

## **Waterford HOA shoreline restoration shows the way**

By GREG GILES News Editor

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**NORTH VENICE** — The expert’s diagnosis was “collapsing ponds.”

But it wasn’t until Ron Fazzalano, president of Waterford Master Owners Association Inc., walked the banks of one of the stormwater ponds and lakes that he understood exactly what that meant, and the risk to himself and others in his community.

“There were two instances walking around the ponds where I stepped and sank a foot and a half into the ground,” Fazzalano said. “The banks were not stable. I went down like a rock. I’m thinking, you put a 75-year-old or 80-year-old out there walking their dog, he steps in this and falls and dies. The liability risk to the association was significant. Now that I knew about the problem, something had to be done.”



Fazzalano said he brought up the issue in 2006 with the Waterford board, but there was little interest at the time. People knew it would be expensive to repair. He went off the board for awhile.

By 2010, Fazzalano was back on the board. He pushed the issue again. A test lake was selected and a company was hired to do some repairs.

But the results were not what he’d hoped for. Fazzalano did some more research and came up with bid specifications, and an extensive request for proposals was issued to six companies.

Landshore Enterprises LLC, was awarded the contract. It would cost \$1.75 million, but all the lake restorations would be engineered since all the ponds are connected and ultimately empty into Curry Creek.



“It needed to be done right or not at all,” Fazzalano said. “Why waste homeowners money on a job that isn’t going to last?”

Initially, there was significant opposition to the project.

To make it palatable and affordable for homeowners, Fazzalano spent time explaining the need for the restoration and came up with a plan to spread the restorations and the cost over

four years. It took about a year speaking with various association committees and group gatherings, about a dozen in all, before the project was accepted.

The board approved a special four-year assessment per household for pond bank repair in order to correct the problem without putting undue financial burden on the owners.

In 2013, Landshore Enterprises began construction activities for the complete shoreline restoration of all 20 lakes within the stormwater management system. The project was completed earlier this year when Landshore accepted recognition for the successful conclusion of a long and difficult project.

Engineered is the key

“During a walk through with Landshore, the board was impressed with our feedback and process-focus, concentrating on long-term engineering solutions rather than cost,” said Richard Paolillo, project coordinator with Landshore.

The outcome of pilot lake bank repairs triggered numerous positive discussions, reevaluations and negotiations for the remaining 19 lakes over several years, Paolillo said.

“The board approved the survey and evaluation of every lake in the community as well as an engineering analysis to determine the optimum solution for repair of the eroding banks,” he said.

Fazzalano said that while cost was a factor in selecting a contractor, Landshore’s character and professionalism mattered more.

To do it right required working with a contractor whom they trusted to provide the optimal solution, flexibility and cost-effectiveness.

“The availability of an engineered solution unique for each lake was important,” Fazzalano said, rather than one size fits all approach.

In all, Waterford got back 47 percent more stormwater capacity. Some of the lakes had eroded 20 feet of land in some areas.

What they concluded through testing was that the initial stormwater system was probably overengineered, Fazzalano said.

It turned out some of the runoff from I-75 was flowing into the community’s stormwater system. Since then, I-75’s widening has included its own stormwater retention ponds, so runoff no longer goes into Waterford’s stormwater system.

Landshore continues its involvement with monthly inspection and maintenance initiatives.