

TOWN OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES

TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

155 F ROAD, LOXAHATCHEE GROVES, FL 33470

LPA/PLANNING & ZONING BOARD WORKSHOP MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2025 – 6:00 P.M. – 8:15 P.M.



Meeting Audio Available Upon Request in the Office of the Town Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

The Planning and Zoning Board Public Workshop was called to order at 6:00 P.M. by Committee Vice Chairperson Lisa El-Ramey as the Acting Chairperson due to the vacancy of former Committee Chairperson Bill Ford in Seat 1.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the Planning and Zoning Board, led by Acting Committee Chairperson Lisa El-Ramey.

ROLL CALL

The roll was called, confirming the presence of the following committee members:

- **Seat 1:** Vacant
- **Seat 2:** Brett Rafowitz – Present
- **Seat 3:** Todd McLendon – Present
- **Seat 4:** Jacquelyn Clifton – Present
- **Seat 5:** Lisa El-Ramey, Vice Chair – Present

A quorum was established for the meeting to proceed.

Staff Present:

- Sammie Brown, FRA-RP, MEDP, Town Clerk Assistant

BOARD QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Committee members of the Planning and Zoning Board asked extensive questions regarding the environmental impact, site design, length of guest stays, enforcement of residency limits, utility connections, traffic impacts, and compatibility with the surrounding community. The Board also raised concerns regarding enforcement of occupancy limits, noise, lighting, and access to community amenities.

The applicant stated that the site will have a gated entry, no on-site mailboxes, and guests will be subject to rules and a formal rental agreement. A professional property management firm will be hired to oversee operations and enforce quiet hours, guest limits, and other policies.

They also clarified that while the resort is a private business, it will offer indirect public benefits such as potential trail access and support of local vendors and services. Jobs will be created during construction and for ongoing maintenance and operations. While most amenities will remain private, community events may occasionally open the space to the public on a limited basis.

GENERAL COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Kristy Coleman spoke in opposition to the project. She cited concerns about deviation from the Town's rural land use plan, increased density, traffic impacts, and questionable compatibility with the character of Loxahatchee Groves. She noted that she was not in support and disputed the applicant's claim of unanimous neighbor support.

Sue Cacioppo also expressed opposition. She voiced concerns about the Town's incorporation purpose being undermined, financial risks if the project fails, enforceability of the operational rules, and doubts about the long-term public benefit. She suggested that if the project is approved, the Town should require enforceable, contractual guarantees tied to the applicant's commitments.

Karen Plante raised specific concerns about voter residency and the potential for guests to use the resort as their legal address. She referenced Florida statutes and questioned how this use aligns with residential RV limits for local residents. She also cited a past commercial project that was approved but never built, leaving the property vacant.

Sue Cacioppo (second comment) reiterated the need for binding conditions if the project is approved. She recommended that the Town preserve the ability to enforce the applicant's stated intentions, as verbal assurances alone offer no long-term protection.

APPLICANT RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT

Gabriel and Joe Bove responded by reiterating their commitment to tight operational control and adherence to environmental and design standards. They emphasized the project's financial stability, with \$40 million in funding secured through a combination of private equity and bank financing. They reaffirmed that the RV resort will be a non-residential, seasonal hospitality operation and committed to exploring infrastructure improvements (e.g., water line extensions, traffic signal participation) and community partnerships.