

ADVOCACY RESOURCE TOOLKIT

info@NoEthanolFernandina.com

TALKING POINTS

THE CATALYST

- Rayonier Advanced Materials (RYAM)'s December 2024 site plan application was denied in February 2025 by the City of Fernandina Beach
- The industrial chemical manufacturing is strictly prohibited by the City's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code

DANGERS

- Ethanol is highly flammable – the plant would produce 100% pure ethanol
- Ethanol can vaporize into a dangerous gas at any temperature above 57°F
- Flammable ethanol vapors can travel along the ground, be ignited by a spark, and the resulting fire can flash back to the source of the leak
- The potential manufacturing site already processes large quantities of other extremely hazardous and highly reactive chemicals

WHY IT IS NOT COMPARABLE TO LOCAL MICROBREWERIES

- Industrial chemical ethanol manufacturing is *very different* from brewing beer
- Wheat, barley and hops are easily and happily fermented into IPAs, lagers, and porters
- Not so for the process RYAM proposes to employ at the facility, using the spent sulfite liquor RYAM hopes to ferment
 - The raw wood product will have to be pre-treated so that the sugars in it can be fermented
 - Even though this first stage of ethanol production is often called "beer," it is *not* drinkable
- The next stage, an extensive industrial chemical production processes, produces near 100% pure fuel-grade ethanol
 - This is a dangerous, highly flammable, and toxic chemical
 - Nothing consumable here
- Beer and spirits are consumable end products with 3%-8% ABV for beers and usually about 40-45% for spirits
- The fuel-grade ethanol RYAM hopes to produce is deadly
- The sheer volume of this manufacturing, 7.5 million gallons annually, is many orders of magnitude greater than any of the local beverage breweries or distilleries

JOBS

- RYAM has been a long-standing provider of jobs in Fernandina Beach, however bioethanol production is highly mechanized – very few new jobs would be created in the facility
- The available plans show only a single control room with three employees for the new facility
- Facility construction would likely provide some jobs, but they would only be temporary

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TALKING POINTS (continued)

TRAFFIC/TRANSPORTATION

- Before the plant event comes online there would be an immediate uptick in large truck traffic supplying construction materials and prefabricated manufacturing elements in the city
- Once online, three tanker trucks a day (over 1000 a year) will route through our city, across the Shave Bridge, and over the busiest road in Nassau County to I-95
- The US Department of Transportation recommends evacuation zones as wide as a 1/2 mile in all directions from the site of any tanker truck incident involving ethanol

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

- In the event of a spill, if ethanol enters water systems it can reduce oxygen levels which harms aquatic life
- Ethanol plants can be linked to air pollution, especially if proper mitigation measures are not in place
- Hazardous air pollutants such as benzene and acetaldehyde could potentially be released into the environment, posing risks to both residents and wildlife
- Facilities such as these play a role in contributing to global greenhouse gas emissions, accelerating the devastating effects of climate change

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ONGOING LEGAL AND LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS

For more detail and to view the pleadings visit [our website](#)

The State Suit

- RYAM filed a Building Permit Application which the City denied as prohibited by the City's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code
- In February 2025, RYAM filed a lawsuit in State Court alleging Five Counts:
 - Counts I and III allege that the City Unlawfully denied the Building Permit
 - Count II alleges the decision is inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan
 - Count IV alleges the City can't be bound by the Memorandum filed by its attorney Weiss Serota
 - Count V alleges the City's Board of Adjustments is biased and can't decide the issue as per the City Code
- The case has ongoing discovery, gathering testimony and evidence and is moving slowly
- The Court has entered a Pretrial Order setting a Pretrial conference for August 27, 2026 and a trial period beginning August 31, 2026

The Federal Suit

- In March of 2025, RYAM filed a lawsuit in Federal Court alleging virtually the same allegations as the State court lawsuit with additional constitutional challenges
- The Court denied the City's Motion to Dismiss the Federal lawsuit as the same as the State lawsuit
- In its Order the Court held that under the legal theory of Preclusion, the case will be decided by whichever Court reaches a ruling first
- The case remains pending with a proposed trial date of October 5, 2026

Legislative Action

- During the 2025 Legislative Session, RYAM supported legislation which was defeated and failed to pass in the Legislature
- It is possible they will bring legislation during the 2026 Legislative Session

The Bert Harris Claim

- On July 11, 2025, RYAM served the City with a Bert Harris Claim letter alleging the City wrongfully took its property by denying the Building Permit Application and seeks \$6.6 Million Dollars in damages for the loss in the value of the Property
- The City must decide whether to settle this Claim or stand by the Comprehensive Plan and force RYAM to file another lawsuit

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ACTIONABLE STEPS

- ✓ [Sign up for our emails](#)
- ✓ Stay informed and spread the word with our website - www.noethanolfernandina.com
- ✓ Host a Yard Sign in your yard – [email us!](#)
- ✓ Raise Your Voice on Social Media
 - Community organizing on digital media is a great way to:
 - Mobilize your friends and neighbors
 - Share information
 - Put positive pressure on our local decision-makers.
 - Tagging local municipality and government bodies and news outlets in your posts will help draw attention to the issue
 - Don't forget to tag No Ethanol Fernandina on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) so we can share it too!

THERE ARE TWO WAYS TO GIVE FINANCIALLY:

- Fernandina Wins Advocacy, our 501(c)4 non-profit entity serves as No Ethanol Fernandina's advocacy and lobbying arm. Donations to our Advocacy arm are not tax deductible. [Contributions to this arm](#) enable us to fund lobbying efforts in Tallahassee. Our Advocacy arm has a pressing need to be adequately funded.
- Fernandina Wins, our 501(c)3 tax-exempt, non-profit entity supports No Ethanol Fernandina's operating and outreach expenses, and other non-lobbying expenses. [Donations to this arm](#), qualify for a tax deduction as per IRS rules and fund our community awareness work.

Fernandina Wins, Inc. is a Florida not-for-profit Corporation DBA No Ethanol Fernandina and has been granted a 501(c)3 Federal tax exemption. REGISTRATION #: CH75795 A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.

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The toll-free number is 1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352), and the website is FDACS.gov.

Corporate Patronage

Your company's support for cause can help your customers make even more of an impact, while increasing their brand loyalty to you. Contact us at info@NoEthanolFernadina.com for ways you can make an impact for your community and your business.

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DIRECT YOUR COMMENTS WHERE IT COUNTS

- ✓ Monitor City Commission meeting agendas and attend meetings
 - City of Fernandina Beach - [Boards & Committees Agendas](#)
 - The City of Fernandina Beach City Commission meets at 6:00 pm on the 1st & 3rd Tuesday
 - Meetings are at City Hall, 204 Ash Street, Fernandina Beach, FL 32034
 - Anyone wishing to speak at a City Commission meeting is required to complete a "Request to Speak" form provided at the meetings and deliver it to the City Clerk
 - Anyone can speak about any thing, at any meeting in the final agenda reserved for non-agenda related public comment
- ✓ Be in touch with the City Commissioners:
 - James Antun, Mayor – jantun@fbfl.org
 - Darron Ayscue, Vice-Mayor – dayscue@fbfl.org
 - Joyce M. Tuten, Commissioner – jtuten@fbfl.org
 - Genece Minshew, Commissioner – gminshew@fbfl.org
 - Tim Poynter, Commissioner – tpoynter@fbfl.org

Need Help? [Download our example letter](#)

NEW! Need help as a non-city resident? [We have an example letter for you too!](#)

- ✓ Be in touch with the County Commissioners – this is not 'just a Fernandina issue' or 'just an Island issue'

John Martin	District 1 - Fernandina Beach and Piney Island	jmartin@nassaucountyfl.com
A.M. "Hupp" Huppman	District 2 - Ameila Island, Nassauville, O'Neil	ahuppmann@nassaucountyfl.com
Jeff Gray	District 3 – Yulee, Cheser, Blackrock	jgray@nassaucountyfl.com
Allison McCullough	District 4 – Hilliard, Bryceville, Boulougne, Kings Ferry, Nassau Oaks	amccullough@nassaucountyfl.com
Klynt Farmer	District 5 – Callahan, West Yulee	kfarmer@nassaucountyfl.com

[County Commission District Map](#)

- ✓ Write to our state legislators* explaining the issue and sharing your concerns:
 - Our Current Florida State House Representative
State Congressman Dean Black representing District 15 - Nassau and part of Duval Counties
 - District Office
Room 1-071
76347 Veterans Way
Yulee, FL 32097-5404
 - Tallahassee Office
402 House Office Building
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-13
 - Our Current Florida State Senator
State Senator Clay Yarborough representing District 4 - Nassau and part of Duval Counties
 - District Office
1615 Huffingham Road
Suite 1
Jacksonville, FL 32216
 - Tallahassee Office
308 Senate Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

**Be sure to include your full home address in any correspondence to our State Legislators identifying yourself as a constituent of their district*

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ABOUT NEF

Our mission is to mobilize a diverse coalition of concerned citizens, local businesses, and community leaders to prevent the construction of RYAM's ethanol chemical manufacturing plant in Fernandina Beach. We are committed to supporting the enforcement of Fernandina Beach's Comprehensive Plan, which safeguards the health, safety, and well-being of our residents, protects our environment, and preserves the unique character of our community.

Our Role

- Monitor the approval process Rayonier Advanced Materials (RYAM) must go through before they are allowed to begin construction
- Coordinate lobbying efforts, including retaining a lobbying firm, to oppose legislation that would allow RYAM to construct the Ethanol Manufacturing facility
- Coordinate legal action, including retaining a land use law firm, to direct judicial efforts when warranted
- Keep the community informed on status
- Educate the community about the dangers of ethanol production and risks to our community
- Mobilize community opposition

No Ethanol Fernandina Board of Directors

Franklin Hileman, President

Len Kreger, Secretary

John Hart, Treasurer

Julie Ferreira, Community Outreach Director

Kristin Huben, Communications Director

We operate with financial transparency. No Board member receives a salary or other compensation except for an occasional expense reimbursement. We use donations to fund our digital communication platforms and for professional fees, including legal and marketing.

NEF does not condone the use of force, intimidation, or violence of any sort as a means to advocate for our island community.