

Grow Smart

A quarterly newsletter from the Florida Yards & Neighborhoods Statewide Builder and Developer Program

Volume 1, Issue 3

SolutionsForYourLife.com/FYN or www.FloridaYards.org

Summer 2007

New Developments Selected for Florida-Friendly Community Awards

Florida Yards & Neighborhoods is pleased to announce the 2007 FYN Community Award winners. Three communities were selected as *Outstanding Florida-Friendly Communities* and five additional communities qualified for recognition. Awards will be presented at the annual meeting of the Florida Green Building Coalition on July 12, 2007 at the Southeast Builders Show in Orlando, FL.

Each of these award winning communities has made exceptional efforts to install Florida-friendly landscapes in their new developments and to educate and maintain these landscapes according to Florida-friendly principles.

The St. Johns Housing Partnership, developer of The Hancock Place in St. Johns County, incorporates Florida-friendly principles into all aspects of the 7 acre development while maintaining an average cost per single family home of \$135,000. The Hancock Place has low impact design elements such as roadside swales instead of curb and gutter and an ecologically enhanced stormwater pond. All of the yards are designed to thrive on rainfall alone once established, the homeowner regulations require Florida-friendly landscaping, and homeowners

are required to attend an introductory class on FYN.

Pelican Preserve, a WCI community in Lee County, is situated on just over 1,000 acres with more than half reserved for common recreational and preserved areas including wetlands and natural wildlife corridors. The community installed an Evapotranspiration (ET) Controller for the irrigation system and has reduced the golf course irrigation by 30%. Many WCI employees have attended FYN training and lead nature walks and bird watching tours while residents maintain an educational butterfly garden.

Connerton is an innovative "New Town" community developed by Terrabrook in Pasco County. The nearly 7,000 acre community includes extensive preserved areas, a Town Center, a regional park, wildlife corridors and a pedestrian trail systems (pictured both above and in titlebar). An ET controller manages the common space irrigation



Rob Harris Productions

and irrigation water is drawn from two ponds that serve as storage facilities for surplus reclaimed water from Pasco County Utilities during heavy rains. Brick pavers and pervious concrete along pedestrian paths, driveways, sidewalks and parking areas help reduce stormwater runoff and every new homeowner signs a pledge to protect nature and wildlife.

Congratulations to all of these communities for their impressive efforts to protect our valuable natural resources through Florida-friendly landscaping.

For more information, contact Ondine Wells, owells@ufl.edu.

Inside this issue:

Hastings Demonstration Unit	2
Legal Ease, Not Legalese	2
Success Stories	3
Workshops and Resources	4

Outstanding Florida Friendly Community Award Winners

- The Hancock Place, St. Johns Housing Partnership, Inc., St. Johns County
- Pelican Preserve, WCI Communities, Inc, Lee County
- Connerton, Terrabrook, Pasco County

Florida Friendly Community Recognition Recipients

- Mediterra, Bonita Bay Group, Lee County
- Willow Chase, Lee Wetherington Homes, Sarasota County
- University Groves, Fidelity Homes, Manatee County
- Veridian, Gulfstream Homes, Lee County
- Lakes of Mount Dora, Pringle Development, Inc., Lake County

Hastings Demonstration Unit: Update

The Florida Partnership for Water, Agricultural and Community Sustainability at Hastings (Hastings Demonstration Unit) in St. Johns County has been developing Florida-friendly demonstration landscape areas under the management of Joe Sowards, Multi-County Horticulture Extension Agent for Putnam and St. Johns Counties, Dr. Mark Clark, UF Extension Wetlands and Water Quality Specialist, and Glenn Acomb, Lecturer, UF Department of Landscape Architecture.

Paver Systems of Jacksonville has generously donated 300 sq. ft. of permeable pavers which were installed at the facility during a demonstration workshop for the public on March 23rd (photo to right). An in-ground cistern has been installed to receive runoff from the roof of the main building. Landscapes in rear of the main building currently demonstrate the use of

native plants, wildflowers, alternative turf and groundcovers. Florida Landscape of St. Augustine has donated a Ditch Witch and labor to assist in the installation of the main irrigation lines and stubs to each of the demonstration areas.

The front of the Hastings Demonstration Unit has recently seen a face-lift with the installation of a temporary landscape that incorporates permeable paver sidewalks, rain gardens and Florida-friendly plant materials and landscape design.

The St. Johns County Master Gardeners have eagerly agreed to begin volunteering at the Hastings Demonstration Unit on a weekly basis and P&A Consulting Engineers of St. Augustine has provided engineering for a future permeable pavement parking lot demonstration to be installed to



the west of the main building in 2008.

Grow Smart will provide regular updates on the Hastings Demonstration Unit. Contact Joe Sowards at sowards@ufl.edu.

Legal Ease, Not Legalese

State statute 373.185. Section (3) says "A deed restriction or covenant entered after October 1, 2001, ...may not prohibit any property owner from implementing Xeriscape or Florida-friendly landscape on his or her land." How does this apply to different phases of a development? For instance, if a development started out as a conventional development, creating an HOA and non-Florida-friendly deed restrictions prior to October 1, 2001, then later decided to incorporate Florida-friendly landscapes with building out through 2035, would the statute apply to phases developed after 2001?

Most likely the statutory language prohibiting deed restrictions or covenants entered after October 1, 2001 would use the date of the declaration of the covenants and restrictions as applicable to the property. This would mean that even if an HOA with restrictions or covenants predating October of 2001 allowed subsequent phases of the same development to join the HOA, and the declaration of covenants with

the deeds transferred by the declarant (developer) to the purchaser included language effectively prohibiting some aspect of xeriscape or Florida-friendly landscaping, this provision would not be valid against properties sold by the developer after October 1, 2001.

How can we get the Water Management Districts (Districts) to provide credit for LIDs on individual home lots?

The Districts are not against implementation of LID methods on individual lots. The Districts are, however, concerned that they do not currently have in place an administrative and legal structure that can realistically oversee and ensure the long-term viability of LID on individual lots. The Districts see some weaknesses in allowing the average HOA to take on the role of overseer and enforcer of district-permitted LID infrastructure on private lots. The Districts seem potentially more inclined towards Community Development Districts (CDDs) because CDDs have

clear fund-raising authority and tend to have better administrative capability. To a great extent, the difference in administrative capability is often a function of size: CDDs are usually larger than the average HOA and have professional administration, while many HOAs are run by volunteers from the community.

In the short term we are focusing our efforts on developing legal language for CDD documents that would be acceptable to the Districts for permitting LID on individual properties. The use of a CDD is better suited to large developments, so in the longer term we will seek ways to overcome District's concerns about allowing HOAs to oversee and enforce the maintenance and operation of LID structures on private parcels in smaller developments.

Legal answers are provided by the Conservation Clinic of the UF Levin College of Law. Submit your legal questions to owells@ufl.edu.

Success Stories

Citrus

Eighty-seven high school students learned about Florida-friendly Landscaping at the Future Builders of America Leadership Camp in Haines City in June. Students learned how Florida-friendly landscapes can reduce water use and pollution, and then worked in teams to analyze landscape site plans and photographs of real landscapes for proper plant placement, on-site stormwater retention and irrigation design. Contact Audrey Durr at Audrey.Durr@bocc.citrus.fl.us.

Hernando

Hernando County Extension is creating a half-hour regularly scheduled television program for Hernando County Government Broadcasting, which will focus on all aspects of the Extension Service. The first taped episodes are on Florida-friendly landscaping and green building.

Builder and Developer Coordinator, Esther Berg appeared on Hernando County Government Broadcasting program, "Issues and Answers," with County Board of Commissioners Administrator to talk about water issues and Florida-friendly landscaping.

Two model homes by Pastore Builders have been certified as Florida-friendly. Contact Esther Berg at eberg@hernandocounty.us.

Hillsborough

FYN Community Association Coordinator, Lisa Strange has met with residents of The Regency Cove 55+ Mobile Home Park on Florida-friendly landscaping and, in particular, micro irrigation systems. The community has since formed a landscape committee and is planning retrofits to their landscape. Contact Lisa Strange at StrangeL@HillsboroughCounty.org

Lee County

An \$8,000 grant from South Florida Water Management District will support the creation of a public FYN demonstration landscape for the busy Veteran's Community Park.

The grounds at South Seas Islands Resort on the Island of Captiva is now more Florida-friendly with the restoration and naturalization of landscaped areas that had been damaged in Hurricane "Charlie" in 2004. The resort has also created a small environmental center staffed by several employees who are Master Naturalists. In addition, 28 of the 32 landscape maintenance employees, staff and interns have been trained in Florida-friendly landscaping principles. Future plans are to develop year-round FYN and BMP education using the resort's 28,000 new trees, shrubs, palms and dune plantings. Contact Tom Becker at TBecker@leegov.com.

Manatee / Sarasota

Developer Taylor Woodrow Homes has purchased a partially built community and will retrofit the community to include green homes and Florida-friendly landscaping.

My Green Building, Inc. completed the first green remodeled home for the Florida Green Building Coalition's certification program with a Florida-friendly certified landscape.

A model in Eslinger Homes' Old Tampa Estates in Parrish was certified as a Florida-friendly Neighborhood in June. They have committed to making all future homes Florida-friendly. Contact Michelle Atkinson at michelleatkinson@ufl.edu.

Orange

FYN Coordinator, Teresa Watkins will oversee the landscaping and irrigation component of the Vision House 2008 to be featured at the 2008 International Builders Show in Orlando. (greenbuildermag.com/vh_site/pdf/GBM_vhseries__2008.pdf).

The home will be evaluated per the NAHB Model Green Home Building Guidelines and will be the focus of the Green Builder magazine for February 2008. The home is being built by Jim Rahman, Westmont Homes, Roberto Carrion, owner, Jim Gerlach and Robert Staudt, LEED-certified Landscape Architects. Sponsors include

Russel Proffit of Precise Irrigation, and Susan Thayer of Maxijet, Inc, for irrigator; Jim Thomas of Biosphere, for shoreline restoration; Kim Graham of Outdoor Expressions, Covey Wise of Wise Landscaping, and Lake Jem Farms for plant materials and installation. Contact Teresa Watkins at twatkins@ufl.edu.

Pasco

On June 14th, Flex-Pave™ provided an educational workshop on the installation of a highly permeable, pour-in-place surfacing material made from recycled tires. The material can be used for curbs, parking lots, driveways, sidewalks, trails and other applications to help reduce stormwater runoff. Samples of the material were installed at the Pasco County Facilities Management Office in a parking lot to solve a ponding problem and on a sidewalk.



Pasco County government and school board have committed to pursuing LEED certification for their buildings.

Numerous developers are pursuing green home certification through the Florida Green Building Coalition including Terrabrook, Newland Communities, Nohl-Crest Homes, Crossland and M/I Homes. Contact Chris Dewey at cdewey@pascocountyfl.net.

Homerun!

Florida Yards & Neighborhoods assisted in the retrofit of the east entrance to St. Petersburg's Tropicana Field as a Florida-friendly landscape. The Tampa Bay Devil Rays provided matching funds for a grant received from Pinellas County Environmental Fund for this project.

The Pinellas County Environmental Fund (PCEF) is a partnership between the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation whose goals are to pursue the protection, restoration, and enhancement of Tampa Bay's natural

resources.

Other organizations collaborating on the project included City of St. Petersburg and Tampa Bay Estuary Program. Florida Yards & Neighborhoods and City of St. Petersburg personnel worked with Phil Graham Studios in the design of the landscape and interpretive signs.

The grant also provided for messaging about the new Florida-friendly landscape to fans between innings as well as a video message to be shown during television broadcasts of home games. The landscape, the majority of the signs, and the between-inning messages were all ready for opening

day on April 6, 2007. In addition, the Devil Rays have applied to PCEF for funding the landscape retrofit of the southwest entrance. Contact Dale Armstrong, darmstro@co.pinellas.fl.us.



Workshops and Resources

Low-Volume Irrigation Workshop

A low-volume irrigation workshop will be held on August 18th, 2007, 10am—2pm at the Florida Partnership for Water, Agricultural and Community Sustainability at Hastings. Rain Bird is donating materials and instruction for the installation of a low-volume system for the landscape. Irrigation contractors and/or homeowners are also welcome to attend. Attendance will be limited to 50. Soft drinks, water and snacks will be available. Contact Joe Swards at swards@ufl.edu.

Green Building E-mail List

Pasco County Builder and Developer Coordinator Chris Dewey has developed a Green Building E-mail List which compiles a weekly list of links to news articles and other resources related to Green Building. Contact Chris Dewey at cdewey@pascocountyfl.net to be added to the list.

IPM Program Piloted in Spanish

A pilot program has been developed that will introduce Spanish speaking landscape maintenance workers to IPM (Integrated Pest Management) techniques and tools. The first pilot will be held in Jacksonville on July 10th, followed by two more in St. Lucie and Miami-Dade Counties.

The training will introduce participants to the Landscape IPM kit and instruct on how to scout for pest problems in the landscape. The kit contains University of Florida pest identification card decks and scouting survey sheets that have been translated into Spanish and the necessary tools to scout that are found in the English version of the kit.

The lecture portion of the workshop will be in Spanish and cover the general concepts of IPM, the contents of the kit and scouting techniques. The last half of the workshop will include

using the kit in the field.

Contact the following in each area:

Northeast Florida and general information —Pam Mattis, Duval County Extension, 904-387-8850, pmattis@coj.net

July 23, 2007—St. Lucie County Extension (Ft. Pierce), Ed Skvarch, (772) 462-1660, eask@ifas.ufl.edu.

August 21, 2007—Miami-Dade Extension, Henrique Mayer, 305-248-3311 Ext. 231, hmayer@ufl.edu.

Get the Right Tree Care Professional (FOR 116/FR171) by Eliana Kampf, Astrid Delgado, Mary Duryea, Traci Partin and Edward Gilman

This 4-page full-color fact sheet illustrates hurricane recovery situations which can be handled by the homeowner, which require the services of a tree care professional or arborist, and how to find a qualified arborist. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/files/fr/fr17100.pdf>

Get this quarterly newsletter delivered to your e-mail!

Contact Ondine Wells, owells@ufl.edu for more information