MEMORANDUM

To: Council Members

From: Staff

Date: May 16, 2008 Council Meeting

Subject: Local Government Comprehensive Plan Review
        Draft Amendments to the Martin County Comprehensive Plan
        DCA Reference No. 08-D2

Introduction

The Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Land Development Regulation Act, Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, requires that Council review local government comprehensive plan amendments prior to their adoption. Under the provisions of this law, the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) prepares an Objections, Recommendations, and Comments (ORC) Report on a proposed amendment only if requested to do so by the local government, the regional planning council, an affected person, or if an ORC Report is otherwise deemed necessary by the DCA. If an ORC Report is to be prepared, then Council must provide DCA with its findings of consistency or inconsistency with the Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP), and provide any comments and recommendations for modification on the proposed amendments within 30 days of its receipt.

Background

Martin County has proposed a text amendment to the Future Land Use Element and a Future Land Use Map (FLUM) amendment to the County Comprehensive Plan. The amendments are directly related to the Quillen Development of Regional Impact (DRI). Under the provisions of Chapter 163.3187(1)(b), Florida Statutes, the amendments are exempt from the twice per year limitation on comprehensive plan amendments. The County has requested a formal review of the amendments by the DCA.

Evaluation

The Quillen DRI is a proposed multi-use development on approximately 586 acres located at the intersection of SR 710 (Warfield Boulevard) and CR 609 (Allapatah Road) near the community of Indiantown in western Martin County (see Exhibits 2,3,4). The development is to consist of 2,250 residential units, 150,000 square feet of commercial
development and a 15 acre school site. The property is within the Primary Urban Service District (PUSD) and within the Indiantown Community Redevelopment Area.

Council considered the Quillen DRI application at its December 15, 2006 meeting. An assessment report and recommended development order conditions were transmitted to the County on January 2, 2007. In addition, at its June 22, 2007 meeting, Council reviewed the proposed text amendment to the Quillen DRI (DCA Reference No. 07-D2) that would allow a blending of residential densities on site without regard to the underlying FLUM designation. The development order for the DRI and the density blending amendment have not yet been approved by the County.

The subject text and FLUM amendment is proposed by the landowner. It would create an Indiantown Economic Development Opportunity (EDO) Overlay. This EDO Overlay would allow a portion of the Quillen DRI to be developed as a master planned inland port and/or intermodal logistic center. The EDO Overlay is considered an alternative to the existing residential development on a 331 acre portion of the proposed Quillen DRI (see Exhibit 5). It would allow the landowner the option of doing either residential development or commercial/industrial development; although the existing residential FLUM designation would remain. The text amendment includes a site specific exception to allow these otherwise non-conforming uses on the land designated as Low Density Residential on the FLUM. The proposed industrial use would be located between the area of the Quillen DRI designated as Commercial General and the area designated as Estate Density Residential (see Exhibit 5).

The text amendments are all included under new Policy 4.4.M.1.h. The policy establishes the Indiantown EDO designation. The overlay can only be applied within the Indiantown Community Redevelopment Area. A minimum of 150 gross contiguous acres located within the PUSD is required for EDO Overlay designation. Subparagraphs in this policy are specific to the Quillen DRI and addresses the following:

1. Limiting the EDO designation to the Quillen DRI and the underlying Planned Unit Development (PUD). The overlay must be shown on the FLUM.
2. Performance Standards for the EDO.
3. The Quillen DRI must be processed as a PUD.
4. The PUD must have design regulations and a pattern book for each final site plan.
5. The overlay is limited to 331.04 acres.
6. The implementation of the EDO option must be on the entire 331.04 acres.
7. Setting the maximum number of residential units should the EDO option be selected.
8. An appropriate buffer between non-residential uses and agricultural or residential uses.
9. A required open space buffer around the perimeter of the EDO overlay, and minimum open space requirements for the EDO.
10. The Quillen PUD agreement will address the allowed and prohibited uses.
The County staff recommended denial of the proposed text amendments. The staff indicated the proposed industrial use was not compatible with existing or proposed residential development in the vicinity, including the existing Indianwood development, development proposed on the Indiantown DRI and elsewhere on the Quillen DRI. The Quillen DRI is proposed for 2,250 residential units, to include 50 workforce housing units to be funded under the state Community Workforce Housing Innovation Pilot Program.

The proposed use of the property as an inland port is not consistent with the Indiantown Community Redevelopment Area plan according to County staff, although the proposal is supported by the Neighborhood Advisory Committee because of the potential for additional employment for local residents. The County traffic engineering staff recommended denial for several reasons, including that the development proposes a Level of Service (LOS) on SR 710 of D; inconsistent with the LOS C required for SR 710 as a component of the State Strategic Intermodal System (SIS). Inland port traffic from the Port of Palm Beach would likely have to go through the Village of Indiantown to reach the site and a rail spur is proposed to cross SR 710, an SIS facility.

The County Local Planning Agency recommended approval of the amendments; if conditions regarding open space could be added. The Board of County Commissioners approved transmittal of the amendments by a 3-2 vote.

**Extrajurisdictional Impacts**

The County provided copies of the proposed amendment materials to all surrounding local governments. Council requested comments from Palm Beach County, St. Lucie County, and the Martin County Metropolitan Planning Organization. As of the date of preparation of this report, no comments have been received.

**Effects on Significant Regional Resources or Facilities**

The proposed amendments may result in adverse effects to the regional roadway network. However, Council is working with the landowner, Martin County and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to determine impacts to the Regional Roadway Network and mitigation of those impacts.

**Analysis of Consistency with Strategic Regional Policy Plan**

The overlay designation could allow the County to take advantage of a unique opportunity for economic development. The proposed development of the Quillen DRI property may have adverse impacts to the regional roadway network. These impacts should be adequately mitigated if the County includes the development order conditions recommended by the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council. Council staff has been working with the landowner, the County, and FDOT on development order conditions to allow the EDO Overlay on the property. Council is in the process of reviewing proposed
modifications to the DRI to determine if there are new or unreviewed impacts caused by the proposed changes to the DRI.

The location of an inland port/intermodal logistic center in the Indiantown area is not considered inconsistent with the SRPP. Potentially, it could help broaden the economic base and strengthen the job market (SRPP Policy 3.1.1.1) and is consistent with a number of other policies of the Economic Element of the SRPP.

However, given the materials provided with the amendments and the analysis provided by the County, the Quillen DRI site may not be the best location for an inland port. There are compatibility (with existing and planned residential uses) issues, traffic level of service concerns, and concerns about the ability to implement the Indiantown CRA Master Plan should this development occur at this location.

Comments/Recommendations

1. Under the proposed text amendments, a large portion of the Quillen DRI that has previously been analyzed for residential development could be developed for industrial use. The landowner would have the option of developing the property either for industrial or residential uses. The Residential FLUM designation is not being modified. The uncertainty over how this land is to be developed could create an “unsettling” effect on nearby landowners and developers, especially those anticipating the development of adjacent lands for residential purposes. If the County elects to adopt these amendments, it is recommended they do so with a provision that the overlay is “removed” from this property if the inland port is located elsewhere. The property would then revert to those uses allowed only under the Residential FLUM designation. Alternatively, if the property is approved as the site for an inland port, the County should reconsider the FLUM designations and mix of uses permitted on adjacent properties. The Indiantown CRA Master Plan may also need to be revised.

2. An inland port/intermodal logistic center would likely generate a significant amount of heavy truck traffic. That traffic may have a negative effect on the ability of: 1) inland port traffic to easily access the site; and 2) the County to revitalize and develop the Town Center area as set out in the design regulations for the Indiantown CRA (see Exhibit 7). The proposal to use the Quillen property for an inland port or similar use would be strengthened and the issue of downtown redevelopment could be better addressed by the selection of one of the corridor bypass alternatives currently under consideration by FDOT and Martin County. This would allow the majority of truck traffic to bypass the Town Center area and provide easier access to the site (see Exhibit 8). Council has been informed that an additional bypass alternative not shown on Exhibit 8 has been added by the Martin County MPO for consideration by the FDOT. This alternative lies between Alternative A and Alternative A1. All bypass alternatives should give due consideration to the safe movement of students including those who must cross Warfield Boulevard.
Consistency with Strategic Regional Policy Plan

The contract agreement between the DCA and the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council requires Council to include a determination of consistency with the SRPP as part of the written report to be submitted to the DCA. Council finds the proposed amendments to be CONSISTENT with the SRPP.

Recommendation

Council should adopt the above comments and instruct staff to transmit the report to the Department of Community Affairs.

Attachments
List of Exhibits

Exhibit

1. General Location Map
2. DRI Boundary Illustration
3. Location Map – Quillen DRI
4. Future Land Use Map
5. Proposed Overlay Location Map
6. Quillen DRI Facilities Map
7. Indiantown Design Regulations
8. Corridor Alternatives
Exhibit 1
General Location Map
Martin County
Exhibit 2
DRI Boundary Illustration

Legend
- DRI Boundary
- County
- Coastline
- Minor Highways
- Limited/Access
- Major Roads
Exhibit 4
Future Land Use Map
Quillen DRI
Exhibit 5
Proposed Overlay Location Map
Exhibit 7
Indiantown Design Regulations
Exhibit 8
Corridor Alternatives