

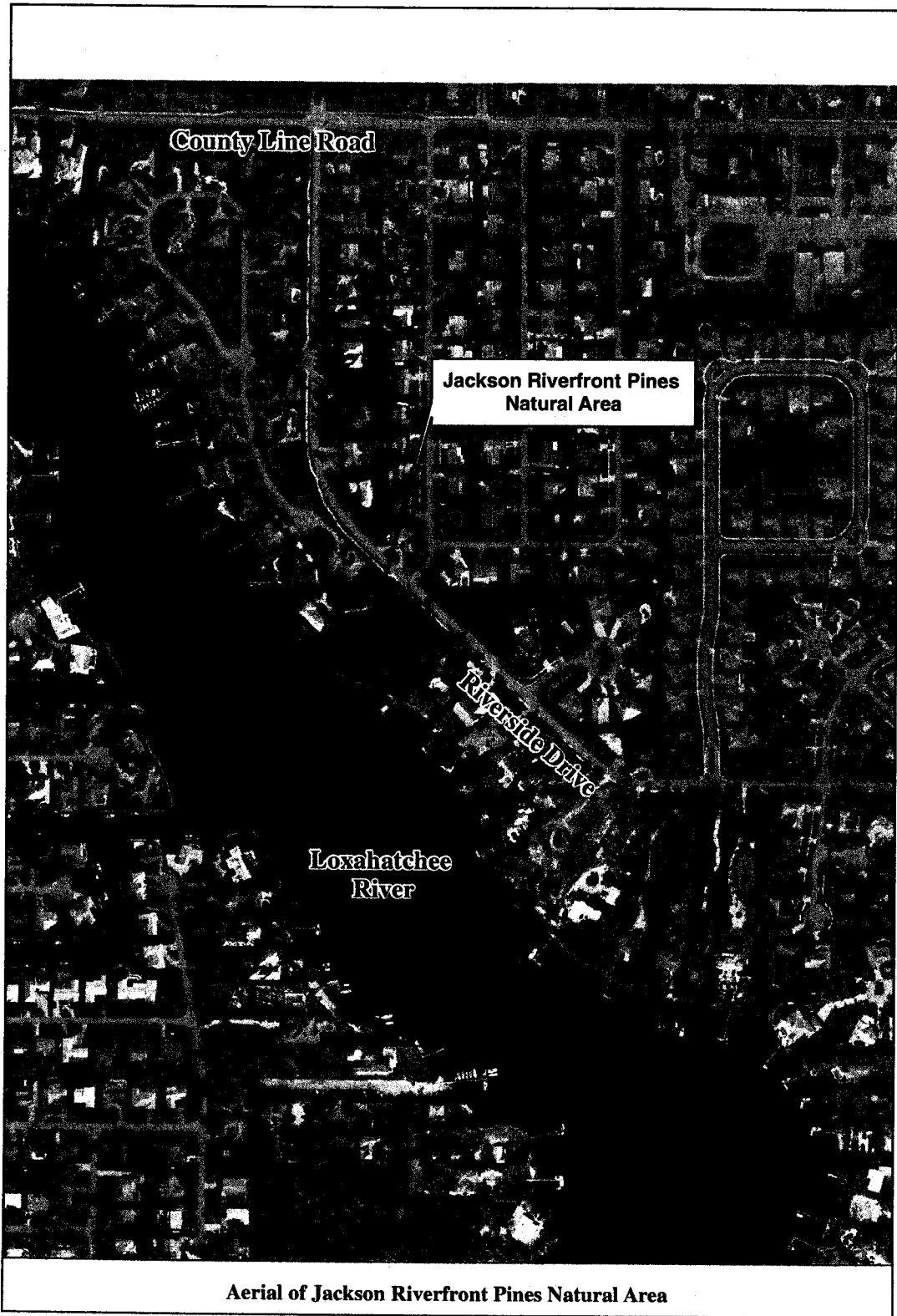
(Continued from page 1):

and a boat dock. A pre-renovation survey of the house completed by Morse Zehnter Associates in October of 2007 revealed that the structure would require asbestos abatement for any renovations involving the walls, ceilings or sheet vinyl. To bring the house up to current Florida Building Code Standards for occupancy by employees and public access (group assembly of less than 50 persons), the building would also require structural repairs, demolition, ADA accommodations, plumbing, electrical and life safety upgrades. According to Gartek Engineering Corporation estimates calculated in October of 2007, the minimum required renovations would cost approximately \$119,950.

At the time of purchase, ERM was directed by the Board to evaluate the feasibility of using the property's single family residence as a nature center. The factors considered in determining the feasibility included both the costs of renovations and the presence of an agency to operate the nature center. ERM had preliminary discussions with the Loxahatchee River Environmental Control District (ENCON) to discuss their interest in using the house to operate an environmental center with public education components and research facilities. In November of 2007, ERM sent ENCON a letter officially offering use of the house at Jackson Riverfront Pines Natural Area along with a draft interlocal agreement outlining each agency's responsibilities for the management of the environmental center and natural area. In the months following the letter, ENCON declined the offer and no other agency or non-profit group has expressed an interest in the development or operation of a nature center at this site.

On May 19, 2008, Commissioner Marcus held a public meeting at the Jackson Riverfront Pines Natural Area to discuss the future plans for the house with the surrounding community. Because of the high cost of renovation, combined with the absence of an agency with interest and staff to operate a nature center, the best course of action was determined to be the demolition of the house. An environmental education/nature center could be constructed at the site in the future upon the recommendation by the Natural Areas Management Advisory Committee, and the approval of a natural areas management plan and the necessary budget appropriations by the BCC.

Attachment 1



 Natural Area Boundary

