

# REIS REPORT

April 2021

news for Southwest Florida's commercial and investment real estate community

REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT SOCIETY

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## 2021 OFFICERS:

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Kristine Smale  
Past President Mary Gentile, CSM, CRX

## BOARDROOM REPORT

News from recent REIS board meetings

### Monthly Programs:

Emerging trends in residential development will be explained by Kristine Smale, of Zonda Advisory, at the **April 13th luncheon**, sponsored by [LSI Companies](#).

The annual legislative review will be presented by State Representative Jenna Persons-Mulicka at the **May 11th luncheon**, sponsored by [Sallee Promotions](#).

Lee County Economic Development Director John Talmage will deliver an update and outlook at the **June 8th luncheon**, sponsored by [Chris-Tel Construction](#).

We welcome your ideas for programs and speakers, which may be submitted to [Kent Poli](#), 239.337.3993. If you would like to lead the pledge of allegiance and prayer at a luncheon, please contact [Don Miller](#), 239.571.4968.

### Real Estate Symposium:

Annual educational program, presented with Lutgert College of Business, will take place September 9th at Florida Gulf Coast University, report committee members Josh Philpott, Kristine Smale, and Greg Blurton.

### Sponsorships:

Contact [Molly Scott](#), 239.226.0500, for information and availability of opportunities to sponsor REIS events.

### Marketing Opportunity:

The rare opportunity to promote your business on the REIS website home page is now available. Contact [Bill Burdette](#), 239.936.1404 for details.

### Scholarship Program:

Donations are needed for scholarships to be awarded in 2021. Information and an online donation form are on the [REIS webpage](#) or contact [Bev Larson](#) for details.

### Horizon Council:

Mary Gentile, REIS representative to the Council, reports that the March meeting focussed on construction costs, labor shortage, and impacts on economic growth.

### Reception for Lee County Commissioners:

Exclusive event for REIS members has been rescheduled for October 14th. Sponsored by Edison National Bank and Henderson Franklin, Attorneys at Law.

## EDISON AWARDS IN FORT MYERS

Inspired by the legacy of Thomas Edison, the Edison Awards have recognized the most innovative products and business leaders in the world for over 30 years. The 2021 program takes place in Fort Myers April 21-23 and is co-sponsored by the Horizon Foundation. Details are on the [Lee County Economic Development website](#).

## FLOOD INSURANCE REFORM

Major changes to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) go into effect for homebuyers October 1st and for existing homeowners April 1st, 2022. "Risk Rating 2.0" policy will base rates on the risk for individual homes instead of using flood zones. NFIP will also continue to phase out federal subsidies and premiums will be based on actual flood risk. Flood zones will continue to be used for floodplain management and Special Flood Hazard Areas will still require mandatory purchase requirement. FEMA projects that 19.8% of Florida policies will decrease and 76% will increase by less than \$240.

## REIS WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Please join in welcoming our newest members:

**Glenn Hasenfus** is director of land acquisition in Southwest Florida for Pulte Group, utilizing his experience in real estate, banking, and project management.

**Regine Cooper**, is a project engineer with Suffolk Construction, working as on-site liaison with contractors.

Membership information is on the [REIS website](#)

## REIS PRESENTS SCHOLARSHIP

Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) student Tania Vega was introduced at the REIS February luncheon as one of three outstanding students to receive a \$2,500 scholarship from the Paul Sands Memorial - REIS Scholarship program. Tania is a senior, majoring in Accounting with a minor in Real Estate.



REIS President Bill Morris and Scholarship Chair Bev Larson present FGCU scholar Tania Vega with her scholarship and honorary membership in REIS at the REIS March luncheon.

## BEV LARSON, CCIM

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## LEGISLATIVE ISSUES TO WATCH

The 2021 Florida Legislature is now in session and is scheduled to continue through April 30th.

**Affordable Housing** HB 0013 and SB 510 would protect the State Housing Trust Fund and Local Government Housing Trust Fund from transfers. HB 563 and SB 674 authorize counties & municipalities to grant ad valorem tax exemptions to property owners whose properties are used for affordable housing. *Being debated in both chambers.*

**Tourism** SB 778 and HB 213 would make "Visit Florida" permanent. The state's tourism marketing organization is currently scheduled to be repealed in October, 2023. *HB 213 died in committee.*

**Business Liability** SB 72 provides protections from civil liability claims relating to damages from COVID-19. *Passed by Legislature and signed by the Governor.*

**Building Design** HB 55 and SB 284 provide that regulations relating to building design elements may not be applied to certain structures. *House to vote on SB 55, SB 284 is in Rules Committee.*

**Growth Management** HB 59 and SB 496 require a property rights element in comprehensive plans; provide that certain property owners are not required to consent to development agreement changes; prohibit municipal annexation of specified areas; and authorize developments of regional impact (DRI) agreements to be amended. *HB 59 has passed. SB 496 is advancing.*

**Regional Planning Councils** SB 62 would revise a requirement for the Governor to consider reports and analyses relating to revision of the state comprehensive plan and eliminate advisory role of councils in state comprehensive plans. *In Community Affairs Committee.*

**Taxes** HB 129 and SB 1222 would raise the corporate income tax rate from 5.5% to 6.5%. SB 652 would create a severance tax of 12.5 cents per gallon of water extracted from state waters, while SB 1776 would create a fee of 5 cents per gallon. *Both bills are advancing.*

**Flood Mitigation Exemption** HJR 1377 and SJR 1182 would amend the state constitution to allow a tax exemption for home improvements to mitigate flooding impacts. *Proceeding through both chambers.*

**Energy Regulation** HB 856 and SB 1128 would prohibit local governments from regulating "energy infrastructure" and banning natural gas in new construction. *Both bills are advancing.*

## REDUCING BUSINESS RENT TAX

Florida House Bill 15 was amended to include a reduction in the tax rate on commercial leases from 5.5% to 2.0%. The bill requires remote sellers to collect and submit state sales tax and that added revenue would offset the rent tax reduction. *The Senate and House of Representatives have both passed the bill and sent it to the Governor to be signed into law.*

## LIMITING IMPACT FEE INCREASES

Florida Legislators passed bills HB 337 and SB 750 to cap impact fee increases on new construction. The legislation would prohibit local governments from raising an impact fee by more than 50 percent or increase a fee more than once every 4 years. Under HB 337, if a fee raised 25% to 50%, developers would be allowed to pay in 4 installments. The bill defines "infrastructure impact fees" as levies to pay the "related construction costs required to bring the public facility into service" and stipulates fees can only be used for "emergency medical, fire and law enforcement public facilities," as well as "infrastructure."

## FLOODING AND SEA LEVEL RISE

Proposals in the Florida Senate (SB 1954) and House of Representatives (HB 7019) would require the Department of Environmental Protection to conduct a statewide assessment of flood risks, encourage local governments to set up regional coalitions on resilience issues and establish the Florida Flood Hub for Applied Research and Innovation to address flooding and sea-level rise issues. \$100 million would be available to help local governments address sea level rise. A tax break for elevating homes is also proposed. Governor DeSantis has proposed a \$1 billion investment, titled "Resilient Florida," over four years to allow local governments to build new infrastructure to address the impacts of sea level rise and intensifying storms. Legislators are debating whether to fund the program with monies transferred from the affordable housing trust funds or with federal stimulus money.

## SWF TOLL ROAD FAILS IN SENATE

A bill (SB 100) to repeal provisions of the legislation that created MCORES, Multi-use Corridors Of Regional Economic Significance and scale down the program passed the Florida Senate and is in the House of Representatives. The bill eliminates a proposed toll road from Collier County to Pasco County, where it would connect with other freeways.

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