



To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

<<
[Back](#)

Article published Aug 3, 2005

Cape panel caps downtown density

By **DON RUANE**
DRUANE@NEWS-PRESS.COM

Allowing up to 11,000 residences in downtown Cape Coral was OK with the Planning and Zoning Commission on Tuesday as long as the city council keeps some control over development in the business district.

Current regulations allow 2,027 residential units in the Community Redevelopment Agency district, which runs along Cape Coral Parkway from about Palm Tree Boulevard east to the Caloosahatchee River.

The planning and zoning group voted Tuesday to include some thresholds that require more intensive review by the Planning and Zoning Commission and the city council when larger projects are proposed.

More residential units are needed to help turn downtown into a pedestrian-friendly place where people can work, shop and be entertained, CRA board member Gary Aubuchon said.

But some residents and business people said the increase would mean more traffic congestion and that they don't want taller buildings.

The 11,000 units is a cap and not a requirement, city planning director Annette Barbaccia said.

Carolyn Saunders, of Cape Coral, said the CRA plan should encourage more businesses instead of reducing the amount of retail space.

"We're going to end up with less business, a lot of people living downtown and driving somewhere else," Saunders said.

More than 125 people attended the session on land use changes for the comprehensive land use plan.

The board endorsed land-use changes for the CRA district, for Paradise Preserve — a 420-unit development just north of Four Mile Cove Eco Park — and Bellagio Properties' Beach Street Square, a proposed commercial activity center at Beach Parkway and Agualinda Boulevard. A proposed change for a multifamily development on Sands Boulevard was rejected. The land use changes still must be approved by the state and the city council.

DELIVERING YOUR WORLD

- ▶ [Subscribe to The News-Press](#)
- ▶ [Signup for daily email news](#)
- ▶ [Printer friendly version](#)
- ▶ [Email this article](#)

RELATED NEWS ON THE WEB

Latest headlines by topic:

- [Cape Coral, FL](#)
- Powered by [Topix.net](#)

Aubuchon urged the commission to let the revised CRA code provide the control over projects in the district. The code was painstakingly revised during the past four years to cover all the concerns a project raises, Aubuchon said.

"You don't review single-family home applications because a code is in place. Developers should not have to ask for an additional layer of approval unless they want to vary from the code," Aubuchon said.

But the zoning commissioners wanted more input.

So they agreed that any project with more than 10 residential units per acre should go through the planned development project review. The review examines projects in detail. City officials can set conditions on a project to make it more compatible with neighboring areas. They also set a project review threshold for commercial projects based on the size and the number of floors.

The extra review will improve the quality of projects, Commissioner Walter Fluegel said.

<<
[Back](#)