

Environmental Science Forum (ESF)
Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center
Thursday, November 1, 2007
3:30 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

Approved by Forum at March 6, 2008 Meeting

Attendees:

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| 1. | Cathy Harrelson | Forum Member, Co-Chair |
| 2. | Doug Robison | Forum Member, Co-Chair |
| 3. | Tom Muntz | Forum Member |
| 4. | Holly Greening | Forum Member |
| 5. | Ray Wunderlich | Forum Member |
| 6. | Howard Rutherford | Forum Member |
| 7. | Jake Stowers | Forum Member |
| 8. | Barbara Hoffman | Forum Member |
| 9. | William Davis | Pinellas County Environmental Management |
| 10. | Andy Squires | Pinellas County Environmental Management |
| 11. | Dr. H. Bruce Rinker | Pinellas County Environmental Lands Division |
| 12. | Lynn Smith | Pinellas County Environmental Lands Division |
| 13. | Gordon Beardslee | Pinellas County Planning Department |
| 14. | Liz Freeman | Pinellas County Planning Department |
| 15. | Sidney Crawford | Citizen |
| 16. | Thomas W. Reese | Citizen |
| 17. | Mike Flanery | Citizen |

Handouts: Environmental Science Forum (ESF) Agenda, ESF Meeting Minutes from October 4, 2007, Project Timelines For Pinellas County Environmental and Park Lands, List of Voting Members and Alternates, Possible Alternatives to Existing ESF Process and Tell Us What You Think (Planning Dept.).

I. Welcome and Introductions (Co-Chairs):

- Co-Chair Mr. Doug Robison welcomed Forum Members and members of the public to the meeting. With no quorum present at the start of the meeting (3:46 pm), Mr. Robison suggested that the Forum begin but without voting until a quorum was present.

II. Additional Agenda Items:

- Co-Chair Mr. Robison inquired about a presentation to the Forum about Wall Springs Park. Mr. Andy Squires replied that a summary of the project will soon be available on the website for review.

III. Approval of October 4, 2007 Meeting Minutes:

- Co-Chair Mr. Doug Robison asked for corrections to the minutes. None were offered. A vote on the meeting minutes was deferred until a quorum was present or until the next meeting. However, with the arrival of both Barbara Hoffman (at 3:50 p.m.) and Mr. Stowers (at 3:55 p.m.), a quorum was reached and Mr. Robison asked for a vote to approve the minutes. Approval was unanimous.

IV. Streamlining Suggestions for ESF (Will Davis):

- Mr. Davis referred to seven possible alternatives for the ESF to consider for streamlining its meetings and decisions:
 1. Provide many, if not all, project details on the ESF website rather than during Forum meetings.
 2. Encourage citizen input during meetings with no established time limit for speaking and no forms for speakers to complete.
 3. Allow Co-Chair(s) discretion to require speaker forms and to limit time allotted to citizens wishing to address the Forum.
 4. Provide Forum input to the County via general guidance and recommendations on science and policy rather than via word-smithing various documents.
 5. Develop Forum recommendations through consensus rather than voting.
 6. Limit the focus of the Forum to projects that only relate to Environmental Lands, thus allowing park projects to be directed by its BOCC-appointed Parks Board
 7. Set meetings for every other month or on an as-needed basis, effective January 2008.
- Forum Members discussed the streamlining suggestions and decided to adopt the following:
 1. Provide project background information on the ESF website (rather than during Forum meetings) and add a link to the website for information for Forum Members; this will require Forum members to prepare more diligently for each meeting.
 2. Encourage citizen input during meetings without time limits and without speaker forms except at the discretion of the Co-Chair(s).
 3. Provide Forum input to the County via general guidance and recommendations on science and policy issues rather than via word-smithing.
 4. Schedule monthly meetings with an option to cancel the following month's meeting, depending on the agenda.
 5. Begin Forum meetings at 4:00 p.m. and to end at 6:30 p.m.

- Co-Chair Mr. Robison called for a vote to make changes of general operational guidelines as discussed. Mr. Jake Stowers so moved and Mr. Tom Muntz seconded. Vote was unanimous.

V. Subcommittee for Review of Updated BCP Management Plan:

- As Chairperson of the subcommittee, Ms. Barbara Hoffman asked for volunteers to review the updated BCP Management Plan when it's ready. Mr. Jake Stowers volunteered. Mrs. Hoffman requested one additional member of the Forum to be part of this subcommittee. She asked if the "Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve, Inc." could be part of this ad hoc committee since its members will also be reviewing the plan. Ms. Holly Greening suggested that the Friends' comments be considered in the Forum's final recommendations. Co-Chair Mr. Robison said he would like to see at least three Forum members assisting with the review. Final subcommittee membership was tabled until the next meeting. Mr. Robison suggested that Forum members consider being a part of the subcommittee.

VI. Process to Review County's Comprehensive Plan:

- Mr. Gordon Beardslee briefly spoke to Forum members about the County's revised *Comprehensive Plan*. A handout entitled "*Tell Us What You Think*" was distributed to the members to provide review guidance and background on the Comprehensive Plan revision process. He asked members to provide input on any environmental themes or areas of focus that might have been missed or might have been addressed inadequately. Suggestions may be submitted to the Planning Department staff for consideration. He also asked the members to identify elements in the proposed plan they thought were particularly important so the Planning Department could make sure to highlight it for the Board during the presentation before final adoption. Mr. Beardslee also provided an overview of the timeline for updating the *Comprehensive Plan*.

- Forum members discussed various ways for reviewing the Comprehensive Plan. It was decided that members will go on-line to read the Comprehensive Plan and then provide individual comments to Mr. Beardslee by Monday, December 17, 2007. Mr. Beardslee will bring a compilation of the comments back to the Forum in January 2008. The Forum asked Mr. Beardslee about specific elements to target. Mr. Beardslee suggested the following key elements: Natural Resource Conservation & Mgmt., Recreation and Open Space, Surface Water Management, portions of Coastal Management, and the section on Natural Resources in the Land Use element. Staff will forward a link to the Planning Department's *Comprehensive Plan* along with the elements listed via e-mail.

VII. Public Comment:

- Mr. Tom Reese asked about the BOCC's decision-making process for the *Comprehensive Plan*. Mr. Beardslee replied there will a public workshop on November 13, 2007, but this topic will be last on the agenda.

- Mr. Sidney Crawford asked if it would be possible to add non-members of the Forum to any notification lists about website links and other information. Mr. Andy Squires requested a simple e-mail request directly to him with the appropriate contact information.

- Co-Chair Mr. Doug Robison asked whether the Forum needed a December meeting. Mr. Jake Stowers made a motion that the Forum not meet in December, thereby moving the next meeting to early January 2008. Mr. Ray Wunderlich seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- Co-Chair Mr. Robison asked if any projects listed on the “Project Timelines for Pinellas County Environmental and Park Lands” be ready for the Forum to examine in January. Mr. Will Davis and Mr. Andy Squires once again mentioned that the Wall Springs Project will be placed on the website; thus, members should review the plan from the website and bring questions and comments to the next meeting. Also the Brooker Creek Management Plan was briefly discussed, including a discussion of the closed-loop/open-loop plan. It was decided the Brooker Creek Mgmt. Plan would not be ready for review until early next year due to forthcoming decisions about the Preserve’s boundary, especially north of Keystone Road.

- Co-Chair Mr. Doug Robison entertained a motion from Mr. Jake Stowers to adjourn. Co-Chair Mr. Robison reiterated the Forum will not meet in December and the January meeting will focus on (1) a review of the *Comprehensive Plan* and (2) a discussion about the Brooker Creek Preserve Management Plan.

Meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.