

MEMORANDUM

To: Participants and Invitees of the City of Gainesville Green Building Workshop

From: **Doug Myers, Dave Heekin & Tom Ankersen**, UF Conservation Clinic
Tom Saunders, City of Gainesville Community Development Department
Doug Murdock, City of Gainesville Building Inspection Department

Date: June 6, 2001

Re: **Summary of Green Building Workshop and Next Steps**

On behalf of the University of Florida Conservation Clinic and the City of Gainesville, we want to thank those of you who participated in the recent Green Building Workshop held at the UF College of Law. More than 40 people attended the workshop representing all sectors of the building community as well as local government officials and advocacy groups. While we did not employ formal consensus processes we believe that the participants were in general agreement on a number of the issues discussed. This memorandum summarizes those areas where we believe there was general agreement and concludes with our recommendations for the steps necessary to advance this process in Gainesville.

Summary

The participants generally agreed that the City should move forward with a green building program. Many also felt that Alachua County should pursue a green building program since much of the new construction that is occurring in Alachua County occurs beyond Gainesville's jurisdictional limits.

The participants generally agreed that any program that the City adopts should be voluntary and incentive-based.

The participants offered several options for incentives that could be included in a green building program. These generally included reduced filing and permitting fees, priority consideration in the development/construction review process, and possibly, density bonuses. One participant also suggested that additional incentives could be provided for "opportunity timing" measures taken to increase building efficiencies. This refers to measures taken at greater cost to the consumer that can only be accomplished once during the life of the building. This participant also suggested that incentives could be provided for "locational efficiency." This refers to the decision to build in areas served by existing infrastructure and service. Another participant suggested that the City's current density bonus point system should be reevaluated in light of

green building standards.

The participants generally agreed that a green building program for Gainesville should be comprehensive in its coverage. This means that the program would cover energy efficiency, water conservation, materials (use and recycling), and site design and protection (including landscaping). The participants also favored comprehensive coverage in terms of the kinds of buildings included. This would include residential, commercial, governmental and remodeling, although most acknowledged that it would be more difficult to include green building standards for remodeling.

The participants generally agreed that a green building program for Gainesville should be simple. Participants expressed support for the incorporation of existing programs into the Gainesville program, such as the EPA Energy Star Program. This would mean that compliance with standards set forth in existing programs would also be recognized as compliance with the Gainesville program.

The participants expressed general support for the draft standards being developed by the Florida Green Building Coalition (FGBC), which were included in the workshop packet. These standards provide coverage across a range of categories, including energy, water, site, health, materials, and disaster mitigation.

The participants generally agreed that the program should require third party certification as opposed to governmental or self-certification. It might be possible that the FGBC, which is developing its own certification program, may be interested in certifying builders under Gainesville's program if it adopts the FGBC standards.

The participants generally agreed that any Program should have a strong consumer education component. The participants also agreed that there needs to be a greater effort to educate all those involved in the building process, including builders, realtors, lenders, and City officials.

Next Steps

At the request of City staff, the Conservation Clinic will continue its work toward developing a green building program. The clinic will work with city officials this summer to further develop the program by recommending green building standards for adoption, and by working on an incentive package for building professionals and homeowners who satisfy the requirements of the program.

It is the clinic's goal to present its findings to the City Commission at some point later this summer and to recommend a course of action for the city with respect to implementing a green building program. The clinic will also provide the County with our recommendations in the hope that the County Commission will consider adoption of the program as well.

Thank you again for your interest and participation in the green building workshop. If you have any further recommendations or concerns, please feel free to contact Dave Heekin at daveheekin@hotmail.com, or call the clinic office at 392-2237.