



Opinion

Saturday's letters: Selby Gardens, recycling, more

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Atlanta gardens' battle had popular conclusion

As a resident of Sarasota and Atlanta, I am fascinated by the battle royale between the Selby Gardens folks and the opposition over the proposed Master Plan and garage.

I witnessed a similar but even more intense battle 15 years ago between the Atlanta Botanical Gardens over its proposed parking garage/restaurant and the opposition citing the potential negative impact on their in-town neighborhoods.

Both botanical gardens are gems and within dense urban areas, bordering beautiful neighborhoods that limit geographic expansion. Efficient land-use planning is critical for long-term viability.

The arguments by the Atlanta opposition were similar to those made against Selby: clear-cutting mature hardwoods, concrete, traffic, cut-through, noise, trucks, etc.

Ultimately the garage expansion in Atlanta prevailed, followed by a new restaurant within the gardens. Today the intense flame of that debate has long since flickered out. Both projects have proven to be wildly successful, exceeding expectations and extinguishing the dire forecasts by some.

The next time in Atlanta, use your Selby Gardens membership and free reciprocity to visit the Atlanta gardens, park in the garage, have a lovely lunch at the restaurant and draw your own conclusions as to what the future could look like for Selby Gardens.

Steve Lansing, Sarasota