

Environmental Science Forum (ESF)
Weedon Island Preserve
Thursday, May 3, 2007

Meeting Minutes

Approved by Forum at June 7, 2007 Meeting

Attendees:

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| 1. | Holly Greening | Forum Member, Co-Chair |
| 2. | Darden Rice | Forum Member, Co-Chair |
| 3. | Joseph Maier | Forum Member |
| 4. | Dr. Randy Runnels | Forum Member |
| 5. | Ann Paul | Forum Member |
| 6. | Tom Muntz | Forum Member |
| 7. | John Ogden | Alternate for Dr. Gabriel Vargo |
| 8. | Barbara Hoffman | Forum Member |
| 9. | Howard Rutherford | Forum Member |
| 10. | Cathy Harrelson | Forum Member |
| 11. | Doug Robison | Forum Member |
| 12. | Elizabeth Warren | Pinellas County Assistant County Administrator |
| 13. | William Davis | Pinellas County Environmental Management |
| 14. | Andy Squires | Pinellas County Environmental Management |
| 15. | Pam Leasure | Pinellas County Environmental Lands Division |
| 16. | Lisa Baltus | Pinellas County Environmental Lands Division |
| 17. | Lynn Smith | Pinellas County Environmental Lands Division |
| 18. | Paul Cozzie | Pinellas County CEL |
| 19. | Walt Hoskins | Citizen |
| 20. | Charles Sexton | Citizen |
| 21. | Tom Reese | Citizen |
| 22. | Sidney Crawford | Citizen |
| 23. | Diane Steinle | <i>St. Petersburg Times</i> |

Hand outs: Project Timelines for Pinellas County Environmental & Parks Lands, Approved Forum Bylaws, Updated List of Members & Alternates for Environmental Science Forum, Ordinance #07-____, ESF Minutes for March 1, 2007 & April 5, 2007, Agenda for ESF May 3, 2007 meeting, Brooker Creek Preserve maps, Shell Key Preserve Management Plan suggested revision from Stakeholders Meeting.

I. Welcome:

- Ms. Rice noted they were one person short of a quorum and if a quorum is attained later, then the Forum will go back and vote on the minutes.
- Ms. Rice welcomed Forum members and the public to the meeting, reminding the public to address agenda items by completing the appropriate form.

II. Additional Agenda Items

- Ms. Rice called for additional agenda items.
- Ms. Greening noted that the Bylaws call for co-chair elections every twelve months and that she and Darden will have served twelve months this June. They both agreed to serve as co-chairs until September if requested.
- Forum members agreed that Ms. Rice and Ms. Greening would serve through the summer as co-chairs with new co-chairs being nominated in August. Ms. Rice and Ms. Greening would relinquish their positions to the new co-chairs for the September 2007 meeting. The vote was tabled awaiting a quorum.
- Ms. Hoffman asked for clarification with regard to Bylaw 4.6.b, which states that special committees be composed of at least 3 members formed by the Forum. Much discussion followed and members acknowledged this requirement and that at least 3 members must attend subsequent committee meetings before reporting their recommendation.
- Mr. Muntz added an agenda item to revisit the number of members required for a Forum. After discussion, the Forum agreed to revise Bylaw 4.6.a., as recommended by Howard Rutherford, to state "*Action by the Forum shall only be taken at full Forum meetings where a simple majority of voting members are present. Such action shall be by the majority vote of those present and able to vote.*" The revised Bylaws will be placed on next month's agenda for approval by the Forum.
- Mr. Ogden asked what the status was of a Charter Amendment for Pinellas County. Mr. Davis said the County Commission (BCC) received Charter language from Ms. Margeson, has not taken a position on the Charter, is not developing their own Charter amendment to address this concern, and finally, is currently focusing on the ordinance.
- Ms. Hoffman said the Charter option will eventually come up in Forum discussions as we move along.

III. Discussion of March 1, 2007 and April 5, 2007 Minutes:

- Ms. Rice noted that the March 1, 2007 minutes were already revised at the previous meeting and now need approval when a quorum is attained.
- Ms. Rice asked for comments on the April 5 minutes.
- Mr. Muntz requested a full list of the original Shell Key Stakeholders be inserted on page 3 under item "V." Pam Leasure agreed to provide the complete list from 2000 for insertion into the April 5 minutes.

IV. BCC BCP Workshops (Will Davis):

- Mr. Davis summarized the April 24th workshop that covered two issues, the proposed ordinance for the sale or transfer of Environmental and Park lands, and the Brooker Creek Preserve (BCP) boundary update. The ordinance will be covered under item V below. Mr. Davis explained how the boundary updates were based on Utilities' future needs south and north of Keystone Road. Utilities staff mapped an area south of Keystone Road for future well field development with minimal vertical construction. North of Keystone Road, Utilities mapped an area for future Utilities' uses which could include vertical structures. The end

result was that approximately 1300 acres that is currently subject to Utilities' uses would be removed from future Utilities' uses. Mr. Davis pointed out that they were draft maps, a work in progress, and that subsequent revisions were likely as some of the mapped areas were questioned by the Commission. He also noted that a few parcels with existing structures or cleared land north of Keystone Road are proposed to be removed from the BCP boundary. Finally, he said the Anclote islands properties currently comprising the western extreme portions of BCP would be redesignated as the Anclote Management Area, with no change in their level of importance.

- Ms. Hoffman summarized the Friends' proposal to "Preserve the Preserve," which requests that all the Preserve be Preservation. It also included a provision that any uses in the BCP for Utilities' purposes would need approval by the BCC.
- A discussion followed with concerns voiced about the justification for the mapped areas for future Utilities projects, the need to consider habitat quality, and future management of the land.
- PUBLIC COMMENT was allowed: Mr. Hoskins reiterated that the Friends wanted the Preserve to be protected with no Utilities' uses allowed unless approved by the BCC. Mr. Reese expressed concerns about the existing committee that was addressing this issue and how additional committee attendance was needed to move forward.
- Mr. Greening recommended, and the Forum agreed, that the committee be expanded and that they work with County Utilities and County Environmental staff to integrate avoidance of high quality habitats when determining areas for future Utilities' uses. The following new Forum members agreed to work on this committee: Mr. Robison, Ms. Harrelson, Ms. Rice. They will work with the existing members: Mr. Stowers, Mr. Rutherford, Dr. Vargo, and Ms. Hoffman.

Item III Revisited - Approval of March 1, 2007 and April 5, 2007 Minutes:

Note: Mr. Doug Robison arrived, thus a quorum was present.

- The co-chairs called for actions to be taken on the minutes.
- Motion to approve March 1, 2007 minutes was made by Mr. Maier, seconded by Mr. Robison. Vote passed unanimously.
- Motion to approve April 5, 2007 minutes with amended list of original Shell Key Stakeholders was made by Mr. Muntz and seconded by Ms. Hoffman. Vote passed unanimously.

Item II Revisited (Additional Agenda Item) – Extension of Co-Chair Terms in Office

- Motion made to keep co-chairs until September of 2007 by Mr. Robison and seconded by Ms. Paul. Vote was unanimously in favor.

V. Shell Key Preserve Plan Update (Pam Leasure):

- Ms. Leasure noted that about 130 citizens attended the April 25 stakeholder meeting. She also emphasized the State's intent for managing Shell Key Preserve (SKP): *management for conservation and protection of natural and historical resources, for resourced based public outdoor*

activities and education which are compatible with the conservation and protection of these public lands. Ms. Leasure then covered the 21 suggested Plan revisions received from the three stakeholders meetings and the Plan Update timeline. The timeline included Plan review by ESF in July, BCC approval in early September, and submittal to the State by mid September 2007.

- Due to Forum interest, Ms. Leasure was requested to schedule a Shell Key field trip for Monday, May 21, 2007. The excursion would depart from Merry Pier (801 Pass-A-Grille Way, St. Petersburg Beach) at 9 a.m. to catch the Shell Key Shuttle to the island. Members could return at 11 a.m., or opt to return from the island on scheduled shuttle departures at 12 noon, 2 p.m., or 4 p.m. Details will be posted on the ESF website.

VI. Environmental Lands & Parks Protection Subcommittee Report:

- Ms. Hoffman asked that legal give a presentation on the County's draft ordinance.
- Ms. Jewel Cole, County Attorney, gave a brief explanation of the ordinance.
- Ms. Hoffman asked that examples to be given for each exception.
- A discussion followed. The ESF members developed the following recommendations, suggested amendments, and comments with regard to the ordinance exceptions under Sec. 2-147(b) and (c):

Sec. 2-147(b)(1)

- Specify "related infrastructure"
- Restrict to minor and existing transportation issues only

Sec. 2-147(b)(2)

- Concerns expressed how this could encourage more density adjacent to "critical properties."
- TDRs should be used for acquiring conservation areas – money should be used for environmental lands.
- Money from TDRs can be put into trusts for environmental purposes (Liz Warren)

Sec. 2-147(b)(3)

- Strengthen language that affirms trading "parks for parks, environmental lands for environmental lands"
- Include specific language referring to a fair market value lease that is consistent with conservation values

Sec. 2-147(b)(4)

- Require "parks for parks, environmental lands for environmental lands"

Sec. 2-147(c)

- Change supermajority to unanimous vote
- Questions were asked about whether a board vote should overturn a referendum
- Change language to say that a ordinance can only be repealed or amended by a referendum

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Mr. Hoskins made the following comments: ordinance Exceptions should have limited acreage sizes; favors a referendum for repeal; need assurance that zoning and land use laws are applied properly; is concerned about licenses and leases; specific language should apply separately to parks and also to preserves; the Charter Amendment would be the strongest protection for the largest and most important parcels; and that the ordinance could apply to smaller parcels.
- Mr. Reese spoke in favor of a County Charter with a referendum provision since an ordinance has not protected land historically. He noted that using an ordinance in place of the Charter concept is a big decision that should not be made today.

ESF Findings, Issues, & Recommendations

- Ms. Greening asked if sufficient factual information was reviewed to make recommendations. Ms. Hoffman moved it was, seconded by Mr. Robison. Vote passed unanimously.
- Ms. Greening asked for scientific findings pros and cons. The forum agreed that it is not applicable.
- Ms. Greening moved on to policy questions and recommendations. She asked the question “Should the County adopt the proposal ordinance on the sale or transfer of environmental and park lands”?
- Ms. Paul made a motion that the County should adopt the ordinance proposal with the list of recommendations and suggested amendments developed earlier (under item VI above) and pending final review by the Forum. This was seconded by Dr. Randy Runnels. Vote passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned

- Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Muntz and seconded by Mr. Maier.