



Terhaar & Cronley

February 22, 2016

Commissioner Wilson Robertson, District 1
Commissioner Doug Underhill, District 2
Commissioner Lumon May, District 3
Commissioner Grover Robinson, IV, District 4 (Chairman)
Commissioner Steven Barry, District 5
Escambia County
221 Palafox Place, Suite 400
Pensacola, FL 32502

Honorable Commissioners:

We are at another critical juncture in the OLF-8 Program. As such, I believe ***it is time to reaffirm our commitment to the purpose and objectives associated with the OLF-8 Land Swap Program.*** As we move forward, the historical intent and purpose of the program are important for everyone to understand.

Recall that the OLF-8 Program is preferred because it provides a ***win-win*** opportunity for two pressing community objectives:

1. Enhance the long-term viability of ***naval aviation*** in our community. Our goal is to assist the Navy in enhancing the training mission at Naval Air Station Whiting Field. We know that the military represents half of the local economy. Taking steps to "BRAC-proof" one of our more vital local commands serves a fundamental community interest.
2. Provide critical site inventory to support future ***jobs*** in our community. With the build-out of Ellyson Industrial Park, the lack of competitive sites to incentivize and support our economic development goals has become a pressing issue. With an expectation of 5,000 diverse career jobs, the OLF-8 site represents a logistically perfect solution for our community.

Over the past 23 years, our fundamental community interest in the program has been to ***help the Navy and create jobs.*** As we move forward to implement the program, we should be certain that these two interests remain our prime objectives.

With these community objectives in mind, moving forward, we will need to consider several developing demands on the OLF-8 Property. I believe we should consider these issues prior to re-establishing our commitment to the OLF-8 Land Swap Program. Each issue is listed below with a brief explanation.

Navy Federal Credit Union (NFCU) Campus Parcel.

The NFCU project is without a doubt the most important economic development event we have seen over the past 50 years. As you know, the OLF-8 land section is directly adjacent to the NFCU campus. The Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) should be advised that the NFCU's position is that 20% of the acreage captured in the land swap should be dedicated to NFCU. Currently, our understanding of this position is as follows:

- Following the land swap, NFCU would take possession of (up to) 100 acres of OLF-8.
- The NFCU parcel would NOT be encumbered with any job creation criteria.
- NFCU might decide to complete a campus expansion on the 100 acres.
- NFCU might decide to convert the 100 acres to recreational, park, or some other use.

In recent discussions with Debbie Calder at NFCU, I became aware that the NFCU position is that this acreage should be dedicated ***without any job creation requirements or criteria***. Of course, this position represents a major deviation from the 23-year prime objectives of the land swap program. In the past, the program has considered the dedication of a buffer parcel to NFCU. Since 2011, our committee has been in favor of a buffer; we have always wanted NFCU to have Right of First Refusal on any land needed for additional jobs.

However, the BOCC should understand that the land swap program always included heavy new job densities on that acreage. The OLF-8 program would be severely depleted if this large portion of the property was used for something other than ***creating jobs***.

Planned Urban Development (PUD) Parcel Utilization.

The OLF-8 development has always been thought of as a world-class ***Commerce Park***. In recent conversations with NFCU, I have encountered opinions that seem to favor replacing the commerce park approach with a PUD approach. In a PUD, the OLF-8 parcel would be developed with shops, restaurants, condominiums, single-family housing, office space, parks, etc.

A Commerce Park and a PUD are two very different development approaches. It is important that the BOCC understand that the ***Commerce Park*** development model is the one that delivers the density, number, and type of jobs that has always characterized the land swap program. If, in fact, the purpose of the OLF-8 land swap is to ***create jobs***, a ***Commerce Park*** is the only approach that delivers the new job densities required to support the swap.

Schools, Youth Sports and Public Recreation.

We have also encountered stakeholders that favor the construction of new schools on the OLF-8 parcel. Other stakeholders have proposed uses that involve regional youth sports facilities, baseball fields, public parks, etc. Once again, none of these proposed uses creates the density and type of **jobs** we have been planning for the property. It is important for the BOCC to reaffirm that the ***prime purpose of the OLF-8 land swap program is to create jobs***. This involves the development of a world-class **Commerce Park**, the impact of which would include:

- 5,000 New full-time jobs.
- New tax revenues.
- Commercial lot sales to recover the initial public investment.

There are other properties available for parks, schools, sports facilities, PUDs, etc. The OLF-8 parcel is the ***only parcel*** available for the development of a competitive Commerce Park.

Reaffirmation

It is imperative at this critical juncture that the BOCC reaffirm its commitment to the OLF-8 project. That commitment should be in alignment with the 23-year objectives of the land swap program: ***Naval Aviation and New Jobs***. In support of those objectives, I believe that the BOCC should be very clear about the intent and purpose of the OLF-8 program. The OLF-8 program has always been about ***creating the finest Commerce Park in the State of Florida***.

As we move forward, numerous issues associated with the development of a Commerce Park on the OLF-8 parcel will arise. For this reason, I believe it is important ***that the BOCC appoint a 10-member committee*** to oversee the details associated with this program. The committee would be charged with working through the full-range of developmental issues, and offering advice or recommendations for BOCC consideration. Items vetted through the committee would include:

- Work with NFCU to create a suitable buffer zone.
- Work with NFCU to provide land for future jobs, if needed.
- Protect and encourage the development of new park opportunities.
- Provide a platform for public input and information.
- Promotional strategies.
- Create recommended standards and criteria, including:
 - Competitor site analysis;
 - Design criteria;
 - Park programming, planning and design;
 - Requirements for commercial lot purchases;
 - Deed restrictions; and
 - Architectural standards.

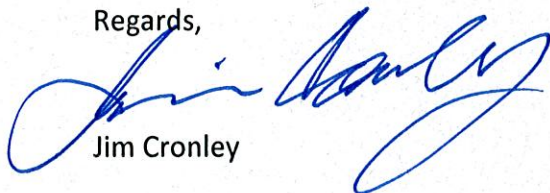
If this reaffirmation of project objectives is not feasible, I would recommend cutting your losses and disengaging from the program immediately. I do not think it is advisable (or responsible) for the project to move forward without clear direction in-place from the BOCC. These actions would help Jack Brown, Alison Rogers and your staff to fully understand your intentions with the OLF-8 program. It is imperative that we all be on the same page and work quickly and efficiently toward clear objectives.

Finally, I'll be 74 soon and I'm tired. My committee and I have spent 23 years on this project. The committee members and I have spent in excess of \$250,000 from our own pockets moving this opportunity forward on behalf of the community. Over recent years, we have taken it upon ourselves to procure legal work, appraisals, studies, designs, real estate commissions, legislative involvement, payments for surface rights, etc. There is no question that these enormous private efforts and investments have resulted in an unprecedented opportunity for Escambia County. We think this is a perfect case study in how local government, the federal government, the Navy and the private sector can work together to develop progressive win-win solutions for our community.

At this critical juncture, I believe ***it is time to reaffirm our commitment to the purpose and objectives associated with the OLF-8 Land Swap Program.***

I will be contacting the County Administrator to respectfully request to be placed on the BOCC agenda to answer any questions or address any outstanding concerns.

Regards,



Jim Cronley

Copy:

Jack Brown, Malcom Thomas, Debbie Calder, Robert Kelly, Alison Rogers, Amy Lovoy, Joy Blackmon, Cooper Saunders, Scott Luth, Craig Dalton, Fred Donovan, Jr.