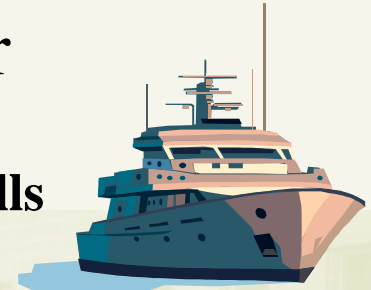


Glades County

Economic Development Council, Inc. August E—Newsletter



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- RIVER FOREST YACHT FILLS VOID
- \$1 MILLION DOLLAR GRANT
- ENTERPRISE ZONE BOUNDARIES

River Forest Yacht Center fills marine industry void

River Forest Yacht Center in Stuart will expand with a second facility in Glades County as construction begins this fall on a River Forest Yacht Center near the Ortona Lock on the Caloosahatchee River.

This location, conveniently located near Fort Myers, will serve Gulf Coast boaters with all the amenities of the original River Forest location, including climate-controlled storage options and the exclusive RFYC Hurricane Club.

RFYC Ortona will feature over 200,000 sq. ft. of indoor climate-controlled storage. An 80-ton boat

lift will allow RFYC Ortona to store larger yachts than the Stuart location.

According to RFYC owner Joe Charles, himself an avid yachtsman, River Forest is unique in that there is nothing like it in the State and fills a void in the boating community. “River Forest Yacht Center” provides not only a safe harbor for yachts during named storms, it also provides climate controlled long term storage protecting the vessels during the summer when boats are either laid up or the owners have returned to the Northern climes,” Mr.

Charles said.

The sale of marinas to corporate developers has forced boat owners to find other options and places to store their vessels, especially since state laws were passed which allow marina owners to take reasonable action to secure vessels within the marina to protect the boat, marina, environment, or personal property, and charge the owner a reasonable fee for doing so when an oncoming named storm has been announced. This has put more pressure on boat owners to find a safe harbor.

“When River Forest at
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Grant sought to bring hope to Main Street

Main Street Moore Haven, in conjunction with the Glades County SHIP program, announced plans in July to apply for a \$1 million HOPE VI grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development HOPE VI Main Street grant for \$1 million.

The grant, which targets towns with a population of 50,000 or less: that are not

served by a public housing agency (PHA) that administers more than 100 public housing units is intended to assist small communities in the rejuvenation of historic or traditional central business district or “Main Street” area by replacing unused commercial space in buildings with affordable housing units.

According to Main Street Moore Haven part time program manager Tracy Whirls, unlike other grants Main Street has applied for, the nonprofit does not have to own the buildings when they apply for the grant.

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River Forest Yacht Center

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Stuart opened for business in 2006, it was originally designed as a long term acclimatized facility," Mr. Charles said. "With the new law, the pressure on boat owners to find a place to take their vessels prior to a named storm it became obvious that a safe harbor facility was needed.

Now Mr. Charles said, risk managers of four large boat insurance carriers have visited the Stuart site and are now allowing local brokers to write coverage for boat owners or prospective buyers if their hurricane plan is to store in or at a facility like River Forest. "One large carrier stated that River Forest may be the marina model of the future," Mr. Charles said, noting that the River Forest buildings at Stuart and those planned for the new facility scheduled to open in Ortona

are designed to exposure "d" 140 mph wind loading. "Our business model provides over five acres of outside paved surface fitted with aircraft tie down cleats to safely tie down and store vessels during hurricanes,"

Mr. Charles said. "The cleats are imbedded flush with the cements surface." River Forest now has a members only "Hurricane Club" providing a safe harbor for members vessels either in or out of the water.

The "Hurricane Club" is a registered trade mark of River Forest Yacht Center.

The Stuart facility in it's first year received the prestigious Clean Marina certification by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Fully booked for the '07 season, River Forest Stuart has in the water storage available for boaters transiting the Okeecho-

bee water way from Stuart to Fort Myers and for a safe harbor during named storms.

The decision to build a second facility on the gulf side of the state was in response to the demand from the Gulf Coast boaters.

"While in search of a West Coast location with access to the Caloosahatchee

River and fresh water, we contacted realtors in both Hendry and Glades County," Mr. Charles said, adding that the need for fresh water limited their search to the East side of the Franklin Lock.

"We settled on a 30 acre site in Glades County because it was convenient for the West Coast boaters and it addressed our fresh water requirement," Mr. Charles said. "Glades County officials were aggressive, receptive, and had a sense of



urgency and can do attitude that helped make our decision easy," Mr. Charles said. "We are pleased to be part of the Glades County community and are now encouraging other marine related companies to take a look at settling here as well."

The Ortona facility, when completed, will have over 200,000 sq ft of climate-controlled storage that will accommodate up to 300 vessels depending on their size. For more information on RFYC, visit their web site @ www.riverforestyc.com

Grant sought to bring hope to Main Street

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"It is our intent to contract with Roger Taylor to purchase the Lundy Bldg., and the former Moore Haven Bank Building, subject to negotiation," Ms. Whirls said.

"The remaining funds would be invested in the

buildings to rehabilitate them to prepare for affordable housing rental units on the second floor and commercial leasing on the ground."

Under the terms of the grant program, the 12 one-bedroom efficiency apartment units Main

Street hopes to rehab using this grant must be made available to low income families, including very low income families during the initial occupancy period funded by the Grant.

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*Support your local
Main Street &
Watch Dreams Come
True!*