



Alachua County Board of County Commissioners

Charles "Chuck" Chestnut, IV, *Chair*
Robert "Hutch" Hutchinson, *Vice Chair*
Mike Byerly
Ken Cornell
Lee Pinkoson

Administration
Dr. Lee A. Niblock, CM
County Manager

April 7, 2015

Honorable Mayor Gib Coerper
City of Alachua
P.O. Box 9
Alachua, Florida 32616

RE: Ordinance 15-03 to Amend the City of Alachua's Official Zoning Atlas from Planned Unit Development and Agriculture to Commercial Intensive, Community Commercial and Governmental Facilities on an approximate 154.5 acre subject property.

Dear Mayor Coerper,

On behalf of the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners, I want to convey our concerns regarding potential adverse impacts to the Floridan Aquifer and Santa Fe River springs as a result of intensified land uses allowed by the above referenced proposed rezoning.

The proposed rezoning area is within a sensitive portion of the Mill Creek watershed and within the Hornsby Springs springshed. Mill Creek Swallet is the terminus of this closed basin and water discharges directly to the Floridan aquifer via the sink. The protection of the quality of water entering the Floridan aquifer via Mill Creek Swallet is very important.

As documented in a 2006 report authorized by Alachua County, highly sensitive Karst features are present on the subject property (Mill Creek and Lee Sinks Dye Trace Alachua County Florida July – December 2005, Karst Environmental Services, Inc., 2006). Mill Creek Sink, on the north side of US 441, has an extensive downstream cave section that has been documented to extend beneath the subject property. The cave system description, based on cave diver surveys, is presented in the report and shown in photographs. A sinkhole feature exist on the subject property, reportedly above the terminal room of the cave. It is my understanding that your staff has a copy of the entire report. County Environmental Protection staff is available to meet with City staff to review the report and further explore opportunities to protect the cave system, the Floridan Aquifer, and the downstream springs on the Santa Fe River.

Thank you for giving Alachua County the opportunity to express our concerns. We look forward to working with the City Commission to ensure that future development in this area occurs in a manner that is protective of these unique water resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Charles S. Chestnut, IV".

Charles S. Chestnut, IV, Chair
Alachua County Commission
Chr15.037

CSC/JCB/jcb

cc: Board of County Commissioners
Dr. Lee A. Niblock, County Manager
Michele Lieberman, County Attorney
Chris Bird, Environmental Protection Director
Steve Lachnicht, Growth Management Director
Department File