



## Meeting Summary

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### RLSA Restudy Public Workshop Discouraging Sprawl and Encouraging Responsible Development

*November 29, 2018, 6:00-8:00 PM, South Regional Library  
8065 Lely Cultural Parkway, Naples, 34113*

#### I Introduction

*Speaker: Mr. Kris Van Lengen, Collier County*

Mr. Van Lengen opened the meeting and welcomed the audience at 6:10, making note of an accident on US 41 that might cause delay in attendees arriving. He welcomed newcomers to the meeting and invited them to contact him if they have any questions or want more background information.

He outlined the evening's agenda, which will include his introduction, followed by an explanation of case studies of new towns and villages by Laura DeJohn, and a presentation of lessons learned at Ave Maria by David Genson. Questions will be welcomed after each speaker, and an opportunity for discussion at the end of the meeting will allow for more input if time permits.

Mr. Van Lengen explained that the County audio/video staff could not attend this evening, and audio of the meeting will be available on the County website. Summaries and PowerPoint presentations can be found on the website also. He added that the [RLSArestudy@colliercountyfl.gov](mailto:RLSArestudy@colliercountyfl.gov) email address can be used for sending comments, and comment cards can be filled out and returned during the meeting as well.

In January the venue will change to North Collier Regional Park, however space is not available January 24 and is available January 31. The date of January 31 is also a conflicting time for the audio/video staff. Mr. Van Lengen advised that the Growth Management Oversight Committee mentioned they would like to see a meeting held in Immokalee or Ave Maria, and he asked if a night meeting in Immokalee or Ave Maria is favorable. An audience member commented that previously meetings in the eastern part of the County were held in the morning. By a show of hands, about half of the audience was in favor of an evening meeting in Immokalee or Ave Maria and about half the audience was opposed.

Mr. Van Lengen described that the February and March workshops will be consensus building meetings held at North Collier Regional Park. The consensus building process will be reviewed with

the Growth Management Oversight Committee, and feedback is welcomed from the audience members.

Mr. Van Lengen said that feedback from the October workshop was great. He mentioned the following items that were suggested by the audience members at the last workshop: density and sustainable town centers, minimum density requirements, ¼-mile radius walking distances per neighborhood, tax incentives for earlier commercial phasing, requiring wildlife crossings where appropriate, separation between towns and villages, addressing decreased habitat value of Stewardship Sending Areas (SSAs) adjacent to towns, not approving too many projects in close timeframes, attracting visionary developers, and considering emergency evacuation planning.

Mr. Van Lengen highlighted questions from the October workshop. The first question was about the Area of Critical State Concern (ACSC). Mr. Van Lengen explained the base zoning in the Rural Lands area is agricultural zoning, which allows certain conditional uses such as mining, recreation, and schools. Residential development is allowed at one unit per five acres. He explained that the ACSC covers 750,000 acres, and roughly 60,000 acres of the RLSA is in the ACSC. The rules for the ACSC restrict uses and limit site alteration to 10% for any kind of development. The maximum density is one unit per five acres. The State of Florida must review any zoning change, regulation change or building permit. The State review is a double protection to make sure rules are followed.

The second question from the October workshop was about population. Mr. Van Lengen said approximately 1,600 certificates of occupancy have been issued in Ave Maria out of the maximum of 11,000 units allowed within the project. This maximum does not include assisted living or dormitory units.

The rate of growth was also a question at the October workshop. Mr. Van Lengen displayed figures from the Collier Interactive Growth Model (CIGM) showing population growth in five-year increments. The data revealed approximately 47,000 people are projected in 2040. By 2070 when the Habitat Conservation Plan expires, the area will be halfway to buildout. Golden Gate Estates currently has 45,000 people and is anticipated to be 90% built out by 2040. That number is a concern for traffic, which illuminates the need for places for work, shop and play.

Another question Mr. Van Lengen addressed was about the cost burden of RLSA development. Displaying slides from the Tindale Oliver presentation from the August workshop, Mr. Van Lengen explained that when a new development begins, the total cost for infrastructure is greater than the revenue generated by impact fees and ad valorem taxes. Public subsidy and developer subsidy are greater than revenues at the beginning of the project. At a certain point in time, the revenue starts to exceed the expenditures. He said that the RLSA program requires that fiscal neutrality must be demonstrated at the time of development application for approval by the Board of County Commissioners.

Mr. Van Lengen referenced a final question from the October workshop about the market for towns and villages, and he said Mr. Genson's presentation will address this.

An audience member asked about revenue neutrality or positive revenue, which can usually only be achieved through industrial or commercial development, because residential property cannot usually generate enough to cover the cost of services. Mr. Van Lengen agreed that that non-residential development is an important part of the fiscal neutrality equation and planning process.

An audience member said that it would be nice to show Ave Maria's actual fiscal data for today's conditions and projected future conditions. Mr. Van Lengen said the conditions of Ave Maria were discussed at the June 26th BOCC meeting as item 11B (around the 4:46 mark on the meeting video) and encouraged the audience to listen to the tape. Mr. Van Lengen said he cannot answer where the balance of reaching fiscal positivity is for Ave Maria.

Commissioner Taylor asked how to plan for fiscal neutrality if the financial details are not known. Ave Maria has been there for ten years and it would be important to know if the fiscal goals are being met. The Tindale Oliver presentation is so subjective, and there are so many variables that cannot be controlled. Mr. Van Lengen said it is important to know the answer, and the experts must be relied upon at the time of application. It's the Board's duty to make sure the models do work out. In the past, the Fiscal Impact Analysis Model (FIAM) was jettisoned because it was assumed to be subject to manipulation.

An audience member asked if the timeline of fiscal input and output has been prepared or provided for Ave Maria, and how much has the County and the developer contributed by year, and the payback? Mr. Van Lengen said it was a great suggestion to find out more information on Ave Maria.

An audience member asked since this meeting is not filmed, whether the PowerPoint slides will be available online, and if the meeting is being taped. Mr. Van Lengen said yes, the presentations and the audio of the meeting will be posted on the County website.

An audience member said many states including northern Virginia have been through this, and it would be helpful to see the fiscal neutrality data from those other communities. Mr. Van Lengen asserted that Tindale Oliver does such studies, and such information was presented at the August 23, 2018 RLSA workshop. He added that another consultant, Urban3, is scheduled to perform a return on investment analysis for Collier County in 2019. An audience member commended the County for bringing Urban 3 onboard to provide a return on investment analysis.

An audience member said Smart Growth America does work on fiscal neutrality all over the country. As to build out periods, the audience member noted that Rural Lands West proposes a 20-year build out period and questioned if 20 years should be used as the fiscal neutrality timeline for Rural Lands West. An audience member from the town of Columbia, Maryland said that community started developing in 1965 and was near build-out but had not reached build-out in the 2000s. She concluded that large urban developments do not get built out, for example, Reston is still not built out, and the timeframe for buildout will likely be longer than 20 years.

## II Survey of Sustainable New Towns

*Speaker: Mrs. Laura DeJohn, Director of Planning and Landscape Architecture,  
Johnson Engineering, Inc.*

Ms. DeJohn gave an overview that she'll present case studies focused on development standards as defined in the RLSA program and as they are being developed in actual towns and villages. She noted that comparing and learning from other communities is helpful, and she asked the audience to write down standards that they like and dislike during the presentation to compile suggestions and feedback. Mrs. DeJohn presented five different town examples, based on the RLSA definition of a town per the Attachment C handout provided to the meeting attendees at each table.

She noted that towns are the largest development type allowed in the RLSA, and the first example of a town to be reviewed was Ave Maria in Collier County. The RLSA town size criterion is 1,000 to 4,000 acres, and Ave Maria is at the top of the size range with 4,000 acres excluding public benefit acres. The allowable residential unit range for RLSA towns is 1,000 to 16,000 units, and Ave Maria is approved for 11,000 units. The density range allowed for RLSA towns is 1 to 4 dwellings units per acre, and Ave Maria is permitted with 2.75 dwelling units per gross acre.

An audience member asked how the density figure was calculated. Ms. DeJohn said it was calculated by dividing 11,000 units by 4,000 acres. She noted that some areas of the project will have clustered development with a higher density, and other areas will be large open areas. The density is calculated according to the project's gross acreage. Standards are not in place to mandate higher densities or minimum densities near town centers.

Ave Maria was approved for non-residential development including: 600,000 square feet of retail; 510,000 square feet of office; and 600,000 square feet of business/employment. The RLSA town criterion for open space is 35% of the entire project, and Ave Maria provides 45% of the project as open space.

RLSA towns are to include a full range of housing types, and Ave Maria includes single and multi-family housing types. The minimum goods and services ratio (restaurants, shops, etc.) for an RLSA town is 65 square feet per dwelling, and Ave Maria has nearly double with 112 square feet per dwelling. The minimum park ratio for an RLSA town is 200 square feet per dwelling, and the proposed community parks for Ave Maria provide 294 square feet per dwelling. Civic and institutional type buildings must be provided with at least 15 square feet per dwelling in an RLSA town. Ave Maria exceeds this standard with 367 square feet per dwelling, attributable to the university, church, government buildings, and school sites. Water and wastewater services must be centralized for RLSA towns, and this is achieved at Ave Maria through its own private utility provider. Transportation requirements for RLSA towns include connectivity, an interconnected sidewalk system, and connection to transit, which are all addressed by the Ave Maria plan.

Mrs. DeJohn said she will highlight four more towns, followed by a side-by-side comparison of the communities.

She explained the next example is Rural Lands West, which is proposed but not yet approved by the Collier County Commissioners. The size of this project is at the high end of the allowable range with 3,964 acres excluding any public benefit areas. Similar to Ave Maria, 10,000 units are proposed which equates to a density of 2.51 dwelling units per gross acre. Proposed non-residential development includes: 800,000 square feet of retail; 450,000 square feet of office; 250,000 square feet of business/employment; 132,000 square feet of hotel; and 250,000 square feet of medical office and hospital. The minimum 35% open space for RLSA towns is proposed to be met in Rural Lands West.

The standard full range of housing types is also proposed to be met in Rural Lands West, with one-third of the housing units proposed to be multifamily and two-thirds proposed to be single family. Rural Lands West proposes more than doubling the minimum goods and services ratio for RLSA towns with 138 square feet per dwelling proposed. Parks are proposed to be more than double the RLSA town standard with 518 square feet proposed per dwelling. The civic and institutional provision is proposed to be met with 21 square feet per dwelling for civic uses plus 106 acres for public school sites.

An audience member asked if golf courses were considered parks. Ms. DeJohn said that golf courses are counted towards open space, but are not counted as parks.

The water and wastewater systems will be centralized according to the Rural Lands West application, and transportation systems are generally proposed to meet RLSA criteria, however transit service is still to be determined.

Ms. DeJohn introduced the third example, Babcock Ranch, noting it is in Charlotte County. She said that development is underway following initial approval in 2007. The expected build out date is 2045. This project is 13,631 acres and therefore much larger than the standard town size for Collier County. The project contains areas designated as villages, hamlets, and a town center. Preservation areas like those classified as Habitat Stewardship Areas or Flowway Stewardship Areas in the RLSA are located inside the Babcock Ranch community in the form of greenways. Roughly 6,500 acres of greenways are within the 13,631-acre Babcock Ranch project boundary.

Nearly 18,000 units are proposed at Babcock Ranch. Given the open spaces and preserves within the project boundary, the gross density is brought down to 1.31 dwelling units per gross acre. Density is allowed to be up to 24 dwelling units per net acre in the town center and up to 16 dwelling units per net acre in villages and hamlets. Non-residential development is proposed to include: 1.4 million square feet of retail; 3.5 million square feet of office; 650,000 square feet of industrial; 360,000 square feet of hotel; 177 hospital beds; and 418 assisted living units. The minimum open space to be provided at Babcock Ranch is similar to the RLSA town standard at 35%.

The full range of housing types proposed in the community include accessory dwellings, such as garage apartments and guest houses, which are important for providing more housing choices.

There is a commitment that 10% of units will be affordable or workforce attainable, and satisfaction of this commitment is addressed through the developer performing and submitting a housing analysis.

The minimum goods and services ratio for RLSA towns is 65 square feet per dwelling, and Babcock Ranch is permitted for 294 square feet per dwelling. Parks are proposed in the form of community parks, mini-parks, neighborhood parks and community/regional parks at three times the Collier County standard of 200 square feet per dwelling.

Ms. DeJohn pointed out that Babcock Ranch is a Development of Regional Impact (DRI). DRI's are subject to a regulatory process through which specific developer commitments are determined. Substantial detail is provided for civic and institutional uses in the DRI approval, such as the number and size of school sites, educational service centers, law and fire rescue buildings, sheriff substation site, EMS vehicles, and library contributions. These contributions are eligible for reimbursement of impact fees. Civic uses do not count toward the maximum allowable non-residential development.

For Babcock Ranch, central water and wastewater must be provided at time of Certificate of Occupancy. Transportation requirements are defined in detail within the DRI approval, and an internal capture goal of 55% to 70% is identified in the traffic analysis. An elaborate trail system of sidewalks and on- and off-road multiuse paths is provided, and an internal autonomous vehicle program is being pursued by the Babcock Ranch developer.

Additional commitments for the Babcock Ranch development that are not addressed in RLSA town criteria include: pattern books to establish development standards at each phase of development, low flow fixtures, one zero energy model home, and compliance with Florida Green Building Coalition or equivalent standards.

The Babcock Ranch Community pattern book is aspirational in nature, and it conveys to the regulatory agencies, the county and to the public what is envisioned for the community. A pattern book is pictorial including diagrams, development standards, and examples of how the development is intended to look and feel.

Ms. DeJohn provided a series of the Florida Green Building Coalition standards, noting that achieving compliance with the standards is based on a scoring system. For full review of all the standards and program criteria, Ms. DeJohn referred the audience to the organization's website [FloridaGreenBuilding.org](http://FloridaGreenBuilding.org). She summarized the program criteria, noting the environmental protection category contains the most standards. Circulation is a separate category with ten standards for measurement and scoring. The Utilities category has nine standards including green power, irrigation standards and a conservation approach to utilities provision. Amenities is another category that addresses features such as golf courses, landscaping, and community gardens. The category of Covenants and Deed Restrictions has standards to help engage homeowners in maintenance of the green aspects of their homes and community. The category

of Education addresses the need for education through provision of materials or educational staff members within the community.

An audience member asked if compliance with Florida Green Building Coalition standards is required. Ms. DeJohn affirmed that compliance with Florida Green Building Coalition Certification or equivalent standards is a condition of the Babcock Ranch DRI approval. Another audience member asked how all this information relates to sustainability. Mrs. DeJohn said that having a development that complies with Florida Green Building Coalition standards is a way to be closer to achieving the objective of sustainability, which is to see that resources are protected in a way that future generations are ensured to have the resources they need.

Another audience member asked if the County Commissioners or the final report from these restudy workshops would recommend to include green standards because it would be a progressive move. Ms. DeJohn replied that the audience input and feedback help to drive recommendations. Dr. Amanda Evans said that these workshops are structured to provide information and get audience input, collect feedback, and ultimately use it to arrive at a meaningful outcome for the RLSA Restudy.

Another audience member requested a show of hands by those whom agree that the County should require compliance with green development standards, and a majority of audience members raised their hands.

Mrs. DeJohn introduced the fourth town of Haile Village Plantation in northern Florida near Gainesville, noting that the community was approved in 1992 and comprises 1,700 acres with approval for 2,700 units. The gross density is 1.6 dwelling units per gross acre, however townhomes are allowed at a density of up to 16 dwelling units per acres. The town is approved for 160,000 square feet of retail and office space, which manifests in 48 different businesses.

The community's open space is increased because it includes 54 golf holes. A takeaway from this exercise is that marketing drives perception on what is good new urbanism planning practice. New urbanism makes up a limited part of this larger golf course community. But having been developed for over 20 years and having seen success, it is worth comparing how this community has developed against the RLSA towns criteria.

Haile Village Plantation has a variety of housing types including live-work units, accessory dwellings, and units within a 50-acre mixed use village center. There is no calculation provided for the square footage of community parks; a village green anchors the village center. The civic and institutional components of this development are limited, with a 3,200-square foot town hall owned and operated by the developer as a for-profit event space. Space is also provided for a post office, sheriff's office and homeowners association office.

Ms. DeJohn said she did not find water and wastewater utility information, but it can be assumed that public utilities are available given the site's close proximity to Gainesville. The transportation system is characterized by narrow streets to promote slower traffic and walkable conditions. The



developer has measured internal capture, finding that 23% of single-family home trips are captured internally. There is also a system of alleys and lanes with an emphasis on pedestrian passageways from neighborhoods to the village center.

Ms. DeJohn presented Abacoa as the final town example. Located in Jupiter, Florida, Abacoa started developing in 1995 and is anticipated to build out soon. Measuring 2,055 acres, Abacoa is roughly half the size of Ave Maria and of the proposed Rural Lands West project. Abacoa was originally approved through the DRI process, with 6,325 units permitted and density range of a minimum of 3 dwelling units per acre and a maximum of 16 dwelling units per acre in the urban residential areas. The allowable non-residential development includes: 1.75 million square feet of workplace; 841,000 square feet of retail; 217,720 square feet of office; 130 hotel rooms; a 4,009 seat movie theater; and the 7,500 seat Roger Dean Baseball Stadium.

The open space in Abacoa is just under 25%, and this includes golf course area. Common use areas are required at a rate of 3%, or minimum of three acres, per neighborhood, and a minimum one-acre public square is required per neighborhood. This form-based approach helps achieve the desired outcome of visible and accessible green space versus the unpredictable outcome of applying a general acreage threshold.

A full range of housing types is provided in Abacoa; a minimum of 10% of all units must be multifamily. The RLSA town criteria of 65 square feet of retail and office per dwelling is exceeded with 167 square feet per dwelling. Additionally, Abacoa has 277 square feet of workplace per dwelling.

A community parks ratio could not be calculated, nor could the civic and institutional square footage, however institutional assets include the Florida Atlantic University Honors Campus and other school sites. Abacoa has centralized water and wastewater systems, and transportation connections are provided given the community's adjacency to Interstate 95 and other main roads, along with a system of connecting sidewalks and paths. A Tri Rail station is also proposed.

Ms. DeJohn summarized the towns with a display of the attributes of each example compared to the RLSA town criteria. She noted the presentation will be online for those that want to study or compare in depth at a later time.

She then focused on RLSA criteria for villages. Villages are a smaller in size than towns, and there are currently no villages in the RLSA. The first example she presented was Habersham in South Carolina. The RLSA standard for village size is 100 to 1,000 acres, and Habersham is 266 acres with 950 dwelling units, which yields a density of 3.6 dwelling units per gross acre. Non-residential development includes 77,895 square feet of retail, restaurant and office space. The minimum open space is 27%. A full range of housing types and parks are provided. The ratio of goods and services provided per dwelling units exceeds the RLSA village standard by nearly three times.

Neighborhoods in RLSA villages must have a minimum of 1% of gross acreage in parks and public green space. Habersham requires parks and public green space in the forms of: parks and squares



in the neighborhood center, parks and playgrounds in neighborhood general areas, and parkways in the neighborhood edges. Civic and institutional space is also required in the neighborhood center and encouraged adjacent to forests or wetlands at the neighborhood edges. Habersham has a centralized water and sewer system, and the transportation system is characterized by narrow streets, on street parking, and walking trails.

The second village example was I'On, also in South Carolina. This community is 243 acres with 750 dwelling units, and a density of 3.1 dwelling units per gross area. Non-residential development includes 30,000 square feet of retail and office space. Open space acreage data was not available; open space is provided in natural open areas, a wetlands corridor and creek, lakes and recreational facilities, and pocket parks.

I'On has a range of housing types including dwellings as small as 950 square feet and as large as 6,000 square feet, which provides flexible and affordable housing options. The square footage of goods and services provided exceeds the RLSA village standard of 25 square feet per dwelling, and the village center includes a mixed use main street and a central square. Eight sites are reserved within the community for civic and institutional buildings such as community meeting hall, school and church sites.

I'On is a suburban infill site with available central utilities. Streets are narrow, and the “marshwalk” is a trail that provides connections through the community’s natural areas.

Baldwin Park in Orlando, Florida was presented as the third example village. The site is 776 acres and approved for 3,500 dwelling units. The density of 4.5 dwelling units per gross acre exceeds the maximum density for RLSA villages of 4 dwelling units per acre. Baldwin Park is approved for 200,000 square feet of retail, one million square feet of office, and a 54-acre mixed-use village center. Ample open space is provided with 250 acres of lakes and 200 acres of parks and green space.

Baldwin Park’s variety of housing types includes a range of units including some within a vertical mixed-use context. This community has a high ratio of goods and services with 343 square feet of retail and office per dwelling. No data was available for civic and institutional uses. Baldwin Park was formerly the Orlando Naval Training Center, and utilities are centralized. The transportation system is characterized by a grid network and an extensive trail system.

Ms. DeJohn summarized with a side-by-side table comparing the three example villages, which can be viewed in the PowerPoint presentation available on the County’s website.

Ms. DeJohn concluded with a series of take-aways learned from the examples. She said the Collier County standards are quantified, formula driven and measurable as provided in Attachment C. The outcomes from the example communities reveal there are aspects of placemaking that are not formula driven but rather are more qualitative and subjective, such as the placement and form of green space in the community.

Ms. DeJohn reviewed some potential options for adjustments to improve RLSA town and village criteria. The RLSA density standards may be adjusted to require concentrated densities in core areas such as town or village centers. The RLSA housing type standards may be adjusted to require housing market analyses or to establish minimum thresholds for multifamily housing or affordable housing if a mix of housing types is desired. Locational standards could be added for non-residential development based on a critical radius in proximity to housing for a more walkable and bikeable environment. The minimum goods and services per dwelling could be increased based on the evidence of the case studies.

An audience member asked if imposing certain standards would cause developers to stop building gated communities. Ms. DeJohn said that Mr. Genson can address this question based on market conditions during his presentation. She added that she has not seen standards such as increased density or connectivity requirements result in fewer gated community projects. The gated community phenomenon exists because history has proven that these are a community type where homebuyers choose to buy homes.

Another audience member said the examples provided have low density, yet are somehow walkable. She suggested shrinking the size of the towns and increasing density.

Another audience member agreed with higher densities concentrated at town centers and gradually reduced densities at  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , and  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile radius distances, because this would make towns more walkable.

Another audience member asked whether the example communities have been successful. Ms. DeJohn said the examples were considered successful case studies from organizations such as the Urban Land Institute, American Planning Association and the Congress for New Urbanism. She said success is measured relative to the community, its context and the people living in the community. This is a good question to ask, but there is no scoring system to determine success and no single model that can be replicated with any guarantee of success.

Another audience member asked why the Seaside community was not presented? Ms. DeJohn said she did not present Seaside or Celebration because they are unique projects that were not developed organically, and she purposefully researched examples that would be relevant to the type of development that goes on in Collier County.

Ms. DeJohn said another take-away is the concept of adjusting RLSA standards to add locational criteria for green space. Also, an impact fee reimbursement for developer-funded civic, government or institutional facilities such as schools or an EMS station is a tool to get those facilities established. She said that mobility standards can be improved by adding a requirement for multimodal analysis that considers bicycle and pedestrian paths between residential and non-residential areas, an off-road greenway/trail system, and other non-auto oriented transportation modes. She added that Pattern Books can be implemented to improve the review and approval process and provide more opportunity for innovative designs. Another option is to add a

requirement for compliance with Florida Green Building Coalition Certification or equivalent standards. Finally, she said imposing a system for monitoring performance and annual or biennial reporting would help ensure that standards are implemented and maintained.

### III Ave Maria Lessons Learned

*Speaker: Mr. David Genson, Senior Vice President and Director of Development  
Barron Collier Companies*

Mr. Genson said he has been involved with the Ave Maria project since 2002. He explained that his presentation will cover how the project started and the current conditions, and he'll address some of the questions that were brought up during the evening. Ave Maria is entitled as a 4,000-acre town, with approval for: 11,000 homes; 1.2 million square feet of office and retail; 600,000 square feet of light industrial; and a 6,000-student university. The population is estimated to be 30,000 people at buildout. Mr. Genson said Ave Maria is considered a self-sustaining town with a private water and sewer utility system, four privately developed parks, and 15 miles of privately developed roadways. The roads within Ave Maria are privately owned and maintained. He said by the end of 2018, roughly 2,000 homes will have been purchased, and those homes amount to \$44 million in impact fees paid to Collier County.

Mr. Genson gave the site's history beginning in April 2005 when the Ave Maria lands were farm fields. In 2009, development was underway and the current population is 6,000 people. Home prices range from \$200,000 to \$450,000 with an average price of \$320,000. The homebuilding trend equates to an average of three hundred homes constructed per year. Mr. Genson cited that Ave Maria has been ranked as the #1 selling community in Southwest Florida for four years. Also, this community has been ranked as one of the Top 40 Selling Master Planned Communities in the United States for the past three years.

Mr. Genson described the progress of the community as of 2017, including development of Coquina at Maple Ridge which is a denser neighborhood at approximately six units per acre. He described how Publix was an important business to establish early for residents, and showed images of the town center. He explained how Arthrex has been a major impact with 400,000 square feet of building area supporting 1,500 employees. He said that several hundred of those employees have purchased homes in Ave Maria, resulting in short commutes for employees. The Park of Commerce now has a gas station and medical office buildings in place, and the university will have the largest incoming freshman class ever in the coming year.

Mr. Genson described the range of neighborhood types within Ave Maria, including estate homes, condominiums, and neighborhoods that are oriented toward families, active adults, and the workforce. The market for Ave Maria is not just a single demographic; it serves everyone including retirees, young families, and active adults. Amenities include parks, water parks, softball fields, and soccer fields that constitute a \$17 million investment by the developer. A fitness center and

other amenities are also provided. Tours are offered to the general public for exploring wildlife in preserved lands around Ave Maria.

Mr. Genson addressed topics raised during the meeting. Regarding mixed use development, he described how Ave Maria has 70 units above retail ground floors in the town center, and this development type has been problematic. The idea of residential units over commercial ground floors seems appealing, but in reality people do not want to live above establishments that generate odor and noise. Based on experience with the mixed use development form in Ave Maria, Mr. Genson said it is not desirable to most people in the general marketplace, and it has not been very successful. He said new urbanism concepts with front porches and alleys are nice, but they are not working in Ave Maria because that form of development is too expensive. Enticing people to travel 20 miles from Naples to live in Ave Maria cannot be successful if the costs to live there are too high.

Mr. Genson explained that Ave Maria offers housing that is affordable. Many buyers are coming from Lee County, and roughly half of buyers are from the east coast because the commute to work along I-75 is easier than the experience of commuting on the east coast. Ave Maria is a more convenient, safe and affordable place for this commuting population.

Mr. Genson gave an overview that Barron Collier Companies has 80,000 acres in the rural lands of Collier County. The town of Ave Maria constitutes 4,000 acres and 1,000 additional acres are public benefit area. In order to develop Ave Maria, roughly 16,000 acres of stewardship sending areas (SSAs) were dedicated at no cost to the County or the taxpayer. The terms of the easement on the SSAs ensure that nothing can be built or developed on those lands. This balance of environmental protection in exchange for development of communities is what makes the Rural Stewardship Lands Area program a success for the whole County.

Mr. Genson addressed the notion that higher densities should be concentrated to promote the idea of a walkable community. At Ave Maria, there are 300 to 400 homes within ¼-mile of the town center. He said the higher densities are not feasible everywhere because the development pattern becomes too costly and overbearing. He said neighborhood centers outside the town center provide some degree of convenient access to services.

An audience member asked if any of the neighborhood centers have been built with retail uses. Mr. Genson affirmed that the Del Webb community clubhouse includes restaurant space that is open to the public.

On the topic of buildout, Mr. Genson said that a 20-year horizon is not realistic. At the rate of 300 homes per year, it would take roughly 30 years to build the remaining units in Ave Maria.

On the topic of fiscal neutrality, Mr. Genson said that Oil Well Road is always mentioned as a negative issue. He gave an explanation on the history of Oil Well Road, noting it was a two-lane congested road prior to development of Ave Maria. He said the widening of the road was needed for many years regardless of the addition of Ave Maria. He said Oil Well Road did cost the County

money upfront. The original developer contribution agreement contemplated that all the impact fees of Commission District 5, including Golden Gate Estates and Ave Maria, were supposed to fund Oil Well Road. In 2012 the County Manager said that many other projects are in need of the District's impact fee funds, therefore it was limited so that only Ave Maria impact fees became the funding source for Oil Well Road improvements.

Mr. Genson highlighted that utilities infrastructure at Ave Maria is private and not County funded. Community parks are private, yet community park impact fees are paid to Collier County. He emphasized that the developer has not made money on Ave Maria. At one point, Ave Maria was costing the developer \$30,000 per day to subsidize.

On the topic of green development standards, Mr. Genson was in favor of incorporating such standards in the RLSA program. He mentioned that some people express concern about impacts of Ave Maria on the water table, and he explained that the prior use as farm fields consumed greater amounts of water than the permitted level of water use for Ave Maria.

Mr. Genson supported that the County should examine Ave Maria to help formulate ideas during the restudy process, noting that examples of what does and does not work can be gathered from experience at Ave Maria. He concluded that Ave Maria is a long term project, and the developer will continue for many years to see the project through.

An audience member asked if a small gas station, basic food store, and drug store should have been established in the community earlier. Mr. Genson said the community started in 2007 and the Publix and gas station opened in 2009. The recession impacted the community, evidenced by the fact that the gas station closed and only 30 homes were sold in 2009.

The audience member said that Reston, Virginia started with a successful town center. The developer did not collect rent from the grocery store vendor for the first five years, and the store provided an important service to the community for those years. Mr. Genson said Barron Collier Companies also subsidizes the Ave Maria town center, noting the commercial lease rate of \$5 per square foot versus \$40 per square foot in other areas of the County during the recession. The developer still helps tenants with subsidies during the summer months.

An audience member asked if it was a good business decision to build in eastern Collier County, and will Rural Lands West have the same problems? Mr. Genson clarified that Rural Lands West is proposed by Collier Enterprises which is a different entity from Barron Collier Companies. He said that people will continue to move to Collier County and the growth should be accommodated through developments that embody sustainable, smart growth principles. This restudy is about determining how to develop correctly and with foresight.

Mr. Van Lengen asked Mr. Genson to clarify his statements about mixed use development. Mr. Genson clarified that vertical mixed use has not been successful, but horizontal mixed use with housing, retail and employment opportunities in proximity to one another is good for balance

within the community, and it supports a healthy internal capture rate to reduce vehicle miles travelled.

An audience member asked about Mercato as an example of vertical mixed use development, noting that affordability is key to securing residents for a vertical mixed use project. She suggested that marketing to the right population and providing units at densities that make them affordable would be a more successful model. Mr. Genson said increasing density is the best way to help make units more affordable, especially in coastal Collier County. He said leaders are starting to recognize and understand this issue. He cited examples of an apartment building developed with a density of 100 units per acre in St. Petersburg, and another development with a density of 75 units per acre in Sarasota, noting that these examples are aesthetically pleasing additions to those communities.

An audience member asked if it would be more economical if the vertical mixed use building was taller, making units more affordable? Mr. Genson said the Oratory is what drove the proportions and building heights in Ave Maria's town center. He affirmed that buildings with more stories help make the units more affordable.

An audience member asked why apartment buildings are not in place where parking lots currently exist near the Oratory? Mr. Genson said there are townhouses planned in the vicinity of the referenced parking lots. He added that bicycles and golf carts are the popular transportation method when Mass is held at the Oratory.

Commissioner Talyor complimented Barron Collier Companies for how they resolved the controversy over the Jackson Labs project. She said that the efforts taken to bring Arthrex to the Ave Maria community speaks to Barron Collier Companies' business acumen. Mr. Genson acknowledged the significance of the efforts to secure Arthrex as part of the community.

#### **IV Adjourn**

Mr. Van Lengen said that the County will be interested in working with Barron Collier Companies to further understand the fiscal aspects of development in the RLSA. He welcomed the audience members to return and participate at the next meeting in January, noting that the meeting date and location will be posted online once confirmed.