

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
PINELLAS PLANNING COUNCIL  
November 13, 2013

The Pinellas Planning Council (PPC) met in regular session on this date in the County Commission Assembly Room, Pinellas County Courthouse, 315 Court Street, Clearwater, Florida, at 3:32 P.M. with the following members present:

Jim Kennedy, Chairman, City of St. Petersburg Councilmember  
David O. Archie, Vice-Chairman, City of Tarpon Springs Mayor  
Samuel Henderson, Secretary, City of Gulfport Mayor  
Joe Ayoub, City of Safety Harbor Mayor  
Harriet K. Crozier, City of Largo Commissioner  
Dave Eggers, City of Dunedin Mayor  
Doreen Hock-DiPolito, City of Clearwater Councilmember  
Joanne “Cookie” Kennedy, City of Indian Rocks Beach Vice-Mayor  
Peggy O’Shea, Pinellas County School Board Member  
Marvin Shavlan, City of St. Pete Beach Commissioner

Not Present

John Morroni, Treasurer, County Commissioner  
Doug Bevis, City of Oldsmar Mayor  
Jerry Mullins, City of Pinellas Park Vice-Mayor

Also Present

Michael C. Crawford, Interim Executive Director, PPC  
Linda Fisher, PPC Staff  
Christopher Mettler, PPC Staff  
Michael Schoderbock, PPC Staff  
Carolyn Shoemaker, PPC Staff  
Jewel White, Managing Assistant County Attorney  
Other interested individuals  
Laura Todd, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk  
(Minutes by Helen Groves, Senior Board Reporter)

AGENDA

- I. CALL TO ORDER
  - A. Invocation and Pledge
  - B. Identification of Members Present

- II. CONSENT AGENDA
  - A. Minutes of October 9, 2013 Meeting
  - B. Financial Statement for October 2013
  - C. CPA Actions – November 2013
  - D. Annexation Report – October 2013
  - E. Preliminary December 2013 Agenda
  - F. Correspondence
  
- III. PUBLIC HEARINGS - To begin at 3:00 P.M. or as soon thereafter as agenda permits
  - A. Public Hearing Format Announcement and Oath
  - B. Amendments to the Countywide Future Land Use Plan:
    - Subthreshold Amendments - None
    - Regular Amendments - None
  - C. Amendment of the County Rules Re: Preservation of Industrial Lands (Continued from October)
  
- IV. REPORTS/OTHER ACTION
  - A. The PPC’s Greenlight Pinellas Support Resolution No. 13-5
  - B. Countywide Plan Map – 2013 Annual Update
  - C. Enterprise Geographic Information System (EGIS) Update
  
- V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ITEMS
  - A. PPC/MPO Unification Update (Verbal)
  - B. Meeting Schedule for 2014
  - C. Year-End Budget Report – Fiscal Year 2012-2013 (FY 13)
  - D. Modification and Renewal of Agreement for Planning Services with Tindale-Oliver and Associates
  - E. Verbal Reports
  
- VI. OTHER COUNCIL BUSINESS
  - A. Chairman/Member Items
    - Nominating Committee for Election of 2014 Officers
  
- VII. ADJOURNMENT

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Kennedy called the meeting to order at 3:32 P.M. and welcomed those in attendance.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

The Invocation was given by Councilmember Hock-DiPolito, following which she led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**IDENTIFICATION OF MEMBERS PRESENT**

At the Chairman's request, a roll call was taken in which the members introduced themselves.

**CONSENT AGENDA - APPROVED**

Chairman Kennedy presented the Consent Agenda items as follows:

- A. Minutes of the October 9, 2013 Council Meeting
- B. Financial Statement for October 2013
- C. CPA Actions for November 2013
- D. Annexation Report for October 2013
- E. Preliminary December 2013 Agenda
- F. Correspondence

Commissioner Crozier moved, seconded by Councilmember Hock-DiPolito and carried unanimously, that the Consent Agenda be approved (Vote 10-0).

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

- A. Public Hearing Format Announcement and Oath

Upon request by the Chairman, all persons planning to give testimony were duly sworn by the Deputy Clerk.

- B. Amendments to the Countywide Future Land Use Plan

**SUBTHRESHOLD AMENDMENTS**

None

**REGULAR AMENDMENTS**

None

C. AMENDMENT OF THE COUNTYWIDE RULES RE: PRESERVATION OF INDUSTRIAL LANDS (CONTINUED FROM OCTOBER 2013 PPC MEETING) – ADOPTED RESOLUTION NO. 13-3 RECOMMENDING TRANSMITTAL TO THE COUNTYWIDE PLANNING AUTHORITY; SEPARATELY REQUESTED EVALUATION AND REPORT ON PROPOSED FUNDING SCENARIO FOR PROTECTION OF INDUSTRIAL PARCELS

Mr. Crawford related that some comments and queries were made at the Planners Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting last month that led the PPC to continue the hearing to this meeting to allow staff time to confirm its recommendation; that Ms. Fisher would review why the preservation of industrial lands has become such a relevant issue and would review the data used in making the employment projections; and that Mr. Mettler would provide details of the proposed amendment to the Countywide Rules.

Ms. Fisher pointed out that manufacturing employment is a very important part of the local economy; and that Pinellas County has about 30,000 manufacturing employees earning above-average wages, more than any other single county in the Tampa Bay region and more than Hillsborough, Pasco, and Hernando Counties combined. She stated that the discussion about preserving industrial land began in 2005 with the Pinellas by Design visioning effort to prepare the county for the effects of reaching build-out; that a team of consultants, including an economist, was assembled to assess the county's long-term future; that the team advised that it would be a struggle just to maintain the current level of economic vitality; and that employment targets were established for jobs and income that the county would need to meet to offset the expected decline.

Ms. Fisher stated that the team determined that land use decisions have a direct bearing on the economic future of the county; that for a local government, the greatest economic benefit to the community comes from industrial and office land use, which is the least profitable kind of land use for an individual land owner; that land owners try to convert industrial land for sale as residential or retail because it is more profitable for them; and that if industrial land is not protected, tax revenue from businesses will decline and the burden of paying for public services will shift to the residential sector and to individual citizens. Ms. Fisher related that as a result of Pinellas by Design, the PPC took several actions, including amending the Countywide Rules to remove industrial conversion amendments from qualifying as sub-threshold amendments and adopting Resolution No. 06-3 to guide the valuation of industrial conversion amendments.

Ms. Fisher discussed the 2008 Target Employment and Industrial Land Use Study (TEILS), noting that the purpose of the study was (1) to determine whether enough suitable land remains to continue to attract and retain businesses needed to keep the economy viable and (2) to

generally guide land use and economic development policy. She indicated that TEILS confirmed the importance of protecting industrial land and identified the types of employers and industry clusters that would bring the greatest economic benefit to Pinellas County, both high-intensity primary targets, such as Jabil Circuit and Franklin Templeton, which bring revenue into the County, pay high wages, are relatively clean, and attract other such employers, and secondary targets, such as Walmart, grocery stores, pharmacies, and gas stations that tend to follow the primary employers because of the customer base. She indicated that the TEILS target of 182,000 new jobs by 2025 remains viable and the figures remain reliable and fit with the projections of the Florida Agency of Workforce Innovation projections; that the report determined that, conservatively, 4,000 acres would be needed to support the growth, mostly for industrial and land office uses; and that industrial land protects target employers from competition with retail and residential uses and indirectly supports the larger business community. Ms. Fisher indicated that conclusions drawn from TEILS include:

- The existing supply of viable industrial land should be protected, more intense building allowed, and accommodations made so target employers can use other types of land.
- The conversion of industrial land would not be prohibited, but the Council must consider the long-term economic impact when deciding if conversion is appropriate.

Ms. Fisher indicated that in response to TEILS, the Council decided that the findings would be implemented as fully as possible in the update of the Countywide Plan and, in the interim, adopted Resolution 06-3, which has guidelines for evaluating industrial land conversions. She related that the recent Safety Harbor case, which was approved by the PPC but denied by the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) acting as the Countywide Planning Authority (CPA), demonstrated that Resolution 06-3 is not strong enough alone to protect industrial land and a more regulatory document is needed, hence the amendment to the Countywide Rules being presented today.

Mr. Crawford discussed the concerns and suggestions the PAC had, including: (1) a proposal for a de minimus criterion, whereby industrial parcels under a specified acreage threshold would not be required to be preserved, (2) the relevance of the pre-recession data and employment projections provided in TEILS, (3) include market issues, such as price and length of time on the market, in the criteria, and (4) include both current and proposed use categories in the criteria; whereupon, in summary, Mr. Crawford related that staff has addressed the majority of PAC concerns, but did not agree that all could or should be addressed.

Noting that the proposed ordinance reiterates that preservation of industrial land must be the top priority, Mr. Mettler provided a brief presentation regarding definitions and

clarification for the terms used in the conversion criteria, and outlined the five criteria to be used when changing industrial land to other uses as follows:

1. Targeting employment opportunities.
2. Amendment site characteristics, including size, configuration, physical characteristics and the ability to accommodate access, loading, and other site improvements.
3. Amendment area characteristics, including relation to surrounding nearby uses and plan classifications.
4. Supporting transportation and infrastructure characteristics, including access, water, sewer, stormwater, and parking.
5. Supporting redevelopment plans and/or special area plans.

Thereupon, Mr. Crawford read the following whereas clause relating to the cumulative effect of year-to-year incremental conversion of industrial lands to other uses, and asked that the Council accept the clause as an addition to the ordinance:

*Whereas, the Council is aware of the cumulative effect of the year-to-year incremental conversion of industrial lands to other categories, resulting in significantly less land to accommodate target employers, and in part has adopted these criteria to address this incremental loss.*

PAC Chairman Lauren Matzke discussed concerns of the PAC members, noting that the item was approved with one change and the change was that both current and proposed categories would be included in the analysis; and that the vote was 8 to 2, with the Cities of Largo and Dunedin dissenting.

In response to query by Commissioner Crozier, Ms. Matzke indicated that the length of time a piece of industrial land is on the market before the owner is allowed to change the designation is a concern of planners. Mr. Crawford related that planners are not realtors; that the current marketing conditions are fueling the industrial use conversion requests; that other types of real estate are being marketed without being sold due to the economic downturn; that how the property is marketed plays a part; and that too many variables exist to develop a market criteria; whereupon, Mayor Archie expressed concern that the issue is not being considered, noting that there are many such properties in Tarpon Springs; and Mr. Crawford related that marketing would be considered when balancing the five approved criteria; and that he would like for the Council to retain flexibility.

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Gordon Beardslee, Division Manager, Pinellas County Planning Department, indicated that his department supports what is being proposed today.

Pinellas County Economic Development Director Mike Meidel indicated that he supports the proposal and is appreciative of the built-in flexibility. He referenced several residential and central business district properties that have sat empty for a considerable period of time, and indicated that while he appreciates Mayor Archie's concerns, any land use can encounter the problem; that the focus should be on why the property is a good industrial site rather than why it has not sold, and whether it is suitable for the types of jobs the county is trying to attract. He indicated that the term *industrial* is a bit of a misnomer that the update of the Countywide Plan will change, as many of the target industries are office uses, such as information technology and financial services; that as to the concern of the study being outdated, the situation has worsened during the recession due to obsolete buildings growing older, making industrial land even more in demand; that future growth cannot be based on where real estate is trending; and that the goal is for the county to build and grow as it has in the past by creating opportunities for employers to bring in new money and increase wages so that everyone can benefit from the increased economic opportunities; whereupon, Mr. Crawford discussed creating a mechanism to close the gap between the value of industrial land and land zoned for other uses.

Chairman Kennedy related that this proposal, while it has difficult criteria, does not ban the conversion of industrial as the prior resolution basically did; and suggested that the County develop a fund to purchase and put together industrial land pieces and find a way to share in the windfall and offset the loss when industrial land changes to a multi-family designation, and Mr. Meidel concurred, noting that a mitigation bank for the loss of industrial land would be a way to assemble attractive industrial parcels; whereupon, Chairman Kennedy requested that staff evaluate his plan.

In response to queries by Mayor Archie, Mr. Meidel indicated that the vast majority of the land available in the county is zoned residential and discussed how to encourage the redevelopment of older housing rather than converting industrial land. Vice-Mayor Cookie Kennedy indicated that the PPC and similar boards are looking to the future of the county. Mayor Eggers expressed concern that the County Commissioners unanimously disregarded the PPC vote on the recent Safety Harbor case, saying that the cities have a vested right to dictate their own destiny; and suggested that the County should purchase property it wants to remain industrial, noting that there is a property in the City of Dunedin that would benefit from a more flexible policy; whereupon, Mr. Crawford stated that he understands that local government issues are important and there are many cases where they will prevail, and should; and reiterated that the proposal today allows the Council more flexibility, and Mr. Meidel concurred.

School Board Member O'Shea related that the ultimate goal is high skill, high wage job creation and how and if that can happen, noting the need for cohesive planning. Mr. Meidel concurred, and described how his department targets the industries it wants to bring to the county; whereupon, Commissioner Shavlan asked for more information about the parcels mentioned by Mayors Eggers and Archie, and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Shavlan queried whether the PPC could approve the proposal before it today and direct staff to work towards solving the members' other concerns; and Mayor Henderson, saying the current proposal is more lenient, indicated that he supports the proposal, noting that it can be changed again if it proves not to work and cautioning against putting a time limit on property land use change.

No one appeared in response to the Chairman's call for citizens wishing to be heard; whereupon, he closed the public hearing.

Thereupon, Vice-Mayor Cookie Kennedy moved, seconded by Mayor Henderson, that Resolution No. 13-3 be approved recommending approval of the Amendment of the Countywide Rules re preservation of industrial lands, to include the new Whereas clause. Upon roll call, the motion carried unanimously (Vote 10 – 0).

In response to the Chairman's call for a motion, Commissioner Shavlan moved, seconded by Mayor Archie and carried unanimously, that staff evaluate and report back on the Chairman's recommendation that the County develop a fund to purchase and assemble industrial land pieces (Vote 10-0).

Following the vote and in response to a recommendation by Mayor Eggers, Mr. Crawford agreed that staff would reconsider making the criteria quantifiable, as well as qualitative; and that he would take the suggestion to the Board of County Commissioners.

#### REPORTS AND OTHER ACTION

- A. The Pinellas Planning Council's Greenlight Pinellas Support Resolution No. 13-5 – Adopted
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Mr. Crawford stated that the Greenlight Pinellas Plan is in a form ready to support by the entities involved in the Advisory Committee for Pinellas Transportation (ACPT), which

includes the PPC; and that staff is recommending the Council review and approve Resolution No. 13-5 in support of the plan, with an added Whereas clause recognizing that the ACPT approved a resolution to advance the plan, and changing the language in the last Whereas clause to show that the financial plan has been conducted.

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At this time, 4:55 P.M., Mayor Ayoub left the meeting.

\* \* \*

Commissioner Crozier moved, seconded by School Board Member O’Shea, that Resolution No. 13-5 be approved. Upon call for the vote, the motion carried unanimously (Vote 9-0).

- B. Countywide Plan Map Update – 2013 Annual Update – Adopted Resolution No. 13-6 and Authorized Transmittal to the Countywide Planning Authority for Filing as Official Record Copy

Upon presentation by Mr. Schoderbock, Commissioner Shavlan moved, seconded by Mayor Archie and carried unanimously, that Resolution No. 13-6 be adopted accepting and authorizing filing with the Clerk the 2013 annual update of the Countywide Plan Map (Vote 9-0).

- C. Enterprise Geographic Information System (EGIS) Update – Deferred Due to Time Constraints

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ITEMS

- A. PPC/MPO Unification Update (Verbal) – Received

Mr. Crawford indicated that the Metropolitan Planning Organization has revised the reapportionment plan in order to provide clarification requested by the Florida Department of Transportation.

B. Meeting Schedule for 2014 - Approved

Upon presentation by Mr. Crawford, Mayor Eggers moved, seconded by Mayor Henderson and carried unanimously, that the meeting schedule for 2014 be approved (Vote 9-0).

C. Year-End Budget Report – Fiscal Year 2012-2013 (FY 13) - Received

Mr. Crawford presented the FY 13 Year-End Budget Report, noting that there is more revenue than expected and the contractual services line item went over budget by \$2,300.

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At this time, 5:00 P.M., Mayor Ayoub returned to the meeting.

\* \* \*

D. Modification and Renewal of Agreement for Planning Services with Tindale-Oliver and Associates – Approved

Mr. Crawford related that the firm of Tindale-Oliver has accomplished everything they were asked to do and have exhausted the allotted fund; that the firm will continue to be retained; and that the contract will be expanded and the scope broadened; whereupon, Commissioner Crozier moved, seconded by School Board Member O’Shea and carried, that the agreement be approved (Vote 10-0).

E. Verbal Reports

Mr. Crawford introduced his step-daughter Amy Hensel and Celine Zbinden, a Rotary Youth Exchange student sponsored by the Dunedin Rotary Club visiting from Switzerland; whereupon, Miss Zbinden expressed her surprise that Mr. Crawford is such a very important person (VIP).

OTHER COUNCIL BUSINESS

A. Chairman/Member Items

Nominating Committee for Election of 2014 Officers

Mayor Henderson indicated that his two-year term as the Inland Communities representative will be up in January; that he has enjoyed serving, has learned very much, and regrets that he was unable to serve on the new Unified Board; and that while he is willing to stay on the Board for another term if needed, it is time to pass the torch to the next person in line.

In response to Chairman Kennedy's call for two members to work with him on the nominating committee that will meet directly after the meeting, Mayor Eggers moved, seconded by Commissioner Shavlan and carried unanimously, that Vice-Mayor Cookie Kennedy and Commissioner Crozier be appointed to serve on the nominating committee (Vote 10-0).

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:07 P.M.

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Chairman