

DRAFT MINUTES
SOUTH GULF COVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SGCAC)
February 27, 2008
Growth Management Conference Rm. B-207 – 9:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Sandy Slater, *Chairperson*
Kendall Leach
April Chattinger
Yvonne Ermerio

STAFF

Jie Shao, *Staff Liaison*
Gayle Moore, *Recorder*

MEMBERS EXCUSED

GUESTS

Jim Benson

I. **CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Chair Slater called the February 27, 2008 meeting of the SGCAC to order at 9:06 a.m. as in the Growth Management Conference Room B-207 and it was noted a quorum was present. **Chair Slater** also introduced Ms. Yvonne Ermerio who was recently appointed by the Board of County Commissioners as the newest member of the Advisory Committee; Ms. Ermerio was part of the original Parks sub-committee and also part of the Linear Park Committee, and has participated in the Entranceways effort as well. She will be filling the position left vacant by Carol Reynolds.

Chair Slater noted that she wanted to add a couple of items to the agenda:

- Discussion of the email she had distributed regarding West County Stormwater
- Information on Scenic Highway
- Information on conversation with Lennar

II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of January 9th were reviewed first, and approved with corrections; the minutes of the January 23rd meeting were then reviewed and approved with corrections. **Mr. Leach** made a motion to approve each set of minutes as amended, which was unanimously accepted.

III. **OLD BUSINESS**

Zoning and FLUM; Stormwater Report

Mr. Leach noted that there was nothing new to report on the Zoning/FLUM matters. With regard to Stormwater, he mentioned the email received from Mr. Mike Post in which he noted that he had missed the last Stormwater Committee meeting but that information had been offered that the County had been previously testing the waters from Butterford Waterway into South Gulf Cove. **Mr. Leach** said he had some confusion over the fact that the report did not indicate that any analysis of the test results was ever given, and that the Stormwater Committee had decided not to pursue this at this point; he felt that testing should be done by the County on a regular basis. Further discussion ensued, including some historical background on the funding for testing. **Mr. Leach** stated that he felt the community voted to increase the assessment with the understanding that testing would be funded out of it, and therefore the County should get back on track; he suggested that Staff Liaison Jie Shao could assist in contacting the appropriate department to follow up on this matter. **Chair Slater** said that she had raised the issue with Commissioner Tom Moore

along with her thoughts on the potential problems with the proposed MSBU consolidation effort.

Public Safety/Health, Pedestrian/Bikeways, FireWise Community, Cove Connection

Ms. Chattinger began with the subject of Public Safety / Health, specifically EMS response time statistics, which she had received and which showed that there had been a decrease in calls and response time remained the same for Station 4; for Station 3, there was a decrease in calls, but the response time was not up to standard. Station 13 also saw a decrease in number of calls, with response time somewhat not up to standard. Station 14, which **Ms. Chattinger** understood to be the one that responded to SGC fire calls, also had a decrease in calls and response time was average. She noted there had been an agreement to locate Englewood fire engine 76 at Station 14, and that a new fire station was planned for the intersection of Sunnybrook and SR 776. There was further discussions about response times, particularly with reference to a recent fire, and **Ms. Chattinger** suggested inviting Chief DiDio to address the homeowners association on these matters. The question was raised whether the fire trucks were equipped with GPS units, but the answer was not known.

Ms. Chattinger next covered the Pedestrian / Bikeways / Cove Connector subject, reporting on the Valentine fundraising efforts, and discussing plans for future events including a brunch on April 6th. The eBay store has also been launched. **Ms. Chattinger** stated that she had been referred to Joyce Ross of Charlotte County Communications and Marketing about getting Cove Connector on the roster for the Penny Tax, and Ms. Ross had asked her to work with Jie Shao on this project.

Chair Slater raised the issue of the approval of the Scenic Highway, and information she had obtained from staff member Martina Kuche who is part of the Charlotte / Sarasota Joint Committee. She noted that she had suggested to Ms. Kuche that SGCAC members working on pedestrian/bikeways become involved with this effort; Ms. Chattinger and Mr. Benson both expressed their intention to attend the next Scenic Highway meeting.

Information about FireWise was the final presentation from Ms. Chattinger; she discussed funding issues and requirements for obtaining grant monies. Additional discussion ensued on techniques for removing invasive species.

Parks, Park Master Plan, Entranceways, Land Acquisition, Funding Resources

Chair Slater reported on the Parks Master Plan, with reference to the monthly memo from the Parks & Rec Department; she noted that the Master Plan was scheduled to be presented to the Commissioners sometime in April. **Chair Slater** indicated she would be informing the Parks staff that Ms. Ermerio would be the Committee contact now.

Regarding the Boat Ramp Park, **Chair Slater** discussed the County arborist, "Doc", who is in charge of all the County's waterfront clearing and development, specifically with regard to mangroves. She noted that the banks at Boat Ramp Park had recently been cleared, and there is also the possibility the County will place rip-rap on the banks. She said she had initiated a discussion with Doc and the Parks staff about having the banks of the Linear Park cleared as well; she later heard that he is preparing a request to DEP for a permit to "open up the view". **Ms. Ermerio** gave details of a proposal to transplant some of the mangroves to other, better locations that was discussed with Doc; it was agreed that the matter should be pursued, especially with an eye to displacing the Brazilian pepper that had come to dominate in these areas. **Mr. Leach** noted that there needs to be a certain salt content

level of the water for these plants to thrive, so they may not be suitable to transplant to each suggested location. **Ms. Chattinger** noted that the FireWise grants are weighted toward getting rid of exotics and thought there could be some benefit to joining forces on this issue.

With regard to Land Acquisition, **Chair Slater** reviewed briefly the history of this effort, noting that there had been renewed interest in trading properties in the three park areas. She also commented briefly on the upcoming budget, and the progress on entranceway signs, particularly with regard to funds currently available to fund the entranceway signs. There was also discussion on the availability of monies from the Native Tree Fund for planting-related purposes including irrigation and landscaping. **Chair Slater** created an action item for herself, to investigate how much of such funding is currently available.

Chair Slater also reported on the creation of specs for the entranceway sign project, which is being handled by Jack Payne who will be turning his work over to Ian Dack of Public Works.

Guest Jim Benson asked if there was any resource online for viewing the current designs being proposed for the entranceway signs; a copy of the plans was available in the meeting for Mr. Benson to view. **Mr. Leach** asked if the signs were going to refer to South Gulf Cove as "a deed-restricted community"; further discussion ensued on the type and amount of information that might be included on the signs.

Chair Slater reviewed what Ms. Ermerio would be responsible for, which was the Master Park Plan and all parks except the Boat Ramp Park which would remain the Chair's responsibility along with the entranceways, right-turn lanes project, land acquisition, funding and resources.

Staff Liaison Jie Shao joined the meeting at 10:17 a.m. A discussion ensued with regard to County involvement in formulating a stormwater plan and testing water quality. It was established that this was a function of the Department of Public Works. **Mr. Leach** asked for some information regarding what happened to the water samples, inasmuch as there seemed to have been no testing after the samples were gathered. He noted that the stormwater assessment had been doubled recently and concluded that this meant there were funds available for testing. **Ms. Shao** asked if these issues had been raised with DPW, noting that this was not a function of Growth Management.

Ms. Chattinger noted that Communications and Marketing Director Joyce Ross had indicated that Ms. Shao was the person who needed to be involved in the penny tax issue.

Discussion ensued regarding potential effects of the budget-cutting on the availability of staff to assist the Committee in working on their Community Plan.

IV. **NEW BUSINESS**

Community Plan Review

The group returned to their review of the spreadsheet material covering their progress on the Community Plan Goals and Objectives. It was agreed that further review should be postponed until all the latest material was added to the spreadsheet.

Guest Jim Benson left the meeting at 10:35 a.m.

MSBU Consolidation Effort

Chair Slater noted that Commissioner Moore had the letter generated by Jack Payne and his committee. The intended workshop has been rescheduled; both Mr. Leach and Chair Slater intend to make a presentation at the workshop when it is held. **Mr. Leach** noted that an MSBU had been established for West County for Streets and Drainage because this had to be accomplished prior to March 1st (other areas of the county had their MSBUs established at the same time.) There was no public comment at that time, as the action was in the nature of a formality.

Chair Slater called for discussion on the subject, noting that when the time came to address the Commissioners, she wanted to be representing the community position rather than merely her personal opinion. She stated that, according to Tara Musselman, the plan would be to leave all the MSBUs in place, and what would remain covered under those Streets and Drainage MSBUs would be:

- Any additional mowings that the community wants, over and above the standard that will be set by the County (e.g., if the standard for mowing is to have 5 and the community wants six, then the sixth mowing would be paid out of the MSBU.)
- Road maintenance. Again, a standard will be set and projects over and above the standard would be funded from the MSBU.
- Drainage. This refers to the outfalls and swales, not the main ditch drainage that is under West County Stormwater.
- Any Community Plan and or beautification efforts.

She noted that these all amounted to a significant portion of the budget, but that complete details of the standards-setting were not yet known, making it difficult to respond with a community position on the matter. **Chair Slater** also pointed out that in addition to the MSBU, tax bills also referenced a category called "Capital Assessment" which is also for streets and which reflects progress in the various phases; she noted that how this varying charge would be handled under the proposed new scheme is still unanswered. She also raised concerns about the Community Plan portion of the new scheme, specifically what will happen to funds already accumulated, which currently totals \$1.328 million.

Chair Slater went on to note that the South Gulf Cove community had been very pro-active in addressing their own needs and in using MSBU funds innovatively, e.g., for park development; her strongest concern was that changes might be made that would interfere with the community's ability to take care of its own needs. Further discussion ensued on these matters, and then the Chair called for comments.

Mr. Leach stated he felt it would be necessary to hear the official presentation to better understand what was intended before taking a position; he gave extensive examples of road condition inequities throughout the South Gulf Cove and Rotonda areas as an example of the difficulties that would be encountered in trying to move to a consolidated West County MSBU format. **Ms. Chattinger** stated that she felt Mr. Payne's summary, which the Chair had read, was well-done and that she agreed with his concerns. The Committee members agreed that Chair Slater should present community comments at the hearing; it was noted that Jack Payne would also be there to present his concerns.

Chair Slater then provided a review of a recent conversation she had with Rob Price of Lennar; their development is currently slated to start in 2009 and there may be some changes in the overall mix of the development given the current glut of condos.

Committee Vacancies

Chair Slater mentioned that she had spoken to a gentleman about his interest in contributing to the community via the HOA.

V. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

VI. **STAFF COMMENTS**

Ms. Shao had a number of comments. The first was to provide general information about the Plan Amendment concerning a SGC neighborhood park, which was intended to regularize the FLUM designation to "Parks and Recreation". The second item concerned the Fullenkamp project in West County; **Ms. Shao** noted that the applicant was holding off on the project while staff developed the new FLUM category of Compact/Node Development. She estimated the project would go forward in May and come to the BCC in August. Finally, she noted that there was a 30-acre parcel across the street from South Gulf Cove on Rotonda Blvd. E., where a commercial center was being proposed for a 10-acre parcel with multi-family proposed for the rest. Some discussion of this project ensued.

VII. **MEMBER COMMENTS**

Ms. Chattinger had a question about a person who she said had been given a permit to run a refuge for Bengal tigers in South Gulf Cove; she thought it was a County permit, but **Ms. Shao** suggested it might be a state permit instead. The consensus was that the original information about the matter was probably faulty.

VIII. **NEXT MEETING**

The next regular meeting of the **South Gulf Cove Advisory Committee** is **Wednesday, March 26, 2008** from 9:00 a.m. until 12 noon in the **Growth Management Conference Room (B-207)**.

At 11:27 a.m. **Chair Slater** stated: There being no further business to come before this committee, I declare the meeting adjourned.