

**Environmental Science Forum (ESF)**  
**Heritage Village**  
**Thursday, January 11, 2007, 3:30 p.m.**

**MEETING MINUTES**

Approved by Forum at February 1, 2007 Meeting

Attendees:

1.	Holly Greening	Forum Member, Co-Chair
2.	Darden Rice	Forum Member, Co-Chair
3.	Ray Wunderlich	Forum Member
4.	Bruce Hasbrouck	Forum Member
5.	Joseph Maier	Forum Member
6.	Tom Muntz	Forum Member
7.	Barbara Hoffman	Forum Member (Non-Voting)
8.	Ann Paul	Forum Member
9.	Dr. Gabriel Vargo	Forum Member
10.	Jake Stowers	Forum Member
11.	Howard Rutherford	Forum Member
12.	Walt Hoskins	Forum Member (Alternate Serving for B. Hoffman)
13.	Mac Sexton	Forum Member (Alternate)
14.	Mark Mueller	Forum Member (Alternate)
15.	Steve Spratt	Pinellas County Administrator
16.	Elizabeth Warren	Pinellas County Assistant Administrator
17.	William Davis	Pinellas County Environmental Mgmt.
18.	Dr. Bruce Rinker	Pinellas County Environmental Lands
19.	Dr. Steven Harper	Pinellas County Environmental Lands
20.	Pam Leasure	Pinellas County Environmental Lands
21.	Lisa Baltus	Pinellas County Environmental Lands
22.	Lynn Smith	Pinellas County Environmental Lands
23.	Paul Cozzie	Pinellas County CEL
24.	Paul Cassel	Pinellas County Development Review
25.	Jewel Cole	Pinellas County Attorney
26.	Tim Closterman	Pinellas County Communications
27.	Al Navaroli	Pinellas County Development Review
28.	Marty Armstrong	Citizen
29.	Rick Watson	Citizen
30.	Bryan Kutchens, ESQ	Citizen
31.	Theresa Blackwell	<i>St. Petersburg Times</i>
32.	Diane Steinle	<i>St. Petersburg Times</i>
33.	Katie Wildel	Citizen
34.	Thomas W. Reese	Citizen
35.	Kevin Rowland	Citizen
36.	Allyn Childress	Citizen
37.	Rob Posavec	Citizen
38.	Mary Romary	Citizen

**Handouts:** January 11, 2007 Agenda; Minutes of December 7, 2006; Project Timelines for Pinellas County Environmental and Park Lands; Draft for Shell Key Preserve Management Plan Update; two Board of County Commissioners letters; East Lake Youth Sports Association, Inc. Board list.

I. **Welcome and Introduction:**

- Co-Chair Ms. Darden Rice welcomed Forum Members and the public to the meeting. She also reminded participants that, as co-chairs, Ms. Greening and Ms. Rice will recognize speakers during Forum meetings.

II. **Additional Agenda Items:**

- Co-Chair Ms. Greening requested additional agenda items. Forum Member Ms. Ann Paul offered four items for consideration that Ms. Greening agreed would be added to future agenda topics.
  - a. Possible county-support for nearby wildlife refuges that might receive funding from the US Fish and Wildlife Service.
  - b. Renewal of the “Florida Forever Act” might provide funding for county effort and deserves our support. Ray Wunderlich added that the County should expedite its support.
  - c. ESF should look into an issue at Crystal Beach where owners of private property have requested that public property rights be vacated for private docks.
  - d. A presentation should be made to ESF about the upcoming “Penny for Pinellas” vote on projects that fall under the purview of the Forum.

III. **Approval of Minutes:**

- Several corrections were made of the December 7, 2006 meeting minutes:
  - a. Page 3, top: add clarification on the ESF bylaws. County Administrator Steve Spratt has invited ESF members to recommend colleagues to serve on the Forum. Mr. Spratt reserves the right, however, to add members independently.
  - b. Page 3, item V: correct spelling of Ms. Jan Allyn’s name and add Mr. Dave Kandz’s name as a member of the subcommittee. Further the notes should reflect that Ms. Ann Paul and Mr. Jake Stowers did not attend the subcommittee meeting.
  - c. Page 5, top: correct spelling of Mr. Dave Kandz’s name. Sentence should read, “Mr. Dave Kandz noted that SWFWMD’s regional water supply plan says to reduce regional groundwater withdrawals; thus, the pumping permit may not be approved by SWFWMD staff.”
- Mr. Bruce Hasbrouck made a motion to accept minutes with the above amendments. Ms. Ann Paul seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. **Forum business:**

- ESF Bylaws Subcommittee Report: Ms. Holly Greening reported that she, Mr. Bruce Hasbrouck, and Mr. Tom Muntz met to draft by-laws for ESF. The

draft is now in review by County Attorney's Office. ESF members will receive copies, probably within the next week or so. The draft will be reviewed at the next ESF meeting in February.

- ESF Member Replacements: Co-Chair Ms. Greening deferred this item.

V. **Recreation Fields at Brooker Creek Preserve:**

- Mr. Paul Cassel, Bureau Director for Pinellas County's Development Review Services, provided a brief update about the status of this project. He reported that the County received the site plan and they are reviewing it for technical aspects as a courtesy to the East Lake Youth Sports Association, Inc. (ELYSA). Approval is contingent upon various legal processes which include the public hearings previously discussed for an amendment to the land-use designation.

- Mr. Al Navaroli, Pinellas County Development Review Manager, highlighted the County's review of the site plan, especially noting issues in meeting code requirements. These major issues included the land-use designation and zoning and the establishment of wetland buffers and drainage plans. He indicated that SWFWMD identified flood plain encroachments and recommended mitigations in the initial submittal. Additionally, the plan contains retention ponds that must be evaluated (e.g., depth).

- Q/A session followed for ESF members.

- Public Comment: Six members of the public addressed issues related to this project.

- After lengthy discussion, the ESF generated the following questions for its consideration, noting the positive and negative impacts:

- a. What will be the environmental impact of changing the pine plantation to the proposed ball field complex?

POSITIVE: Possible restoration of wetlands through enhancement of existing wetlands; possible restoration of upland habitat; an opportunity to improve management of the site; a natural "play area" for children, and; an opportunity to enhance the Brooker Creek Preserve Management Plan.

NEGATIVE: Possible destruction of wetlands and interference with local hydrology; destruction of uplands; light and noise pollution; run-off including fertilizers, pesticides, trash, gasoline, oil, and herbicides; another example of moving from undeveloped Preserve land and open space to urbanization; loss of future restoration potential; loss of habitat value; reduction in local biodiversity

- b. How can the proposed project be built to minimize or improve the parcel's environmental conditions?

- After discussion, Mr. Jake Stowers made a motion to table the issue until the next meeting to allow County staff time to provide pertinent information to ESF so they can make a more informed decision. Mr. Stowers was asked to submit the information request to the County. Motion was seconded by Mr. Bruce Hasbrouck. Motion carried by a 9 to 4 vote. Discussion ensued regarding a recommendation to form a sub-committee to review this information. Jake Stowers and Darden Rice volunteered to participate.

- Mr. Bruce Hasbrouck suggested that henceforth for future issues that a sub-committee meet and prepare questions beforehand for ESF's consideration.
- Co-chairs Ms. Rice and Ms. Greening noted the remaining time for the Forum and decided that anyone who had signed up for public comments would have the opportunity to speak at this time. No public comments were volunteered.
- Mr. Walt Hoskins requested that ESF remain in session to view the entire presentation on the Shell Key Preserve Management Plan rather than postpone until a later date. Members agreed.

VI. **Introduction to Shell Key Management Plan:**

- Ms. Pamela Leasure, Senior Environmental Specialist with the County's Environmental Lands Division and land manager for Shell Key Preserve, provided a slide presentation and short video clip on the Shell Key Preserve Management Plan. She emphasized throughout the presentation that an updated and approved management plan must be in effect by October 2007, putting the County, ESF, and its cooperating agencies and committees on a strict timetable for the planning and approval process. During her presentation, Pam shared information about the Shell Key Lease Agreement with the State of Florida, various aerial photographs, public-use concerns and issues about human health and safety.
- Dr. Bruce Rinker, Division Director for the County's Environmental Lands Division, provided closing remarks, mentioning that Shell Key Preserve's issues seem to be escalating and the County is acting now (1) to protect the island and its waterways and (2) to be consistent with the management of other preserves and environmental lands. Thus far, Shell Key Preserve has been an experiment in multiple-use of a natural resource from which we have learned many lessons.
- Ms. Greening entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Tom Muntz seconded that motion. Meeting Adjourned at 7:03 pm.