

August 1, 2020

Mr. Adlerstein's article about SummerCamp's water/sewer (W/S) problem deserves our close attention. John Curtis, residential development manager at SummerCamp, you should be ashamed of yourself and the St. Joe corporation you represent! You have presented a colossal failure as a growth opportunity for the Carrabelle Water Dept. to "expand it's reach as a regional provider". St. Joe's 2005 master plan for Franklin county got multiple favors and waivers to build the upscale resort development the way they wanted. The company knew what they were dealing with in the way of wells and septic removal at that time. The lack of projected profits should NEVER become a burden for local residents.

It is far too soon to consider such an impactful decision without doing thorough research; one feasibility study is just a beginning. Anyone can fancy up some sales projections based on fantasy growth. These miscalculations could destroy our Carrabelle W/S system which currently has issues that remain unresolved. This is an appropriate moment to look honestly and hard at the reality of home sales today and the multiple reasons this area has not sold.

Detailed discussions with multiple other W/S utilities can highlight problems and reveal that most W/S utilities do not make a profit. At best they might remain solvent. Due diligence now, by analyzing a variety of other W/S utilities, can prevent unpleasant, expensive, disastrous future surprises for the city of Carrabelle. I am curious how some of the towns hosting other NW Florida St. Joe resort developments have fared. When there are problems at 'The Clubs', or 'WaterColor', or 'WaterSound', or 'Camp Creek', have these towns been assessed unforeseen bail-out costs?

Only if the St. Joe Corporation, with its VAST financial resources, is willing to pay 100% of every phase should this project be discussed. Equipment, road work, contractor and sub-contractor fees, salaries for the consultants and professional employees to manage and maintain the facility, ever-present cost overruns, plus unanticipated unknowns, should all be St. Joe's financial responsibility. They can also afford the 10-year project operating costs.

The bottom line must be a guarantee that there will be NO increased W/S costs to any and all local customers; then vote on that proposal.

Mayor LaPaz, and the entire board of County Commissioners, please do not be blinded by a slick, shiny presentation. St. Joe is offering all of us a solid lump of excrement in a golden box.

Respectfully,

Lanark resident, Leslie Stuart

