

# Residents win round 1 in property rights battle

BY SHERRI BUSICK  
THE COURIER

A group of northeastern Hillsborough County residents may have won the first round in a fight for property rights.

Hillsborough County Planning Commission staff is considering recommending some of the property in the Knights-Antioch area be changed to a higher density class, said Ray Chiamonte, director of comprehensive plans. Area property recently was downsized in density from one residence per acre to one residence per five acres.

"This is the first step in a long road with a lot of hurdles," said Todd Pressman, who has helped organize affected prop-

erty owners in a group dubbed the 5-to-1 Task Force.

The residents' problems arose when the county rezoned their property to conform with the 2010 Comprehensive Land Use Plan, which outlines what property within the county may be used for. Under the new zonings, land densities in many parts of the Knights-Antioch area have dwindled from one home per acre to one per five acres.

This means residents whose homes are built on fewer than five acres now own non-conforming houses. And residents who want to sell some property for retirement or vacation money now find their options limited.

Although Pressman said



Todd Pressman

Chiamonte's news is good, he urged residents to continue lobbying, saying that changes in the comprehensive plan must go to the county com-

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## 2-Upper Tampa Bay

# Residents surrender in fight against new McDonald's sign

By CHARLES STOVALL  
Tribune Correspondent

LUTZ — Although there is little they can do about it, the golden arches are still tarnished for some residents of Crystal Lakes Manors subdivision.

Members of the subdivision's homeowners association met Monday night to discuss the 30-foot sign McDonald's plans to build near the entrance to the community off U.S. Highway 41.

And they realized there was very little they can do to stop it. Most of their options — and their complaints — have been exhausted.

"The time allotted for an appeal is two weeks," said Dennis Boucher,

association president. "And I think that, at this point, we are outside that."

Cliff Livingston, attorney for the owners of a new shopping center also going up near the subdivision, clarified some questions about future signs in the area.

He told the association the Department of Transportation had bought 10 feet of the existing 50-foot strip of land between the CSX railroad tracks and U.S. 41, with an option to use 25 more feet, if necessary, for road expansion.

"That only leaves 10 feet for the railroad, so I don't think you're going to see any signs at all in that stretch of land between the road

and the railroad," he said.

Residents also discussed problems with a subdivision sign on the northern edge of their property, the possibility of getting speed bumps and privatization of the subdivision's roads.

Meanwhile, most of the residents who attended the meeting didn't blame Hillsborough County for approving the sign. However, they blamed McDonald's for pushing for a sign that residents obviously didn't want. They also were upset the restaurant at one point pushed for changes in the county's sign law.

The case was resolved when McDonald's bought land from the railroad for the sign.