



Greater Pine Island Civic Association | Matlacha Civic Association | Buckingham Community Association, Inc. | Alva, Inc. | Captiva Civic Association | Captiva Community Panel | Concerned Citizens of Bayshore Community, Inc. | Greater Pine Island Water Association
Contact: Info@LeeCommunities.com

Sept. 9, 2026

To: Tracy Hayden, Vice-Chair – Executive Regulatory Oversight Committee (EROC) — and members Carl Barraco, Jr.; Annette Carrasquillo; Bill deDeugd; Victor Dupont; Scott Edwards; David Gallaher; Sam Hagan; Bob Knight; Ian Moore; Ben Smith

cc: Erika Garcia

On behalf of The Lee Communities Coalition (TLCC), I wish to comment on EROC's Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2026, agenda item: "Amend Chapters 2, 10, 14, 30, 33 and 34 of the LDC to increase efficiency, reduce unnecessary regulations, while maintaining the protection of public health, safety, and welfare and meeting State requirements."

The Lee Communities Coalition (TLCC) is a newly formed coalition of civic and community groups from unincorporated Lee County. Collectively, our organizations have spent decades working to develop planning guidelines for our respective communities, beginning with the Pine Island Plan initiated in 1978 and followed by Community Plans in 16 other Lee County communities that are covered by Chapter 33.

These Community Plans are the result of a historic investment in Lee County's diverse communities, and represent thousands of County Staff and Community Volunteer hours, along with hundreds of thousands of dollars of private funding and taxpayer dollars.

Yet these same Plans are proposed for wholesale elimination under revisions being considered today that neither reduce inefficiency nor maintain the public protections for health, safety and welfare of communities as required by state statute. Furthermore, they were proposed as part of a process that ignored the statutory requirement for public participation in the development planning process.

Today, on behalf of the coalition, we ask that EROC to reject or defer the proposed amendments in order to:

- Afford affected communities an opportunity to fully review the proposed changes;
- Request that Lee County staff to solicit meaningful public input from these communities;
- Allow the county itself to engage in a comprehensive planning review of The Lee Plan and the Land Development Code with full transparency and community engagement.

In fact, state law requires such a full review of the Lee Plan just two years from now, in 2028, as part of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) process. We would encourage EROC to direct county staff to defer any changes until it can go through the typical and required regular review process.

Furthermore, we take issue with this process of revision that has ignored the state requirement for public participation. In fact, an entire statute — Section 163.3181, titled "Public participation in the comprehensive planning process; intent." Section 163.3181 (1) — is dedicated to addressing public participation in the comprehensive planning process:

(1) It is the intent of the Legislature that the public participate in the comprehensive planning process to the fullest extent possible. Towards this end, local planning agencies and local governmental units are directed to adopt procedures designed to provide effective public participation in the comprehensive planning process and to provide real property owners with notice of all official actions which will regulate the use of their property. The provisions and procedures required in this act are set out as the minimum requirements towards this end.



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The first sentence is important and instructive. The Legislature intends that the public participate in the comprehensive plan to the **fullest extent possible**. The section notes that the provisions herein are **the minimum requirements of public participation**.

The members of The Lee Communities Coalition are not the only ones to see problems with this process — a highly respected and long-serving member *of your own committee* resigned last week in protest of these revisions, stating:

- “... While there is certainly scope for some fine tuning for many of these plans, it is not reasonable or transparent to simply eliminate all of them in one fell swoop, when so many citizens have volunteered their time over many years to foster a distinct identity for their communities.”

He also questioned the removal of public input with the elimination of the public information session requirement currently in place under community plans:

- “...The amendments will certainly make the process simpler and cheaper for developers/contributors, but will also substantially reduce the scope for citizen awareness and engagement in protecting the character of their communities.”

Please do the right thing for Lee County communities: return this issue to the staff.

Respectfully submitted,

Nadine Slimak, Coordinator

The Lee Communities Coalition

Info@LeeCommunities.com

239.339.7914

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