

**MINUTES OF THE
TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
MARCH 18, 2011**

Chairman Trias called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting. He led the pledge of allegiance and requested roll call.

The following members and alternates were present:

Indian River County: Commissioner Wheeler (Alternate)
 Mayor Adams

St. Lucie County: Commissioner Mowery

Martin County: Commissioner Hayes
 Commissioner Smith
 Commissioner Scott

Palm Beach County: Commissioner Taylor
 Mayor Ferreri
 Mayor Golonka
 Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Priore
 Vice Mayor Webster
 Commissioner Golden (Alternate)
 Councilman Pinto (Alternate)
 Commissioner Mitchell (Alternate)

Gubernatorial Appointees: Kevin Foley
 Bill Hall
 Susan Hershey
 Richard Oujevolk
 Reece Parrish
 Peter Sachs
 Ramon Trias

Ex-Officios: Andrew Riddle, Florida Department of Transportation
 Kim Mac’Kie, South Florida Water Management District
 Mary Murphy, Florida Department of Environmental Protection
 Ann Benedetti, St. Johns River Water Management District

Council Staff: Michael Busha
 Kim DeLaney
 Eloine del Valle
 Anthea Gianniotis
 Sandy Gippert
 Liz Gulick
 Wynsum Hatton
 Stephanie Heidt
 Terry Hess

Dana Little
Peter Merritt
Greg Vaday
Joan Young

Council Attorney: Roger Saberson

The Executive Director announced a quorum was present.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Marty Laven, representing the Environmental Sustainability Alliance of the Research Coast, noted for Councilmembers an upcoming seminar on April 8, 2011 entitled The Reality of Stormwater Permitting, From Dirt to Finish. He stated this is the first in a four-part series on stormwater permit compliance which provides a history of the Clean Water Act and the national pollutant discharge elimination system regulations. The future seminars are: June 3 - Construction Best Management Practices; September 9 - Inspections; and October 28 - Designer/Reviewer Manual.

Councilmember Foley asked why the use of the “Research Coast”. Mr. Laven stated that the use of Environmental Sustainability was preferred to using “pollution prevention control” as it has a more positive message, and by embracing the “Research Coast” brand name it makes it consistent with the region.

AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Smith moved to approve the Agenda and Consent Agenda as presented. **Motion**
Commissioner Hayes seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Items on the Consent Agenda were: 5A, Financial Report – December 30, 2010; 5B, Financial Report – January 31, 2011; 5C, Minutes – January 21, 2011; 5D, Sebastian Comprehensive Plan Amendments DCA Ref# 11-1; and 5E, Intergovernmental Coordination and Review Log.

STATE FUNDING OF REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCILS

Under Public Comment, Ms. Alexandria Larson spoke in support of regional planning councils. She noted that she has been attending meetings for the past eight years and feels that regional planning councils provide a layer of oversight on tremendous building issues that are affecting the State as well as the perfect opportunity for public input. She encouraged everyone to contact their legislators in support of regional planning councils. She stated she believes that for every dollar spent at the regional planning council, there is a one hundred dollar return.

Councilmember Foley stated he has spoken with Governor Scott and the Governor told him he does not want to eliminate Regional Planning Councils and supports regional planning.

Staff made a presentation to Council which included the statutory requirements and funding history of Regional Planning Councils. With the Governor’s office proposing to reduce Regional Planning Council funding during the current fiscal year, and recommending no funding for Fiscal Year 2011-2012, there will be little or no state funds for Regional Planning Councils to carry out

contractual/statutory responsibilities. Staff also reviewed proposed legislation to eliminate regional planning councils; and a number of other statutory changes to growth management. Staff noted that Ron Book, the Executive Director of the Florida Regional Councils Association, is asking members from all the councils to contact their legislators and express their support for regional planning councils. Additionally, staff asked Council for guidance on forming a Legislative Committee to evaluate alternatives for carrying out statutory responsibilities in the event state funding is reduced or eliminated. Staff also asked Councilmembers to contact Ron Book, or Rana Brown in his office, to advise of any conversations they have with the Legislative Delegation. Staff provided talking points as well as contact information for the Florida Regional Councils Association staff.

Commissioner Smith stated that as the incoming President of the Florida Association of Counties he has spent the last five weeks touring the State and the top priority of the Association is the continuation of growth management in some form. He stated that their fallback position is if the Department of Community Affairs is going to be eliminated, or restricted, then the regional planning councils will need to play a significant role in how local governments work together on regional planning issues. He stated not all local governments in the State can afford to have a planning staff, and the regional planning councils fill that role.

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Priore stated the talking point documents provided by staff were helpful, but too generic. He said it will be a more effective message to give the legislators a circumstance that occurred in their district where the regional planning council played a significant role.

Mayor Ferreri stated the two main points that need to be made are the importance of the regional planning councils being close to the people, and that the regional planning councils have consistently over the past twenty-five years worked within their budget. He stated planning activities the regional planning councils provide such as emergency responder training and the emergency evacuation study would not be done for many of the smaller local governments because they cannot afford these types of planning efforts.

Commissioner Taylor asked for the name of the senator sponsoring the bill to eliminate regional planning councils. Staff indicated it is Senator Miguel Diaz de la Portilla from Miami. Commissioner Taylor stated it would be to our benefit to determine why he has proposed the bill. Staff indicated Ron Book spoke with the Senator before and after he proposed the bill, but the Senator was not clear in his intentions for proposing the bill.

Councilmember Hall stated that if the Department of Community Affairs is to be radically reduced, then the regional planning councils should come up with a formula on how to handle developments of regional impact and comprehensive plan amendments to show the legislature and the Governor they have control and a methodology for public and regional review. He stated it would be prudent to have our finance committee look at the funding timeline, using 2004 as a baseline, and realize we should probably budget to that figure.

Councilmember Sachs asked if there was a "Plan B". He asked if the regional planning council has the legal ability to raise money privately or attempt to pick up the shortfall if we are not successful in stopping what is being proposed in Tallahassee. Staff indicated that for the past decade State funding has only been approximately ten percent of the regional planning council budget. Staff stated there is not a "Plan B" at this point in time.

Commissioner Hayes stated two million dollars is a paltry amount for the State, but that is only half the issue. He stated the other side is authority and if the Department of Community Affairs is diminished, then to not support or fund additional authority to the regional planning councils is ludicrous.

Commissioner Smith noted a recent presentation he attended given by Mr. Tim Center with the Sustainable Florida - Collins Center. He stated the presentation laid out the discussion of the lack of a state-wide vision. He stated he believes this is an opportunity for Council to support the Collins Center, as there is no better place in the State that is prepared to discuss and understand planning and regional issues than the regional planning council.

Staff indicated Council's by-laws do allow for private donations and from civic organizations to do work, although this has never been aggressively pursued. Staff also noted that if the Department of Community Affairs is minimized as an agency, there is still an enormous amount of statutory responsibility, and the regional planning councils are well-positioned to accept additional roles and responsibilities as the Governor sees fits. However, staff cautioned the regional planning councils do not want to become regulatory agencies as this would set them up to be in the same situation the Department of Community Affairs is currently.

Councilmember Hershey expressed her concerns with respect to Council's statutory requirements regarding contracts that are currently in effect and how to accommodate those responsibilities if there are eliminations. She stated that the regional planning council has been very helpful to the School District in terms of planning when new developments are proposed.

Commissioner Hayes stated that "When planning becomes an impediment to growth, we are all in serious trouble."

Councilmember Foley stated the problem is both strategic and systemic. He stated that there needs to be some belt tightening at all levels of government. Systemically, he stated that although the Department of Community Affairs role is going to be diminished, that role should not disappear and it may be the eleven regional planning councils that will need to take on those responsibilities. He complimented staff on being able to find new sources of revenue, stating his belief that the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council is the best in the State and will be able to handle additional responsibilities. He stated he prefers to have a decision making process that is local and not in Tallahassee, which tends to be more of a "one size fits all" approach to planning.

Chairman Trias echoed Councilmember Foley's comments, stating he has been with Council since 1991 and feels it is the best in terms of terms of the staff, the mission and how Council has evolved in the last twenty years in terms of helping the local governments. He stated that as the state funding is only ten percent of the budget, money is not really the issue. Rather, it is what is going to happen with growth management in the State.

Vice Mayor Webster stated with the diminishing of the Department of Community Affairs regional planning councils are an attractive alternative as they are close to the local people and decision making where there is better input and understanding of the decisions that need to be made. Staff asked Councilmembers to have the legislators they speak with communicate their feelings to the Chairs of their respective committees.

Chairman Trias asked all Councilmembers to utilize staff as a resource when needed.

MARTIN-ST. LUCIE 2035 REGIONAL LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN - PRESENTATION

Staff made a presentation to Council on the 2035 Regional Long Range Transportation Plan. Council staff assisted in the preparation of the plan for the Martin Metropolitan Planning Organization and the St. Lucie Transportation Planning Organization. The process involved a significant amount of public outreach and participation, and focused on balancing issues of land use, future growth patterns, roadway improvements, and strategies to improve general mobility and livability. Of particular note was an irregularity in one of the models used in the study. The model over-predicted roadway volumes and impacts by approximately 20,000 trips. This irregularity was identified by Martin County staff and was hand-adjusted to reflect the conditions on the ground. Failure to identify this irregularity would have made significant differences in the plan.

Commissioner Smith stated that of the four long range transportation plans he has been involved with this is the most comprehensive, well-thought out and most inclusive. He noted that there were two major elements in Martin County that would have had significantly different outcomes if the plan had not been so thorough. He thanked staff for their hard work.

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Priore asked if, as a result of the excess utilization calculations that were identified, any developments were rejected. Commissioner Smith stated that the reality is that there were ten to eleven partnerships between development and the projects coming in the SR 76 Corridor that did have to put up additional funds in order to meet the concurrency requirements.

Staff noted this item was put on the agenda as an educational tool for Councilmembers who may currently or in the future serve on transportation planning boards. Staff stated that the real lesson learned from this plan was to not take the results of models as fact. Models should only be used for guidance and need to be thoroughly evaluated as part of the planning process.

HOBE GROVE DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL IMPACT – PRESENTATION

Staff made a presentation to Council on the Hobe Grove Development of Regional Impact, which is being planned as a sustainable, mixed-use employment center on approximately 2,823 acres in Martin County, Florida. The project site is located immediately west of the Florida Turnpike, south of Bridge Road (CR 708), and east of Pratt Whitney Road (CR 711). The presentation was done in part to provide information to Councilmembers on Developments of Regional Impact and Council's role in the process. Staff indicated Council does not approve such developments, but rather provides an Assessment Report and recommendations to the local government that addresses the regional issues. The local government then will approve, or not approve, the development.

Mr. Tom McNicholas of McNicholas & Associates addressed Council on behalf of the property owner, Becker Holdings. He stated that the idea for the project began when the applicant was approached by two private universities and two private Fortune 500 companies. He stated the four points to the project are environment, jobs, education, and residential. He stated these points are in order, and if one does not occur, then the others will not. He noted the applicant has been working with the South Florida Water Management district on an environmental restoration project that would be drawing water from the C-44 Basin, and stop it from going into the Estuary. He noted

there are several meetings planned with local governments and agencies. He asked that there be an objective approach taken when reviewing the project.

Commissioner Hayes stated he believes this project has the potential to be a wonderful opportunity for Martin County and he is encouraged with the commitment and a focus on environmental restoration. He stated that he believes there needs to be a master plan in this area and not have piecemeal development. He noted the last Development of Regional Impact in the County was Willoughby, which significantly transformed the U.S. 1 to Kanner Highway Corridor and all the surrounding properties and had major positive and restorative consequences for the area.

Mayor Golonka stated she looks forward to the discussions as this project moves forward. She stated her concern with the traffic impacts to Indiantown Road in Jupiter, which is the first interchange off of I-95 to the south. She stated this could be a positive for the whole region in terms of economic development.

Commissioner Smith noted for new members that there will be an opportunity for significant comment and discussion that will produce a report and recommendations for the project. Councilmember Foley stated he was very encouraged to see the amount of land that will be dedicated to the environment. Mayor Golonka stated that it is a positive that there is a substantial portion of the project that will be preserved, but that alone should not drive approval of the project. Mr. McNicholas noted that the Becker Family is not a developer and that if the environment, jobs and education are not done, then there will be no residential.

Mayor Ferreri noted there is no where else in the region with that much green, stating the real challenge will be connecting in terms of transportation without affecting the green. Commissioner Smith noted that what was not shown in the presentation was the 50,000 acres west of the property that the County has acquired over the last ten years in an effort to lay out a plan for the area. Chairman Trias recommended Mr. McNicholas work closely with Council staff as they progress through the planning of the project. No action was taken as this item was presented for information only.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Staff noted an upcoming meeting of the Executive Committee meeting for the Sustainable Communities Initiative Grant. This Executive Committee is an oversight committee that will manage the grant and, for the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, is represented by Chairman Trias, Vice Chairman Foley, Secretary O'Bryan and Mayor Ferreri. Staff noted there will be a much larger partnership forming that will do the more detailed work of the grant. This partnership will consist of representatives from local governments, not-for-profits, and the private sector and will be formed into small work groups to focus on the individual elements of the plan such as housing, water, and transportation. Commissioner Smith encouraged staff to expedite the process and not waste any time. Chairman Trias asked staff to take some of the lead and not rely so much on the South Florida Regional Planning Council to lead the project. Staff noted there are two staff positions for this project; the Project Director, who will be the face of the project, and the Program Manager who will be housed at the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, but work closely with the Project Director. Staff stated there will be two partnerships, one for the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council and one for the South Florida Regional Planning Council that will meet. Commissioner Smith stated it is very important that everyone involved get together and participate in these meetings as this project will affect long range funding and strategies.

COUNCIL MEMBER INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Commissioner Hayes noted there is an Art and Music Festival planned for the weekend in Downtown Stuart.

Mayor Ferreri stated the City of Greenacres is co-hosting the Fiesta de Pueblo in Greenacres over the weekend.

Pam Mac’Kie cautioned Councilmembers that local governments could be hearing from the South Florida Water Management District as soon as Monday calling for water restrictions due to the drought.

Vice Mayor Webster noted the Village of Royal Palm Beach will be hosting their second annual Street Fest next weekend.

Commissioner Smith stated it would be helpful if Councilmembers could email all of these events to staff, who could then disseminate the information to all Councilmembers.

Commissioner Mitchell introduced herself and expressed her enthusiasm on being an alternate on the Council. Staff noted Commissioner Mitchell has been very gracious about offering the City of West Palm Beach as the host city for the Congress for the New Urbanism National conference in May of 2012.

STAFF COMMENT

None.

CHAIRMAN’S COMMENT

None.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Trias adjourned the meeting at 11:52 a.m. This signature is to attest that the undersigned is the Secretary or a designated nominee of the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, and that the information provided herein is the true and correct Minutes of the March 18, 2011 meeting of the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council.

Date

Signature