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Memo from Robert Fagin to the Environmental Advisory Council January 6, 1998

Robert F. Fagin

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ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE
Office of the Vice President

MEMORANDUM

TO: Environmental Advisory Council (EAC)
FROM: Robert F. Fagin
DATE: January 6, 1998
RE: Golf Management and Learning Center (GMLC)

In our EAC meeting of November 18, 1997 I committed to discuss alternate sites for the Golf Management and Learning Center (GMLC, its official title) with President Herbert. This is to advise you that I met with Dr. Herbert before the Christmas break, and we discussed the location in some detail. While not etched in stone, the decision for the location of the GMLC in the southeast corner of the UNF campus follows a body of logic that is closely tied to the Master Plan that I briefed the Council on in the same meeting.

As you will recall, I distributed the 2010 projections at our meeting, which reflect a student body of approximately 25,000 students. This level of enrollment will result in construction of 1,000,000 square feet of buildings along with housing to support a university of that size. This is in addition to the \$100 million of construction we currently have on the drawing boards.

The point of reciting this magnitude of growth is to put the 38 acres in the southeast corner in an overall context. For purposes of giving some sense of dimension to the southeast property, we estimate that we could put approximately 200,000 square feet of space in that amount of land with roads and associated parking.

At our meeting we discussed the issue of employing the northern property, which is already cleared, in lieu of the designated area, which is not. As appealing as this might appear on the surface, in the near term it does not achieve any net gain in terms of lands that would be cleared for development. Specifically, to support the construction of over 1,000,000 square feet we will have to make use of the northern properties. Thus, using that land now for the GMLC means dismantling it or moving it in the next five to ten years. This does not make economic sense. Moreover, such use of the land, were it not to be moved, would mean that the southeast corner would be disturbed anyway and likely for a building as opposed to the more benign use as a recreational site.

Further, in requesting legislative funding for the acquisition of the northern properties, UNF indicated that the lands' long term use would involve -- academic buildings; parking; and, in the interim, recreation and athletics. However, the rate of growth at UNF makes this interim period very short in terms of planning. The proposed alternate use of these lands for the GMLC would be significantly different from our proposal.

In addition, the President asked me to explore if there were other alternatives besides the northern property. The only other buildable lands are the eastern ridge and an area that is west of UNF Drive (usually referred to as the Drill Field). The cost of permitting and bringing infrastructure to the eastern ridge makes this alternative cost prohibitive. The Drill Field is not suitable because we will be building roads and some parking in this area to meet the needs of the growing campus population.

I recognize that this information may not make any of the Council feel better about the prospect of the GMLC. Nevertheless, I trust that you will understand the rationale that was employed in selecting the site we did. In light of the above, my sense of the group was that we would not hold another forum to discuss the GMLC. I will assume that the Council concurs with this assessment unless I hear differently. The subject of a forum, focused on future issues that the university community may wish to influence, will be on the agenda for our January meeting. Please also remember, we are looking for a Chair and Vice Chair for our group. I am certainly willing to consider expanding the group to include a volunteer for this role.

/rff

cc: Marianne Barnes
Charlie Bear
Lance Taylor
Signe Evans
Eric Nelson
Ray Bowman
Becky Purser
Fred Schell