

HISTORIC PRESERVATION TASK FORCE

LOCATION: **Planning Department Conference Room**

DATE: **August 24, 2005**

TIME: **9:00 a.m.**

- I. WELCOME AND PURPOSE By Ronnie Duncan, the Committee Chairman
 - a. Explanation of purpose of this board
 - b. BCC will take action on recommendations
 - c. BCC members will attend occasionally – hopefully
 - d. This is a very high level board
 - e. This Board is sunshined – precaution – meetings will be recorded and minutes will be transcribed and sent to all members – if minutes don't reflect your views, let us know
 - f. Formal body that will operate informally
 - g. Press is here and encouraged to attend and spread the word
 - h. Excited and committed to this committee
 - i. Resolution passed out to everyone.
 - j. Sent one around for corrections on names, address, phone, email ,etc. and that list will be revised
 - k. Still have a couple more openings and people who we want appointed still have to go through the Board appointment process so they are not here today but will be at the next meeting and the Committee of 15 member will be complete

- II. INTRODUCTIONS – SELF
 - a. **Joan Deming**, co-owner and President of Archeological Consultants, Inc. – happy to be a Director of American Cultural Research Association – would like to see the creation of a **county-wide ordinance** that affords protection not only to our significant standing structures, but our cultural landscapes, our archeological resources and our traditional cultural properties and I would like to see this as a **community supported, enforceable** way to protect our collective heritage.
 - b. **Vinnie Luisi**, Director of the Dunedin Historical Museum, resident of Pinellas for almost 15 years, worked on several different boards. Dunedin owns several historic buildings so this is a major concern to me, not only for my own community but for Pinellas. **Save Pinellas County traditions and history.**
 - c. **Cindi Tarapani** – planner by training and education. Been involved in preservation in a lot of different ways on the public side for the City of Tampa, for Clearwater writing ordinance and enforcing ordinances – that sort of thing – also was the Director of Florida Historic Trust for Preservation which many of you all know and Stephanie is a former president of that board and Bob is now on that Board as well. Some experience on the non-profit side as a state wide advocacy group – and Kathy – also am involved on the private side now as well. My husband and I own several historic buildings in downtown Tarpon Springs, one of which we are renovating which is always painful in the summer. I have just always been interested in preservation and in our historic. To me it's where we came from and why we're here and so, you can't think about the future without knowing a little about the past. For me, what I am interested in is all the things that folks have already said, but I am particularly interested in **education** and I think it's very important to educate children about our heritage and our built environment but the folks that are making the decisions today and in the next 5 and 10 years are adults and we do very little education for adults – goal: develop education about in and then people will appreciate what we have and then you can start to save it.
 - d. **Becky Bremser** – Project Manager with the Trust for Public Land – national non-profit group and I have worked with Brian Smith on several projects which is why I've been brought here. TPL also – our mission is to conserve land for people and land can come in a lot of different forms – where it's properties or structures or even theme parks. One

of the things I would like to see come out of this is – more difficult as it works it ways around – but somehow combine education which would lead eventually to community support in order to protect some of our historic structures and facilities in the County and eventually through education the community support developing an ordinance or some sort of actual protections. ***Real protection versus paper protection.***

- e. **Cheryl Robinson** – I am a resident of St. Petersburg and I have worked for Joniman Park Health Center which is part of Community Health Centers of Pinellas and the reason I am here, I believe, is because I actually direct historical sites at Joniman Park Health Center which had been Mercy Hospital in South St. Petersburg. At the time I relocated here the history of St. Pete really did not mean that much to me, but having participated with the renovation of that particular site and the pride that that community has not only with the Mercy Hospital site, but with the Casino and the Royal Theatre, it very much heightened my awareness about how important the preservation of history is and I really think that it needs to be county-wide and if I can add anything to that, I want to be a part of that. I think that, as Cindi said, if you don't know your past, you can move forward in your future. So much of that is being lost and I think we need to, I guess if I get into the committee and I bring anything to this, it would be to help preserve that and to carry it forward into the future. So many people want to tear down and redevelop, we have to stop that or we really won't know who we are. And that is so important. So most of what I want is already up there! ***Protect the past.***
- f. **Stephanie Ferrell** – I am a historic preservation architect and preservation consultant and I think that education and protection and good solid ordinances, I think one of the other things I have become interested in for at least a decade long interest, and that is, ***we need carrots as well as sticks. We need incentives as well as regulations*** in order to encourage the private for profit sector to preserve historic properties. I have now ventured into the development/redevelopment world with preservation as my foremost interest – probably will do some in-fill work as well, but certainly preservation of historic buildings in the context of urban neighborhoods and downtown – incentives and carrots – I think those things are very important. I know a lot about historic preservation and federal income tax credits, I know a good bit about Florida's property tax exempt program, I am not sure where that program stands in Pinellas County but certainly that is a very good one, but there are probably other incentives that could be offered to encourage preservation, zoning potentially as well, and maybe some impact fee incentives along those lines are useful to us.
- g. **Bob Jeffery** – Assistant Director for Development Services, which is Planning for the City of St. Petersburg; also on the Florida Trust Board – Vice President for Development on that organization. In my private life, I own about 15 historically designated landmarks in St. Petersburg that I have brought back from the brink of total ruin and that leads me to what I would like to see and that, like Stephanie, is economically driven protection. I've seen far too many buildings come down because what can go back on them is 10 to 15 times what the value is of that building sitting there and I've seen on my properties, even with the tax program in place, to the point that my taxes are 50% of the rent that I collect, meaning that, with the insurance and everything like that, luckily the St. Pete market is good so, but I think we are fooling ourselves if we don't look at the underlying cause of why buildings come down. Education is so important for people to know to save it, but even at the end of the day if they love it to death and it doesn't make economic sense to, it's not going to happen. St. Pete is in the process of rewritings it's land development regulations and we have put just astronomical strides in putting in every benefit we can to save our historic structures, especially in the downtown with transfer development rights, actual bonuses for retaining historic buildings, anything else that we can, we've written our ordinances around our traditional fabric with – allowing densities to increase with the use of say garage apartments versus actually changing it to multi-family where you get them knocking down the house and putting in the duplex, so very much tailor-made what we are trying to do around the character of our city and I think that, in Pinellas County, we

have a unique character and we are ahead of the curve on this. I look forward to participating.

- h. Kathy Monihan** – Cultural Civil Services Director for the City of Tarpon Springs, on the Board for Historic Trust Preservation, also on the Historic Preservation Advisory Council. On the public sector side, I have spearheaded the movement for preservation ordinances for our historic district and national register district. Right now we have several buildings that are part of our cultural treasures program, the old city hall building, the old high school, our cultural center which is our old city hall building, (inaudible), that was a great bonus to our community definitely. It has been very exciting to see all the changes in a relatively small community in Pinellas County, what preservation has done to education small community life. I think small community life appeals to me very much and people across the country feel that that life is disappearing and too many cookie-cutter communities are popping up that are modeled on historic and I think it is interesting that there was a book written about natural waterfronts like the Tarpon Springs working waterfronts are disappearing and it's interesting that there are now new ones coming up that look like – so there's a disconnect there that I think we can help in our own county and what I would like to see is that ***we become a destination for natural resources, historic resources and arts/architectural resources and that those be combined.***
- i. Sam Casella** – planner, I am a partner in the Planning Authority LLC, which is a consulting firm that operates here in the US and in China. I've been a resident of Pinellas County since 1976, except for the five years I was at FSU in Tallahassee. I've been involved in preservation issues periodically when, you might say, the spirit moved me. When I first came to Clearwater in 1976 I was involved putting protections in place for the Harbor Oaks neighborhood in Clearwater, in the mid-80s I was involved in keeping open Clearwater's historic South Ward School and this year I have been involved in the Town of Belleair, where I live, in keeping the Belleview Biltmore Hotel in one piece and the other thing I want to say about my experience that may be useful to this committee is that I do have a great deal of experience as an Urban Planner with issues of incentives such redevelopment incentives and after 3 decades here, historic preservation really should be a vital element in redevelopment and redevelopment should never be a destruction of historic structures and I think that I may be useful somewhere down the road perhaps. The other thing that I want to point out is that as a resident of a small town in Pinellas County, of which there are many, I think that it is wonderful that we have this Commission and I think there is a real need in this county for the smaller communities – for all the municipalities – to be able to work with the county government on historic preservation. I think the small municipalities, whether they realize it or not, in this particular issue have hamstrung by their small size and they need – like the Town of Belleair – it needs to have a cooperative relationship with the county so that there can be mutual support. I think there are things that could come out of this committee that would be extremely important, again, for the whole county and also I want to express my real gratitude and thanks to the Ron Duncan, the Commissioners and the staff and all of you for being here – and to the press, by the way. Let me point out that in Belleair this year, in my opinion played a very important part of stopping the Belleview Biltmore Hotel and so we are all doing what we can. End result – I would like to endorse the concepts already put on the table but also add that I would like to see a ***greater cooperation between the county and the municipalities.***

Additional comment by Cindi Tarapani:

Some kind of county-wide entity – an entity that helps small cities when they are in trouble – can't it just be a resource center for information – there are a lot of things it could be and I think we ought to talk about that – what is it – lots of cities and counties do it differently, but is there a need for it here? Personally I think it is although I don't know exactly what it is but maybe by the end of this – we'll have a better sense of what that entity should be.

j. Ronnie Duncan – It's now confession time because I need to tell you where I am coming from. Many of you don't know who I am and ... well, I'm the new kid on the block, I was elected in November, so I'm still trying to figure out whose on first and whose on second and where to park and all that good stuff. But I will tell you that coming into this position and this is my first time in elected office, although I served in other appointed positions, on issues like water and planning, growth and that sort of thing. Coming into this, I came out of the private sector, owning my own company and I'm the bad capital D developer and the poster child for everything that is wrong in the state of Florida and some people think – the country. But I am here to tell you that there are a few of us in this industry that – as you all know– that when you're doing development, whether you want to call yourself a developer or not, there are a few of us who believe that there has to be this focus and priority placed on our current day situation as it relates to properties and land use and zoning and making sure that we look at those through the eyes of our past and that there is a balance there. I ran for office, quite frankly, because as a developer – oh by the way I do not develop residential, I only build office buildings and most of my work is outside of the Tampa Bay area to be very honest. Know what goes on in the industry here but I don't have properties out there that I am trying to develop or unload or load or whatever. So, I really don't have a dog on that side of the county. I will also tell that, on the professional side, just so someone doesn't find out and wonder just what he's really about ... 17 years ago before I started my own company, I did work for the DeBarlow Corporation in Belleair and I worked for them when Mr. DeBarlow Sr. was still alive, when they were based in Ohio and they still believed the retail development was their primary mission. They weren't looking at buying hotels and tearing them down and building hi-rise condos. I don't have any relationship with those folks – the son Eddie, Jr. – I don't do any business with them, I don't talk to them, they didn't call me and ask be about the Biltmore, they don't interface with me and, quite frankly, that's fine with me because that's a different organization today and frankly– our business styles are different and I just don't agree with some of the things they do, and probably they don't agree with some of the things I do, so, it's a very nice relationship because we don't have one. But I say that because it's important that you all know that I am coming from the perspective of a parent, first and foremost here in this County. Many of you have children, perhaps, or have had them and they're grown, or whatever, and looking to the future and our County is changing rapidly. Those of you who have lived here for any period of time at all have seen over the last ten years dramatic change, geometric change as opposed to the previous ten years. And with all due respect, it's probably going to get worse in terms of change, if that's a bad thing or a good thing – whichever way you look at it. It will change more in the future than it has in the past and as we look at that, as a parent and a tax payer and as someone that's concerned about the place that I want to call home for the rest of my life, I want to make sure that my kids, and your kids, and other kids and future generations have 1- a high quality of life here that is maintained and hopefully even enhanced in the future, but also they don't forget the element of our history and our past and how that plays into that quality of life, and I didn't see, and I will say this publicly, I have seen very little vision in this County as it relates to anything – not just historic preservation, but vision in terms of how we approach any issue in this County. We've made some major strides here because of you all and many, many people and wonderful team members like the two of these people here on each side of me, we have a Heritage Village, we have a Pinewood Cultural Center, we have in our own little areas around the County, areas we call urban cores and little cities and little gathering places and town centers and neighborhoods we've protected and that sort of things. But, my friends, the world is different today and you all know that as well as I do. We find ourselves, and Sam hit on it, we find ourselves in an environment today where we have 24 municipalities and one County government. I'm sorry to say that not every municipality and the County government get along, some get along better than others, some don't play ball at all with each other, and that's a problem. But that's a backdrop of anything we do in this County

in terms of policy making and that's a backdrop we have to deal with here in this environment. The second aspect of it, we're seeing land values in this County just go through the roof. Whether I like it or not, it's happening, and that's creating tremendous pressure and stress on neighborhoods and on all kinds of structures and properties in our County. Don't care where you live – whether it's a city or the County – it's happening throughout, but what I hope to see out of this is really all of what you have put up there so articulately and I appreciate that, but I don't want to focus just on the house or the home or the buildings that one thing of – old city halls that are turning into cultural art centers or and old church – those are all wonderful things to do, don't misunderstand me, and that should be part of our focus, but I want to make sure that we don't lose sight of the small mom-and-pop motel on the beach that in ten years we won't have such an animal. My friends sitting back here that live in mobile home parks, so we don't find there are no more mobile home parks, that there is no more affordable housing as it exists today. We have to focus on life styles; we have to focus on the lives of the people. I don't want us to wake up one day and realize that, we saved a couple of major structures and that's to the betterment of our community, but we haven't saved the fishing village, where people, worked 18 to 20 hours a day just to make a living and risked their lives going out on fishing boats – Tarpon Springs and Ozona and down through the beach areas and, those are the things I am interested in talking about as well. That we save our culture that we save our true past. Because it's not just bricks and mortar. In today's development environment, we can make brick and mortar look like anything we want it to – cookie-cutter communities made to look like town centers. There is a reason for that – it goes to the economic side of it. It's easier to demo it and start over, make it look like that then it is less costly. But we have to fix that. We've got to fix that and I think that's my commitment, that's my cause, that's my attachment – is protecting structures and areas and buildings and really lifestyles of people of the past so that my children – I have a three year old who is an avid fisherman and I want him to understand that you didn't always have the depth-finders you have today, but unless I tell him that, he will never know that – he will just think that's the way it is. People who have come here and moved to Tarpon Springs, in a beautiful home on the water or a beautiful home in one of those communities there and, or the City of St. Petersburg, they moved there, like Cheryl said – she really didn't think about the historical significance and prominence of the Royal Theatre and Mercy Hospital, but it is, it's who we are, so we've got to get this through to the elected officials of the cities as well, because they have to play roles to make this work. But we have to start the education process, the communication process of yes of adults of yes of children, those strange birds who are elected officials, the staffs in some of these cities, to be honest with you, because the thinking is all over the book, and some are not even thinking about it. That's my vision and it really goes, in my opinion, beyond the brick and the mortar, but it goes to people that live in the past and live there today. Thank you again for the introductions and again, I am delighted you are here. One more thing I will suggest to you is some of you mentioned some books and that sort of thing, some of you have access to information and statutes and all kinds of things that are done in other parts of the country and world and if you have such a document, we will take the responsibility, if you are willing to share it with us, we will make copies and get them out to the board. Also, from a book standpoint, if you have books that you think are important and perhaps we haven't read, we will keep – I'm moving toward creating a part of our County website for this task force, for this advisory board and we will post that up there so that all of us as well as others can go and look at these references that you've referred to and I will have that set up by the next time we meet, but we'll get that posted so that people want to go and read that book, they can or take excerpts out of it and if you need photocopying done, we will do that. I don't expect you to do that on your nickel and your time, we'll take care of that because it's important to share that information.

III. REVIEW RESOLUTION/EXPECTATIONS

Ronnie Duncan stated this was already covered

IV. WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS OF TASK FORCE MEMBERS?

Ronnie Duncan said the members had covered this

V. ELEMENTS OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

a. INVENTORY OF HISTORIC STRUCTURES

- i. Brian Smith presented the inventory performed by municipalities and county as part of the Comprehensive Plan. Explained the process of the inventory.
- ii. Data is approximately ten years old so it needs to be updated
- iii. Updating should show what we've lost, not so much what wasn't in the inventory
- iv. Hoping for a survey grant in the fall to update this inventory and how to add to the inventory and also look at what wasn't included originally
- v. Perhaps each municipality would contribute their time, effort, results as part of the grant and would expand the possibilities as part of the match and would expand the possibility and some cities might already be doing for their E.A.R. or some other purpose
- vi. Perhaps develop a criteria to add and protect properties to this inventory
- vii. Part of this inventory might be to determine which properties are potentially eligible for listing in the national registers and some graphic display of that as not all that is old is significant
- viii. Historic districts, historical landmarks, even historic landscapes should be considered

b. CRITERIA FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

- i. Ronnie Duncan suggested sitting around a map of the county and talk about the areas and try to identify what we see as the resources without getting into the specific detail – would provide paint a broader picture of what we're looking at – that would help filter out all the sites important and what we want to protect
- ii. Is 1940 the right cut off? What is the right cutoff? Is there a cutoff?
- iii. At next meeting – come back with multiple maps and we can all come prepared to do just what we talked about – our perspective of that criteria, whether it be alleys, or waterfronts, or whatever. Then we can break into groups and then use that to come back together.
- iv. Don't forget archeological resources and as we're modeling we shouldn't overlook anything in the County

c. MECHANISMS TO ENABLE HISTORIC PRESERVATION TO BE ACCOMPLISHED

- i. Ronnie Duncan stated there is no requirement for any property owner or future property owner to look at a property that they own or may want to change in any way, shape or form, to look at its history or the past.
- ii. Pinellas County and many of its cities are going through redevelopment changes, LDRs, land use review overall. The County is going through a redevelopment program, the plan is about to come out in the next 30-60 days in its final draft form for review by the cities and review by the Pinellas Planning Council and the Board of County Commissioners. I'm sorry to tell you, although it's not too late, that there is nothing in that redevelopment plan about historical property. However, it has not been adopted yet and it's something that we need to have in there ... Need to, at a minimum, refer to an advisory board that's creating something ... something that would refer to a policy that historic preservation is an important part of development/redevelopment and refer to as some of the cities have and list those cities.

1. Brian will try to get each member an electronic or hard copy of the proposed plan so you can review it before the next meeting
 2. Need to have something in that plan from this advisory board before final passage
 3. List some of the carrots and incentives into the plan
 4. After a review of the plan, perhaps a brain storming session and agree on some objectives, goals and policies that should go into that plan – that should be one of the first things we cover at the next meeting – this would be a great place holder in the plan
- iii. Not just incentives for the individual owner of the building but its also the incentives for the policy makers to want to adopt some of these policies in their communities ... which leads to the economic benefits of heritage tourism and tourism being one of our biggest industries. Tremendous economic benefits for heritage tourism and is one of the number one drivers of tourism and if we take away all that character in the County, then people will go to other communities in Florida that have beautiful beaches but also have some historic character to them. Important to pull in the heritage tourism as a driver that might be something of value and incentive for policy makers to want to make some of these changes.
- d. COMMUNITY AWARENESS/EDUCATION – no comment needed
- e. COUNTY-WIDE HOW TO WORK
- i. Ronnie Duncan stated the countywide process, philosophy, program, ordinance – its only as good as the number of cities that sign on to it – keeping in mind that nearly two-thirds of this County is controlled by the cities.
 - ii. Can't mandate incentives but can only put the hooks out there (like heritage tourism, etc.)?
 - iii. Countywide entity that has any funding associated with it, then for the cities to get any of that funding, they've got to buy into the program – people follow money!
 - iv. Whatever we craft here, we have 24 times 5 – approximately 105 people have to buy into this thing in order to have it be a truly county-wide, all inclusive, initiative. City of St. Pete has a very well ordinance as it sits today, there is some concern that what we do will impact their ordinance and they don't want that to happen. That's why it's important to know what everyone else is doing so we don't write something that is counter to them so they won't sign on.
 1. When a Countywide initial is taken, it's not always perceived by every city as being something that is necessarily right for them. Therefore whatever we draft we need to be sensitive to the fact that we are not trying to tell them how to run their business, but trying to get them to embrace this initiative and find out what they are already doing and perhaps the County's part would be only minimum giving the cities a more encompassing plan.
 2. The most challenging part of doing any public policy in this County is getting the 24 parts herded together in one room.
 - v. Demolition by Neglect ... property owner could just not fix the roof and let the rain come in and destroy the building. Town could legally go in and say, we're going to fix that roof and send you (the property owner) the bill (lien the property). I.e., Belleview Biltmore roof repair is in excess of \$3m – Town of Belleair doesn't have a budget of \$3m in total, so suddenly becomes a big issue because the town is so small. Therefore, a larger community with a bigger budget could possibly front that money and get it back later then that isn't as big an issue – comparatively so important – that as a smaller town. That way as smaller community would say – we have a lot to benefit by being associated with a larger government, such as Pinellas County, on this because if we have to do something like that, we know there is someone else to turn to kind of backstop the thing ... a kind of insurance, that it can be done promptly and in a timely way without some undue angst. That's the kind of thing that I think, if we could

generate ideas of that type and agree and get consensus at the County level, then it could be put out there and the municipalities would see it as a carrot.

- vi. Another carrot might be matching funds for going after state grants because the city and county would have a better pull.
- vii. What are some of the pitfalls that have prevented preservation from happening?
 1. Hyde Park – 26-story tower next to a one- or two-story house within the local historic district.
 2. Solution to Historic Preservation - People usually do the right thing if it's available to them and if someone helps them know what the right thing is.
 3. Finding out what the problems are, coming up with the solutions, and then getting them through the government process before that solution is actually needed.

VI. ASSIMILATE ISSUES WITHIN THE ELEMENTS

This will be covered later

VII. OVERVIEW OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES

This was indicated early in the meeting. Brian Smith and Jan Luth will provide the staff support for the committee

VIII. MEETING LOGISTICS - FUTURE

- a. FREQUENCY – Monthly – last Wednesday of each month for next six months
- b. LOCATION – September meeting at Planning Department Conference Room
- c. TIMES - 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.
- d. COMMUNICATION – by email, phone, or regular mail
- e. OTHER PARTICIPANTS – asked about lack of participation from City of Clearwater – Ronnie Duncan will think on that and get back to the committee
- f. ASSIGNMENTS –
 - i. As you see ordinances, books, articles from other counties other states, if we can get a copy – we will get you copies or get in on the website.
 - ii. As soon as the website is up, you will be notified.
 - iii. Send any and all “stuff” to Ron Duncan and he will get it out.
 - iv. Redevelopment Plan
 - v. Grant information
 - vi. Surveys/maps of the County

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