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Jublic Service Commission

CAPITAL CIRCLE OFFICE CENTER • 2540 SHUMARD OAK BOULEVARD TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-0850

-M-E-M-O-R-A-N-D-U-M-

DATE:	July 18, 2014
TO:	Carlotta S. Stauffer, Commission Clerk, Office of Commission Clerk
FROM:	Penelope D. Buys, Engineering Specialist III, Division of Engineering ROB TVS
RE:	Docket No. 130265-WU - Application for staff-assisted rate case in Charlotte County by Little Gasparilla water Utility, Inc.

The attached was handed to staff during the site visit on July 16, 2014. Please incorporate these documents into the docket file.



Little Gasparilla Property Owners Association PO Box 3643 Placida, FL 33946

September 17, 2007

Dear Island Neighbor,

Over the years, we have been doing our best to keep you informed during the drafting of the Little Gasparilla Island Community Plan. This document, if adopted by the Charlotte County Board of Commissioners, will become part of the Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan. As such, it will be used as a blueprint for all matters regarding growth, future development, and implementing the ways in which we want our community to improve. This document will not be sent out to property owners for approval. The Little Gasparilla Island Advisory Committee has approved the final draft of the plan and it has now been sent to the County Planning and Zoning Board for approval. If that Board approves the plan, it will be sent to the County Commission for final adoption. These two meetings will be your last opportunities for input regarding the plan:

Charlotte County Planning and Zoning Board will meet Monday, October 8, 2007 at 1:30 PM in the Charlotte County Administrative Center, 18500 Murdock Circle, Room 119, Port Charlotte, FL.

Charlotte County Commission will meet Tuesday October 16, 2007 at 9:00 AM in the Charlotte County Administrative Center, 18500 Murdock Circle, Room 119, Port Charlotte, FL.

We are providing you with a copy of the final draft of the plan. We believe that it is extremely important that you review this document. Only you can determine if this document serves your needs and fulfills your vision of the future. This is not a responsibility you can delegate to someone else. We urge you to attend the public meetings, as this will be your last opportunity for input. We hope that keeping you informed during the development of the plan has helped and again, we urge you to take an active part in directing the future of the island.

Sincerely,

Little Gasparilla Property Owners Association

Phyllis NeSmith, President Gena Huebner, Secretary Nat Parke, Director Jay Perry, Director David Haynes, Vice-President Paul Holmes, Treasurer Tom McCoy, Director Sharon Belcher, Director

Not a member? You will find an LGPOA membership application on the back of this letter. Already a member? We appreciate your support. Please pass this application on to your neighbor.

LGPOA	Little Gasparilla Property Owners Association PO Box 3643 Placida, FL 33940
	2007 Membership Applicatior
WWW.LGPOA.ORG	Annual dues are \$25.00 Make your check payable to LGPOA
Island Property Address:	
Name of Owners	Owners' Email Address
Please add additional pages if the	e are more owners.
Mailing address for official of	rrespondence Phone Numbers:
	Island:
	Mainland:

Name of Designated Voter:

Please designate one owner only. This person will cast one vote for all owners. All ballot information will be mailed to the official mailing address reported above.

Address for other properties owned on Little Gasparilla Island:

I (we) would be interested in serving on the following LGPOA committee(s):						
	Development & Planning		Legal			
	Equipment Acquisition		Island Services			
	Navigation Committee		Historical			
	Membership		Social			
	Hurricane Preparedness					

Little Gasparilla Island Community Plan

,1

Prepared by:

The Citizens of Little Gasparilla Island,

The Little Gasparilla Island Advisory Committee,

and

Charlotte County

With assistance from Consultant:

HDR Engineering, Inc.

Community Vision:

"Little Gasparilla Island is a pristine piece of old Florida, conveniently located minutes from the mainland and its amenities and services. Quiet, peaceful and uncrowded, Little Gasparilla Island is an informal, yet cooperative, collection of residents who cherish the breathtaking beauty of their unique island home and the easy going lifestyle it fosters. Timeless and enduring, Little Gasparilla Island combines history, nature and individuality to create one of the most endearing places in Florida."

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Plan

Charlotte County's Community Planning process is a community-driven planning initiative that addresses the individual needs of the respective community planning areas. Little Gasparilla Island is one of nine community planning areas in Charlotte County, on the west coast of Florida (Figure 1). The Little Gasparilla Island Community Plan addresses important community needs, identifies issues affecting these needs, and provides goals, objectives and policies in order to meet these needs.



This Community Plan expresses the community's vision and values, and embodies public policy relative to the Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan. The Community Plan does not replace the County's Comprehensive Plan, but it expands it to address local needs. The document is organized in a manner that mirrors the County's Comprehensive Plan.

According to state legislation, local comprehensive plans should accomplish four primary tasks:

- 1. Guide and control future development;
- 2. Overcome present problems and deal effectively with future problems which may result from the use and development of land;
- 3. Preserve, protect and improve health, safety and welfare; and
- 4. Protect human, environmental, social and economic resources.

Charlotte County's Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1997 but due to protracted challenges by the State of Florida, the plan entered into effect in 2000. The Comprehensive Plan contains the County's goals, objectives, and policies for implementation of the state mandated growth management actions through the year 2010. The Comprehensive Plan applies throughout the County and is implemented based upon the local community conditions.

Charlotte County is currently going through a review of their Comprehensive Plan. This review, the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR), is a two-year process which updates the Comprehensive Plan to address population and development changes. Since the Comprehensive Plan is the vision for the area, the plan needs to be updated to respond to changing needs and desires.

1.2 Community Planning in Charlotte County

The Charlotte County Community Development Department instituted a "Community Planning" program to assist neighborhoods and communities in coordinating their planning efforts. The Community Planning process provides a vision, core values and policy guidance to balance the needs of a community while enhancing the quality of life of its residents. Typically, a neighborhood or stakeholders group will form and begin to discuss areas of concern or improvement. Once a community identifies the desire to initiate the community planning process, the Charlotte County Board of Commissioners approves funding assistance for the neighborhood and formally designates the area for community planning. The County also assigns a County staff member who serves as a neighborhood liaison to the community planning area.

The County then hires a consultant who assists the community in identifying a vision for the area and establishing goals, objectives and policies for the community. These goals, objectives and policies preserve and maintain the existing amenities and aim at addressing the community's specific needs. There are nine community planning areas in Charlotte County: Manasota Key, Grove City, Placida, South Gulf Cove, Harbour Heights, Burnt Store, Boca Grande, Don Pedro/Knights/Bocilla Islands/Thorton Key and Little Gasparilla Island. Of these, Manasota Key, South Gulf Cove, Placida, and Burnt Store have completed a community plan. Harbor Heights, Grove City, and Boca Grande are in the process of completing their community plans.

The community plan provides specific policy direction and actions to meet community needs related to land use, the natural environment, economic development, infrastructure, community character and public facilities and services. Preserving and building community character while ensuring an efficient and predictable development approval process is a central theme of the plan. Each community plan is tailored to the specific community planning area. For example the Community Plan for South Gulf Cove emphasized density reduction, while the Community Plan for Harbor Heights focuses on quality commercial development. In turn, the Community Plan for Little Gasparilla Island focuses on preserving island character while improving mainland services and support.

1.3 The Little Gasparilla Island Advisory Committee

In November 2000, the Little Gasparilla Island Steering Committee was established to formulate a vision for Little Gasparilla Island and to begin addressing concerns of the residents. The Committee members included Island residents and property association members. Due to the lack of land access to the Island, the Little Gasparilla Island residents initially identified issues regarding emergency medical services, fire suppression services, right-of-way and access issues. Over the next two years the committee met and discussed the characteristics of the Island. The Committee documented their findings and concerns in a report presented to the Board of County Commissioners in March 2004. The Board of County Commissioners passed a resolution and the Little Gasparilla Island Advisory Committee (hereafter, LGI Advisory Committee) was formally established (Appendix A).

The LGI Advisory Committee drafted and presented a set of bylaws in July 2005. The LGI Advisory Committee is represented by a seven-member Board, the purpose of which "is to discuss matters of concern to the island residents including but not limited to the development of a community plan, emergency medical services, fire suppression services, right-of-way and access issues, the development of recommendations regarding island infrastructure and environmental issues, the development of the findings of the prior Little Gasparilla Steering Committee and to advise the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners on said matters." Since its inception, the LGI Advisory Committee has addressed such topics as establishment of a north/south easement, property rights, density of structures, red tide, Stump Pass Dredging Project, Gasparilla Pass, water taxis, trash disposal, sewer facilities, island emergency services, MSTU/MSBU and aggressive exotic plant growth. The Community Plan seeks to address some of these concerns.

The LGI Advisory Committee approached their district's Commissioner in 2004 with a written request to formally initiate the Community Planning process. The Commissioner forwarded the request to the Community Development Department. The LGI Advisory Committee and the Little Gasparilla Property Owners Association (LGPOA) collaborated on the request to initiate a Community Plan. Both groups developed a list of specific areas of concern. On May 5, 2005, the LGPOA presented a memorandum to the LGI Advisory Committee recommending the following areas of concentration regarding the Community Plan (Appendix B):

- Zoning
- Future Land Use
- Access to the island
- Roadway easements
- Water supply
- Sewage treatment
- Garbage collection
- Fire protection
- Emergency medical treatment and transportation

- Community center building, and
- Taxes and costs of county services.

The LGI Advisory Committee then expanded the list provided by the LGPOA and provided a summary of issues and considerations to be addressed in the community plan. This summary was used to create the Request for Letters of Interest (RLI). A RLI outlines the scope of services the consultant is asked to perform. A consultant was retained in September 2005.

1.4 Current Conditions

Little Gasparilla Island is a bridgeless barrier island located off Florida's west coast in Charlotte County (Figure 2). It is the southernmost island of the chain formed by Don Pedro, Palm Island and Little Gasparilla Island. Little Gasparilla Island is approximately 2.5 miles in length and averages between ¼ and ½ mile in width. The island has access to both the Gulf of Mexico and Placida Harbor. The island is physically connected to Don Pedro Island to the north; however the Don Pedro State Park serves as a buffer which only allows for pedestrian access. Therefore, Little Gasparilla Island is accessible only by watercraft and emergency vehicles (such as All Terrain Vehicles (ATV) that are utilized by the Charlotte County Sheriff Department).

All parcels on Little Gasparilla are privately owned. There are 642 platted lots ranging in size from one-tenth of an acre to 13.6 acres. There are two condominium developments on the island: Placida Beach Condos and Hideaway Bay Condos. Placida Beach Condos have 30 single-family residential units and Hideaway Bay Condos have 102 single-family residential units. The majority of the island is single-family residential; 10 parcels are zoned Planned Development. Little Gasparilla Island is located outside the Urban Service Area. There are no public lands or facilities on the Island with the possible exception of roads which may or may not be considered to be public. Vehicular and pedestrian access is limited to a network of unimproved paths. Docks on the island are owned by individual waterfront property owners, property owner associations, neighborhood groups or the two condo associations.

Infrastructure and public facilities are limited on the island. Florida Power and Light provides electricity and Sprint provides phone service. Potable and non-potable water is provided by individual cisterns, shallow wells and a privately owned for-profit water company that utilizes a deep drilled well to provide water. The Little Gasparilla Island Water Utility has a reverse osmosis desalinization plant. Wastewater from single-family units is disposed of in septic tanks and drain fields located on individual lots. The condominiums have a single wastewater treatment system.

Emergency and medical services are provided by the volunteer fire department located on the island. Fire protection for the island is provided by a subsisted chief who resides on the island. The fire services operate by contributions from island residents. Law enforcement is provided by the Charlotte County Sheriff's department. Amenities on the Island include the Leydon-Mirza Chapel. A stakeholder maintains a common-use library on the Island that is free to all islanders.



2. Little Gasparilla Island Community Planning Process

The LGI Advisory Committee, along with Charlotte County, established a comprehensive list of needs with which to establish a Request for Letters of Interest (RLI). The RLI was produced in order to hire a consultant to assist Little Gasparilla Island in the community planning process. The County hired a consultant in September 2005. The consultant's Scope of Work is reproduced in Appendix C. The consultant met with the LGI Advisory Committee on October 11, 2005, which served as the Kick-Off Meeting for the Community Planning Project. At this meeting the consultant was introduced to County staff and the LGI Advisory Committee and a schedule for the project was established.

Two public workshops provided opportunities for the Little Gasparilla Island stakeholders to define a community vision and goals for the Plan.

Workshop 1 – November 12, 2005

The first public workshop was held at the Chapel on Little Gasparilla Island, on November 12, 2005, with the participation of 89 island residents as well as County staff and consultants (Photos 1-3). The consultant introduced and described the planning process, its schedule, and the structure and scope of the final Plan.



Photo 1. Participants listened to the consultant's presentation.



Photo 2. Participants worked in groups.



Photo 3. Participants voted for the issues.

In a group exercise, attendees brainstormed and identified community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). Finally, the attendees ranked the SWOT elements to determine the main issues of the community (Table 1, Appendix D).

Table 1 Highest-ranked Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (number of votes in parenthesis)					
and the second second	Strengths		Weaknesses		
 Pe (48) Lo No Sa 	b bridge = No cars (53) eaceful old Florida environment B) w residential density (26) o commercial development (24) afe environment for kids (16) o paved roads (13)	0 0 0 0	[Lack of] mainland parking (44) Lack of value for taxes paid (40) Access to the island (marina) (32) No north south access (14) Few public docks (11) Lack of island EMS (10)		
Opportunities			Threats		
de Cr on Isl Ex Re Ma	ontrol future growth and velopment on island (46) eate additional marinas/parking mainland (38) and ownership of marina (25) plore LGI residential ferry (22) esolve North-South corridor (17) aintain green areas/island ology (12)*	0 0 0 0 0	Sale of marinas (mainland) (50) Taxes (36) Over development (32) MSBU/MSTU (26) Paved roads (23) Bridge to island (22)		

*The discussion relative to green space was to encourage lot owners to consider density reduction through the Transfer Density Units process to provide more green space on the Island, but also to pursue acquisition of a common area to construct a public use facility.

The consultant summarized the results of the SWOT analysis in a statement provided to the County via email on November 17, 2005:

"The LGI community relishes its geographic autonomy and the quiet, natural, safe environment it provides. Yet, they want more support from the mainland, such as larger return on taxes paid, provision of EMS services, and securing a permanent mainland site for parking/boat launching. They see this juncture as an opportunity to control future growth and strengthen the connection with the mainland. They are leery of increasing taxes, uncontrolled development, and losing a parking/boat launching facility on the mainland. They also want to address the island-side issue of a north/south corridor."

Workshop 2 – December 9, 2005

The second workshop was held on December 9, 2005 at the County facilities in Port Charlotte, with the participation of 17 community members. In the workshop, the consultant facilitated a discussion that yielded the community vision and the main goals to be incorporated into the Little Gasparilla Island Community Plan.

The following Community vision statement synthesizes the desires of the Little Gasparilla Island community:

"Little Gasparilla Island is a pristine piece of old Florida, conveniently located minutes from the mainland and its amenities and services. Quiet, peaceful and uncrowded, Little Gasparilla Island is an informal, yet cooperative, collection of residents who cherish the breathtaking beauty of their unique island home and the easy going lifestyle it fosters. Timeless and enduring, Little Gasparilla Island combines history, nature and individuality to create one of the most endearing places in Florida."

The group then worked to identify the issues the Plan goals should address (Table 2).

Table 2 Results of goal exercises						
Fu	ture Land Use					
•	Consider Barrier Island Act					
	Single Family Residential Zoning					
	Set-back requirements					
	Grandfather in Golf Cart business					
	Consider limited neighborhood commercial activities					
•	Essential Services					
0	Require property owners to maintain junk free status					
Tra	ansportation					
	Ensure that the Island is accessible from the mainland					
•	No vehicles on the beach					
0	No bridge or vehicle access					
•	Create north/south access easement					
۲	Maintain current sand paths					
Na	tural Resources and Coastal Planning					
•	Remove exotic, aggressive vegetation					
•	Erosion control					
•	Maintain/dredge Gasparilla Pass					
•	Red tide					
0	Water quality of the Bay					
	Continual testing of water contaminants					
•	Follow the coastal construction line					
•	Enforce existing dock restrictions and restrict motorized boat traffic over low					
	seabeds and grass flats					
•	Controlled/regulated burning					
Inf	rastructure					
•	Solid waste pick up and heavy trash collection					
0	County should acquire water system					
0	Pursue a feasibility study of the sewer system and ensure the existing septic					
	systems are operating properly					
	Utilities run along easements versus private property					
•	Need efficiently operated potable water system with adequate fire flow pressure					
•	Tie into Charlotte County 2" water main located on Don Pedro					
Re	creation and Open Space					
•	Maintain free and open beach where pets are allowed and prohibit all vehicle traffic.					
Ho	using					

Table 2					
Results of goal exercises					
	No condos, hotels, resorts, townhomes or mobile homes				
	Ensure that height restrictions and set backs are enforced				
	Homes are low scale with appropriate architecture				
Int	ergovernmental Coordination				
0	Ensure that Charlotte County will coordinate with LGI, specifically regarding fire,				
	EMS and law enforcement services.				
•	County to work with island Advisory Board				
Co	ommunity Facilities and Services				
	EMS on Island Station				
0	Trash Removal				
	 Road and easement maintenance 				
	Gathering place for community				
٠	Develop effective EMS, fire, police response to island emergencies				
Ca	pital Improvements				
	Underground power				
	Provide boardwalks to beaches through easements				
	Ensure that an appropriate sized chipper and equipment are purchased to manage				
	tree debris				

Technical Workshop

On February 14, 2006 the consultant and County staff met at the Charlotte County offices from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. The work session was structured around the Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan elements, where appropriate County staff addressed seven topics: Land Use, Transportation/MSBU, Utilities, Fire/EMS, Parks and Recreation, Environmental Extension and Natural Resources. For each topic, the group discussed the key issues raised by the community and how the Community Plan could address it.

3. Land Use Element

3.1 Current Conditions Summary

Zoning & Future Land Use

Little Gasparilla Island is primarily residential; all parcels are privately owned. With the exception of 10 parcels zoned for Planned Development (PD) (aka Preserve Unit II), the island is zoned residential, multifamily/tourist (RMF-T; Figure 3). The future land use for Little Gasparilla Island is Medium Density Residential (Figure 4).

The RMF-T zoning designation is defined as follows in the County land development regulations (Sections 3-9-34 and 3-9-49):

Residential, multifamily/tourist (RMF-T): The residential, multifamily/tourist (RMF-T) zoning district is intended to permit multifamily dwellings, apartments and tourist-related commercial facilities (Table 3). The locations of these districts are primarily along arterials as designated in the comprehensive plan and in resort areas on the barrier islands.



Figure 3. Little Gasparilla Island Zoning

Table 3 RMF-T Zoning							
and a second	and a second	Setbacks		Max	Minimum Lot	Primary	
District	Front	Side	Rear	Height*	Coverage	Uses	
						Multi-family, apartments & tourist related	
RMF-T	25	15/25/20	7.5/15/20	38 feet	7,500 square ft	commercial	

*The maximum building height is measured from the based flood elevation.



Figure 4. Little Gasparilla Island Future Land Use

<u>Planned development district (PD):</u> Any residential, commercial, industrial, or public land uses and structures are permitted in this district, provided the proposed development is shown to be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the comprehensive plan, and consistent with the future land use element and relevant standards and criteria contained in the county land development regulations.

Future land uses are defined in the Comprehensive Plan Objective 2.2. Policy 2.2.1 defines the Medium Density Residential Category as follows:

"These lands are designated for urban residential uses. Medium Density Residential lands may be developed at a density from 5 dwelling units per acre to 10 dwelling units per acre. Uses on land designated as such include: single-family residential dwelling units, multi-family residential

dwelling units, manufactured residential dwelling units, recreational facilities, subneighborhood commercial centers, and schools."

Therefore, both the zoning and future land use designations for Little Gasparilla Island allow for multi-family, medium density developments, including both residential and commercial units.

However, Little Gasparilla Island is located within the Bridgeless Barrier Island Overlay District (BBIOD) of Charlotte County (Figure 5). An overlay district is an additional zoning requirement placed on a geographic area but does not change the underlying zoning. Overlay districts have been used to impose development restrictions in specific locations in addition to standard zoning requirements. The District essentially restricts density and intensity of residential development mainly to reduce the potential for devastation caused by hurricanes.



Figure 5. Bridgeless Barrier Island Overlay

The Bridgeless Barrier Island Overlay District is described and implemented through the Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan. Policy 2.5.3 defines the District as follows:

"The Bridgeless Barrier Island Overlay District (BBIOD) consists of Charlotte County's bridgeless barrier island chain and includes. Don Pedro Island, Knight Island, Thornton Key, and Little Gasparilla Island. In order to reduce the potential for devastation resulting from involuntary natural disasters. this overlay district restricts the intensity of residential development. Residential densities within the district may not exceed one (1) dwelling unit per gross acre. All residential lots created within the Bridgeless Barrier Island Overlay District subsequent to February 1. 1992 shall not exceed one (1) dwelling unit per gross acre requirement. However, all residential lots created consistent with the Charlotte County Subdivision Regulations shall have an allowable density of one (1) dwelling unit per subdivided lot."

Therefore, the Bridgeless Barrier Overlay District is more restrictive than the current zoning and future land use designations in Little Gasparilla Island.

Non-conforming structures and uses occur on Little Gasparilla Island. Section 3-9-10 of the Charlotte County Code addresses non-conforming structures and recognizes as "legally non-conforming" those structures built prior to the enactment of the current zoning. In Little Gasparilla Island, typical non-conformities include improper setbacks and improper use (e.g., golf cart repair in a residential area), among others. The Charlotte County Code establishes limits and sets criteria for rebuilding non-conforming structures in the event of destruction.

Land Use

A review of the Charlotte County Property Appraiser's database shows that there are 642 parcels on this 206.5-acre island (Table 4). Nearly half of the parcels and half of the area are vacant. Vacant parcels occur throughout the island (Figure 6).



Table 4 Land Use in Little Gasparilla Island (as 01/12/2007)						
	Parcels (%)	Area in acres (%)				
Total	642 (100%)	206.5 (100%)				
Vacant Residential	273 (43%)	93.9 (45%)				
Single Family Residential	344 (53%	88 (43%)				
Multi Family (132 units)	16(.2.9%)	22.4 (1.4%)				
Miscellaneous (water plant, FPL, other)	3 (.4%)	0.4 (.2%)				
Mobile Homes	2 (.2%)	0.4 (.2%)				
Miscellaneous Residential	3 (.4%)	0.4 (.2%)				
Institutional (chapel)	1 (.1%)	1.0 (.4%)				



Photo 4a. Single-family residential units.



Photo 4b. Condominium units.

Ninety-three percent of the developed parcels are developed as single-family residential (Photo 4a). The 344 single family residential parcels occupy nearly 88 acres of the island. Eleven parcels are listed as "condominium" - there are two condominium developments on the Island (Photo 4b): Placida Beach Condos with 30 units, and Hideaway Bay Condos with 102 units.

To estimate the number of developed parcels occupied permanently, we assumed that a Little Gasparilla Island or a Placida P.O. Box mailing address for the owner implied that the owner resides on the island permanently. Under this assumption, there are 86 permanent households on the island, seven of which are in condominiums. The balance of the available units (approximately 380 units) are occupied temporarily or seasonally.

Little Gasparilla Island is outside the Urban Service Area. There are no public lands or facilities on the Island.

3.2 Analysis of Community Needs

The Little Gasparilla Community, through the LGI Advisory Committee and the community workshops held during the preparation of this plan, nearly unanimously expressed a desire to remain a low-density residential community, with only a minimal, strictly necessary public/commercial use to meet basic community needs.

The Bridgeless Barrier Island Overlay district restricts new residential densities to a maximum of one dwelling unit per one gross acre or one unit per platted lot. The current zoning and future land use designations allow for higher densities, as well as for commercial uses. The community wants to eliminate the discrepancies between the Bridgeless Barrier Island Overlay District, the zoning, and the future land use designations. Ultimately, zoning and future land use should allow only single family units on a minimum lot size of one acre or on a previously platted lot.

Of the 273 vacant residential parcel, 250 (92%) are smaller than 0.5 acres; 21 parcels are between 0.5 and 1 acre, and 20 parcels are larger than 1 acre. Should development continue unchecked on these vacant parcels, the Bridgeless Barrier Island Overlay's goal of one dwelling unit per gross acre would be unattainable. The community wants to find mechanisms to reduce the number of parcels available for development and thus approximate the goal of the overlay. The LGI Advisory Committee discussed some potential mechanisms, such as land acquisition for conservation, incentives to aggregate small lots, or transfer of development rights.

Conversely, the zoning and future land use designations should allow for limited public or commercial uses to meet basic community needs, such as emergency management. The limited existing non-residential uses, such as golf cart repair and water treatment plant should be allowed to remain as non-residential uses. The community also expressed a strong desire to have an on-island site where they can meet and hold public meetings and other community activities. This plan includes provisions to help the community establish a public area to meet these needs.

While the community desires some public or commercial uses on the island, it also wants to ensure that such uses are limited. Therefore, this plan calls for limits on the number of parcels and total parcel area potential devoted to public or commercial uses (see Policy 1.3.2).

Finally, the community needs clarification on the treatment of non-conforming uses. Existing non-conforming uses should be inventoried and recorded and their current status should be grandfathered. Also, the 50% replacement rule should be clarified for the island. Charlotte County Code, Section 3-9-10, Nonconformities, applies to the LGI as well.

3.3 Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1. Maintain and protect Little Gasparilla Island (LGI)'s low-density residential nature, while providing for limited non-residential uses to meet community needs.

Objective 1.1. Complete zoning revisions to guarantee that residential density on LGI shall not exceed the requirement of the Bridgeless Barrier Island Overlay District (BBIOD).

Policy 1.1.1. New zoning categories will be developed for LGI to address the overlapping regulations including BBIOD, Residential multi-family/tourist (RMF-T), & Medium Density Residential Future Land Use designations.

Policy 1.1.2. New zoning may include incentives to encourage lot aggregation and other density-reduction measures.

Objective 1.2. Charlotte County will coordinate with the LGI Advisory Committee to identify an island site that serves as the location from which community services may be provided.

Objective 1.3. While low-density residential will remain the principal land use on Little Gasparilla Island, Charlotte County will explore zoning revisions and other measures to promote limited commercial and community land uses on the island.

Policy 1.3.1. Charlotte County recognizes that some existing uses on the island are nonconforming and that those nonconformities should be conformed to the existing County Codes.

Policy 1.3.2. The residents of Little Gasparilla Island (LGI) expressed a desire for little, if any, commercial development on the island. Any commercial property on LGI is subject to Federal, State, and County regulations and must receive the appropriate zoning classification from its current designation of residential uses. The LGI Advisory Committee will review all proposals for zoning change and will make a recommendation to the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners. Proposed zoning changes must clearly show that there is a unique need for and resulting benefit to the LGI community. The LGI Advisory Committee will base its recommendation on varied criteria including but not limited to, needs, benefit, scope, infrastructure, impacts, and community conformity.

Goal 2. Manage growth and the rate of growth in a manner that ensures the sustainability of its resources and the attainability of its community vision.

Objective 2.1. Consistent with Objective 1.4 of the Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan, the County in partnership with the LGI Advisory Committee will explore the feasibility of reducing the number of vacant platted lots.

Policy 2.1.1. Land acquisition for conservation and green space will be promoted. The acquisition of land and partnership opportunities should be explored.

Policy 2.1.2. Charlotte County will encourage the LGI Advisory Committee to work with private entities to reduce platted lots through assembly and deplatting, public acquisition, transfers of density rights, and may explore the possibility of lot swaps.

Policy 2.1.3. In order to provide viable development alternatives to Little Gasparilla Island lot owners, stakeholders shall work with the LGI Advisory Committee to explore land development alternatives.

4.0 Transportation Element

4.1 Current Conditions Summary

Little Gasparilla Island is accessible only by watercraft. Once on the island, there is no dedicated road network. This summary addresses both issues: access to the island and mobility on the island.

Most residents and visitors park their vehicles and launch their boats at either the Charlotte County Public Boat Ramp located just across Placida Sound from the island; Gasparilla Marina, Eldred Marina, and to a lesser extent, Palm Island Marina (Figure 7). Hideaway Condos operates their own marina with 30 boat slips at condos and 4 slips on the mainland near the parking lot with 100 auto parking spaces.



Figure 8. Manatee speed zones (Source: FDEP).



Photo 5. Typical Little Gasparilla Island Road.

Navigation to and around Little Gasparilla Island is constrained by channels and aids to navigation. The entire area within Placida Sound is a manatee protection zone, subject to minimal wake restrictions (Figure 8); however, there are some designated areas limited to 25 miles per hour (MPH).There are 117 docks on the bay side of Little Gasparilla Island. Most of these docks are used by several dwelling units; others are private. In most cases, docks are aligned with access easements or rights-of-way, which provide access to the island interior.

Mobility on Little Gasparilla Island is limited by the lack of a designated road network. There are some dedicated county owned rights-of-way. As a result, the transportation network is a series of ad hoc pathways that traverse the Island in north/south and east/west directions (Figure 9, Photo 5). These roads of convenience are maintained with a sand or shell surface and used almost exclusively for golf carts.





4.2 Analysis of Community Needs

The County should expedite the process of obtaining channel marker permits from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and from the Office of Boating Safety, and the installation of the channel markers for the south fork.

The community wants the County's assistance to investigate ways to establish facilities on the mainland and on the island to facilitate transportation between the island and the mainland. Ideally, these facilities should accommodate private boats, barge transportation of bulk items, transport of emergency equipment and personnel and car and boat trailer parking on the mainland.

The community clearly wants to avoid road widening and paving, yet residents would like to secure a north-south corridor that would allow for access across the entire island. The current legal status of the path network remains unclear; easements exist for some roads on the island, but much of the network had been established through long-time use. The community is not interested in surrendering ownership or maintenance of the roads to the County.

4.3 Goals, Policies and Objectives

Goal 3. Secure a mainland site to serve the future parking and boat launching opportunities.

Objective 3.1. The LGI Advisory Committee will coordinate with Charlotte County to determine how to supply short and long-term parking and boat slip needs.

Policy 3.1.1. The LGI Advisory Committee will explore alternative funding sources to establish parking and docking facilities.

Goal 4. Maintain boat access to the island.

Objective 4.1. Charlotte County will support the LGI Advisory Committee's efforts to ensure the water-based transportation network for island residents and visitors is navigable

Policy 4.1.1 In coordination with appropriate agencies, LGI Advisory Committee will communicate desired boating needs for LGI stakeholders.

Goal 5. Establish a permanent, north-south transportation corridor.

Objective 5.1. Charlotte County in coordination with the LGI Advisory Committee will evaluate the different alternatives under which a north-south access could be established on Little Gasparilla Island.

Policy 5.1.1. The LGI Advisory Committee will work with the residents on the island to explore funding sources for the alternatives

Policy 5.1.2. If established, the north-south corridor will remain unpaved.

5. Natural Resources and Coastal Planning Element

5.1 Current Conditions Summary



Figure 10. From the FDEP Environmental Sensitivity Map.

Little Gasparilla Island is located along the southern end of the Lemon Bay Aquatic Preserve. The coastal and marine environment around the island includes sensitive elements, such as seagrass beds on Placida Sound, mangrove areas, manatee habitat, nesting areas for sea turtles, and available habitat for bivalves and other marine and wetland species (Figure 10). Beach erosion is evident on the ocean side of the island, particularly on the northern shore, where the surf nearly reaches residences (Photo 6).

The FDEP Strategic Beach Management Plan (FDEP, 2000) recognizes a 0.4 mile segment of "critically eroded beach" on Little Gasparilla Island, just south of the former Little Gasparilla Pass. The plan calls only for monitoring this segment. The island is also

within Charlotte County's Coastal High Hazard Area, requiring evacuation in the event of a Category 1 hurricane.

Native vegetation on the island has been severely impacted. A mangrove fringe occurs along the bayside shore (Photo 7). Inland, the vegetation canopy is dominated by the exotic species Australian pine (*Casuarina equistifolia*). Brazilian pepper (*Shinus terebinthifolius*), another exotic invasive species occurs throughout the island. Among the most common native species, cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*), cocoplum (*Chrysobelanus icaco*), and sea grape (*Coccoloba uvifera*) occur in patches throughout the island. Coconut palm (*Cocos nucifera*) and a variety of ornamental species are also common on the island.

County staff indicated that gopher tortoises (*Gopherus polyphemus*) occur on the island, but no population census or mapping has been conducted.



Photo 6. Beach erosion.



Photo 7. Typical vegetation: mangrove along the bayside shore and Australian pine dominating the island canopy.

Analysis of Community Needs

The community wants to address key restoration issues, such as help restore native vegetation and control beach erosion. They cherish their natural setting and want to ensure the protection of the marine and terrestrial resources.

Goals, Policies and Objectives

Goal 6. Promote the restoration of native terrestrial habitats on Little Gasparilla Island.

Objective 6.1. Charlotte County recognizes that Little Gasparilla Island lots are privately owned. The Charlotte County Environmental Extension Office will work with local residents and land owners to establish an awareness campaign which promotes the restoration of native habitats on the island.

Policy 6.1.1. Charlotte County in coordination with the LGI Advisory Committee will investigate the means by which to conduct an assessment of the terrestrial vegetation on Little Gasparilla Island including but not limited to grant funding opportunities.

Policy 6.1.2. The assessment of native terrestrial vegetation should include a description of the vegetation types across the island as well as the identification of priority areas for restoration. The study should also recommend techniques to remove and dispose of exotic vegetation and replace with native species.

Objective 6.2. All new construction on the LGI is required to remove exotic and aggressive native species, such as Brazilian pepper, Australian pine, Nicker bean, and etc. The LGI Advisory Committee will actively encourage removal of exotic species on existing developed properties.

6. Infrastructure Element

6.1 Current Conditions Summary

Infrastructure on Little Gasparilla Island is limited. Potable water is obtained through private wells, cisterns, or the island's water treatment plant. According to the property appraiser's records, the water treatment plant serves the 132 condo units as well as an additional 113 dwelling units (Figure 11).

Wastewater in the condominiums is treated; the sludge is transported off the island periodically. All other dwellings rely on septic tanks for wastewater disposal and treatment.

Each household is responsible for disposing its solid waste. Residents transport waste to the mainland and deposit it at the nearest available waste disposal site.

The County supplied the LGI Advisory Committee with the results of an evaluation regarding the feasibility of connecting Little Gasparilla Island to the County water supply system. According to the study (Conceptual Implementation Plan Barrier Islands Utility Service, dated October 2004) a 2" subaqueous waterline to Don Pedro State Park is insufficient to provide adequate service to Little Gasparilla Island. The study states that it would cost approximately \$1.2 million to increase the pipe size to 10 inches.

6.2 Analysis of Community Needs

The community desires a reliable source of drinking water and a safe method of disposing and treating wastewater. They recognize the logistic and economic constraints that prevent the establishment of a centralized waste disposal and collection system for the island, but would like to explore potential options.

While the public perception regarding water quality in the surrounding marine environment is unfavorable, there is no data to evaluate the actual status of water quality. The community wants to know the current levels of water quality.

6.3 Goals, Policies and Objectives

Goal 7. Maintain efficiency and effectiveness of the provisions of potable water.

Objective 7.1. Charlotte County supports the efforts of the Little Gasparilla Island community to monitor and evaluate the quality and quantity of the potable water supply for Little Gasparilla Island.

Policy 7.1.1. The LGI Advisory Committee will coordinate with the Department of Environmental Protection and the State Department of Health.



Objective 7.2. Charlotte County, in coordination with the LGI Advisory Committee and the Public Service Commission, will support efforts to ensure that the private potable water utility plant complies with industry and regulatory standards for treatment efficiency and water quality.

Objective 7.3 The County encourages the LGI Advisory Committee to investigate other alternatives to provide potable water in a cost-effective, reliable fashion.

Goal 8. Maintain efficiency and effectiveness of the provisions of wastewater regulations.

Objective 8.1. Charlotte County supports the efforts of the Little Gasparilla Island community to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of septic systems.

Policy 8.1.1 The LGI Advisory Committee will coordinate with the Department of Environmental Protection and the State Department of Health to maintain the standards for wastewater systems.

Goal 9. Seek alternative means to provide a more efficient collection system for the disposal of solid waste generated on Little Gasparilla Island.

Objective 9.1. The LGI Advisory Committee will coordinate with Charlotte County to investigate the opportunity to establish a collection point on the mainland to serve the solid waste disposal needs of Little Gasparilla Island.

7. Community Facilities and Services Elements

7.1 Current Conditions Summary

Currently Little Gasparilla has limited or no community facilities and services. This issue was repeatedly raised during the community planning workshops and identified in reports generated by the LGI Advisory Committee. There is a privately owned church which serves as a meeting place for the residents. Other than the church there are no community facilities. There is a small library attached to a home owned by a stakeholder that operates on an honor system.

Little Gasparilla has a private funded Island Fire and Rescue service that operates as a member owned non-profit organization. The volunteer Fire and EMS is a 501(c)3. The equipment is owned by the corporation and the current fees are \$100/house or \$25/lot for membership. Currently approximately 250 of the islands 700 property owners are members. The Fire and Rescue service receives donations from the Island residents and some help from the Charlotte County Fire Department.

All 911 calls for the Island are handled as part of an agreement between the LGI rescuers and Charlotte County EMS. All residents are requested to call 911 if an emergency occurs. The fire rescue volunteers respond to all 911 calls. For medical calls the Charlotte County fire department sends a County Marine Boat to transport the injured party to the mainland and then the hospital. According to the Fire Chief, due to the limited water supply, when there is a fire on the Island; water is used to prevent the fire from spreading rather than fully extinguishing the fire.

7.2 Analysis of Community Needs

Based upon the community workshops and discussions with Little Gasparilla Island stakeholders the community feels that they need a small county owned lot which would provide a dock area, mosquito control, community facilities and trash removal area (Figure 12). A study should be conducted to determine the best suitable location for the lot.

7.3 Goals, Policies and Objectives

Goal 10. Enhance the capability of Fire/EMS services provided to the island.

Objective 10.1. Delineate geographic location for additional Fire/EMS services.

Policy 10.1.1. The preferred site would have frontage or access to the water, likely, on the bay side of the island; be centrally located, to facilitate access by all island residents and visitors; and should be of sufficient size to accommodate emergency equipment storage, temporary living quarters, a community activity building, and other elements that may be desired by the community.

Objective 10.2. Charlotte County will work with the LGI Advisory Committee to explore ways to enhance the level of police patrolling and improve the response time for emergency calls



Figure 12. Artist's depiction of Community Center

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8. Implementation

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The implementation of the Little Gasparilla Community Plan will require the commitment and continuous attention of the County and the Little Gasparilla community. Table 5 summarizes key elements of the implementation of each objective of the Plan.

Table 5 Little Gasparilla Island Community Plan Implementation									
Objective	Responsible Party	Schedule	Comments						
1.1 Complete zoning revisions to eliminate discrepancies among main land use regulations.	Charlotte County Community Development Department	This objective is subject to administrative discretion and budget constraints.	The County should work with the community to complete the evaluation of options and enact the necessary revision to the zoning and future land use to meet the intent of the Bridgeless Barrier Island Overlay District.						
1.2 Identify island site for community services	LGI Advisory Committee	December , 2008	Criteria must be established to select the appropriate site.						
1.3 Implement zoning revisions to allow for limited commercial and community uses.	Charlotte County and LGI Advisory Committee	This objective is subject to administrative discretion and budget constraints.	See above. Revisions must ensure that commercial and community uses remain limited. No proliferations of non-residential uses will be allowed.						
2.1 Explore feasibility of reducing the number of vacant lots.	LGI Advisory Committee	In the future	In the future, if the County will identify incentives, the County will publicize them so that property owners become aware.						
3.1 Determine how to supply short and long- term parking and boat slip needs.	LGI Advisory Committee & Charlotte County's Parks, Recreation, & Cultural Resources Department	On-going	A study can be commissioned.						
4.1 Ensure water-based transportation network for island residents and visitors is navigable.	LGI Advisory Committee and Charlotte County	2008	See above.						
5.1 Evaluate the different alternatives under which a north- south access.	LGI Advisory Committee and Charlotte County Department of Public Works	This objective is subject to administrative discretion and budget constraints.	See above.						
6.1 establish an awareness campaign which promotes the restoration of native habitats on the island.	LGI Advisory Committee and Charlotte County	As soon as practicable in coordination with appropriate agencies	The County may appoint a staff member to coordinate with agencies and with the LGI Advisory Committee.						
7.1 Monitor and evaluate quality and quantity of the potable water supply.	LGI Advisory Committee and Charlotte County	As soon as practicable in coordination with appropriate agencies	The County may appoint a staff member to coordinate with agencies and with the LGI Advisory Committee.						
7.2 Ensure that the private water utility complies with applicable standards.	Charlotte County and LGI Advisory Committee	As soon as practicable in coordination with appropriate agencies	The County may appoint a staff member to coordinate with agencies and with the LGI Advisory Committee.						
7.3 Investigate other alternatives to provide potable water in a cost- effective, reliable fashion.	LGI Advisory Committee	2008							

Table 5 Little Gasparilla Island Community Plan Implementation									
8.1 Monitor and	LGI Advisory	As soon as							
evaluate the	Committee and	practicable in	8						
effectiveness of septic	Charlotte County	coordination with							
systems.	Health Department	appropriate							
		agencies							
9.1 Investigate	LGI Advisory	2008	The County may appoint a staff member to						
feasibility of establishing	Committee and		coordinate with agencies and with the LGI Advisory						
a waste collection point	Charlotte County		Committee.						
in the mainland.									
10.1 Delineate	LGI Advisory	2009							
geographic location for	Committee (with								
additional Fire/EMS	support from								
services.	Charlotte County)								
10.2 Explore ways to	LGI Advisory	2008							
enhance the level of	Committee and								
police patrolling and	Charlotte County								
improve the response									
time for emergency									
calls.									

4







March 6, 2013

RE: Structural Evaluation of LGI R/O Plant's Wood Frame Building

To Whom It May Concern:

DMK Associate's representative Jay S. Johansen accompanied LGI Water Utilities' President for an inspection of LGI R/O Plant's deteriorating wood frame building. The building houses the R/O membrane, high pressure pumps and chemical feed storage. The building is a rectangular structure with wood trussed roofing and 2x6 wood framed walls. The building is located on the top of a reinforced concrete water storage tank. The 2x6 wooden framing and plywood exterior sheeting are showing many signs of deterioration. All of the galvanizing has corroded off the base plate anchor bolts and Simpson hurricane ties. In some case, the underlying steel has also corroded away. This deterioration is likely due to high levels of humidity and treatment chemicals within the building (see attached photos). It is evident that this building is nearing the end of its useful life and that there isn't an alternative to the demolition and reconstruction of the structure.

Sincerely,

Jay S. Johansen DMK Project Manager

Attachment: Photo Sheet

www.dmkassoc.com

LGI R/O WATER PLANT





- 1. The plant does not have the required chlorine safety equipment. Please provide gloves, a chemical resistant apron, and eye protection and maintain these items at the plant. Rule 62-555.320 (13) (b) 13, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.)
- 2. One of the wells is leaking from the well head. Please repair the well head to correct the leakage. Rule 62-555.350 (2), F.A.C.

REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. The accuracy of the chlorine meter used to determine compliance with Department chlorine standards has not been verified in accordance with DEP SOP FT 2000. Please implement the required accuracy verification program to comply with the SOP.
- 2. The structure of the water plant building is deteriorating. Specifically, the wood in several areas at the bottom of the walls is becoming soft. This should be addressed as part of the overall maintenance plan for the facility.

PHOTOS



Deterioration of the wood along lower wall of the plant.



Water leaking around well head.

Herdon Rimi TITLE EC DATE: 11/30/12 INSPECTOR'S SIGNATURE TITLE ES2 DATE: 11/30/2012 REVIEWED BY

north	Complia	nce Inspection Fo	orm						Page 1		
VIION	Nater system:	LITTLE GASPARILL	A UTILITY, I	NC. System Type	: <u>sc</u> System F	PWS#:	6080175	Date of inspecti	on: 11/9/12		
MH(System address:										
	System phone:	941-626-8294	941-626-8294					Cell:			
A F	ax number:	941-697-2070					Email: 1wjd777@yahoo.com				
12/20	Owner name:	JACK BOYER					Owner title: PRESIDENT				
Ş		PO BOX 5145 GROVE	CITY, FL 3	34224							
O I		941-626-8294									
11	Fax number:	941-697-2070				Email:	lwjd777@yahoo.				
£	and the second	rator required? Yes No (If "No", Operator sections not applicable)				Operator name: KATE DODGE					
¥.					Phone	Phone 941–270–1030 Fax:					
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1	Well Number		AAH9982	AAH9981	AAH9981 AAJ9360 3		Eluching of dood a				
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and the second second	Security measure		Y	Y	Y		Auxiliary power maintenance? (C)		Y		
	D & M manual compliant?		Y				CL testing following S.O.P.		N		
		orage compliant (no organics/acid/sun)					Plant category and type?		2C		
Section 1		eated sample tap provided?		Y		OPERATOR	Visits compliant?		Y		
-		Security measures compliant? Cl solution NSF approved?		Y		OPE	MORs submittal compliant?		Y		
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IN		ation compliant?				Last inspection fully compliant? Yes					
A TIME			NANA		Are any of the deficiencies "repeats"?			N			
TREATMENT	CI room com	chlorine alarm compliant?		NA NA		-					
000		ales compliant?				Have deficiencies been addressed?			Y		
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COMMENTS



Florida Department Environmental Protection

South District Office Post Office Box 2549 Fort Myers, Florida 33902-2549 Rick Scott Governor

Jennifer Carroll Lt. Governor

Herschel T. Vinyard Jr. Secretary

December 7, 2012

Mr. Jack Boyer, President Little Gasparilla Water Utility, Inc. PO Box 5145, Grove City, FL 34224 lwjd777@yahoo.com

Re: <u>Charlotte County - PW</u> Little Gasparilla Utility, Inc. PWS I.D. Number: 6080175 Compliance Inspection Report

Dear Mr. Boyer:

Enclosed is your copy of the recently completed Compliance Inspection Report for the referenced public drinking water system.

If there are deficiencies listed in the Report, they may be violations of Rules 62-550 and 62-555, F.A.C. Please correct all deficiencies as soon as possible and notify the Department in writing of corrective actions completed by <u>no later than January 7, 2013</u>. For those deficiencies which cannot be corrected by that date, please submit a written request for a time extension that proposes specific deadlines to complete corrective actions.

If you have any questions, please contact me at the letterhead address or call 239-344-5688, or by e-mail at <u>Gordon.Romeis@dep.state.fl.us</u>. All correspondence must include the system name and PWS I.D. number.

Sincerely,

Gordon Romeis Environmental Consultant

CC: Kate Dodge; dodgekq@live.com

www.dep.state.fl.us





3,500 LF of 8"



1800 LF of 6"

Page 1 of 1

