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CURRENT NEWS



County approves development despite Navy concerns

BY TIMOTHY O'HARA

Citizen Staff

KEY HAVEN — The Monroe County Commission Wednesday evening approved a posh 43-home subdivision Navy officials fear could limit their training at the Boca Chica air station.

Capt. Jim Scholl, commanding officer of Naval Air Station Key West, asked the commission to postpone approving the project and changes to the Future Land Use Map for the area below the Navy flight zone until the Navy and the county can study the issue to see if development is compatible with the Navy base.

"This is the only (flight) training facility on the East Coast of the United States," Scholl said.

The main area of concern for the Navy is a piece of development called Enchanted Island, a proposed 10-unit development on land jutting out just east of Key Haven. This area will be in a "fighter jet accident potential" zone.

Commissioner Sonny McCoy initially proposed not approving that section of the project, but withdrew his motion.

The commissioners opted instead to let the state Department of Community of Affairs decide whether the development of Enchanted Island is appropriate. State law allows the Navy to be part of the process when it comes to development near bases. The Navy can object to developments if the projects will limit training, Scholl said.

Commissioners also proposed allowing the state or the Navy to purchase what would be Enchanted Island and set it aside.

Dozens of Key Haven residents attended Wednesday's meeting to show their support for the project.

"I learn to live with it (the airplane noise) and console myself that

Thu, Feb 24, 2005

WEATHER FORECAST

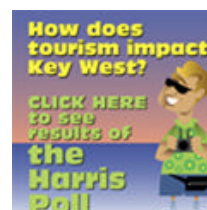


Kaynan Elkins Fourth grade Gerald Adams Elementary School

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it is my taxes at work," longtime resident Frank Romano said.

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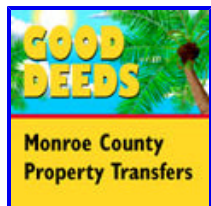
The commission changed the zoning from commercial to residential. Residents have long opposed commercial development in that area. Some residents have started to call the property the "Key Haven truck stop," because truckers park there on the way to and from Key West.

tohara@keysnews.com

Published on Thursday, February 24, 2005

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