

REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT SOCIETY

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BOARDROOM REPORT

News from recent REIS board meetings

Luncheon Programs:

The Legislative Review is planned for the June 14 luncheon. Jeff Kottkamp, former Lieutenant Governor and Legislator, will review new legislation and the implications for Florida's economy. Sponsored by [Realtor® Association of Greater Fort Myers and the Beach, Inc.](#)

REIS welcomes suggestions for programs from members. Please convey your ideas to [Kim Donnelly](#), (239) 768-4522. Sponsorships for future luncheons are available and [Jim Garinger](#) has all the details: (239) 418-0300.

Scholarship Programs:

The REIS Scholarship Foundation, a not-for-profit, registered 501(c)3 corporation is actively seeking contributions toward scholarships to be awarded in the fall. REIS manages the Foundation so 100% of donations are awarded as scholarships to students and area colleges and universities. Details at [www.reis-swfl.org](#) or Scholarship Chairman [Matt Simmons](#), (239) 333-1060.

Educational Workshop:

Education Chair Amanda Brock is developing a half-day workshop on strategies for redeveloping and repositioning commercial properties and development sites in today's market. The workshop is scheduled for September 22. Anyone interested in planning, sponsoring, or participating in the workshop should contact [Amanda](#), (239) 344-1269.

Gala Social Event:

The REIS annual party will take place November 17 at The Edison restaurant. Sponsorship opportunities are available. The event will feature a silent auction to benefit the REIS Scholarship Foundation. Event Chair Robin Mixon welcomes your ideas to help plan a memorable event. Contact [Robin](#) at (239) 334-6870 or 872-3273.

Horizon Council:

REIS representative Hal Tate attended the Council's Social Media Workshop and Futurist Seminar.

IMPACT FEES MAY DROP IN LEE

Lee County's recent Road Impact Fee Update report recommends fees be reduced 27% on average based on lower road construction costs and reduced travel demand. The report and draft ordinance, including a schedule of fees for different property types may be reviewed at <http://www3.leegov.com/dcd>. The proposed ordinance will be considered in public hearings with the [Local Planning Agency \(LPA\)](#) at 8:30 am on May 23 and with the [Board of County Commissioners](#) at 5 pm on June 14. Both hearings are in Lee County Commission Chambers. Public comment is welcome. If adopted, the ordinance would become effective when filed with the Secretary of State.

Many other counties and municipalities on the Gulf Coast have reduced impact fees in the past few years to encourage construction and stimulate economic growth.

LET'S MIX IT UP

The Annual Mixer of REIS, AIA, CCC, CSI, and USGBC members will be 5:30 - 7:30, July 13th, at Royal Palm Yacht Club in Fort Myers. \$25 for members of participating organizations. Details and registration available from Lee BIA, info@bia.net.

Memberships Available:

A limited number of REIS memberships are now available. Members receive preferred rates on luncheons and workshops, invitations to member-only social events, special bulletins, and are listed in the membership directory with direct links to their websites. Annual membership is \$125 and an application is on the bottom of the home page at [www.reis-swfl.org](#).

Executive Director Appointed:

Bill Burdette has been appointed Executive Director of REIS. Burdette has been a member for over 25 years, during which he has served the organization in public relations, event promotion, newsletter editing and publication, and membership and website management.



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GROWTH MANAGEMENT REFORM

Governor Scott has signed legislation that reinstates the Growth Management Act passed by the 2010 Legislature and later invalidated by the court. The legislation eases concurrency requirements for developers to provide roads and schools, exempts some larger developments from state review, and allows for extension of development approvals and permits.

The legislation, coupled with the Governor's proposal to eliminate the Dept. of Community Affairs, reduces the state's role in comprehensive planning and gives local governments more authority in managing development.

FORT MYERS ZONING DATA ONLINE

The City of Fort Myers Community Development Department has launched a new web mapping application system that allows citizens and property investors to research parcel zoning, with links to other departments and City Codes. The web map has tools for map navigation, identifying features, measuring distances, finding addresses, viewing the latest aerial photography, and a neighborhood lookup menu. More features to come. Check it out at: <http://gis.cityftmyers.com/cddinformation>

PLANNING & ZONING CONFERENCE

Florida Planning & Zoning Association's Annual Conference takes place in Naples June 8 - 11. Former Director of Dept. of Community Affairs Linda Loomis Shelley reviews 2011 Legislative Session. Other programs on Redevelopment, Issues & Pitfalls in Land Use Hearings, Roadway Capacity Myths, Site Sustainability Initiatives, Parking, Utility Services, and Hurricane Tolerant Community Concepts, and more. Details and registration at fpza.org or fpza@bellsouth.net.

UNDERSTANDING VACANCY RATES

The US Census estimates that 30% of Lee County dwelling units are vacant. However, that includes units that are occupied for seasonal, vacation, or occasional use, which is a substantial amount in this area. It also includes units sold or rented but not yet occupied.

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Contact Bill Burdette for details:
(239) 936-1404
bill@burdetteinc.com

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

1. **Septic Tank Inspection** - Bills to repeal the mandatory septic tank inspection regulation failed but implementation of the law is on hold. The approved budget prohibits spending on the inspection program unless approved by the Legislative Budget Commission and ratified by the 2012 Legislature.
2. **Property Rights** - Property rights bills passed which strengthen property rights protections afforded by the Bert Harris Act, reduce unnecessary litigation, and shifts burden of proof to those challenging permits.
3. **Property Assessments** - Approved constitutional amendments to be on the 2012 ballot which would reduce the yearly assessment cap on nonhomesteaded property to 5% and allow the Legislature to prohibit assessment increases when property values decline.
4. **Florida's One-Stop Business Connect Act** - Failed to pass a bill to streamline issuance of licenses, certifications, and registrations by state agencies by jointly conducting review of state's requirements.
5. **Residential Building Permits** - Approved bill to prohibit local governments from requiring certain types of inspections as a condition to issuing a permit.
6. **Water Management Requirements** - Approved bill establishing agricultural-related exemptions to water management requirements; provides Dept. of Agriculture & Consumer Services exclusive authority to determine whether activities qualify for exemption; and provides exemption for converted agricultural lands.
7. **Corporate Tax Relief** - Approved bill increasing the exemption to corporate income tax from \$5,000 to \$25,000, saving businesses about \$1,100 each.
8. **Insurance Costs** - Legislation passed that limits coverage on sinkhole insurance and allows insurers to pay cash value for repairs rather than paying replacement value up front. Intended to limit factors that increase premiums and to encourage more insurers to operate in Florida.
9. **Title Insurance Protection** - Bill passed that ensures title coverage continues when underwriter fails.

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