



AS WE SEE IT

Juxtaposing at the June 25th City Commission meeting the acquisition of Turnbull Trace, 152 acres of a vital, pristine watershed once slated for development, and the acceptance of septic tanks for the Turnbull Crossings Subdivision is another example of the challenge we face in practicing conservation as we grow and develop as a city. To be sure, the Mayor and City Commissioners are united on the issue of environmental protection but are often thwarted by state laws.

Turnbull Crossings does have an upside as a subdivision. Only 25 lots will occupy 31 acres of rural landscape providing adequate opportunities for containing storm water runoff and saving native vegetation. Unfortunately, the city's water and sewer services are not available in this annexed section. Moreover, the statutes of the State of Florida permit wells and septic tanks in such cases.

However, other cities have not yielded to the septic tank solution but have offered a developer an alternative; decentralized wastewater treatment.* Such an approach allows for constant monitoring of one treatment system within a subdivision. The expense of installation is shared using a special taxing district.

Our city leaders and indeed our business leaders are united in a commitment to new strategies as we grow and change. Innovative approaches must be adopted that will preserve our fresh water supply; save our springs and protect our lagoon from red tide. Some incorporate home and commercial designs that are specific to floodplain construction.

Doing enough soon enough is the conundrum. To that end the NSB Residents' Coalition thanks the City Commission and Staff for expediting the Comprehensive Plan Review process by adding to our planning staff a temporary outside consultant who can focus entirely on this process. Only when we have incorporated new strategies in our Comprehensive Plan can our elected leaders ensure a sustainable future for our city.

*A wastewater treatment system that performs in a similar way to a city's main treatment plant but is physically detached from it.