

Board of County Commissioners
Leon County, Florida
Special Meeting
July 27, 2006

The Board of County Commissioners of Leon County, Florida met in Special Session at the Leon County Fairgrounds on Thursday, July 27, 2006 at 6:00 p.m. Present were Chairman Proctor and Commissioners DePuy, Sauls, and Thael. (Commissioners Rackleff, Grippa, and Winchester were not present). Also present was County Administrator Alam.

Invocation was provided by Chairman Proctor which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The purpose of the special meeting is to hear from St. Joe Company, a stellar company, to hear their ideas before they proceed with the development on the Southside of Tallahassee. The impacts on transportation, education, economic development, and property values and other items will be affected. Chairman Proctor explained that earlier today, St. Joe Company met with Southside Business leaders and various representatives of agencies on the proposed development. The City of Tallahassee and Leon County adopted the "Southern Strategy" in the Comprehensive Plan which aims to focus development in the Southern Strategy area. This will bring about advanced and increased housing, transportation and economic development for the community.

Chairman Proctor pointed out that it was important for St. Joe to hear from this community before they submitted a formal application. They will hear from the community about their views and suggestions for the development.

Planning Department staff was present. Ms. Jean Gregory explained the process of a DRI (Development of Regional Impact), the timetable, and technical issues. Also representatives from St. Joe Company were present to provide input: Will Butler, George Gonzales, Corbett Drew.

See attached "Notice of Special Meeting:"

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

The Board of County Commissioners of Leon County, Florida hereby provides notice of a Special Meeting on Thursday, July 27, at 6:15 p.m., in Building 4 of the North Florida Fairgrounds, 441 Paul Russell Road, Tallahassee, Florida. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the proposed St. Joe development of regional impact.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 286.26, Florida Statutes, persons needing a special accommodation to participate in this proceeding should contact the Leon County Public Information Office, Leon County Courthouse, 301 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32301, by written request at least 48 hours prior to the proceeding. Telephone: 606-5300 or 606-5000; 1-800-955-8771 (TDD), or 1-800-955-8770 (Voice), or 711 via Florida Relay Service.

*Tues - 7-25-06
Jill Somers*

Mr. Will Butler, St. Joe Company, explained that they want to receive input from citizens regarding the project and then take it under advisement. He hopes that residents in Tallahassee, particularly those in the south side, will be proud of the project. This is just the beginning of the process and an application has not yet been filed.

Mr. Butler explained the location of the development is at the southeast quadrant of the Woodville Highway, Capital Circle southeast and Tram Road, roughly three miles from the Capitol Building. Using an overhead screen, the map showed the areas and the various proposed uses of the property, which involves approximately 1,625 acres which includes 1 million square feet of retail, 2,800 residential units (multi-family, single-family, apartment units, etc.). The land uses which St. Joe proposes would allow for 150,000 square feet of office, 100-bed hospital or medical facility, and 300 hotel rooms. Using the screen, Mr. Butler also described the rough boundaries where various uses would be located. It was noted that approximately 400 acres will be set aside for green space (or open space) for passive recreational area for residents of the subdivision. The project will be intended to be an inclusive project and it is the goal to deliver affordable and obtainable price points for lots and housing. He pointed out that at this point in time he cannot provide a figure or percentage on the price of homes, but later in the process they can.

Mr. George Gonzalez of St. Joe Company, pointed out that the approach to the proposed plan will be a master plan approach. He gave an overview of the infrastructure plans for transportation and schools. Internal to the project, St. Joe plans to extend Paul Russell Road from Tram Road through the project all the way to Woodville since the extension is set forth in the Comprehensive Plan. A second item set forth in the Comp Plan is the extension of Jim Lee Road. Mr. Gonzalez pointed out that FDOT and other major State agencies will be involved in the process as they are with all DRIs. Also, Capital Circle Southeast from Tram Road to Woodville Highway is close to being fully funded for 6-laning. St. Joe Company has had discussions with the School Board and there is interest in locating a school within the project and discussions will proceed.

Ms. Sue Gammill, 509 Curtis Road, appeared and explained that she lives in the Southside and voiced concern about traffic involving Southwood and the new proposal. She asked about timeframes for addressing the traffic problems in the area. County Administrator responded that when Southwood comes forward with the project, and at that point, all the calculations will be made and Southwood would be required to pay their proportionate share and it will be determined at that time what is needed to address traffic.

Mr. Jim Davis, P. O. Box 5420, Tram Road, talked about Mt. Pisgah A&E Church, a small church situated on a half-acre on Tram Road, and stated that the proposal to widen the road would adversely impact the church and drastically reduce its size. St. Joe staff responded that there have been discussions about the church, and he believes that Southwood will provide an additional four acres adjacent to the existing property for growth and expansion. Mr. Davis stated that Paul Russell Road turns North and goes over to Apalachee Parkway; if there is a new road, he suggested that it be named Proctor Road.

Ms. Rochelle Williams, 2022 Wahnish Way, Alumni FAMU University, raised some questions: will there be a percentage designated for minorities for retail; 2) will there be a community center for the youth; how will the crime level be kept low. St. Joe responded that these are very important issues and they will be working with people to facilitate these issues. It was pointed out that St. Joe is the land developer and they are seeking to obtain the zoning to allow for these types of uses. Commissioner Sauls advised that in a couple of months, a new community center will be completed in Woodville which is located a couple of miles from the proposed development.

Ms. Karla Brandt, P. O. Box 3884, appeared and asked if Southside would be providing its own sewage treatment. St. Joe staff explained that there is a City sewer line on Capital Circle and they are obligated to connect to the City's central sewer line. Ms. Brandt suggested that plans involve the City of Tallahassee and Wakulla County in an effort to upgrade the facility and rescue Wakulla Springs. It was noted that St. Joe has made a presentation with Friends of Wakulla Springs and citizens and will continue dialogue.

Reverend Donald McBride asked if public transportation would be extended to the subject area including Woodville. St. Joe indicated that they are proponents of mass transportation and have been working with the City for some time. Hopefully, the City plans to have a route to Southwood this fall and they will work with the City about including the area.

Chairman Proctor acknowledged Ms. Maggie Lewis, School Board member, in attendance.

Ms. Shawna Smith, 814 Apache Street, Apalachee Ridge, appeared and wanted to know if there would be citizen input which would involve small ongoing community meetings. St. Joe indicated there would be and advised of their website: www.joe.com

Mr. Elijah Turner, 2110 Broad Street, Vice President of FAMU Neighborhood Association, wanted to know what type of educational resources would be

provided for the Southside, and asked if there will be meetings on this issue. St. Joe staff pointed out that schools are a very important part of the project and they have been engaged with the School Board on this issue. As the plan is more defined, it will show a commitment to education. There will be follow-up meetings which will also involve the School Board. School Board member Maggie Lewis explained that the School Board has talked to St. Joe Company about land for a high school on the Southside and are in the process of setting up meetings. Chairman Proctor stated that the County would like to be informed about this, noting that the County and the City has property if needed.

Mr. Rick Davies, 831 Duren Street, appeared and stated that he lives on the western boundary of the proposed project. He voiced concerns over water quality due to 1,600 acres of forest being converted to concrete parking lots and buildings, and suggested a study of the impacts of water quality. He also asked that St. Joe be sensitive to the existing housing around the area which is next to forest and suggested a buffer along existing housing. Ms. Jean Gregory, Planning Department, responded that the Comp Plan requires compatibility measures between single family residential and other like uses, and the Zoning Code has buffer standards depending on uses and their intensity. The required buffering grows larger with more plantings.

Ms. Derry Williams, Woodville, wanted to know if the same plans that citizens discussed earlier are still in effect for the Woodville Community Center. Commissioner Sauls responded that the original plans for the center have actually been expanded to accommodate uses and the current surroundings of Woodville. She does not know if it would accommodate 1,600 new residences as proposed by the new Southside plans.

Mr. Will Sheftall, 615 Paul Russell Road (work), inquired about transportation and master planning issues. He was concerned about the flow-through traffic (truck route/Capital Circle) and suggested using frontage roads and not having so many cut-throughs. He wanted to know what the plans are. St. Joe staff explained that the Comp Plan has strict access management standards for Capital Circle, especially from Tram Road to Woodville Highway. He does not intent to have a driveway cut every 1,500 feet on Capital Circle and concepts like frontage roads and limiting access on a 6-lane highway are concepts at the core of the planning principals and are in the planning stages at this point. By "master planning" the project, these items will be addressed. Mr. Sheftall also wanted to know what does research show about the distance residents are willing to walk from their homes to a grocery store or restaurant; was St. Joe planning to disperse the commercial areas in that fashion, using the walkable community concept. Ms. Gregory pointed out that there is extensive literature on this question and in general most sources say people are willing to walk 10 minutes. St. Joe staff responded that they were using the concept in their planning; the mixed used area, the central core, is going to have residents and stores, etc.

Chairman Proctor requested that Planning Staff provide an overview of the States' plans for the State Office Complex directly adjacent to Southwood off of Capital Circle. Ms. Gregory explained that the office complex is currently approved for 8,800,000 square feet of office activity. Today, the office contains approximately 1.2 million square feet, so they still have 600,000 square feet more to build out. The state will be bringing forward a request to increase the square footage in the State Office Complex by another 1,700,000 square feet.

Mr. Frank Lasane from McGlynn Laboratories, appeared at the request of the Chairman, and spoke about the Southside water study that has been ongoing and the demand on the infrastructure and other environmental impacts. Mr. Lasane advised that through the assistance of Chairman Proctor, a grant was received from the US Environmental Protection Agency to allow him to conduct a study of the Woodville Aquifer area. They are looking at current land use and projected land use and are modeling current loadings of contaminants so they can predict the effects on the aquifer. He emphasized the need for protection of the Aquifer and evaluation of the cost benefits and the ecological benefits to go from septic tanks to an actual sewer system in Woodville.

Mr. Kenneth Barber, citizen, appeared and stated that he recognizes that the project is in the conceptual and planning stage, and requested that Southside developers, Southside contractors, and Southside entrepreneurs be included in the process and that this be in the plan.

Ms. Bonnie Fowler, 1519 Killearn Center Blvd., realtor, stated that she is concerned about affordable and Inclusionary housing and education. She acknowledged the new elementary school and plans for a High School, but encouraged the Board to consider a new middle school. She gave an example in Southwood where a family, upon selling their home, had to come up with cash to the closing which goes back into the community. Ms. Flower cautioned the Board about looking into these types of issues in Southside so that when someone sells their affordable house they do not have to bring cash to the closing. She also wanted to know if this was going to be a special taxing district.

A St. Joe representative responded that they have discussed the CDD (special taxing district) and have looked at the project under a number of scenarios and will continue to do so. Ms. Flowers requested that realtors and banking community be included in the dialogue.

Ms. Diane Jefferson, 3120 Rackley Drive, stated that she has elderly ailing parents and conveyed the importance of having a hospital included in the development. St. Joe staff stated that they very much wanted to see medical services, specifically a hospital in the area. They are looking upfront to ensure

that the permitting issues would allow a hospital and are engaged in discussions with medical providers about this. He is confident that this will happen.

Mr. Hedrick, 2205 Thomasville Road, A-201, appeared and asked if St. Joe was intending to be fully annexed into the City of Tallahassee. St. Joe explained that the 1,600 acres was approximately half in the County and half in the City and they are planning to get the remainder annexed. The Board of County Commissioners will have to allow that to happen. St. Joe will also honor the Inclusionary housing percentage set aside even if the current Inclusionary Housing Ordinance is struck down by the courts (since it is being challenged in the courts). Mr. Hedrick brought up development by St. Joe Company in Wakulla County and Chairman Proctor advised that this meeting tonight involves discussion about Leon County and discussion of Wakulla County will not be entertained.

Reverend Lila Richardson, citizen, voiced concern about additional flooding in the area and urged the Board to not impose any more taxes on citizens. She mentioned the proposed ½ cent tax for indigent health care and remarked that Medicaid is available for health care for individuals who cannot afford to pay.

Ms. Delores Downing, P. O. Box 5571, stated that she lives in the older neighborhood which directly abuts the new residential area. She wanted to know if St. Joe planned to blend the old neighborhood with the new neighborhood or to connect a buffer between the two. If a buffer is put up, she suggested that St. Joe consider the older neighborhood which is quiet and suggested putting single family homes next to the older neighborhood rather than multi-family or apartments. Ms. Downing stated that she did not want to wake up one day and see apartments constructed across the street from her home. A St. Joe representative explained that he did not know at this point but, there would be a logical and compatible transition from one neighborhood to another.

Chairman Proctor asked that Ms. Gregory outline the process that would safeguard any surprises such as mentioned by Ms. Downing. Ms. Gregory advised that the application for the project would be filed in the Planning Department and the application has to go through a number of steps before it is actually approved. As part of the process, notices are sent out to people and legal advertisements are run; the DRI is an open process and citizens will have an opportunity to go through it to receive notices and attend workshops and hearings and to address the Planning Commission. Also there will be notice of joint City and County meetings at City Hall and the Courthouse so citizens can bring forth concerns and address them. Ms. Gregory advised that citizens living within 500 feet of the boundary of the project will receive a written notice in their mailbox of the meeting dates.

Commissioner Sauls stated that she serves on the Executive Committee of the North Florida Fairgrounds. There are a number of critical issues that she has joined in and supports: revitalizing and economically reinvigorating the Southside Community, Southern Strategy; improving the regional area. She stated that some of the objectives can be advanced at the same time as the proposed Southside PUD. The Chambers of Commerce, the Economic Development Council, business leaders, and church and civic groups are working together to focus on how to positively redevelop and reinvigorate economic development on the Southside. Commissioner Sauls pointed out that private consultants and focus groups have repeatedly identified the existing 114-acre fairground site as an ideal and central unit that, once redeveloped, would serve as a center for economic and social activity for a large portion of the Southside Community. The Fair Association would like to consider a relocation of the fairgrounds if it would better serve the citizens of the region by improving access, visibility and use of the fairgrounds. The County has joined with the Congressional delegation, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Fairgrounds and other community partners to support the purchase of property (currently parkland located on Capital Circle/Woodville Highway) for relocation of the fairgrounds. There is a Bill pending to allow the sale of the parkland to the County.

Commissioner DePuy expressed appreciation to Chairman Proctor and Mr. Will Butler and other St. Joe Company representatives for putting this meeting together. He supports the purchase of the proposed land for relocation of the fairgrounds. Commissioner Thael also expressed his appreciation. He was thankful that citizens are part of the process in the early stages of the development and noted the importance of making environmentally sound decisions.

Ms. Gregory explained some of the development trends going on in the Southside area, noting that the State Office Complex was already mentioned: opening of Bond Elementary School next week; new Woodville Community Center; City's neighborhood enhancement program (sidewalks and streetlights installed); neighborhood preservation efforts on the Southside are continuing (Oak Ridge area, Crawfordville Trace); continuing with Sector Plans for the Southern Strategy area and implementation.

Chairman Proctor thanked citizens, staff, and the Board for their input.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Approved: Bill Proctor
Bill Proctor
Chairman

ATTEST:



Bob Inzer
Bob Inzer
Clerk of the Circuit Court