

# SCHOOL PLANNING WORKGROUP MEETING

JULY 27, 2011

**PINELLAS COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT CONFERENCE ROOM, 9:30 A.M.**

**ATTENDEES:** Gordon Beardslee, Pinellas County; Liz Freeman, Pinellas County; David Sadowsky, Pinellas County Attorney; Al Navaroli, Pinellas County; Marshall Touchton, School District; Tom Moore, City of Largo, Jenna Duncan, City of Dunedin, Greg Rice, City of Dunedin; Linda Fisher, PPC; Ginny Pannill, School District; Lauren Matzke, City of Clearwater, Paul Geisz, City of St. Petersburg, Fred Metcalf, City of Gulfport; Bob Bray, City of Pinellas Park.

**MEETING SUMMARY:** Gordon opened the meeting and indicated we wanted to discuss and develop a recommendation regarding school concurrency, the public school facilities element, the interlocal agreement, and development tracking to take back to the School Collaborative at their September meeting.

**SCHOOL CONCURRENCY** - Gordon explained that County planning staff and School District staff met a few weeks ago to discuss concurrency and agreed that there are already a lot of coordination mechanisms in place (including the Interlocal Agreement and the School Collaborative process). Marshall then discussed the projected enrollment figures as well as other things (e.g., virtual classrooms, charter schools, etc.) influencing the number of classroom seats needed. Following discussion, Pinellas County, the School District, Clearwater, Dunedin, Pinellas Park and Gulfport indicated they supported rescinding the application of school concurrency.

St. Petersburg indicated they would like to continue implementation of school concurrency since it is in place and appears to be functioning well. They suggested waiting to see how the surrounding counties/cities respond to the new law.

Largo staff has not discussed the question since it has not had a significant impact on the City due to lack of residential development.

Based on the discussion, it was also determined that follow-up with DCA is required to find an answer to whether a local government can implement school concurrency if others do not. Also, Gordon will try to find out what the planned “glitch” bill is expected to address and how that might influence our thinking. Marshall indicated that he intended to still do the annual “level of service” report (he will come up with a new name for it). Ginny said that the important thing is to keep sharing information, and suggested that the Interlocal Agreement could address that. Bob indicated he likes the idea of no concurrency but still tracking development.

**INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT** - Gordon then discussed the Interlocal Agreement (ILA). If the Collaborative agrees to discontinue school concurrency, the Agreement will have to be amended to remove several

sections that address concurrency; however, a provision can be added on retaining the development tracking system as a mechanism to coordinate and share information. Gordon said the following sections of the ILA will need to be amended: 2 through 8, and 14 through 20. Also, the beach communities (and Kenneth city and South Pasadena) will need to be added.

**DEVELOPMENT TRACKING SYSTEM** - There was general support for retaining the development tracking system as a database that tracks information on approved residential projects for planning purposes. However, it was noted that the system needs to be modified so that a local government can see what projects have been approved in other jurisdictions as well (not just their own) and also to remove its connection to concurrency.

**PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES ELEMENT** - There was a lot of discussion regarding the future of the Element itself. Some local governments would prefer to amend the current Element to remove the concurrency-related components, but keep the rest of the Element. Some local governments would consider rescinding the Element and moving the statutorily- required portions to other Elements of their local comp plan. The County indicated its current interest is to keep the Element, and the goals, objectives and policies related to coordination – but remove those related to concurrency and financing for concurrency-related projects. Also, the CSA maps would be “un-adopted.”

One question raised was whether there was still the requirement that the Elements be consistent among jurisdictions? And can some jurisdictions retain an Element and others rescind theirs? Gordon will ask Mike McDaniel at DCA these questions.

**STUDENT IMPACT WORKSHEET** – It was agreed that there is no longer a need to do the student impact calculations since they were tied to impacts of land use amendments on school capacity (i.e. concurrency). So the worksheet will no longer be used, but Marshall indicated he will still maintain a student yield factor.

**OTHER ITEMS** – The question of how you evaluate charter schools with regard to the school siting policies in the comp plan, and how do you handle it when private schools become charter schools? It was agreed that this would be an item for future discussion at the next workgroup meeting.

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**UPDATE: Conversation with DCA** – Following the Workgroup meeting, Gordon had a phone call from Brenda Winningham at the Department of Community of Affairs. Ms. Winningham was able to answer questions about the recent statutory changes affecting school concurrency and school planning and coordination. DCA will soon be posting information on the Agency’s website that answers some of the questions on this subject. It is DCA’s interpretation that the amendments to Sec. 163.3180(6)(a) stipulated that implementation of school concurrency requires participation by both the County and one or more municipalities, representing at least 80% of the total countywide population. Local governments have the choice of not adopting school concurrency even if other local governments representing 80% or more of the countywide population decide to implement school concurrency. Ms. Winningham also confirmed that all local governments must participate in that portion of the Public

Schools Interlocal Agreement that establishes the ways in which the School Board and local governments will coordinate and share information. If a local government rescinds school concurrency, the PSFE becomes optional and local governments can either retain or delete the element irrespective of what actions other local governments in the County take regarding the element. DCA has identified some glitches that need to be addressed, but they don't appear to have significant bearing on what the workgroup discussed at our July meeting.