

Achua County Rural Concerns Advisory Committee Letter

to County Commission

Regarding Draft Changes to Rural and Agricultural Comprehensive Plan Policies

Authorized for Public Hearing

(CPA 04-20)

July 2, 2020

Honorable Robert Hutchinson, Chair
Alachua County Board of County Commissioners
12 SE 1st Street, 2nd Fl.
Gainesville, Florida 32601

Re: Draft Changes to Rural and Agricultural Comprehensive Plan Policies Authorized for Public Hearing

Dear Chair Hutchinson:

The Rural Concerns Advisory Committee ("RCAC") has been following the discussion of the local foods issue, including its relationship to elements of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan, for a couple of years going back to the early stages of the Evaluation and Appraisal process on the County's Comprehensive Plan in 2018. The Committee received several presentations from staff on this and provided input on the policies in related elements, including the Rural and Agricultural policies section of the Future Land Use Element focusing on agriculture in the open space required in Clustered Rural Residential Subdivisions. Staff has kept the Committee apprised of the several workshops of the County Commission and various drafts, and at its January 2020 meeting, the RCAC requested that staff bring these policies back for its review after the Board's authorization to advertise public hearings on amendments to the policies.

At its meeting on June 16, 2020, the RCAC staff presented the draft amendments that the County Commission had authorized for public hearings at its meeting on May 5th. Committee members had extensive questions and discussion on changes from prior drafts, especially the draft changes relating to Clustered Rural Residential Subdivisions, particularly the proposed changes to the policies on Permitted and Prohibited Uses in the open space in Clustered Rural Residential Subdivisions (Future Land Use Element Policy 6.2.12(c)). The Committee approved the following motion:

Regarding the proposed changes to the Rural and Agricultural Policies, Committee members have questions on definitions of Community Gardens and Agricultural Uses, and the definitions need to be expanded and made more specific; the Committee also requested an opportunity to review and provide input on the Land Development Regulations to implement these policies.

We thank you for considering the views and input of the Rural Concerns Advisory Committee on this matter.

Respectfully,



Ward Scott, Chair
Rural Concerns Advisory Committee

XC: Alachua County Board of County Commissioners
Michele L. Lieberman, County Manager
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