

/EDITORIALS

One size does not fit all

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Lee County has touched off a whirlwind of protest with residents and virtually every

environmental group in the county protesting proposed changes to the Lee Plan they say will eliminate every individual community plan throughout unincorporated Lee County.

The changes address both the Lee County Comprehensive Plan, which “Provides the long-term vision for how the county should grow” and the county’s Land Development Code, which “Contains the specific rules and regulations that make that vision possible,” as stated on the county’s Facebook page.

“Think of the two as a puzzle,” the explanatory post states. “The Lee Plan is the complete picture and the LDC includes the pieces that help that picture come together. Collectively, they ensure that growth in Lee County is thoughtful, coordinated and consistent with long-term community goals.”

“Community” being a broad stroke of consistency that bundles Buckingham and Lehigh with communities like Captiva and Pine Island, critics say.

Those critics maintain that individual community plans — of which there are 17 — have protected, well, individual communities for decades. The picture that snaps together when the new pieces are connected is one that disenfranchises local planning for a one-size-fits-all development process. Emphasis on development.

CAPE CORAL BREEZE

organizations led by the Greater Pine Island Civic Association have banded together as The Lee Communities Coalition to stop the process in its tracks.

“Policies in place for 40 years that were developed through careful planning and the input of hundreds of thousands of Lee County residents should not be deleted with the simple strike of a red pen,” said Bokeelia resident Nadine Slimak, in a commentary on behalf of The Lee Communities Coalition published in The Breeze last week. “This major change in community planning philosophy requires — in fact, demands — a careful and measured review by the residents that Lee County serves. We’re not taking this lying down. The Lee Communities Coalition is saying in one voice that we will not go quietly into the night, that we will not go down without a fight.”

We are unapologetically “pro business.”

We support private property rights.

But not a one of us gets to build what we want where we want, and rezoning is not an entitlement that comes easy with the purchase of property whose current zoning is so designated for a reason.

We agree, one size does not fit all.

Lee County needs to put in a lot more time on this one.

Breeze editorial

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