

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
PINELLAS PLANNING COUNCIL
March 9, 2016

The Pinellas Planning Council (PPC) met in regular session in the County Commission Assembly Room, Pinellas County Courthouse, 315 Court Street, Clearwater, Florida, at 3:12 P.M. with the following members present:

Jim Kennedy, Chairman, City of St. Petersburg Councilmember
John Morroni, Vice-Chairman, Pinellas County Commissioner
Joanne "Cookie" Kennedy, Secretary, City of Indian Rocks Beach Commissioner
Representing Beach Communities
Doreen Hock-DiPolito, Treasurer, City of Clearwater Councilmember
Julie Ward Bujalski, City of Dunedin Mayor
Representing Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA)
Sandra Bradbury, City of Pinellas Park Mayor
Dave Eggers, Pinellas County Commissioner
Cliff Merz, City of Safety Harbor Commissioner
Representing Oldsmar, Safety Harbor, and Tarpon Springs
Kevin Piccarreto, Town of Belleair Deputy Mayor
Representing Inland Communities
Darden Rice, City of St. Petersburg Councilmember
Karen Williams Seel, Pinellas County Commissioner (Late Arrival)
John Tornga, City of Dunedin Commissioner

Not Present:

Michael Smith, City of Largo Commissioner

Also Present:

Whit Blanton, Executive Director, PPC
Michael C. Crawford, Planning Division Manager, PPC
Tina M. Jablon, PPC Staff
Chelsea D. Hardy, Assistant County Attorney
Other interested individuals
Lynn M. Abbott, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk

AGENDA

- I. CALL TO ORDER

- II. CONSENT AGENDA
 - A. Minutes of the February 10, 2016 Meeting
 - B. Financial Statement for February 2016
 - C. CPA Actions for February 2016
 - D. Preliminary April 2016 Agenda
 - E. Correspondence and PAC Agenda Action Sheet (Draft)

- 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 Plan Map
 - Subthreshold Amendments
None
 - Regular Amendments
 - 1. Case CW 16-8 – Pinellas County

- IV. REPORTS/OTHER ACTION
 - A. Amendment to PAC Bylaws

- V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ITEMS
 - A. Preliminary Budget Discussion for FY 17
 - B. Verbal Reports

- VI. OTHER COUNCIL BUSINESS
 - A. Chairman/Member Items

- VII. ADJOURNMENT

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Kennedy called the meeting to order at 3:12 P.M. and welcomed those in attendance.

CONSENT AGENDA – APPROVED

Chairman Kennedy presented the Consent Agenda items, as follows:

- A. Minutes of the February 10, 2016 Meeting
- B. Financial Statement for February 2016
- C. CPA Actions for February 2016
- D. Preliminary April 2016 Agenda
- E. Correspondence and PAC Agenda Action Sheet (Draft)

Commissioner Morroni moved, seconded by Councilmember Hock-Dipolito and carried, that Consent Agenda Items A through E be approved (Vote 11–0).

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 Plan Map

SUBTHRESHOLD AMENDMENTS - None

REGULAR AMENDMENTS

PUBLIC HEARING: CASE CW 16-8, A PROPOSAL BY PINELLAS COUNTY TO AMEND THE COUNTYWIDE PLAN MAP FROM EMPLOYMENT (E) AND TARGET EMPLOYMENT CENTER OVERLAY (TEC) TO RESIDENTIAL LOW MEDIUM (RLM) – APPROVED

Pursuant to legal notice published in the February 20, 2016 issue of the *Tampa Bay Times* as evidenced by affidavit of publication filed with the Clerk, public hearing was held on Case CW 16-8, a proposal by Pinellas County to amend the Countywide Plan Map from E and TEC to RLM, re 1.1 acre m.o.l., located at the southwest corner of 135th Place North and Palm Way.

Mr. Crawford referred to aerial and ground-level photographs and the zoning and land use map, pointed out the location of the subject area, and provided a brief overview of the application. He

related that the vacant property is proposed to be redeveloped with a single family residence at a later date.

Referring to the Countywide Plan Map and various photographs, Mr. Crawford discussed the surrounding land uses and related that the subject property is currently designated as E with a TEC Overlay; and that the County has determined that the site has the potential to accommodate employment-based uses and could be developed in a manner consistent with the Countywide Rules; whereupon, he indicated that staff's recommendation is to deny the land use change and retain the overlay, noting that the proposed amendment is not consistent with the Relevant Countywide Considerations.

Mr. Crawford indicated that the Countywide Rules encourage the maintenance of the Employment categories, noting that the Employment designation depicts areas that are developed with or appropriate to be developed with a wide range of employment uses, including primary industries that have customer bases beyond Pinellas County, and allows for flex space and uses that have minimal external impacts. He described the TEC Overlay area, noting that with the current configuration, the site could provide for Target Employment uses; and that the acreage is sufficient with good access, although it is located in a residential area.

Mr. Crawford discussed site access, noting that Palm Way accesses the site and travels down to Ulmerton Road; that industrial employment-type uses access Palm Way from the north and west; that residential uses access Palm Way from the east; and that Ulmerton Road is a Level of Service F, noting that if the designation was changed to Residential, the number of trips on that roadway would go from 236 potential daily trips down to 67.

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Commissioner Seel entered the meeting at 3:24 P.M.

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Mr. Crawford discussed staff's conclusions with regard to the five criteria used to determine whether the Employment category should be changed; whereupon, he reiterated his recommendation that the Council deny the requested change to Residential Low Medium and retain the Employment category and the Target Employment Center Overlay on the site.

Discussion ensued, and in response to concerns and queries by the members, Commissioners Seel and Morroni briefly explained the reasons behind the Board of County Commissioners' unanimous approval of the amendment; whereupon, Commissioner Eggers related that the

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subject area is struggling as an industrial use due to poor access, noting that the Target Industry designation doesn't necessarily fit the area.

Responding to query by Mayor Bradbury, Mr. Crawford explained that a property designated RLM allows for ten units per acre, noting that the subject site is 1.1 acre; and that the request is for one single family home. At the request of the Chairman, he briefly described the process for approval of an amendment at the local and countywide levels and related possible outcomes for approval or denial of the application.

In response to query by Chairman Kennedy, Planners Advisory Committee (PAC) Chair Marcie Stenmark indicated that PAC had voted 10 to 1 to recommend denial and commented that the majority felt that the property could transition to future employment; that it is important to preserve the site as Employment; and that access could potentially be provided from other sites, rather than from the residential street.

Upon the Chairman's call for the applicant local government, Planning Director Gordon Beardslee appeared and related that the applicant lives on the east portion of the property and wishes to build a home for his daughter for care-taking purposes on the west portion; that the parcel has two land use designations; that the east side is designated Residential and the west is Employment; and that a zoning overlay recently approved by the County Commission restricts the subject property to one single family home. He indicated that traffic leaving the area is prohibited from turning east on Ulmerton Road, due to its recent widening; that there is a 90-degree turn where 135th Place turns north into Palm Way; and that there is only 60 feet of frontage, which is a limitation on developing the area as an employment use.

In response to queries by the members, Mr. Beardslee clarified that the applicant combined the parcels several years ago; that the property was originally amended from Commercial and Agricultural to Industrial and then to Employment; that the property was never categorized as Residential; and that the applicant has lived on the property for over 40 years. He explained the difference between a zoning overlay and a development agreement, and indicated that the zoning overlay could only be modified through the public hearing process, noting that the restriction travels with the property.

Responding to the Chairman's call for proponents, Teresa Wescott Lavrinc, Largo, appeared and indicated that her father is the owner of the property, and explained the importance of living close so that she can care for him. She discussed the area's poor access and traffic issues, and informed the Board that her father has no intention of using the property for industrial purposes; and that converting the land to residential is a viable alternative use.

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Ralph Wescott, Largo, appeared and provided background information, noting that he built his house in 1967 and purchased the adjacent property in 1977; and that he combined the two properties and homesteaded the land due to high taxes. He related that he was led to believe that the rezoning would be no problem when the process started, and thanked the Board for consideration of his request.

No one appeared in response to the Chairman's call for opponents of the request.

Following discussion, Mayor Bradbury indicated that the Property Appraiser lists the property as one parcel, and Mr. Beardslee clarified that the property could be reverted back to Employment through the public hearing process if an owner wanted to sell it in the future.

Mr. Crawford indicated that PAC had discussed the reconfiguration of Ulmerton Road and that the other employment uses west of the site have the same access and turning configuration to confront as the subject parcel; that employment-based or industrial properties commonly have lower values and vacancies; and that more properties are being chosen for transition to residential development. In response to queries by Commissioner Tornga, he related that Pinellas County tries to maintain its Employment classification for economic purposes; that precedent may be set for parcels in north county from a Countywide Planning Map perspective; and that he has never experienced a situation similar to the current case.

Responding to queries by the members, Mr. Crawford provided a brief history of the property, noting that a house could not be built under the current Employment category.

Chairman Kennedy closed the public hearing; whereupon, Deputy Mayor Piccarreto moved, seconded by Mayor Bujalski, that Case CW 16-8 be approved, and discussion ensued regarding the uniqueness of the situation, the unity of title, the development restriction applied by the local government, and the PAC recommendation.

Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously (Vote 12-0).

Following the vote, Chairman Kennedy acknowledged the hard work of everyone involved throughout the process.

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Commissioner Seel left the meeting at 4:05 P.M.

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REPORTS AND OTHER ACTION

A. Amendment to PAC Bylaws

Mr. Blanton indicated there is a need to revise the bylaws, which have not been updated since 2014, which was prior to the Special Act unifying the Metropolitan Planning Organization and the PPC. He related that the changes will clarify how a quorum is achieved and clean up some non-controversial language; whereupon, Mr. Crawford noted that the changes will give PAC better direction and recognize the Board's expansion to 19 members, including representatives from the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority and the Department of Transportation.

Referring to the second paragraph of Section 4, Chairman Kennedy suggested that the last sentence be revised to read "...submitted to, and approved by, the Council on an annual basis, or as needed," to avoid having to vote on the item every year; whereupon, Commissioner Eggers moved, seconded by Mayor Bujalski and carried, that the amendment to the PAC Bylaws be approved as amended (Vote 11-0).

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ITEMS

A. Preliminary Budget Discussion for Fiscal Year 2017

Mr. Blanton provided a brief overview of the preliminary Fiscal Year 2017 budget, noting that the information is to be submitted to the County Office of Management and Budget by March 17, 2016. Referring to a chart titled *Unassigned Fund Balances*, a copy of which has been filed and made a part of the record, he related that the Council had directed staff to begin spending down the fund balance beginning in Fiscal Year 2010; and that, due to delays related to the unification and hiring of the Executive Director and increased property tax revenue, the balance began to rise in Fiscal Year 2015.

Mr. Blanton indicated that the Fiscal Year 2017 budget will continue the long-term trend of spending down the Unassigned Fund Balance; that the required ten percent contingency will increase due to the unification; and that the Fund is used to assist with cash flow for paying bills, noting that grants do not come in at a steady pace because of federal or state issues or changes in allocation methods and rules.

Mr. Blanton related that there is a good program in place to spend the unassigned dollars; that the PPC has brought an array of consultants on board; and that he is comfortable with reducing the

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millage rate from .0160 to .0150, noting that a further reduction could necessitate an increase as early as Fiscal Year 2018 if spending continues as expected.

Commissioner Eggers commended Mr. Blanton for considering the millage rate reduction and concurred with his proposal for a graduated reduction of the Unassigned Fund Balance. Commissioner Morroni congratulated Messrs. Blanton and Crawford for the good jobs that they are doing, noting that saving money is a big reason why the MPO and the PPC were combined. Mayor Bradbury agreed, cautioning the Council to keep a small amount of the Fund in reserves to help some of the smaller communities in case of an emergency, and Mr. Blanton discussed how the MPO and PPC work together and contribute to each other's success.

Thereupon, Councilmember Hock-Dipolito moved, seconded by Commissioner Tornga and carried unanimously, that the Preliminary Fiscal Year 2017 Budget be approved (Vote 11-0).

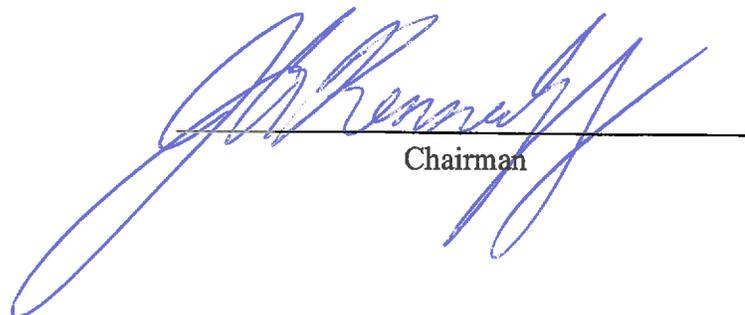
OTHER COUNCIL BUSINESS

Chairman/Member Items

The members thanked Deputy Mayor Piccarreto for his service on the Council.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:15 P.M.


Chairman