

**MINUTES**  
**SOUTH GULF COVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SGCAC)**  
**Wednesday, March 26, 2008**  
Growth Management Conference Rm. B-207 – 9:00 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

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

**STAFF**

Jie Shao, *Staff Liaison*  
Jane Starr, *Recorder*

**MEMBERS EXCUSED**

**GUESTS**

Karen Ireland  
John McGuire  
Jim Benson  
Paul Chattinger  
Maria Miller  
Sarah Katz

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

*Chair Slater* called the March 26, 2008 meeting of the SGCAC to order at 9: 05 a.m. in the Growth Management Conference Room B-207 and it was noted a quorum was present.

II. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Chair Slater* noted that guest *Jim Benson* was in attendance again and *Mr. Leach* noted that Mr. Benson has turned in his application to become a member of the Committee.

III. **COMMITTEE DEFINE 501(C)3 REQUIREMENTS TO IMPLEMENT COMMUNITY PLAN**

*Chair Slater* suggested that the discussion of the 501 (c) 3 application come first on the agenda; she invited guest John McGuire to advise the group on the requirements for applying for that tax status and how CCT may be helpful. *Mr. Leach* asked what was the Charter and the intent of the CCT, and how it relates to the Community Plan to improve his understanding of why this matter is on the agenda.

Guest *John McGuire* respectfully submitted to the Committee that the agenda item is out of order, based on the Community Plan policy which calls for the Committee to develop an annual budget and “assist the SGC 501 (c) (3) corporation in seeking the necessary funding sources of the Plan’s implementation.” He stated that the keyword “assist” implied to him working together with the CCT, not the role of oversight with regard to the CCT; establishing requirements for the CCT would be an oversight role, and therefore this agenda item is out of order. *Mr. McGuire* further noted that he was here to state that the CCT Board is not requesting any assistance from the Advisory Committee, and that they are continuing their negotiations with the Cove Connector.

*Mr. McGuire* then referenced item 9 of the policies which refers to monitoring threatened properties, review possible acquisitions, monitor budgets, seek outside funds and prepare grant applications; in this instance he focused on the language “seek outside funds and prepare grant applications” as having been a point of difference between Chair Slater and the CCT for some time. He emphasized that seeking funds and preparing grant applications is therefore an Advisory Committee role which may be delegated to sub-committees; he

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noted that the Cove Connector served in this sub-committee role, and he reviewed the Cove Connector mission. He also described the negotiations between Cove Connector and CCT and stated that he felt they were close to an agreement.

**Mr. McGuire** said that seeing this item on the agenda was upsetting and that the proposed discussion is disruptive in terms of where the group is now. **Ms. Chattinger** commented that she felt the process was getting caught up in semantics and little things that were turning into deterrents to the rest of the committee. She described how she saw the role of the Cove Connector and the hope that CCT could support them in their activities, both in fund-raising as well as management of donations.

**Chair Slater** responded regarding her association with the CCT and her point of view on the history of the fund-raising efforts involving CCT with reference to various documents she had archived. **Guest Sarah Katz** suggested that the discussion should "start from today" rather than go back through the history; it was also agreed that the CCT was established to raise funds to implement the community plan, particularly because some grants are only available to 501(c) (3) organizations. Likewise, there was agreement that the role of the Advisory Committee is not that of an "overseer" but rather to coordinate, prioritize and support the implementation of the plan, part of which is working with the CCT. The appropriate subject now is how to get to where it doesn't take so long to negotiate an agreement. **Mr. Leach** stated this had answered his question about the role of the CCT, and agreed the focus should be on "today forward."

The question posed to CCT, through Mr. McGuire, was "does the CCT want to undertake the responsibility to look for funding for whatever projects the Advisory Committee has indicated it wishes to fund." **Mr. McGuire** responded that CCT is willing to work with the Cove Connector, and referring to their Memo of Understanding, clarified that if it comes to applying for a grant, the CCT would be available to work with them. **Chair Slater** asked for further clarification, e.g., does this mean CCT won't be taking the lead; **Mr. McGuire** said that the way it has operated in the past, CCT does not take the lead, but expects that the project group will do that, and that this stance is partly a reflection of the limitation of resources. Further discussion ensued on these issues. The group agreed that completion of the uniform agreement was of paramount importance to the efficiency of fund-raising efforts in the future; **Chair Slater** suggested that the finalizing of the agreement might move faster if the process was not being conducted primarily via email, and **Mr. Leach** agreed, suggesting that a time and place for negotiations be set. **Mr. McGuire** and **Ms. Chattinger** noted that such a meeting was already set for this evening.

#### IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Mr. Leach** made a motion to accept the minutes of the February 27, 2008 meeting, as corrected, second by **Ms. Chattinger**.

#### V. OLD BUSINESS

##### Zoning and FLUM; Stormwater Report

**Mr. Leach** noted that there was nothing new to report on the Zoning/FLUM matters; as previously, further action awaits changes to the Deed Restrictions. He noted that a meeting had been scheduled with an attorney during the second week of April at which this issue, along with others, would be discussed.

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On the subject of Stormwater, **Mr. Leach** noted he had attended the most recent meeting as a representative of the SGCAC; one issue that was covered was the community's understanding that the County was supposed to be testing the waters within the South Gulf Cove canal system. It turns out that this work had been done previously under a DEP order which was rescinded about five years ago; samples were collected but not analyzed.

**Mr. Leach** further stated that he had learned that the University of Florida has a program called "Lake Watch" under which they will send a staff member to educate the public about gathering water samples and having those samples analyzed by the University. As a condition of participation, the University requires a minimum one-year commitment from volunteers who will be doing the collecting once a month. **Mr. Leach** said he had advised the Yacht Club and Clarence Brosmer, Mike Post and Abe Wolson of the program, and also gave the same information to the HOA; he is starting to get contacts from community members interested in helping gather the water samples, and noted that there will also need to be a Chairman to coordinate the efforts from the HOA standpoint. **Mr. Leach** noted that the University's website has a lengthy manual which discusses the testing program and describes what substances are tested for in the water; he noted that no one has ever indicated if there are any particular contaminants they are concerned about. Further discussion ensued about joining the testing program.

**Chair Slater** said that she had visited an environmental office near the airport where the old test results were stored; these were very old results predating the formation of the Advisory Committee. She thought there may be information there about what areas were tested.

**Mr. Leach** said he had mentioned the proliferation of water lettuce to Ms. Musselman at the Department of Public Works and that the County did subsequently spray those plants which can cause the dead plant material to sink to the bottom and decompose there. Normally, this material would need to be raked out; if there was a flow barrier at the 771/Butterford Waterway bridge, it would prevent that material from coming into the SGC canal system, and the material could be raked out at that point. **Ms. Musselman** agreed that would be a good idea and said she would investigate the MSBU system to determine if there was money to accomplish that work. Guest **Jim Benson** said he believed that such a barrier had already been installed within a mile or so of the location Mr. Leach was referring to, within the last two years.

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

**Ms. Chattinger** reported that Chief Didio has agreed to come to the April HOA to discuss the statistics on calls and response times. With regard to FireWise, she reported that a small grant had already been obtained to be put toward education, which will enable FireWise to create a brochure for the community. A larger grant is also possible and is being pursued, for cutting down invasive species in the community. **Chair Slater** asked how grant monies work; does the money come in only after the work is done and paid for, as reimbursement? **Ms. Chattinger** said that monies would be going to the County, would then be dispensed by the County to the contractors doing the work. She also noted that this grant does not require 501 (c) (3) status, but other grants will require that status.

Regarding Cove Connector bicycle and pedestrian pathways, **Ms. Chattinger** reported that the Leprecaun Madness Month fundraiser was very successful, raising approximately \$300. Further discussion ensued about these fundraising efforts.

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**Ms. Chattinger** also reported that the eBay store was progressing. There will be a brunch on April 6<sup>th</sup>; this monthly event will be held on the first Sunday of each month from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. These events will be an opportunity for education and recruitment, and there will be space for tables from which information can be dispensed.

Finally, **Ms. Chattinger** noted the formation of a South Gulf Cove Scenic Highway subcommittee; their first meeting has been held, attended by Barb Holmes (HOA), Bob Dratch (Yacht Club), Maria Miller (FireWise Cove Connector), Irma Whitmer (Crafty Girls), Paul Chattinger (CCT), and Yvonne and April also attended.

**Chair Slater** asked if someone had attended the Scenic Highway committee meeting and, if so, what the outcome of that meeting was; **Ms. Chattinger** responded that she, Yvonne and Maria had attended the March 4<sup>th</sup> meeting, and noted that they hadn't even gotten the full paper documentation that the designation had been officially bestowed. Until the official designation and the 501 (c) (3) status are in place, there will not be an opportunity to pursue grants. Partnering with CCT was discussed as an interim strategy; the committee will be completely funded by grants. The committee is discussing ways to promote themselves and increase community awareness about the options for beautification. One of the first activities would be a road clean-up event, in which the committee would partner with the community, including Gulf Cove. South Gulf Cove members were urged to sign up to be part of the clean-up committee; she feels that there needs to be a SGC presence on this committee because of the opportunity to weigh in on how grant monies are used, specifically thinking of SR 771. Those who have agreed to go and represent the SGC community are Marie Miller, Paul Chattinger and possibly also Barb Holmes; they will report on the meeting outcome, and will have voting rights on the committee.

**Ms. Yvonne Erimiro** spoke regarding grant possibilities available through state or federal sources and non-profit sources; she concluded that the deadline period for submitting for the grant monies, even if some were deemed to be attainable, was fast approaching and might not be possible at this time. But these are annual grants that can be applied for in the future, once the group's eligibility has been confirmed. Further discussion ensued on these possibilities.

**Mr. Leach** offered some information pertinent to FireWise; Rotonda Sands is mulching all the pepper trees in that subdivision, using the contractor Forestry Resources whose bid was substantially less than the other bids (\$200,000 vs. \$300,000). Using that as a basis to calculate what a similar removal in SGC would cost, Mr. Leach came up with a figure of roughly \$1.5 million. The comment was made that \$1.5 million was a lot of money for what would be essentially a temporary fix (mulching is not eradicating); others observed that a temporary fix was probably the best that could be done, as a chemical eradication would be substantially more expensive. Further discussion ensued on this matter.

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

**Ms. Ermirio** reported on the Parks Master Plan, which she had just received in hard copy from Planner Jie Shao; she noted she had not had time to review it.

It was noted that removal of vegetation from the banks along the Linear Park had commenced, according to the Park update.

**Chair Slater** stated that she had sent a notification to all County contacts that Ms. Ermirio is now the SGCAC person working on Parks; she noted that responses were slow in coming

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back. **Ms. Chattinger** mentioned the anticipated further cutbacks in County staffing and the concern this causes for the departments (Parks and Rec in particular) that SGCAC works with frequently.

Regarding the Boat Ramp park, **Chair Slater** reported that the landscape design may be reworked, and that riprap may be placed on the banks, pending the proper permitting.

On the subject of Land Acquisition, **Chair Slater** noted she had received an email from Real Estate Services regarding property near McAlister Park on Appleton Blvd., which the group had decided was the first priority. There are four lots, three owned by one person, and that person has agreed to an exchange of 3 county-owned lots for his SGC lots. The fourth lot is still being researched. Further discussion ensued on other targeted land acquisition prospects.

With regard to the budget, **Chair Slater** reported that she, Jack Payne and Tony Ermirio had attended the County workshop on March 4<sup>th</sup>, but did not have an opportunity to speak at that meeting. The prospects for consolidation of road maintenance projects seemed to be much more costly to citizens than the current methods; the Board directed the contractors who made the presentation to gather more information and present an updated report, but the reaction seemed to be very negative. It seemed clear there would be no consolidation in this coming fiscal year, and perhaps none at all, given the intractable issues of road parity, as noted by **Mr. Leach**. Further discussion ensued on the budget, including review of funds available for the entranceway signs. **Chair Slater** observed that since there was no proposed increase in the MSBU rates, it seemed likely to be approved; the money would be available on October 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Chair Slater** responded to comments about the Forestry Grant also being usable for entranceways work, saying that she would appreciate direction on a process between SGCAC and CCT, specifically what would CCT need from SGCAC to start work on such an option; **Mr. McGuire** suggested that a separate meeting between the two groups would be advisable to work that out.

Turning to the subject of Entranceways, **Ms. Ermirio** spoke about the results of a recent meeting, which included picking tiles and colors, and adjusting the layout of the signs to make them less expensive. Further discussion ensued on design issues.

Finally, **Chair Slater** reported on a meeting at her house regarding Leadership Council activities and whether they should continue to be held; the consensus was for one more meeting in July and decide at that time whether this particular group would be ongoing, or whether its efforts were duplicative of other committees.

A brief recess was called at 10:56; the meeting resumed at 11:04; Planner Jie Shao joined the group.

## VI. **NEW BUSINESS**

### Penny Tax Issues

**Planner Jie Shao** acknowledged receipt of material from the group concerning how to get their funding requests considered for a portion of the Penny Tax; she said she had a question for the group: Did the group do their own research? The Penny Tax is intended to fund projects countywide; the group's proposition is for an amenity for the SGC neighborhood. So, before taking the matter to the Director, **Ms. Shao** needed to

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understand if the matter had been researched and was of a nature to be considered. **Ms. Chattinger** said the group had met with Ian Dack of DPW and also with Commissioner Moore, and they understood that sidewalks were definitely within the scope of uses for the Penny Tax. **Chair Slater** also noted that DPW Director Tom O'Kane had advised the group to get the sidewalk initiative identified as a Penny Tax project; it is the staff liaison who creates the definition of the proposal. **Ms. Chattinger** noted that the sidewalks would join to the Pioneer Trail and would therefore be of benefit to all County citizens.

**Ms. Shao** also recounted her discussion with Ms. Musselman on water testing; the group provided Ms. Shao with one of the Lake Watch brochures discussed earlier in the meeting.

### Community Plan Review

It was noted that all information had now been added into the spreadsheet; a new review was proposed in order to bring the newer committee members up to speed. **Ms. Shao** said that once the table was filled-in, she would take a copy in order to update the master table. The group proceeded to work on filling-in the table.

**Ms. Ermirio** raised an issue about the inadvisability of new driveway construction including pavers extending beyond the homeowner's property line, since other regulations specify that where the driveway crosses a sidewalk or extends into the right-of-way, it must be of concrete. She felt that this information should be better publicized so that no one ends up having to rip out pavers. It was pointed out that the requirement for concrete was at a point that would not be the homeowner's property, but County right-of-way; theoretically, no one should be putting pavers on the public rights-of-way. **Chair Slater** commented that it would be good for the Architectural Review Committee to publish this type of information for the benefit of new homeowners who will be building; she suggested the information be provided to John Robinson for further dissemination.

### VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

*None.*

### VIII. STAFF COMMENTS

*None.*

### IX. MEMBER COMMENTS

*None.*

### X. NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the **South Gulf Cove Advisory Committee** is **Wednesday, April 23, 2008** from 9:00 a.m. until 12 noon in the **Growth Management Conference Room (B-207)**.

At 12:09 a.m. **Chair Slater** stated: There being no further business to come before this committee, I declare the meeting adjourned.