north side of Kanner adjacent to the St. Lucie Canal.

The Board majority approved The Ranch PUD in April of 2024. Approved uses include 175 single family lots, golf cottages (that do not count toward maximum density and can each have up to 12 bedrooms), two 18-hole golf courses, a short course, range house and training center, golf practice facilities, a clubhouse, residential multi-slip docking facility, 2 spa and wellness facilities and a tunnel under Kanner Highway connecting the east and west parcels.

And though Article 4, Division of Land Development Regulations prohibits any excavation below 20 feet, The Ranch will be excavating to a depth of 40 feet.

Ciampi, Hetherington, Jenkins and Smith voted to approve. Heard opposed.

[DEPT-4](#) was a proposal to replace the Sand Dune Cafe at Jensen Beach.

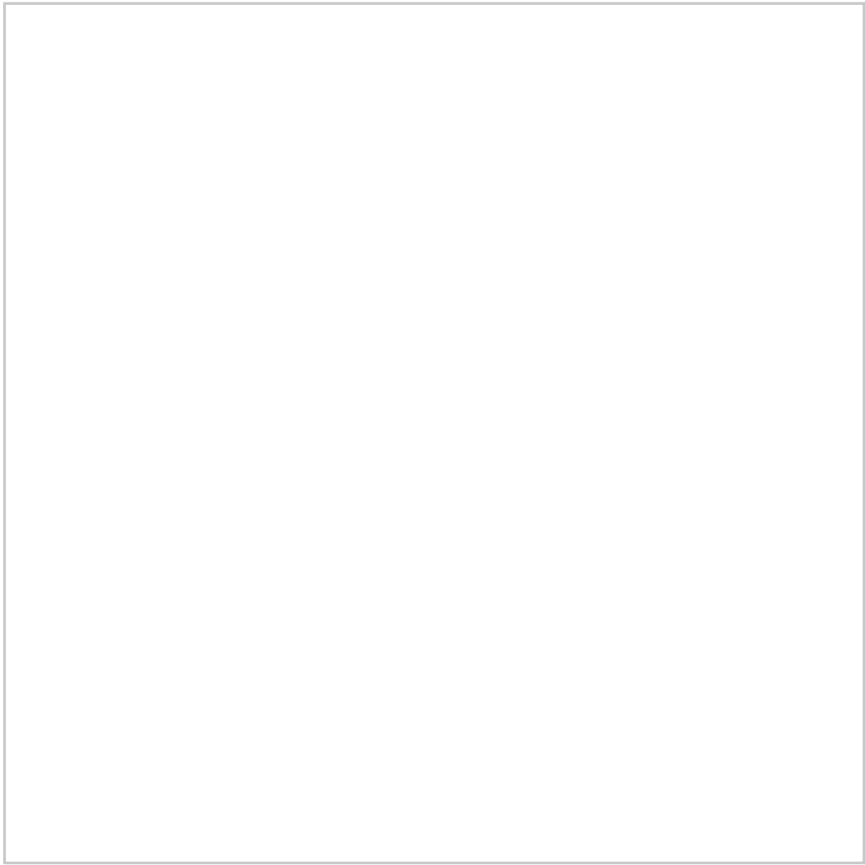
The project is currently in design for building replacement with a 3,000 square foot commercial kitchen and dining building, access improvements and associated site work.

The project was approved unanimously.

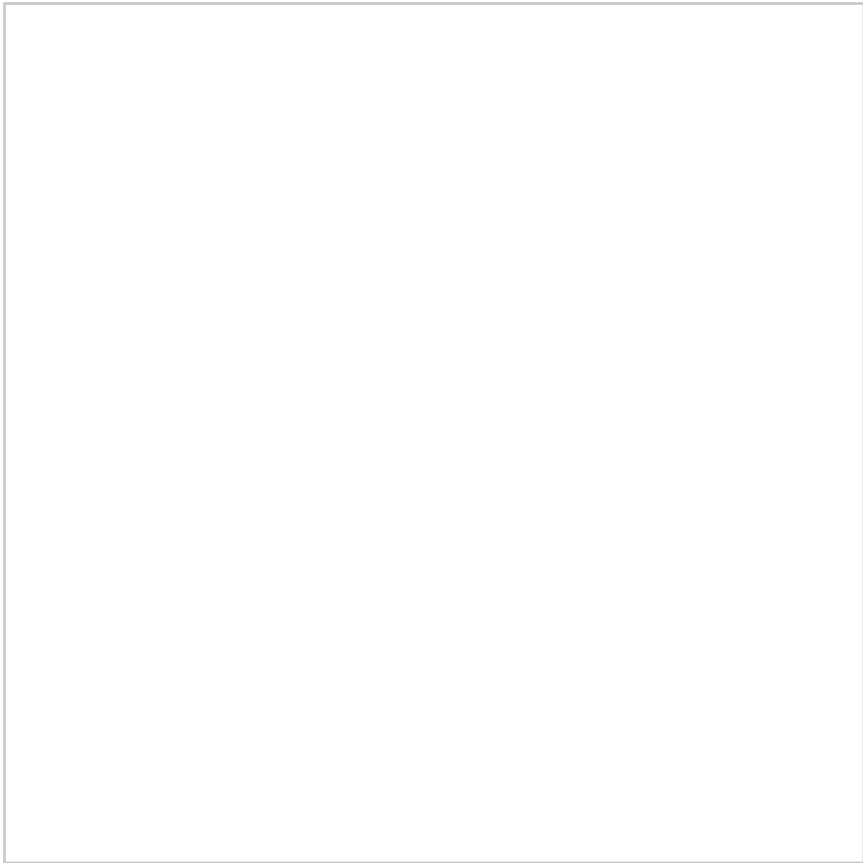
[DEPT-5](#) was a water quality conditions and project update by John Maehl, our Environmental Resources Administrator. For well over 2 decades, Martin County has employed the most stellar team of environmental resource managers in the State of Florida. Their dedication and innovation are peerless. These are just some of the most recent achievements. Use this [link](#) to see the presentation.



Veterans Workshop



Disaster Recovery Center



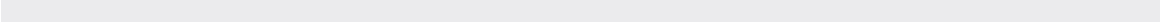
Upcoming Martin County Board Meetings

Board of County Commissioners Upcoming Meetings

*Commission Chambers - 1st Floor
2401 SE Monterey Rd, Stuart, FL 34996*

- November 12, 2024
- November 19, 2024
- December 10, 2024

MCTV Television Information - [MCTV Links and Info](#)
Martin County YouTube Chanel: [YouTube Channel Click Here](#)



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-  Forward



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.

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From: [Elaine Macomber](#)
To: [Comish](#)
Subject: Our Community First!
Date: Sunday, November 10, 2024 9:20:05 AM



Dear Commissioners:
I support responsible decision-making that reflects our community's needs.

The commission is making decisions on projects like Brightline, cell towers, comp plan, and the proposed Wawa without full transparency or public input.

Please do not throw our tax dollars down the drain!

**Elaine Macomber
Palm City, FL 34990**

John 3:16