

**MINUTES OF THE
TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
APRIL 15, 2022**

Chair Townsend called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. and welcomed everyone. She led the pledge of allegiance and requested roll call. Thomas Lanahan, Council's Executive Director, took roll and announced a quorum was present.

The following attended in person:

Indian River County:	Commissioner Adams Councilmember Minuse
Martin County:	Commissioner Smith
St. Lucie County:	Commissioner Townsend Commissioner Mitchell Councilman Pickett, Alternate
Palm Beach County:	Vice Mayor Weiss Mayor Gerwig Vice Mayor Gottlieb Commissioner Linden Mayor Reed
Gubernatorial Appointees:	Douglas Bournique
Council Staff:	Thomas J. Lanahan Kim DeLaney Liz Gulick Stephanie Heidt Jessica Seymour
Ex-Officios:	Kathy LaMartina, SFWMD James Cannon, SJRWMD
Council Attorney:	Mitty Bernard for Keith Davis

The following participated remotely:

Martin County:	Commissioner Clarke
Palm Beach County:	Commissioner Marino Commissioner Bernard
Gubernatorial Appointees:	Michael Davis
Ex-Officios:	Lois Bush, FDOT Jon Moore for Jason Andreotta, FDEP
Council Staff:	Sarah Kammel Dana Little

Agenda Item 3: Agenda Approval

Council Action: Commissioner Smith from Martin County moved approval of the Agenda. Commissioner Adams from Indian River County seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 4: Consent Agenda

Chair Townsend noted that there was a request from the public to speak on Agenda Item 4B3, Martin County Amendment No. 22-01ESR. This item was pulled from the Consent Agenda for a staff presentation and Council discussion.

Council Action: Commissioner Smith moved approval of the Consent Agenda as amended. Vice Mayor Gottlieb from the Town of South Palm Beach seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Items left on the Consent Agenda were: 4B1, Financial Report – February 28, 2022; 4B2, Minutes - February 25, 2022; and 4B4, Wellington Amendment No. 22-01ESR (Updates to Mobility Maps).

Agenda Item 4B3: Martin County Amendment No. 22-01ESR (Rural Lifestyle Land Use Text and Future Land Use Amendments)

Stephanie Heidt, Economic Development and Intergovernmental Programs Director for Council, provided an overview of the proposed text and Future Land Use Map (FLUM) amendments. She noted that the text amendments create a new future land use designation called Rural Lifestyle which requires a minimum of 1,000 contiguous acres located within unincorporated Martin County and outside the Primary Urban Service District; approval of a comprehensive plan amendment for any changes proposed to the FLUM; development of a specific parcel must be implemented through a Planned Unit Development (PUD); maximum building height of four stories or 40 feet; a minimum of 70% of the gross land area be open space; specifications for residential development; requirements related to accessory residential housing for employees; extension of potable water and sanitary sewer services, to be paid by the developer; the requirement of an economic analysis to evaluate impact on availability of public services and facilities/net fiscal effect on the County; and other specific development requirements to mitigate environmental and ecological impacts. Ms. Heidt noted that the County staff report indicates the new land use designation will provide an opportunity for the protection of open space; encourage development of self-supporting and self-contained rural communities on land outside the Primary Urban Services District; and has a maximum density comparable to other designations permitted outside the urban services districts.

Ms. Heidt provided a map depicting the location for the FLUM amendment proposing to apply the Rural Lifestyle future land use designation, if approved. The request is to apply the new designation on ±1,493.91 acres currently designated as Agricultural, which allows a maximum of 1 unit per 20 acres. The new designation will allow a maximum of 1 unit per five acres, which results in a potential development increase of 224 units. The Site, located on the north side of SE Bridge Road and east of the I-95 Interchange in Hobe Sound, is outside both the Primary and Secondary Urban Service Districts. She also provided a map showing 811 acres that is being proposed for off-site open space preservation. Ms. Heidt noted that a letter in opposition to the amendments was received from the Loxalucie Headwaters Initiative, which is included in the staff report. She also noted that there was extensive public outreach related to these amendments, with the Guardians of Martin County holding a four-hour meeting to provide information to the public regarding the proposed Rural Lifestyle designation.

Ms. Heidt noted that staff did find that the proposed amendments will have no adverse effects on regional resources or facilities, and there should be no extra jurisdictional impacts. She noted that staff commends the County for developing an alternative approach to ranchette development on rural lands and offered the following suggestions to enhance clarity and minimize the potential for unintended consequences: 1) Future Land Use Policy 4.13A.18(1) would be enhanced by stipulating that any “open space” within the bounds of an individual subdivided house lot does not count towards the required 70% on-site open space since this open space may become isolated by fencing and replaced by patios, etc. over time; 2) In order to ensure that the density bonus provided leads to net new preservation of open space, Future Land Use Policy 4.13A.18(3)(b) should require that the additional off-site preserved open space be newly designated preservation in conjunction with the proposed project and not part of any other approved development (a golf course in another subdivision, for example). In addition, any preserved off-site open space should have development potential in order to qualify (for example, not a drainage district canal right-of-way) and that development rights on the off-site preserved open space are retired upon project approval. The 501(3)(c) conservation organization should be long-standing and experienced in open space management and not created specifically for, or under the control of, the development; 3) It appears that Policy 4.13A.18(4)(c) will allow new development with individual septic tanks. Martin County has set admirable goals and devoted substantial public money for the elimination of existing septic systems and these goals will be harder to achieve if new systems are allowed. In addition, requiring connection to central sewer will help ensure that Rural Lifestyle developments are reasonably close to urbanized areas and services; 4) Policy 4.13A.18(7) would be enhanced by requiring that on-site and off-site open spaces be arranged to create contiguous open spaces and corridors with other adjacent open spaces and preserves; and 5) In general, provisions should be included which steer new Rural Lifestyle developments to appropriate locations and ensure that open space preservation, including off-site open space preservation, retains land integrated with good adjacent natural areas or agricultural production as relevant utilizing a systematic approach.

Ms. Heidt indicated that the staff recommendation is to approve the report and authorize its transmission to Martin County and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. She noted that in order to meet statutory timeline requirements, staff had already provided a draft report to the County and State.

Vice Mayor Weiss from Palm Beach County asked what uses are considered open space. Mr. Lanahan stated that Open Space is defined in the County’s comprehensive plan and can include a variety of things such as preserve areas, golf courses, and agricultural production. Vice Mayor Weiss asked if it is possible to get a four-story building with a forty-foot height limitation. Mr. Lanahan indicated it is possible.

Mayor Gerwig from the Village of Wellington stated it appears there is a lot written into the text amendment that allows septic tanks. Mr. Lanahan noted that the proposed site-specific amendment is going to have central sewer connection but others could be developed without central sewer and that is why concern was raised in the staff comments.

Under public comment, Linda Smithe, a resident of Martin County, stated that it is her understanding that this project, according to 1000 Friends of Florida, started at about 1,500 acres, is in the process of morphing to affect 130,000 acres. She stated that this speaks to the vagueness of the amendments. She indicated that Martin County is taking it upon themselves to use this 1,500-acre property as a way to create a larger comprehensive plan amendment that will affect much more land. She stated the proposed requests should get more scrutiny and public review. She noted that what is being proposed for open space is already being used for agriculture, so that will not preserve any open space. She asked if the public will be able to use the proposed new golf course, or will it be private. She stated she is concerned about the amount of golf cottages being proposed, and the impacts to traffic, water

quality and quantity, and flooding that will occur from unbridled development. She asked that the County keep the zoning codes already in place.

Drew Martin, serving as the Conservation Chair for the Loxahatchee Group of the Sierra Club, stated they have a number of concerns about how this development will change the character of Martin County, which has substantial amounts of open space. He stated he is concerned that this is opening the door to increase development outside the urban service boundary, which will have negative impacts on the quality of life for the County, water quality, and traffic, and potentially produce more impacts from the stormwater runoff to the Indian River Lagoon.

Commissioner Smith stated that County staff was available to clarify some of the comments that have been made that may be far-reaching. Clyde Dulin, Comprehensive Planning Administrator of Martin County, indicated he drafted both the text and FLUM amendments and provided an overview of the proposed amendments for Council. He noted that first and foremost, the proposed new future land use designation cannot be assigned to any property without going through the full future land use amendment process, which is outlined in Chapter 163 of the Florida Statutes and in the County's Growth Management Plan. He stated that Council's report provides a good analysis of the proposed amendments. He noted that the County did specify that accessory dwelling units are limited to one per single family residence and the single family dwelling units that are accommodated under this future land use designation include townhomes and duplexes, but condominiums are not permitted. He noted that several changes have been done in response to public input since the County's transmittal hearing. He stated that these amendments are scheduled for final consideration by the Board of County Commissioners at their April 19th meeting.

Mr. Dulin stated that more specificity has been placed into the text amendment for the subject of guest cottages, which are counted as accessory units, and additional language has been drafted that specifies golf cottages may not be sold, transferred, or used as single-family dwellings, so they are not counted as dwelling units. Also, there can only be a maximum of one of these units per hole on the golf course up to a maximum of fifty-four. He noted that there have also been changes made to the original amendments in response to comments from Council, the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, and public comment received online and at the special workshop. He stated that the language has been modified to respond to and progressively get better with each public meeting. With respect to concerns regarding water quality, he noted that as a part of the PUD requirements, and language in the text amendment, there are high standards in place for the treatment of water before it is discharged into either the St. Lucie or Loxahatchee Rivers. He stated that this could potentially improve water quality because it is written into the text amendment that you have got to step up your game before discharging to the water sheds.

Mr. Lanahan clarified that the amendments are currently under the review process and there will be another public hearing by Martin County with an opportunity to provide further comments. Mr. Dulin noted that the amendments will be considered under three separate items on April 19th, one to consider the text amendment, a second to consider the FLUM amendment, and then a third for the proposed PUD. Mr. Lanahan received confirmation from Mr. Dulin that although the text amendment creates a new land use designation that could be applied to various properties around the County, the new designation can only be applied to a specific site if requested through the land use amendment process.

Council Action: Mayor Gerwig moved approval of the staff recommendation. Commissioner Linden from the Town of Lake Park seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 5: East Coast Greenway – City of Fort Pierce/Indian Hills Recreation Area Segment Ribbon Cutting

Kim DeLaney, Director of Strategic Development and Policy for Council, provided an overview of the recent ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of the Indian Hills Recreation Area segment of the East Coast Greenway (ECG). She noted that this is the first regional segment funded under the state's Shared-Use Nonmotorized (SUN) Trail Program, which extends the larger trail network across the state. In recognition of Council's efforts supporting Greenway planning, Council was acknowledged as a partner agency and provided with a commemorative piece of the ribbon. She noted that the need to regionally connect preservation areas and greenways first became apparent in the 1970s as a means to provide wildlife corridors. The Greenways movement really emerged in Florida in the 1980s to preserve habitat and its functionality. In 1984, Florida created a Greenways and Trails Foundation to provide guidance from a citizen's standpoint and began to look at interconnecting natural areas with greenway corridors. Over time, the idea that the corridors could be used as recreational and transportation facilities emerged organically. In 1991, the East Coast Greenway Alliance was created and developed an idea to create a 3,000-mile interconnecting trail facility, similar to the Appalachian Trail, from Maine to Key West with interesting destinations along the way. She noted that in 2010, Council began working with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), local governments, and the Region's four transportation planning organizations to focus on developing a four-county regional greenways trail plan. In 2013, the plan was expanded to include the three counties to the south to create the Southeast Florida Regional Greenways Trail Plan.

Dr. DeLaney noted that in 2015, the state adopted the SUN Trail program, which is the Shared-Use Network trail plan and began to put substantial funding into that effort. There were ten priority trails identified in the state by 2018, with the East Coast Greenway becoming one of the top-ranked trails. She provided an overview of how a well-organized trail network will lead to sustained economic development and expand the tourism industry. In the seven-county region, the segment is about 284 miles of the 3,000-mile East Coast Greenway.

Robert Barto, Florida Coordinator for ECG, noted that they are a non-profit that partners with local level advocates and agencies to leverage public investment for planning, designating, and constructing segments of the ECG, with the goal of a unified trail system. He noted that the trail is approximately 3,000 miles along the Atlantic Seaboard, passing through many cities with a variety of scenery along the route. The trail travels through 15 states and Washington D.C., passing through almost five hundred individual communities. He noted that every year the East Coast Greenway gets fifty million rides, runs, and walks, which makes it the most visited park in the entire United States. He said they like to say it goes from the moose all the way down to the manatee. He indicated that within the state of Florida the ECG is about 20% complete, with the entire trail running 600 miles from the state border to the Keys. He said that they are very excited about the SUN Trail program because it recognizes the importance of trails and public access to these free open spaces for both physical and mental health as well as transportation and recreation.

Robin Birdsong with FDOT noted that their primary statutory responsibility is to coordinate the planning and development of safe, viable, and accessible transportation systems serving all regions of the state and to assure compatibility of all components including multimodal facilities. She indicated that the Florida Transportation Plan (FTP) guides the state's development of multi-modal transportation systems that fit within the context of a community's vision. She noted that state law established an annual reallocation of new vehicle tag revenues, which are deposited in the State Transportation Trust Fund, to develop the statewide system of interconnected, high priority, strategic, paved, multi-use trail corridors for bicyclists and pedestrians. She stated that SUN Trail funding is just one source for developing trails that align with the programs' four overarching goals to: improve transportation safety; enhance economic prosperity; increase mobility and connectivity; and preserve

our environment and communities. She provided information on other SUN-Trail funded projects within FDOT's adopted work program and funding available over the next few years.

Dr. DeLaney provided an overview of the Indian Hills Recreation Area, which is a stormwater treatment area that also serves as a recreational facility, that connects from the Savannas to downtown Fort Pierce. She noted that the City worked extensively with the residents to find ways to interconnect the neighborhoods to the facility. Audria Wells, Special Projects Coordinator for the City thanked all the agencies and municipalities that coordinated the planning of this facility. She noted that Jack Andrews, the City Engineer in charge of this project, wanted her to express how the successful completion of the Indian Hills Recreation Area was a huge accomplishment for the City of Fort Pierce. The City is now planning to move forward by continuing with planned future segments of the trail that include the Highwayman Trail and the Historic Downtown Segment.

Mayor Gerwig asked if a map could be produced that shows how the greenways and blueways connect. She noted that Palm Beach County does not have a lot of greenways, but they do have blueways and she would like to see that integrated into the whole system. Dr. DeLaney noted that the Regional Greenways and Trails Map includes the blueways for the seven-county region. She stated she would circulate that to Council members.

Commissioner Smith noted that with Seven 50 project, part of the goal was to get all of the individual maps in alignment and get one central depository of all that information. He also noted that Martin and St. Lucie counties did a joint waterways program that was spectacular work.

Councilmember Bournique, Gubernatorial Appointee from Indian River County, noted that everyone should read *The Barefoot Mailman*, which shows the original trail was the beach.

Agenda Item 6: Regional Economic Development Summit for the Treasure Coast Recap

Ms. Heidt noted that serving as the Economic Development District for the Region, Council receives funding from U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) to work with our local governments, organizations, and citizens to do various planning activities related to economic development. She noted that part of that work is done through the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee, which is comprised of individuals appointed by the four Boards of County Commissioners.

Ms. Heidt indicated that staff facilitated a Regional Economic Development Summit on March 25th to begin the process of writing the CEDS Plan for the next five years. She noted this plan, required by EDA, supports collaborative, regional innovation and is the blueprint for economic development in the Region. She stated that the plan is rewritten every five years because it needs to stay relevant to changing economic issues and trends. She noted that staff and the CEDS Committee do annual updates to the plan to reflect current trends such as Opportunity Zones; update the plan's actions as needed; and add sections when required such as the Pandemic Section added in 2021.

Ms. Heidt provided an overview of the Summit, which included a keynote address from David Gillespie from the Florida Chamber Foundation; a presentation from Gregory Vaday with EDA; and panel discussions on Workforce Training and Education and Innovation and Economic Development. Participants were asked to break out into groups based on the Six Pillars organizational framework established by the Florida Chamber Foundation to identify key factors that drive Florida's economy. The six pillars breakout group topics included: Talent Supply & Education; Innovation & Economic Development; Infrastructure & Growth Leadership; Business Climate & Competitiveness; Civic & Governance Systems; and Quality of Life & Quality of Places. Ms. Heidt noted that the topic of Economic Resilience was included as an added seventh pillar as this is a key priority for EDA. The

groups did Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analyses for their topics and provided information on projects in the Region, Pandemic Impacts/Responses, and work being done within Opportunity Zones. The groups were also asked to look at the objectives and actions contained in the current CEDS plan and make revision recommendations.

Ms. Heidt provided an overview of the data gathered from the breakout groups. She noted that the Summit was highlighted on WPSL's Small Biz Florida radio show; featured on WPTV Channel 5 News; captured on video by Martin County Television; and is available for viewing on YouTube. She stated the next steps are to use the information gathered at the Summit to inform the writing of the new CEDS Plan.

Councilmember Bournique noted that with respect to affordable housing he has tried in two counties to bring in a world-class company that worked with Disney to build an affordable housing facility for agricultural workers with all the amenities, but has received no interest in allowing it by the County Commissions. He indicated that this type of housing is very much needed in the Region, however he was not able to make it happen.

Councilmember Minuse from the City of Vero Beach asked if there was discussion at the Summit of repurposing the empty malls and big-box stores for affordable housing. Ms. Heidt noted that this was not brought up at the Summit, however she has the notes from a previous Council meeting where this suggestion was made. She stated one of the things that will be done is to look at the existing buildings and infrastructure to see if there are viable options.

Commissioner Linden indicated that he attended the Summit, calling it fast-paced and well-organized. He stated that participants were given a wealth of information and knowledge and he felt the breakout sessions provided good engagement. He encouraged everyone to make sure that the next time there is a summit like this, they should take the time to attend.

Ms. Heidt thanked her fellow staff members for all the hard work they did to make the Summit a success.

Agenda Item 7: Announcements

Mr. Lanahan noted that the Urban Design Studio, after a few years off, held the first post-pandemic charrette last week for the Village of Tequesta and will be in Lake Worth Beach on April 30th to begin a charrette there.

Mr. Lanahan noted that FDOT has launched a significant railroad trespass and crossing safety study. They are collecting best practices, looking at specific alternatives that might work in different locations, and identifying funding and technical assistance sources. He noted that Council staff was invited to participate in this effort as partners with FDOT.

Mr. Lanahan noted that at the Council meeting on May 20th there will be discussion and approval of the mid-year budget amendment for Fiscal Year 2021-2022. He encouraged everyone to attend and participate as this discussion will include updates on expenditures and new contracts that have been executed since the budget was approved in July of 2021.

Mr. Lanahan noted that the Communications Package contains an article about Stuart being selected as one of the South's Best Small Towns by Southern Living. Additionally, there is an article comparing the cost of commuting by transit, by rail, versus driving your own car. There is also an article about what has been called the Great Resignation, and how it is more of a shuffling of the workforce.

Mr. Lanahan congratulated Commissioner Curtis Johnson and Mayor Hudson from the City of Fort Pierce for being named Home Rule Heroes by the Florida League of Cities and invited any other Council members who have been so honored to raise their hands and be recognized.

Mr. Lanahan noted that Passover will begin at sundown and Easter will be celebrated on Sunday.

Agenda Item 8: Chairman's Comment

Chair Townsend wished everyone a Happy Easter asking each to remember what it is really about this Sunday.

Agenda Item 9: Council Member Update

Commissioner Adams indicated Indian River County is going through a visioning process to determine how they deal with growth and development. She noted that she had the opportunity to attend a meeting with Mr. Lanahan and Ms. Heidt in Fellsmere related to the work being done to create an economic development and resiliency plan for the City. She wished everyone a Happy Easter.

Councilmember Minuse indicated that the Indian River Metropolitan Planning Organization agreed to expand their rural lands study to include the cities of Fellsmere, Sebastian, and Vero Beach. They will also be reaching out to the barrier island communities of Indian River Shores and Orchid to see if they are interested in participating as well. The study is looking at infill development, redevelopment, and revitalization opportunities. She noted that pickleball is one of the fastest growing sports in the nation and the City just held their annual spring tournament with over four hundred participants. She also noted that the Blue Angels will be performing at the air show, which begins on April 30th.

Vice Mayor Gottlieb wished everyone Happy Holidays.

Kathy LaMartina from the South Florida Water Management District indicated that the District will be hosting a virtual meeting on extreme rainfall events on Wednesday, April 27th. This is the first step in developing future rainfall projections, which will support the district's mission and set resiliency priorities.

Commissioner Mitchell from St. Lucie County noted that the County will be hosting Earth Day on April 23rd at the Oxbow Center on St. James Drive.

Mayor Reed from the City of Palm Beach Gardens noted that at a recent City Council meeting they adopted Vision Zero, a program that involves educating the public about road safety, encourages road design that promotes less accidents, and enforcing traffic laws. She noted the City has five projects that are being funded by the Palm Beach Transportation Planning Agency that look at transportation alternatives and provide a great opportunity to put in sidewalks and bike lanes without the local government having to pay for it. She noted that both the Honda Classic and ArtiGras were a success. She also noted that several groups have been going to the 2,400 acres of conservation areas of the Avenir development to remove invasive plant species.

Vice Mayor Weiss noted the County has approved a low-income assistance program for County residents for new HVAC systems. He indicated that the County has been in discussions to consider a bond referendum on the November ballot to help with affordable housing projects in the County. He stated that the goal is to build 20,000 units over the next 10 years. He noted that the County will be freeing up approximately \$40 Million to immediately address the issue. He stated other potential referendums would be to address environmental and water issues such as septic to sewer conversions and water storage projects.

Commissioner Linden indicated that on Saturday the City will be hosting an Easter egg hunt and on Sunday Easter Services and breakfast at Kelsey Park. He noted that next month the City will be doing the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Nautilus 220 condominium project. On April 29th the schools will be hosting Arbor Day events with tree plantings. He noted that the Town's Diversity and Inclusion Council (which he chairs) won the National League of Cities award for Cities under 50,000. Commissioner Linden indicated that Palm Beach County ranks number three in Florida for suspected cases of human trafficking. He noted that there is an upcoming public event on this topic.

Mayor Gerwig stated that there is only one more week of polo. She noted that the new group that purchased the equestrian facility has changed the name to the Wellington International Equestrian Center. She stated that there is a charter referendum being proposed to close a supposed "loophole" that allows a term-limited Mayor to run for Council after serving as Mayor. The Village will be designating the canvassing board from the County for this effort.

Commissioner Smith noted topics discussed at the Joint Regional Planning Council meeting in March included water and biosolids. He stated he thinks it is time for the topic of biosolids to be back on Council's agenda. He suggested having Peter Janicki present and give everyone a better understanding of how to deal with biosolids. He noted that the County is considering adding a sales tax referendum for land acquisition to the general election ballot. He stated this is the third land acquisition program he has been involved in 22 years where the County has acquired over 116,000 thousand acres now designated as open space and conservation. That land is being used for stormwater treatment and Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan projects. He noted that Martin County residents have put up over \$84 million dollars over those 22 years to acquire those lands and they continue to be aggressively looking towards doing more. With respect to the comprehensive plan amendment previously discussed, he noted that there are potentially two more projects looking to apply the new land use designation in addition to the project that is the subject of the current proposed amendment. He stated that the revenue that will be generated from the current project is over \$25 million a year in new revenue, and there have been conversations to use 50% of that revenue for land acquisition. He stated that the County has identified about 45,000 acres worth approximately \$150 million for acquisition. He stated those properties will be restored and it will not take very long for the habitat to come back and generate amazing space for wildlife. He noted the state requires that for referendums ordinances and ballot language needs to be adopted 180 days prior to the election date.

Councilmember Bournique stated that at the St. Johns River Water Management District Governing Board meeting they discussed how to address biosolids because 82% of all biosolids produced in the state are trucked into the St. Johns basin. He stated that on paper it looks like a good idea to spread it and let it evaporate and be used by the grasses, but the insidious part is that the water drains off and it shows up in the canals and the water bodies. Also, all the vitamins, minerals, and medicines being ingested by humans ends up there and in the cows that eat the grass. He stated this needs to be figured out and the best thing to do is treat the waste at sewage treatment plants at the source. He said that a lot of money is being spent to clean up the Indian River Lagoon and St. Johns River, but biosolids are then trucked back to the area and the phosphorus and nitrogen are ending up back in the water that was just cleaned, which does not make sense financially, or otherwise.

Councilmember Bournique noted that the Biden Administration has made available billions of dollars in the Partnerships for Climate Smart Commodities program, which allows proposals from \$5 million up to \$100 million. He stated he is looking to propose a project, on behalf of the Indian River Citrus League, for carbon sequestration through water farming. He is looking into how much carbon a large 10,000-acre water farm sequesters and what is being accomplished through the South Florida and St. Johns water management districts' citrus tree planting programs. He noted projects are not limited to agricultural and can be done in urban areas.

Commissioner Smith noted that the processing of biosolids (separating nitrogen, phosphorus, and water) creates commodities that are usable and can be sold in other states that are not phosphorous rich. He also noted that there is an energy component to the process. He stated that so much money is spent trying to fix the impacts caused from mis-management of biosolids, that these issues could be turned around quickly if we used that money to build these processing plants. Vice Mayor Weiss invited everyone to see how Palm Beach County processes its waste and biosolids.

Commissioner Marino from Palm Beach County indicated that they are happy to work with Martin County for land acquisition in Pal Mar. She noted that this is an important area for water storage and water flow as it connects to other waterways.

Agenda Item 10: Public Comment

Linda Smithe, as the Executive Committee Chair for the Sierra Loxahatchee group, noted there is a lot of synergy between their group and Council, so she hopes Council members will take her comments to heart. She noted that there is a rock mine being proposed in St. Lucie County at the McCarty Ranch. She stated this project will impact local traffic with hundreds of dump trucks a day full of rocks and sand. Additionally, there will be impacts to air quality through silica dust; noise from the heavy equipment; lower aquifer levels for residents; water quality issues; and effects on wood stork foraging habitat. She noted she is also concerned about the reduction of productive agricultural land in our area. She stated she appreciates the local government staff expertise and time spent on local zoning issues, but is concerned that the emphasis might be more on how to craft a proposal and not on consideration of the public’s quality of life. She thanked Palm Beach County Commissioner Marino for sponsoring the proclamation for Earth Day.

Drew Martin stated that he supports the Greenways Trail project and would like to make sure that the Sierra Club is involved as one of the stakeholders. He said that it is important to ensure that the trail will accommodate wildlife as well as humans, and it is important to keep mechanical modes of transportation, such as ATVs and dirt bikes, off the trail. Additionally, it is important not to install too much lighting. He stated that he agrees with Ms. Smithe that it is important to preserve agricultural lands which are an important part of the economy. With respect to biosolids, he stated that it is important that we put certain responsibility on those people creating the biosolids to improve and upgrade the systems rather than transferring the biosolid contamination to northern counties where it is causing real problems. He wished everyone a Happy Earth Day and hopes Council can do more work to improve water quality.

Agenda Item 11: Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Townsend adjourned the meeting at 11:38 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 April 15, 2022 meeting of the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council.

Date _____ Signature _____