

## Building in Floodplains and Wetlands

There is great concern regarding the proposed Wetlands Objectives 5, of the Comprehensive Plan Conservation Element. There are substantial objections to this revised language, including the incredible loss of our natural resources, wetlands and habitat is the overwhelming cost of the transportation system required for such inappropriate development.

One of the critical aspects of any community is the integrity of its transportation system. We depend on our roads to safely carry us through our travels, as well as carry our police, emergency vehicles, fire trucks, school buses, visitors, customers, etc. We also recognize how expensive it is to provide this network of safe roads for access to all necessary areas.

Most of our paved roads are composed of asphalt, and although asphalt has been around for millions of years in crude oil, it doesn't last forever when used for paving roads. Few of us have missed jolting over cracks and ruts in heavily trafficked roads.

A number of factors change the performance of asphalt. These include the crude oil source, the type and amount of aggregate used, temperature, volume of traffic and the presence of moisture. According to engineering specialists, "...moisture is the worst thing for asphalt roads."

To seriously consider allowing Industrial and Commercial development in our Wetlands is to invite enormous expense for the residents of Brevard County in terms of road construction and maintenance.

Since there is currently a moratorium on Transportation Impact Fees, the burden of transportation needs for all new development is on the backs of the current residents.

To put the citizens in the untenable position of having to pay the extremely expensive additional costs of reinforced roads that are required in Wetlands is unwise and unfair.

The additional costs of road construction in such environments include removing massive amounts of muck down to the hard pan and replacing it with massive amounts of dry, clean fill and compacting per county requirements or driving multiple cement pilings deep into the earth to hold the weight of a lifted road or filling our valuable wetlands and natural floodplains with powdered cement in hopes of binding a hard enough base upon which to build safe roads. But it will not last...

With documented rises in sea level and our natural high water table, these roads through our wetlands would have to be elevated much higher than the natural contours of our thriving habitats and living swamps in order to keep the roads from raveling and rutting in record time. All this adds massive costs to construction and maintenance.

There is clear and substantial evidence that the enormous transportation and maintenance costs of safely accessing proposed wetland developed areas, would severely challenge the economic stability of Brevard County, and further burden the taxpayers.

In addition to the enormous initial expense this action will impose upon the citizens of Brevard, the potential increased risk on their liability, insurance rates, property and persons, is unconceivable.

This is not the kind of vision, leadership, strategic planning or future we expect from our county leadership.

The Wetlands (Objective 5) in the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment 2010 -1.2 of the Conservation Element is inappropriate and should not be approved. The current language regarding construction in Wetlands, while not perfect, is by far preferable.

References:

Chemical & Engineering News, What's That Stuff? Asphalt, Nov. 22, 1999, Vol. 77 47 p. 81.

Transportation Information Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Asphalt PASER Manual, 2002, 28 pp.