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BOARDROOM REPORT

News from recent REIS board meetings

Luncheon Programs:

The latest economic trends will be explained by Gary Jackson, Ph.D., Director of the Regional Economic Research Institute at the December 10th luncheon, sponsored by [Krise Commercial Group](#).

The January 14th luncheon will be sponsored by [Velocity Engineering Services](#).

REIS welcomes your suggestions on programs and speakers you would like to see at the luncheons. Please share your ideas with [Matt Simmons](#), 239.337.0555.

Scholarship Programs:

The Paul Sands Memorial Slaw Dog invitational golf tournament will be Dec. 12 with a portion of the proceeds funding the Scholarship Program.

The REIS Scholarship Foundation is a not-for-profit registered 501(c)3 corporation that provides opportunity to make charitable donations to fund scholarships. Contact Scholarship Committee Chairs [Lisa Sands](#) and [Matt Simmons](#) to plan your year-end contributions.

Membership:

Memberships expire December 31 and those not renewed by January 8 will be offered to new members. Annual dues remain \$125 and may be paid online. When renewing their memberships, members are encouraged to review and update their contact information.

Horizon Council:

Lee and Collier County economic development officials are partnering with the private sector in the newly formed Southwest Florida Economic Development Alliance. The Alliance hopes to have a website online in January.

Luncheon Registration Policy:

Registration is required for monthly luncheons. Luncheon fees are not refundable but may be transferred to another member or colleague prior to the deadline.

ESTERO INCORPORATION BACKED

The Lee County Legislative Delegation unanimously agreed to file a bill in the 2014 session that would allow Estero residents to vote on incorporating the community as a city. The Delegation includes Senator Lizbeth Benacquisto, Senator Garrett Richter, Representative Matt Caldwell, Representative Dane Eagle, Representative Heather Fitzenhagen, and Representative Raymond Rodriguez. More information on the incorporation referendum is on the Estero Council of Community Leaders [website](#). There is also a local referendum planned for February 25 for property owners in portions of the Colony and Pelican Landings communities to agree to be annexed into the City of Bonita Springs.

FLOOD INSURANCE DILEMMA

Implementation of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 persists, resulting in higher premiums for new owners of coastal properties. Florida's governor and congressional district have supported efforts in Congress to delay it until potential consequences can be studied and reviewed. That initiative has been blocked by the chairmen of the House Financial Services Committee and the House Subcommittee on Housing & Insurance, determined to cut the program's debt. Lee County Dept. of Community Development has established a [website](#) for property owners and insurance agents to learn about the Act, its impacts, schedule, and latest news. It includes links to FEMA information and Lee County flood zones and property base elevations.

FLOOD MAP EXEMPTION SOUGHT

Lee County is appealing to legislators for an exemption for local government adoption of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Zone Maps. The inaccuracies in the maps have resulted in numerous claims for inverse condemnation under the Bert J. Harris Act. Adoption of the FEMA maps is required by the federal government for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.



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REIS ROCKS THE RIVER DISTRICT

REIS members and their guests enjoyed continuous live music, tasty hors d'oeuvres, and a rousing good time at the Martini Bar in The Firestone in downtown Fort Myers November 21. The popular annual party was sponsored by:



[Henderson Franklin Starnes & Holt, PA](#)
[Conestoga - Rovers & Associates](#)
[Pavese Law Firm](#)
[City of Palms Realty](#)
[Hans Wilson & Assoc.](#)
[Wells Fargo Business Banking & SBA Lending](#)

and our event partners:

The Firestone
Daniel Melvin
Jennifer "Golden Note" Gilmore

REIS WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Please join in welcoming our new members:

Michelle Rice, CoStar Group
Angie Voit, Affordable Secure Insurance

Membership is strictly limited, but a few remain available. The membership application is on the [REIS website](#).

DO YOU HAVE NEWS TO SHARE?

Join the [REIS LinkedIn Group](#) to participate in discussions, network with other leaders in the local commercial real estate industry, and stay abreast of breaking news.

The **REIS REPORT** also welcomes contributions from members. Please submit story ideas to REIS Communications Chairman [Randy Krise](#) or [Bill Burdette](#).

STAYING INFORMED & INVOLVED

The [calendar of events](#) on the REIS website is constantly updated with industry and government events.

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REAL ESTATE OUTLOOK

Annual Real Estate Economic Outlook Conference presented by [Punta Gorda - Port Charlotte - North Port Association of Realtors](#) is December 13 at PGPCNP Auditorium in Port Charlotte. Panel of regional experts to discuss market trends for the area.

The annual **CCIM Southwest Florida Real Estate Outlook Conference** takes place January 29 at Harborside Event Center in Fort Myers. Event features presentations and panel discussions on area economy and real estate market sectors, with expectations for the future. Details at [Southwest Florida CCIM Chapter website](#).

ESTERO DEVELOPMENT STUDY

A research study to assess potential demand for new retail, office and residential uses was presented to the Estero Council of Community Leaders in November. The study identifies 3 areas of opportunity where landowners and the community should consider working together to develop a multi-district town center. Areas include the Town Center area at US 41 - Corkscrew Rd., a medical village around the Lee Memorial Hospital property near Coconut Point Town Center, and a University Village close to Florida Gulf Coast University. The [study](#) is a rich source of market demographics and planning information.

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN CURBED

Lee County Commissioners declined to advance the Sustainability Plan toward adoption, noting that the plan has noble goals but lacks solid direction for achieving them. The Plan calls for encouraging more mixed-use development, which has not proven to be generally successful in Southwest Florida. Commissioners asked staff to include more working details on promoting mixed-use projects and grading sustainability efforts.

BONITA DRGR MORATORIUM

On December 12, Bonita Springs Local Planning Agency will discuss an ordinance to establish a moratorium on amendments to the comprehensive land use plan for properties in the Density Reduction Groundwater Resource (DRGR) area of the city. Meeting is at 8:30 am in Bonita Springs City Hall.

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