

Lee County Department of Community Development May 2007 e-Newsletter

Don't let permits expire!

Commissioners allow reinstatements

Lee County Commissioners adopted an ordinance to reinstate residential building permits that expired from Jan. 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007 – without charging the increased road impact fees which became effective Feb. 1.

The reinstatement and impact fee break are good only for six months and are not for dwellings built for speculation or for rental or lease purposes.

This does not include hotel, motel or institutional rooms.

Reinstatement requests must be sent by letter to the Lee County Building Official, Lee County Community Development, P.O. Box 398, Fort Myers, FL 33902-0398 with a check for \$100 made payable to Lee County BOCC. See the ordinance at http://lee-county.com/dcd/Downloads/Documents/Studies_Reports/Ordinances/Ord07-08.pdf

Last chance for impact fee relief

The June 29 deadline is approaching for picking up building permits without paying the increased road impact fee, which became effective Feb. 1. A record number of permit applications were filed by Jan. 31 to avoid the fee increase, however, those permits must be issued and picked up by June 29.

These applications have gone through initial staff review. We encourage you to submit your amended work in time for a final round of staff review prior to the June 29 deadline.

E-Connect enhanced

Finalized documents, like staff reports and administrative decisions, are now accessible through e-Connect for current zoning cases. If the documents are available for the project you are viewing, you will see them in the Application Activity section of the e-Connect page. An "(A)" indicates an attached document.

We will use this process for zoning cases from this point forward. View e-Connect services at <http://www.lee-county.com/econnect>

Meetings and public hearings

Pine Island Community Plan

Land Development Code (LDC) amendments for the Pine Island Community Plan will be discussed at a second public hearing before Commissioners at 5 p.m. May 22, in commissioners' chambers, 2120 Main Street, Fort Myers. Commissioners will hear the issue again and vote at 5 p.m. May 29. Read details at <http://lee-county.com/dcd/CommunityPlans/PineIsland/PILDC-C.pdf>

2007 LDC amendments

The Local Planning Agency (LPA) will review the 2007 LDC amendments May 21 at 8:30 a.m. in the first-floor conference room of the Lee County Administration Building, 2115 Second St., Fort Myers.

For details, go to <http://www.lee-county.com/dcd/Agendas/LPA/2007/05/may212007.pdf>

Housing bonus densities might change

Commissioners will hold LDC amendment hearings June 12 and June 26 at 5 p.m. in commissioners' chambers. Discussion of numerous items will include housing bonus densities, specifically: lowering the monitoring requirements from 10 to 7 years, inserting provisions for moderate-priced housing, and raising the fee per bonus unit to \$40,000.

Read the amendments at <http://lee-county.com/dcd1/Downloads/OrdinanceReviews.htm>

April permit report

Builders in unincorporated Lee County, Bonita Springs and Fort Myers Beach pulled 264 permits for single-family houses in April, about 17 percent fewer than in March and 60 percent less than in April 2006.

However, commercial permitting was up 13.9 percent from March to \$27.2 million for April.

Lee County issued a total of 11,745 building permits valued at approximately \$858.9 million in the first four months of 2007.

Sea Turtles begin nesting

Sea turtle nesting season began May 1, and Lee County's Environmental Sciences staff has suggestions for reducing on-site lighting near beaches.

Through Oct. 31, female sea turtles will crawl ashore in the night, dig nests and lay eggs on local beaches. After several weeks, the nocturnal hatchlings emerge and follow the lighter, seaward horizon to the water. This crucial trek for survival can turn treacherous if artificial lights confuse the hatchlings and misdirect them inland.

Lee County enforces Sea Turtle Conservation Codes to prevent this. Our staff can help you select new turtle-friendly light fixtures. Learn about lighting alternatives by calling 479-8585 or go to <http://www.lee-county.com/dcd/Environmental/SeaTurtles.htm>

This monthly update is published by the Lee County Department of Community Development to highlight news in planning and development for unincorporated Lee County. For details on these topics and the department, visit our Web site <http://www.lee-county.com/dcd/>. To be dropped or added from this distribution, contact Joan D. LaGuardia, communication manager, jlaguardia@leegov.com or call (239) 479-8705.