

To: Jane Grogg, Board of Sarasota County Commissioners, Michele Norton, Jonathan Lewis
From: Fresh Start Initiative
RE: Update Report "[Public Uses for Public Lands at the Celery Fields](#)"
Date: July 11, 2018

This is to introduce the Update Report requested by the Board after Fresh Start's presentation of viable options for two public parcels at Apex Road and Palmer Boulevard on April 25, 2018. The Board directed that we take this time to refine our results, which have been distilled into this report, entitled "*Public Uses for Public Lands at the Celery Fields.*"

We appreciate the time and attention your staff has provided over the past seven months. Our two prior reports on Feb. 5 and April 25, 2018, detail the meetings, outreach, advisory panel input, surveys and professionally guided roundtable process that led to four proposals. This report focuses on the YMCA proposal. The Y has done a site analysis of the Quad site, and finds an ample market of potential users. Fresh Start's own survey of its HOAs found a substantial need for athletic facilities -- one that will only grow with the growth coming to East County.

We understand that it was not possible to schedule a presentation of our additional findings to the Board prior to the July-August break. The break will provide time to review this new material along with a complete set of our earlier reports. If anything else is desired, let us know.

In brief, we ask that the Board put the public back in our Public Lands. The possibilities for a small, community-oriented facility offering healthy opportunities for exercise, sports, and learning for people of all ages at this site are remarkable. A YMCA near the Celery Fields and Audubon's' nature center will foster synergies that go well beyond the ordinary:

At the Celery Fields, the Sarasota Y could offer a rich array of children's programs making great use of the natural treasures right next door. Think of kids birding with Audubon volunteers, and fishing, hiking, and kayaking with YMCA leaders. A YMCA at the Celery Fields would amplify the range and richness of what our community's seniors and children can experience.

Jane, as head of long range planning, you better than anyone are aware that new developments underway in East County will create a new population that will need of public facilities, open spaces, roads and services. Selling the people's lands to private developers will not fill a lack that future residents will demand, necessitating future land purchases and plans. Our signatories opposed two such sales last year. The County can and must do more to anticipate the impacts, needs, and best options for coming future growth. It's coming fast. As our report states:

We take this opportunity to assert the public's right to a vision that balances private development with public needs.

This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create something special for an exceptional area and its people. With our thanks, we stand ready to work with you.

The Executive Council of Fresh Start

Glenna Blomquist, Carlos Correa, Tom Matrullo, Gary Walsh

Fresh Start Signatories

Bee Ridge Neighborhoods Committee, Uwe Hinrichs, Chairman

Aberdeen Pines Bent Tree I Bent Tree II Bent Tree III & IV Gator Creek The Hammocks Heritage Oaks	Lake Sarasota Laurel Lakes Laurel Meadows Laurel Oak Misty Creek Palmer Lake
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Fruitville 210 - Gary Heffner, Chairman

Cedar Hammock Cedar Hollow Chatwick Court Coffman Manor Deer Hollow East Richardson Eastpointe Forest Creek Fox Creek Fox Creek Acres 2 Georgetowne Goodwill Greystone The Groves	The Meadows Newburn Village Palm Oaks Peaceful Vista Homes Pine Valley Ranches Pleasant Acres Racimo Ranches San Palermo Southpointe Meadows Swartz Subdivision Vereda Verde The Legends The Woods Wyndham
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Save Richardson Road East (Sarren)

Scott Featherman, MD
Joey Anderson (also on the Board of Fruitville 210)
Jane Archer
Margaret Lewis
Judith K. Earl

Palmer East Group

Enclaves, Carlos Correa, President
Meadow Walk, Gary Walsh, President, David G. Johnson
Eagle Trace
Palmer Lake
Regent Lake
Palmer Glen
Palmer Reserve
Sarasota Golf Club Colony

Palmer East Working Group: Glenna Blomquist, Paula Berkowitz, Carlos Correa, Peter Gemma, Jonny Howell, David G. Johnson, Wendy Loomis, Matt Moffitt, Robert Rovnak, Gary Walsh, Charles Young.

Aberdeen Pines, Mary and Lee Hasselbring

Bent Tree, Bob Zack

Gator Creek, Bob O'Neil, Treasurer

Lake Sarasota Community Group

Keith Russo, Chairman
Ellie Himes, Treasurer
Joy M. Mayer, Secretary
Joanna Kilmer
Jami Caseber

The Hammocks, Julie Williams, President;
Sarasota Audubon, Rob Wright, Conservation Chair
NCCA, Steve Baran, President, 640 Apex Rd.
CeleryFields.org, David G. Johnson

Citizens for Sarasota County, Tom Matrullo, Cathy Antunes
Cona Sarasota, Kafi Benz, Pat Rounds, William C. Zoller
Lourdes Ramirez, Adrien Lucas, Vickie Nighswander
William C. Zoller, McKown Rd. Neighborhood, East Sarasota,
Melanie Goddard, Post Rd., Sarasota