

Environmental Science Forum (ESF)
Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center
Thursday, October 4, 2007
3:30 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

Approved by Forum at November 1, 2007 Meeting

Attendees:

1.	Cathy Harrelson	Forum Member, Co-Chair
2.	Doug Robison	Forum Member, Co-Chair
3.	Tom Muntz	Forum Member
4.	Mark Mueller	Forum Member
5.	Holly Greening	Forum Member
6.	Ray Wunderlich	Forum Member
7.	Mandy Peterson	Alternate for Howard Rutherford
8.	Dr. Randy Runnels	Forum Member
9.	Barbara Hoffman	Forum Member
10.	Dr. John Ogden	Alternate for Dr. Gabriel Vargo
11.	William Davis	Pinellas County Environmental Management
12.	Andy Squires	Pinellas County Environmental Management
13.	Dr. H. Bruce Rinker	Pinellas County Environmental Lands Division
14.	Lisa Baltus	Pinellas County Environmental Lands Division
15.	Lynn Smith	Pinellas County Environmental lands Division
16.	Brian Smith	Pinellas County Planning Department
17.	Gordon Beardslee	Pinellas County Planning Department
18.	Liz Freeman	Pinellas County Planning Department
19.	Paul Cozzie	Pinellas County CEL
20.	Jason Ester	Pinellas County Attorney
21.	Devesh Nirmul	Pinellas County Extension Services
22.	Sidney Crawford	Citizen
23.	Tom Reese	Citizen
24.	Mike Flanery	Citizen

Handouts: Environmental Science Forum (ESF) Agenda, Draft ESF Meeting Minutes, Project Timelines for Pinellas County Environmental and Park Lands, List of Voting Members and Alternates for the Environmental Science Forum, Memo on Shell Key Preserve Management Plan Draft Recommendations, the Brooker Creek Preserve Management Plan Update, *Comprehensive Plan* Amendments.

I. Welcome and Introductions:

- Co-Chair Mr. Doug Robison welcomed Forum Members and the public to the Forum meeting, reminding members of the public that they would have an opportunity to address agenda items by completing appropriate forms on the table outside the room. He introduced himself and gave a brief biography. Mr. Robison

thanked Ms. Holly Greening and Ms. Darden Rice for their contributions while serving as Forum Co-Chairs this past year. He also recommended the ESF continue operating following a “loose” Robert’s Rule of Order process.

II. Additional Agenda Items:

- A request was made for an opinion or position statement from Mr. Fred Marquis, the newly appointed Interim County Administrator, as to how he views ESF’s role. One member suggested the ESF members recommend how the ESF could best serve the County. Another suggestion was for County staff to provide ideas for streamlining ESF operations without reducing its effectiveness while upholding its existing purpose and mission.
- Ms. Holly Greening made a motion to direct staff to look at ESF’s operations and make recommendations for streamlining and reducing costs without reducing the effectiveness of the organization. Motion was seconded by Ms. Cathy Harrelson. Vote was unanimously in favor.

III. Approval of August 9, 2007 Meeting Minutes:

- Ms. Barbara Hoffman made a motion to accept the minutes; Mr. Tom Muntz seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Letter to BCC Supporting Shell Key Plan (Cathy Harrelson):

- Co-Chair Ms. Harrelson explained that copies of her memorandum to the BOCC with regard to the Shell Key Preserve Management Plan were available. The Plan was approved unanimously by the BOCC on 2 October 2007.

V. New Members (Will Davis):

- Mr. Will Davis and ESF members discussed ESF member representation that included the balance in the number of members with technical vs. policy backgrounds. Much discussion ensued; for the time being, most members seemed content to continue with the existing 15 members and use outside experts as needed.
- A request was made to print the ESF mission statement directly on each ESF agenda; staff acknowledged that could be done.

VI. Update on Charter Amendment & BCP Land Use Definitions (Will Davis):

- Mr. Will Davis is collecting examples of charter amendments and environmental ordinances from around the State. No decision has been made as to which protection tool (ordinance vs. charter amendment) will be used for which land type (environmental vs. parks). Mr. Davis said Assistant County Attorney Mr. Dennis Long is the County lead on this project. He also said that final resolution to

this complicated issue is likely to last several more months and most likely will not go to ballot until November 2008.

- The newly edited *Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan* has changed terms for passive vs. active recreation to resource-based recreation vs. facility-based recreation, respectively. These definitions were core concerns in discussions of the recreation fields in Brooker Creek Preserve (BCP).
- Citizen Mr. Tom Reese asked about the resolution of the mapping boundary issues of BCP. Mr. Davis said the new Interim County Administrator needed to get up to speed on this issue before moving forward and that the BCP Management Plan Update is on hold until the new year.

VII. Brooker Creek Preserve Management Plan Update (Lisa Baltus):

- Ms. Lisa Baltus summarized components of the Plan Update with reference to its Table of Contents. Her discussion covered Natural Resources, Natural Resource Management, Public Recreation, and the Educational Program.
- A brief discussion followed about wildlife corridors (e.g., Coastal Corridor Plan), future land acquisitions, BCP boundaries, and the pine plantation off Old Keystone Road.
- Will Davis once again announced that the timetable for the BCP Mgmt. Plan Update has been delayed to allow the Interim County Administrator time to consider relevant issues and determine the best course of action.
- Members discussed whether they should form a subcommittee to look at the Brooker Creek Preserve Management Plan since the timeline for approval by the BOCC has changed.
- Co-Chair Cathy Harrelson made a motion to establish a BCP Mgmt. Plan Subcommittee and to elect Ms. Barbara Hoffman as chairperson for that subcommittee. Motion was seconded by Dr. Randy Runnels. The motion carried unanimously. The Forum added that there should be at least three or four members of the Forum on the Subcommittee.
- Ms. Hoffman asked that staff send out an e-mail to ESF members requesting interested subcommittee members to respond.
- Dr. Bruce Rinker announced that Ms. Lisa Baltus is now the ELD Administrator for the County's Wildlands Fire Team.

VIII. Comprehensive Plan Amendments (Brian Smith, Planning Department):

- Mr. Brian Smith and Mr. Gordon Beardslee presented an overview of two sections of the updated *Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan*: Natural Resource Conservation and Management Elements; and Recreation, Open Space and Cultural Elements. Included in the brief were goals, objectives, policies and definitions.
- The Forum members had a brief question-and-answer session with Mr. Beardslee and Mr. Smith. In response to one question, Mr. Beardslee said some ESF members might also want to review the Coastal Management Element.
- The Forum members asked staff to add *the Comprehensive Plan* as a discussion item to next month's agenda.

IX. Next Meeting Agenda Topics:

- Co-Chair Mr. Doug Robison asked that three items be put on the agenda for next month: (1) streamline suggestions for the structure and function of the ESF, (2) the subcommittee membership for the Brooker Creek Preserve Management Plan Update, and (3) suggestions to the County's *Comprehensive Plan*. Mr. Robison also asked staff to provide a presentation on the Wall Springs Tract Project. Mr. Andy Squires suggested the County put a summary of the Wall Springs Tract Project presentation on the ESF website. Mr. Paul Cozzie, the Culture, Education, and Leisure Department Director, will not be able to present the Wall Springs project to the ESF next month.

X. Future Meeting Date and Time:

- Co-Chair Mr. Doug Robison reiterated the next meeting will be at WIPCNHC on Thursday, November 1, 2007, from 3:30 p.m. until 6:30 p.m.

XI. Public Comment:

- Mr. Devesh Nirmul with Pinellas County Extension Service spoke briefly about the success of the Bushnell Center for Suburban Sustainability Conference held earlier on October 4. During the conference, a regional discussion on sustainability included employees from industry, the scientific community, and government.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m. without motion.