

August 20, 2018

Ms. Emily Schemper, AICP, CFM, Acting Senior
Director of Planning & Environmental
Resources

Via Email

Re: Suggestions for amendment language for Goal 109

Dear Ms. Schemper:

We write on behalf of Friends of the Lower Keys (FOLKs) and Save Summerland Native Areas (SSNA), two organizations composed of residents of the Lower Keys concerned about preservation and enforcement of the Lower Keys Livable CommuniKeys Plan and its protection of the community character of their neighborhoods. We have several concerns about proposed Goal 109, including its impact on our communities and the traffic problems which would be created by the current version of the proposed ordinance. We are also concerned about the elimination of community participation components of the existing Comprehensive Plan.

We ask that this letter, which primarily addresses some suggestions from Last Stand concerning a proposed addition of an overlay district to the LDC text of Goal 109, be considered and placed in the record for the upcoming Development Review Committee meeting.

Overlay districts as the situs of the increased density bonuses of Goal 109 for workforce housing rental developments can avoid conflict with the Livable CommuniKeys Plans, minimize traffic issues, facilitate and accommodate flexible and sustainable planning efforts for developers and planning staff, and avoid some of the legal problems which would result from adoption of Goal 109 as presently worded. A tightly crafted overlay component to Goal 109 could also avoid conflict between Goal 109 and other sections of the Comprehensive Plan, including the sub area policies.

We suggest the addition of the following language to the proposed text offered by Last Stand to clarify and to avoid loss of time/resources in controversies over interpretation:

“Overlay districts for the increased affordable housing bonuses set forth in Goal 109 shall be on the islands which are the major employment centers in Monroe County-- Key West, Stock Island, Boca Chica, and Marathon-- or within 3 miles of these major employment centers via US1.”

There is other language and there are other potential problems with the proposed ordinance we would like to address. We think these issues could be more effectively discussed and perhaps resolved in a meeting with Planning staff.

We support Planning staff's suggested changes to the super majority vote, requiring all five commissioners to be present where any vote requiring a super majority is undertaken. We are also concerned about the proposed loss of community participation and urge that the community meetings for text changes and the Planning Commission's ability to deny projects over 20 units be retained.

Thank you for your dedication to crafting a workable solution to the workforce housing crisis facing Monroe County. Although the islands of the Lower Keys Livable CommuniKeys Plan do not face such a crisis, we realize it exists elsewhere in Monroe and support your efforts to reach a feasible, legally defensible solution. Whether the overlay concept works to solve some of the existing problems of Goal 109 will depend on the precision and clarity of the wording. We would like to be part of that process and thank the Board of County Commissioners, Planning staff, and Last Stand for taking the first steps in that direction.

Just today, we received word of an amended set of proposals by Planning Staff directed to an overlay district concept. We have not had time to review Planning Staff's proposals because they were so recently made available. Therefore, this letter should serve to support Last Stand's recommendations for an overlay district policy, as amended by inclusion of our clarifying language, and not as support for any other proposals to amend the existing Comp Plan. We will review Staff's proposals and we request sufficient time to comment on them in a thoughtful fashion. We repeat our request to be included in the discussions about this important overlay district concept. Thank you.

S/s Matthew Fowler, Attorney

Matthew@Matthewfowlerattorney.com

S/s Caron Balkany, Attorney

Balkany@aol.com

cc: Board of County Commissioners

cc: Ms. Ilze Aguila, Liaison, Planning Commission

cc: Ms. Debra Roberts, Planning Coordinator

cc: Mr. Robert Shillinger, County Attorney