Dear :

A number of citizens’ committees advise the Alachua County Commission, including the Environmental Protection Advisory Committee (EPAC), which I chair. EPAC has 12 volunteer members and has weighed in on a number of issues in recent years, including the Koppers Superfund site, GRU’s spreading of bio-solids in Archer, and the health of the Santa Fe River and its springs.

Recently, EPAC decided to take a comprehensive look at the County’s Environmental Protection Department (EPD), with a particular focus on these questions:

* Is EPD effective and efficient?
* Do any of its services duplicate services provided by other agencies?
* Does EPD act appropriately in carrying out Commission policies in the enforcement of environmental and land development regulations and in other areas?
* Should EPD’s roles be changing given diminished budgets in other agencies (e.g. water management districts)?
* What should EPD’s future priorities be?

A review of EPD was conducted by the Commission about 10 years ago. Given the policy and budgetary changes that have taken place since then, a new review would seem to be timely. We plan to finish our review within the next six months.

As part of the review, we are soliciting the views of local business and community leaders. We are also interested in hearing comments from sitting Commissioners as well as candidates for Commission seats.

We would welcome your input. Please feel free to respond to this email or if you would prefer to talk directly to me, let me know and I’ll give you a call at your convenience. I can be reached at 352-371-4093.

Thanks for your consideration.

Bob Palmer