



**TOWN OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES
TOWN COUNCIL QUASI-JUDICIAL WORKSHOP MEETING
TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 155 F. Road, Loxahatchee Groves, FL 33470
Tuesday, June 4, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Kane called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE FOLLOWED BY A MOMENT OF SILENCE:

Mayor Kane led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

ROLL CALL:

Mayor Anita Kane, Vice Mayor Margaret Herzog, Councilmember Laura Danowski, Councilmember Phillis Maniglia, Councilmember Robert Shorr, Public Works Director Richard Gallant, Town Manager Francine Ramaglia, Town Attorney Tanya Earley, Public Works Director Richard Gallant, Public Works Superintendent Craig Lower, Project Coordinator Jeff Kurtz, Town's Planning Consultant Kaitlyn Forbes (of Complete Cities), Town's Financial Consultant Chris Wallace (of Munilytics) and Town Clerk Valerie Oakes were present.

QUASI-JUDICIAL CONCEPTUAL DISCUSSION

1. Conceptual Discussion for a Recreational Vehicle Park, Presented by Bove Company, P.E. & JMorton Planning

A RECREATIONAL VEHICLE PARK ON A PARCEL OF LAND LOCATED AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE COLLECTING CANAL AND "C" ROAD

LOXAHATCHEE GROVES, FLORIDA CONSISTING OF FORTY-SEVEN ACRES MORE OR LESS.

Councilmember Maniglia & Councilmember Shorr stepped down from the dais and left the meeting during this time.

Bove Company and JMorton Planning (The Developers) expressed appreciation to the Council and Mayor for the opportunity to speak and shared how much he enjoyed visiting the local businesses and community. He praised the town's culture as unique and special, and emphasized the company's desire to be part of it. He introduced the Bo Company as a small, family-oriented real estate development firm based in Ponte Vedra, Florida, with over 30 years in business. He was joined by his nephew Joe Bo, their planner Jennifer Morton and associate Lauren, and other consultants. He outlined their proposal to develop a high-end, equestrian-themed RV resort community named The Paddock, located on a 47-acre site near Southern Boulevard. The project would feature 285 RV spaces, two clubhouses, recreational amenities (tennis, pickleball, pools, outdoor kitchens, dog park), and landscaped, paved, gated lots with short-term stays capped at 180 days. The design emphasizes aesthetics, nature preservation, and seamless integration with the existing equestrian environment, including a publicly accessible trail system and buffers around the perimeter. He detailed the team's background, the family's engineering roots, and commitment to quality. They have partnered with Advanced Outdoor Management for property operations, and cited market research showing strong demand for RV resorts in the area. The team has already assessed environmental and infrastructure aspects, including plans for stormwater management and traffic improvements without a traffic signal. Rates at the park would start at \$165/night, positioning it as an upscale alternative to existing nearby facilities like Lion Country Safari and Jupiter Park. He stressed that the proposal is solely for an RV resort—not a bait-and-switch for other development types—and they plan to submit applications for land use, zoning, and site plan approval simultaneously. The total investment is projected to exceed \$35 million, with 10 to 15 employees expected to manage the property. He reiterated their desire to contribute positively to the community through a professionally managed, visually appealing, and community-compatible resort. Jennifer Morton was then invited to speak about the application process, with the speaker indicating he would return afterward to address economic impacts.

Jennifer Morton (Bove Company and JMorton Planning/The Developers) proposed RV resort project, outlined the application and approval process for the project. She stated that the application would be grouped into three primary categories:

1. Comprehensive Plan Amendments – This would include submitting proposed language to allow for the RV resort and making a map amendment.
2. Zoning Amendments – This would include text changes to the zoning code and the creation of property development regulations specifically for the RV park.
3. Special Exception and Final Site Plan Approval – The project would also require a special exception permit for the RV resort and final approval of the detailed site plan.

She emphasized that the intention is to submit all components at once for transparency and to present a clear vision of the proposed development. The full application will include architecture, engineering, and all required documentation. She then presented the project timeline, estimating it would take just under a year from the time of initial submission to final approval. After the application is submitted, it would go through staff review, Development Review Committee (DRC) feedback, and likely two to three rounds of revisions. During this period, the team also plans to conduct community outreach meetings. They aim to present the application to the Planning and Zoning Board early next year, with final adoption by the Town Council projected for March and April. Throughout the process, the development team intends to collaborate closely with staff and the community to refine and improve the project.

Bove Company and JMorton Planning (The Developers) stated representing the development team for the proposed RV resort, highlighting the economic impact of the project. He reiterated the significant investment of \$35 million into the community and emphasized that local labor and materials would be used during construction. He noted that the current ad valorem tax revenue from the undeveloped property is approximately \$250, but post-development, it is projected to generate around \$67,000 annually—an estimated 5–6% increase to the town’s tax base. He stated that their consultant estimated the total local economic impact to be around \$100 million, factoring in construction, employment, and increased spending. The resort would employ 15 people and is expected to boost local commercial and retail activity as visitors utilize town businesses. He also mentioned the development team’s intent to integrate with the local agricultural community, referencing a visit to a mushroom farm as an example of unique local experiences they would like to promote to guests as part of the resort’s offerings.

Mayor Kane expressed concern about traffic impacts related to the proposed RV resort project. She specifically noted two issues being the wear and tear on C Road within the town due to the weight and volume of RV traffic and the traffic congestion on Southern Boulevard, which she described as already being “treacherous” due to growth in nearby developments like Westlake and Arden. She questioned whether the developer had conducted a traffic study to assess the cumulative impact of the resort’s 285 RV sites, particularly considering that many of the guests would be operating large RVs towing additional vehicles, resulting in frequent trips to local stores and services.

Bove Company and JMorton Planning (The Developers) confirmed that they have engaged Simmons and White to conduct a traffic study for the proposed RV resort. He stated that the study is currently underway and noted that, according to the traffic consultants, RV parks generally have a minimal traffic impact. He added that they have considered the issue and reiterated that the consultants do not believe the project will cause significant traffic concerns.

Mayor Kane raised a second concern regarding the potential for RV park guests to establish legal residency in the town. She emphasized that the community is unique and close-knit, and expressed worry that transient visitors could stay for a short period, change their address, and become eligible voters, which might skew local elections. She also questioned the enforcement of the 180-day stay limit, asking how the policy would prevent someone from leaving after 180 days, driving around

the block, and re-entering a new RV site to restart the clock. She sought clarification on how long someone would have to be gone before returning.

Bove Company and JMorton Planning (The Developers) responded they would have 180 days per year and that he couldn't give a lawful response to them changing their license.

Mayor Kane voiced a third concern regarding emergency management for the proposed RV resort. She pointed out that the area is in a hurricane zone and that the town already faces limitations when responding to emergencies for its current residents. She noted that RVs are especially vulnerable during such events. She questioned whether the town would be responsible for managing the safety and evacuation of the RV park's 285 occupants in the event of a hurricane, since there was no emergency management plan or mention of such provisions in the developer's presentation. She asked if there was any plan in place for emergencies or if the burden would fall on the town.

Bove Company and JMorton Planning (The Developers) stated they will have to address that concern.

Vice Mayor Herzog asked for clarity on the park rentals.

Bove Company and JMorton Planning (The Developers) answered by stating that some RV resort communities have introduced small Casitas—described as high-end tiny homes or small cottages—for guests who do not own an RV but still want to experience the RV resort lifestyle. He noted that his team is considering implementing a similar concept and has reserved about 16 spaces on the site plan for a potential small community of Casitas. However, he emphasized that this idea is not yet finalized and remains under consideration.

Vice Mayor Herzog asked if he would allow their residents to have their horses or other animals on site.

Bove Company and JMorton Planning (The Developers) mentioned they would shy away from that as they are not set up to be in the equestrian business.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Ken Johnson expressed several concerns regarding the proposed RV resort development. First, he raised an issue about noise control, stating that he already hears excessive noise from vehicles, especially motorcycles and hot rods, along Collecting Canal Road, and questioned how additional RV traffic would impact that. Second, he asked what actual control the town would retain over the development if it is approved, cautioning that developers often return later requesting additional modifications or approvals beyond what was originally proposed. He warned that such patterns could lead to a loss of control over town development. Third, he questioned the viability of the RV park in the event of rising gas prices, citing geopolitical concerns and noting that RVs are fuel-intensive vehicles. Finally, he raised a public health concern, referencing the potential for another pandemic similar to COVID-19, and questioned what would happen to the RV resort in such a scenario. He concluded by emphasizing the need for strict town oversight and control to protect the community's original intent and character.

Nina Corning asked to give the Council a document to be placed on file.

MOTION: MAYOR KANE/COUNCILMEMBER DANOWSKI MOVED TO RECEIVE AND FILE THE DOCUMENT PLACED ON RECORD. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (3-0).

Nina Corning began by clarifying a handout provided to the Council, which was part of a 2018 REDI GAG report—specifically referencing concerns raised at that time about the wetness of the property in question. She noted that one parcel on the property had a "9,000" code in the Palm Beach County Property Appraiser's system, indicating it had no financial value due to excessive wetness. This designation was later removed, but she found the original record during her research. She expressed strong opposition to the developer's plan to dump runoff water into the Collecting Canal, calling it an "absolute no-no" and urging the Council to enforce environmental protections as they do with FEMA requirements for residents. She criticized the potential environmental impact, referencing the expected trash, noise, and flooding, and stated that this would severely affect Collecting Canal, surrounding trails, and overall drainage. Additionally, she raised concerns about the lack of visible buffers in the site plan and criticized the artist renderings presented, claiming they misleadingly depicted greenery and landscaping that would not exist once the project is paved. She recalled that in the past, a plan for only 94 houses on the same site was deemed inappropriate, yet now a much larger plan for 280 RV sites is being considered. She concluded forcefully, calling the proposal "insanity" and noting that she had much more to say but was out of time.

Paul Coleman identified himself as a neighbor to the east of the proposed development site. He began by recalling a previous instance where the Town had rejected an RV park that had fewer units and less impact than the current proposal. He expressed skepticism about the mention of green space in the presentation, noting that the developer also slipped in plans for trailer parking and storage, which he sees as problematic. He criticized the proposed 25-foot buffer along Collecting Canal as inadequate, pointing out that the Town is already dealing with buffer noncompliance issues in another nearby preapproved development, where trees were cut down and buffers were not planted as required. He argued that the proposed RV park does not reflect the rural character of Loxahatchee Groves, calling it a commercial apparatus that violates the long-standing understanding that commercial development should only exist from Tangerine to Southern Boulevard—nowhere else in the town. Mr. Coleman questioned the developer's assertion that no traffic light would be required, expressing concerns about large RVs attempting U-turns on Southern Boulevard, particularly with attached trailers. He challenged the claim that the \$35 million investment would significantly benefit the Town, pointing out that building permit fees primarily support the building department, and any surplus would eventually have to be returned. He also noted that the Town doesn't have its own building department to manage those funds. Mr. Coleman dismissed the notion that the development would bring meaningful economic benefit, saying neighboring communities already shop at local businesses and that this project would not significantly change that. He urged the Council to reject the proposal, stating that there is clear and widespread opposition both in the meeting room and online.

Bianca identified herself as a resident living kitty-corner to the proposed RV park, directly across the canal. She strongly objected to the project, calling the proposed 20-foot buffer “ridiculous”, especially given that she runs a horse farm and the development would place 28 RV lots directly across from her home. She emphasized that her right to peaceful enjoyment of her property should not be compromised simply due to its location. She raised concerns about increased noise and activity, stating that she paid a premium to live in Loxahatchee Groves for the peace, space, and ability to conduct her equestrian business. In referencing the tax revenue comparison made by the developers, she challenged the claim that the development’s contribution of \$60,000 annually in ad valorem taxes was significant, pointing out that she herself paid \$50,000 in property taxes on about 20 acres, which is less than half the size of the proposed development site. She warned that rezoning the property for commercial use would open the floodgates to further commercial expansion, referencing a nursery on B Road and Collecting Canal whose owner she claimed is already exploring converting it into a car dealership. She asserted that if this RV park is approved, similar commercial projects would continue to emerge, ultimately eroding the character of the town and lowering property values for nearby residents. She concluded her comments by strongly opposing the project, stating, “That is a no-go.” She insisted that commercial development should be limited to properties with direct access to Southern Boulevard, and any expansion beyond Collecting Canal should be prohibited.

Alysa Daly recently purchased property in the area spoke out in opposition to the proposed RV resort development. She stated that she moved to Loxahatchee Groves from Los Angeles specifically for peace and quiet, and had she known this development was being considered, she would not have bought the property. Her major concerns were noise and light pollution from the influx of RVs and site activity, increased population density, especially during high season, noting that even now, local amenities like Publix are already overcrowded. She estimated that 285 RV slots could potentially mean hundreds of additional residents, which would overwhelm local resources, environmental impact, questioning whether a formal environmental impact study has been completed, effects on the aquifer, especially concerning water supply and well water access for surrounding residents, and stormwater runoff and canal discharge, which she believes could devalue nearby properties. She also raised questions about a kayaking amenity mentioned in prior communications, expressing concern about the use of canals near her property and the safety of aging infrastructure like her bridge, which she does not want others traveling under due to liability. Parking on C Road, which she claimed is already too narrow to accommodate her own vegetation bins, let alone public parking. She also took issue with the developer's claims about the high-end aesthetic of the project. As a professional interior designer with over 25 years of experience, she said the design presented did not reflect what she would consider “high-end.” She closed by reiterating her belief that the project would negatively impact the character, privacy, and livability of the area for current residents.

Jane Harding voiced strong opposition to the proposed 285-lot RV resort, expressing concern that the project would destroy the very qualities that drew her and others to Loxahatchee Groves. She opened by referencing the community’s past debates about allowing just 2 to 4 RVs per private property, contrasting it with the current proposal involving hundreds. She discussed water supply concerns: She asked where water for the RV park would come from, noting that her own canal has

had dead fish for years and those issues remain unresolved despite numerous complaints. Business impact: She stated the RV park would hurt local equestrian businesses, including her own, rather than support or benefit them. She challenged the developer directly: *“How are you going to benefit my business as a horse owner?”* She highlighted that she moved to the area for peace, quiet, and a clean environment, all of which she fears will be lost if the park is built. She emphasized the community’s small-town identity and the threat this development poses to it. Ms. Harding said the project appeared to “pop up overnight,” raising suspicions about lack of public awareness or early communication. She questioned how long this plan had been in motion before residents were informed. She cited worries about trash, runoff into canals, increased traffic, and overstressed permitting systems. She pointed out that the town already struggles with its current responsibilities and warned that the new development could exacerbate existing problems. She mentioned the opposition to Swank Market's parking overflow and asked why similar impacts from a tourist-heavy RV park weren’t being addressed with the same concern. She closed by stressing the sacrifices she and others made to build their farms and lives in the area. She stated that the RV park would “seriously hurt the horse farmers” and that it “scares the living hell out of me.” Her testimony reflected deep-rooted anxiety about preserving Loxahatchee Groves' rural and agricultural heritage, while accusing the developers of prioritizing profit and aesthetics over the well-being of existing residents.

Bove Company and JMorton Planning (The Developers) offered a brief rebuttal and clarification in response to the wave of public concern and opposition shared during the meeting. He acknowledged the volume of feedback and promised to review and address all concerns more thoroughly later. He emphasized that the RV resort is intended to be a quiet, family-oriented community. He stated that noise control is a priority, and the developers would “endeavor to keep that under wraps” for the sake of both their guests and the neighboring community. The developer noted that hedge walls and heavy landscaping will surround the property, particularly along the 25-foot buffer by the canal, aiming to obscure views into the resort and maintain visual separation. He confirmed that stormwater management will comply with Water Management District standards with on-site retention ponds and storm overflow “pop-off” discharge directed to the nearby canal. He assured residents that the water would be filtered and clean, with no trash or pollutants, and managed according to legal engineering standards.

Christy Coleman (letter read into record by her husband) was a formal statement opposing the proposed RV resort development. She quoted from House Bill 951—the legislation that allowed the Town of Loxahatchee Groves to incorporate—which emphasizes preserving the town’s rural, low-density, agricultural, and equestrian character. She argued that the RV resort directly contradicts these founding principles, calling it incompatible with the town's Charter, zoning laws, and community values. Ms. Coleman criticized any comparisons to other commercial developments like Walmart or gas stations, saying such comparisons are irrelevant and misleading. She expressed concern that the property in question had been cleared of mature trees under agricultural exemptions as a way to prepare it for development, calling this a misuse of the exemption. Ms. Coleman also voiced frustration over developers repeatedly pushing projects that don’t conform to town regulations, urging the Council to stop approving zoning variances and to

enforce existing rules. She concluded by calling on the Council to protect the town from high-density commercial encroachment and to uphold the Charter and the will of the residents.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Kane adjourned the meeting at 6:12 P.M.

**TOWN OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES,
FLORIDA**

ATTEST:

Town Clerk

Mayor Anita Kane, Seat 3

Vice Mayor Margaret Herzog, Seat 5

Councilmember Phillis Maniglia, Seat 1

Councilmember Laura Danowski, Seat 2

Councilmember Robert Shorr, Seat 4