

TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM

To: Regional Planning Council Members AGENDA ITEM 5C

From: Staff

Date: July 17, 2009 Regional Planning Council Meeting

Subject: Local Government Comprehensive Plan Review
Draft Amendments to the Town of Ocean Ridge Comprehensive Plan
DCA Reference No. 09-1ER

Introduction

The Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Land Development Regulation Act, Chapter 163, *Florida Statutes*, requires that the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (TCRPC) review local government comprehensive plan amendments prior to their adoption. Under the provisions of this law, the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) prepares an Objections, Recommendations, and Comments (ORC) Report on a proposed amendment only if requested to do so by the local government, the regional planning council, an affected person, or if an ORC Report is otherwise deemed necessary by the DCA. If an ORC Report is to be prepared, then the TCRPC must provide DCA with its findings of consistency or inconsistency with the Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP), and provide any comments and recommendations for modification on the proposed amendments within 30 days of its receipt.

Background

The Town of Ocean Ridge has proposed text amendments to all of the elements of the Town Comprehensive Plan. A number of the amendments are intended to carry out the recommendations of an Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) adopted by the Town on July 9, 2007 and found sufficient by the DCA on November 2, 2007. Other amendments are to address statutory requirements to incorporate the Town's Water Supply Facilities Work Plan into the comprehensive plan. The Town has requested a formal review of the amendments by the DCA.

Evaluation

Community Profile (from the Town Comprehensive Plan)

The Town of Ocean Ridge is a small residential community located in the southern portion of Palm Beach County, east of Boynton Beach. It is approximately 635.6 acres in size and located entirely on the barrier island, bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the east and the Intracoastal Waterway to the west. To the north is unincorporated land under

county jurisdiction. This land is primarily used as a water access park to the Boynton Inlet (aka Lake Worth Inlet), located just to the north of the Town. This inlet is not within the jurisdiction of Ocean Ridge but is considered to have a major impact on, and is a key characteristic for the Town.

To the south of Ocean Ridge is the Town of Briny Breezes, which consists almost entirely of a single mobile home park. South of Briny Breezes is a similar small town to Ocean Ridge, known as Gulf Stream. The City of Boynton Beach lies immediately to the west.

Ocean Ridge is a beach-oriented town characterized primarily by single family homes. There are also intracoastal and beachfront condominiums and a few multi-family buildings scattered throughout the Town. There is very little commercial development in the Town.

In its EAR, the Town identified the following as major issues to be addressed:

1. Evaluate the potential impact on the Town of the growth of surrounding communities.
2. Evaluate the potential impact of the Town of the conversion of existing multi-family residential buildings regarding density and intensity uses.
3. Assess and evaluate the public utilities systems throughout the Town.
4. Assess and evaluate the public services provided by the Town.
5. Evaluate the potential redevelopment of older and under-developed areas of the Town.

Following are the highlights of the proposed amendments:

A. Future Land Use Element

1. Revised Objective 5 is to maintain historic property regulations that preserve historic houses or identify and preserve archaeological sites.
2. New Policy 10.1 is to direct development to upland parcels; and to preserve wetlands designated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
3. New Policy 10.4 requires a justification statement of consistency with the comprehensive plan, hurricane evacuation and concurrency for any proposed amendment that would increase density and intensity of development.

B. Transportation Element

1. In Policy 1.1.1 the peak hour level of service standard for all roadways is changed from “C” to “D”.
2. Revised Policy 1.3.1 is to coordinate with the Metropolitan Planning Organization, Florida Department of Transportation and regional transportation planning agencies to seek viable alternatives to road widening or bridge relocation.

C. Housing Element

1. New Objective 1.5 indicates that National Register of Historic Place properties within the Town are subject to all applicable Town, State and federal legislation.
2. New Policy 1.5.1 addresses the designation of structures or archeological sites as historically significant; and the maintenance of these historic sites.

D. Infrastructure Element

1. Revised Objective 1.1 is to monitor and continue to upgrade the Town's existing potable water system through a program of facility replacement.
2. Revised Policy 1.2.5 is to coordinate with the Solid Waste Authority to maximize recycling efforts and provide public information regarding the disposal of hazardous household waste.
3. Revised Objective 1.3 is to encourage water conservation through the installation of water-saving plumbing fixtures on new development and redevelopment.
4. New Policy 1.3 is to adopt the Town Water Supply Facilities Work Plan of March 25, 2009.

E. Coastal Management Element

1. Revised Policy 1.2.3 is to continue investigation into the necessity and feasibility of a public sewer line.
2. Revised Objective 2.2 and Policy 2.2.1 addresses the maintenance of the Town post-disaster redevelopment plan in coordination with Palm Beach County.

F. Intergovernmental Coordination Element

1. Revised Objective 1.2 and Policy 1.2.3 stress intergovernmental coordination via participation in the Palm Beach County Intergovernmental Plan Amendment Review Committee.

G. Capital Improvements Element

1. New Policy 1.1.7 is to undertake a comprehensive study of municipal services to ensure they are being provided in the most efficient, economical and desired manner.
2. New Objective 1.6 is to adopt a Capital Improvements Program covering at least 5 fiscal years and to adopt a Capital Budget on an annual basis.
3. New Policies 1.6.3 and 1.6.4 call for the annual review of existing and potential revenue sources for the purposes of a balanced budget.

Extrajurisdictional Impacts

The proposed amendments were not noticed to the Palm Beach County Intergovernmental Plan Amendment Review Committee 30 days prior to transmittal, consistent with the Interlocal Agreement. However, according to the June 15, 2009 transmittal letter to the DCA, the Town provided copies of the amendment materials to the County and the municipalities of Gulfstream, Delray Beach, Boynton Beach, Briny Breezes and Manalapan. Council contacted each of these local governments to give them an opportunity to provide comments on the proposed amendments. As of the date of preparation of this report, correspondence was received only from the City of Delray Beach, who indicated that the City had no comments on the proposed amendments.

Effects on Significant Regional Resources or Facilities

Analysis of the proposed amendments indicates that they would not have adverse effects on significant regional resources or facilities.

Analysis of Consistency with Strategic Regional Policy Plan

Comments/Recommendations for Modification

1. New Policy 10.4 of the Future Land Use Element requires a justification statement for proposed Future Land Use Map amendments that seek to increase the intensity and density of the property. The policy should be revised to require such a statement if the amendment increases intensity or density of the property.
2. Regional Housing Policy 2.2.2.1 indicates that local governments should carefully assess their existing housing stock and their existing needs during the preparation of Evaluation and Appraisal Reports. Particular attention should be paid to the housing needs of the elderly, young adults, single-parent households and others who may find the traditional single-family home to be unaffordable and/or inappropriate for their needs. During the review of the Town of Ocean Ridge EAR in 2007, Council noted that the Town did not identify the shortage of affordable/workforce housing as a major issue. Council recognized the limited opportunity for the development of such housing in a municipality like Ocean Ridge, but given the severity of the problem, all local governments were asked to carefully review their Housing Element to ensure there is support for programs and strategies that will facilitate the development of housing units that are affordable to the workforce. It was suggested that the Town may be able to offer support for the affordable housing programs being implemented by the neighboring City of Boynton Beach.

The Town is proposing only minor revisions to objectives and policies of the Housing Element. None of the changes are likely to have an effect on the ability of low and moderate income members of the workforce to have access to additional housing opportunities. Council does not expect that new housing units affordable to the low and moderate income will be located in Ocean Ridge because of very high land values and location in the Coastal High Hazard Area. However, all communities should share in the responsibility to ensure that members of the workforce can find housing in proximity to employment, consistent with Regional Housing Goal 2.1 and 2.2. Perhaps the Town can provide support to the affordable housing programs in nearby mainland areas such as Boynton Beach, which are more likely to house workers in those sectors of the economy (e.g. service, retail) that serve the residents of Ocean Ridge.

3. The Coastal Management Element should be revised to include the new statutory definition of the Coastal High Hazard Area.

Consistency with Strategic Regional Policy Plan

The contract agreement with the DCA requires the TCRPC to include a determination of consistency with the SRPP as part of the written report to be submitted to the DCA. The TCRPC finds the proposed amendments to be CONSISTENT with the SRPP.

Recommendation

The Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council should adopt the above comments and instruct staff to transmit the report to the Department of Community Affairs.

Attachments

List of Exhibits

Exhibit

- 1 General Location Map
- 2 Existing Land Use Map
- 3 Future Land Use Map
- 4 Existing Conditions for Roadways
- 5 Future Traffic Circulation

Exhibit 1
General Location Map
Town of Ocean Ridge

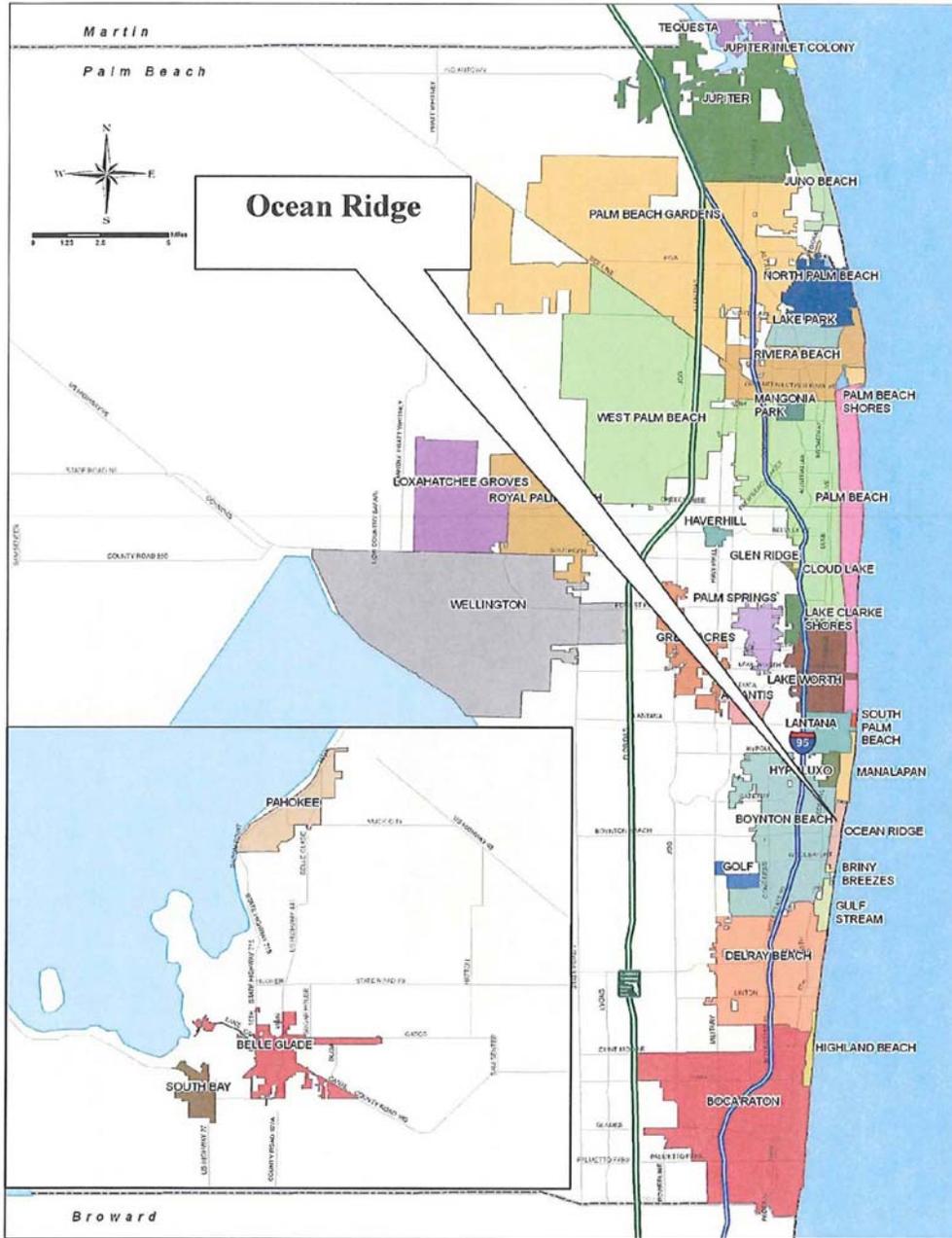


Exhibit 3

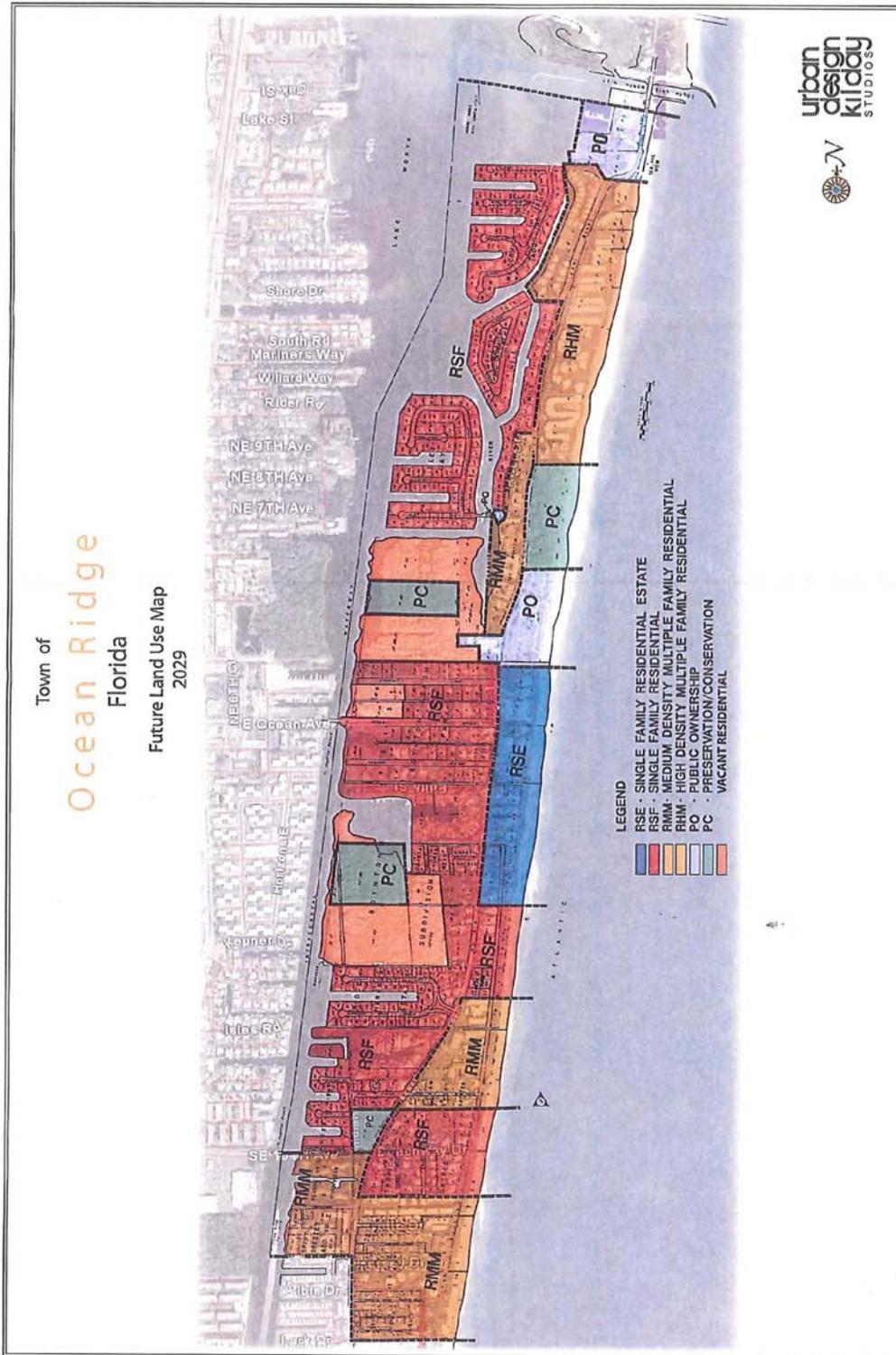


Exhibit 5

