

SOUTH MIAMI DADE WATERSHED STUDY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Forty

January 26, 2006
John D. Campbell Agricultural Center
8:30 a.m. -1:30 p.m.

Report of Proceedings

WELCOME/CHAIR ANNOUNCEMENTS

The meeting was held at the John D. Campbell Agricultural Center in Homestead, Florida.

Roger Carlton, Chair, welcomed everyone.

Mr. Carlton made the following comments and announcements:

- Jamie Furgang, National Audubon Society, has been confirmed as a member of the Committee.
- Comments in Report of Proceedings
 - If an observer sends in a comment to be published in the Report of Proceedings, then a member sends an email "adopting" the observers comments as his/her own, that will be noted in the Report following the comment made, but will still be put with the "comments received subsequent to the meeting" section
- Mr. Carlton asked member, Charles Thibos to announce the upcoming Economics Workshop on January 31 from 10-12pm at the Fruit and Spice Park. All members are invited and encouraged to attend.

SFWMD Project Manager, Evan Skornick, announced that the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project will be holding stakeholder meetings presenting the Basis of Design Report on February 2 and 6, 2006. Mr. Skornick will email the details to facilitator Janice Fleischer for distribution to the members of the Committee.

Michael Davis, V.P. Keith and Schnars, announced that the next public meetings by the Consultant will be held February 21 and 22, 2006. Details will be send to Committee members who are strongly encouraged to attend one of the meetings.

Members present:

Roger Carlton, Chair
Ivonne Alexander Miami Dade AgriCouncil
Richard Alger, South Florida Potato Growers Exchange
Subrata Basu, Miami Dade Planning and Zoning*
Amy Condon, At-Large Member
Carlos Espinosa, Miami-Dade DERM*
Jamie Furgang, National Audubon Society
Louise King, Redland Citizen's Association

Mark Lewis, Biscayne National Park
William Losner, Greater Homestead/Florida City Chamber of Commerce
Bennie Lovett, Florida City
Carter McDowell, Building Industry Representative
Reed Olszack, Miami-Dade Agricultural Practices Board
Mark Oncavage, Sierra Club
Lawrence Percival, Kendall Federation of Homeowner Associations
Armando Perez, Florida Engineering Society
Bonnie Roddenberry, Sunny South Acres Homeowner's Association
Jorge Rodriguez, Miami Dade Water Department*
Mike Shehadeh, City of Homestead
Jane Spurling, Florida Nurserymen, Grower's and Landscape Association
Charles Thibos, Tropical Everglades Visitor Association

*Non-voting member

10 Observers were present at the meeting.

AGENDA REVIEW/GUIDELINES

Janice Fleischer, Facilitator, reviewed the Agenda for the day (Exhibit A).

All Reports of Proceedings of the Committee, Discussion Guidelines and Committee related information, can be found either on the Study website at SFRPC website at www.southmiamidadewatershedstudy.com or at <http://www.sfrpc.com/institute/watershed.htm>.

PROJECT MANAGER'S REPORT

Bob Daniels, Project Manager, presented his Project Manager's Report (Exhibit B).

PRESENTATION: UPDATED PREFERRED SCENARIO MAP

Michael Davis, Vice President, Keith and Schnars gave a short presentation on the methods used to develop the second version of the map for the Preliminary Preferred Scenario presented at this meeting for consideration by the Committee (Exhibit C).

Subsequent to Mr. Davis' presentation, members made the following comments:

1. When dots with circles are indicated on the map, please indicate what the distances are from the center.
2. Indicate on the map what the existing zoning is in each area shown.
3. Rather than calling areas "agriculture", call it "rural"

SMALL GROUP INSTRUCTIONS/FORMATION

The Facilitator introduced the Committee to the exercise to follow. Using the second version of the map revised by the Consultant, Members were divided into the same four small groups they were in at the January 12, 2006 meeting to review, comment and answer a set of questions based on the map. Each group was given a copy of the same map. The Facilitator distributed the group

instructions (Exhibit D), gave each member a copy of the questions and assigned groups to the members who had not attended the January 12 meeting. Working together for the next several hours, the members of the Committee answered the following questions:

1. With regard to the proposed urban expansion areas, what comments or concerns do you have? Note: approximately 30, 000 dwelling units (du) will be located in these areas.
2. Indicate on the map which agriculture areas, if any, should remain as agriculture until at least the year 2025, and record your comments below.
3. Indicate on the map and list below potential locations where new regional, local, and neighborhood parks could be located. In areas where very high densities are recommended, what are some innovative ways of providing open space?
4. Indicate on the map and list below any special places that should be preserved and/or showcased.
5. Does the map adequately set forth a basic outline of the preferred scenario? If not, how should it be revised?

SMALL GROUP REPORTS

GROUP 1: ARMANDO PEREZ, AMY CONDON, CARLOS ESPINOSA, LAWRENCE PERCIVAL, MARK ONCAVAGE

Listed below are the questions followed by the group's answers (if a question is not duplicated, it means there were no answers to that question by the group):

1. *With regard to the proposed urban expansion areas, what comments or concerns do you have?*
Note: approximately 30, 000 dwelling units (du) will be located in these areas.
 - a. To minimize densities in the proposed UEAs (urban expansion areas), go as close to 100% densities approved for the charrettes areas. (note: incorporate recommendations of East Kendall Charrette).
 - b. Infrastructure
 - i. Water
 - ii. Transit
 - iii. Schools
 - iv. Parks
 - v. Police/fire
 - c. funding-
 - i. raise ½ penny to full penny sales tax
 - d. Maintain wetlands north of Kendall Drive
 - e. CSX corridor as commuter and rapid transit (double decker)
 - f. SW 137th Avenue: increase density in (?), from blue to red- at at 1 unit per 5 acres
2. *Indicate on the map which agriculture areas, if any, should remain as agriculture until at least the year 2025, and record your comments below.*
 - a. Where farmland is displaced within all of UEAs, create receiver areas for farming to compensate (identify receiving areas-this supports eco-viability)
 - b. Identify the criteria to prioritize which agriculture areas on the map to save.
 - c. Show remaining agricultural areas adjacent to Everglades National Park (need to determine how large this could be)

3. *Indicate on the map and list below potential locations where new regional, local, and neighborhood parks could be located. In areas where very high densities are recommended, what are some innovative ways of providing open space?*
 - a. Miami Dade Parks and Open Space Master Plan
 - i. Influence recommendations to highlight areas of concern-East Kendall, West Kendall-prioritize usage
 1. Larry and Penny Thompson Park
 2. Homestead Airforce Base Park
 - b. Ludlam Trail (multipurpose)- the FEC corridor from MIA to Dadeland North-convert rails to trails
 - c. South Dade Greenways Plan- implementation, show on the map
 - d. Develop 240 acre HARB Park as a central park (needs money to do this)
 - e. Recommend level of service higher than current adoption of 2.75; a minimum of 3 acres/1000 residents; up to 4 acres/1000 residents
 - f. Wetlands restoration areas should incorporate access; i.e. Snake Warrior Island in Broward County- elevated trails
 - g. Create pet-friendly policy for parks
 - h. Create multipurpose areas along canal corridors
 - i. Create series of pocket parks, community gardens, median parks, safewalks, greenways/trails, connections to larger neighborhoods, community parks, in denser areas
4. *Indicate on the map and list below any special places that should be preserved and/or showcased.*
 - a. Horse Country
 - b. Historic-identify and connect with trail systems where possible
 - i. Pioneer homes
 - ii. Buildings
 - iii. Cauley Square
 - iv. Anderson Corner
 - v. Downtown Homestead
 - c. Attraction areas
 - i. Monkey Jungle
 - ii. Orchid Jungle (county park)
 - iii. Coral Castle (state)
 - d. Farmer's Market- 200th and Krome on NE corner, 190 acres of old trailer park
5. *Does the map adequately set forth a basic outline of the preferred scenario? If not, how should it be revised?*
 - a. Show South Dade greenways network (as proposed)
 - b. County parks make presentation to Watershed Committee re: open space Master Plan Process
 - i. Include on maps all existing (including municipalities) parks, EEL lands so that we can see the relationship with dense areas
 - c. Show historical and cultural sites on maps to help make it clear what needs to be preserved
 - d. Show CSX transit corridors more clearly; FEC trail
 - e. Show schools; must see relationship to parks, trails, density

GROUP 2: Mark Lewis, Bill Losner, Louise King, Jamie Furgang, Bennie Lovett

Listed below are the questions followed by the group's answers (if a question is not duplicated, it means there were no answers to that question by the group):

1. *With regard to the proposed urban expansion areas, what comments or concerns do you have?*
Note: approximately 30, 000 dwelling units (du) will be located in these areas.
 - a. *Shift the northern most section of north UEA (56th Street and 167 Avenue and 80th Street and 177 Avenue)*
 - b. *Move the UDB west from Tamiami Airport to 162nd Avenue (120th Street to 136 Street)*
 - c. *Middle UEA: move west boundary (147 Avenue) east to 142 Avenue and increase density within Blue Zone.*

GROUP 3 JANE SPURLING, JORGE RODRIGUEZ, CHARLES THIBOS, REED OLSZACK

Listed below are the questions followed by the group's answers (if a question is not duplicated, it means there were no answers to that question by the group):

1. *With regard to the proposed urban expansion areas, what comments or concerns do you have?*
Note: approximately 30, 000 dwelling units (du) will be located in these areas.
 - a. *The southernmost expansion area should be enlarged to handle the increase to commercial activities in the area to 132 Avenue.*
2. *Indicate on the map which agriculture areas, if any, should remain as agriculture until at least the year 2025, and record your comments below.*
 - a. *Emphasis should be on the utilization of government owned land such as Frog Pond, Homestead General Airport, Homestead Airbase, Rockey Glade, etc. They could be leased to agricultural producers. By concentrating growth to the central core of urban expansion areas it maintains "rural character" of the Redlands and does not encumber land owners with prospects with "de facto" down zoning by trying to "save agriculture". Let the market dictate the use.*
3. *Indicate on the map and list below potential locations where new regional, local, and neighborhood parks could be located. In areas where very high densities are recommended, what are some innovative ways of providing open space?*
 - a. *Parks should be located within the future wellfield study area and the west wellfield.*
 - b. *ATV park to be included close to Tamiami Airport*
 - c. *School and recreational parks(include parks within school property)*
 - d. *Utilize canal right of ways*
 - e. *Parks in the proximity of multi family units*
 - f. *Equestrian Park to be designated in the Redland*
 - g. *Parks in Naranja area*
4. *Indicate on the map and list below any special places that should be preserved and/or showcased.*
 - a. *Chekika park*
 - b. *Biscayne National Park*
 - c. *Blackpoint Marina*
 - d. *Deering Estate*
 - e. *Monkey Jungle*
 - f. *Fruit and Spice Park*
 - g. *Fairchild Tropical Garden*

- h. Montgomery Botanical Gardens
 - i. Pinecrest Gardens
 - j. USDA Chapman Field
 - k. TREC Research Center/Old Sandoy property? Across from TREC
 - l. Redland Elementary
 - m. Cauley Square
 - n. Girls and Boys Scout camp
5. *Does the map adequately set forth a basic outline of the preferred scenario? If not, how should it be revised?*
- a. Basically- yes
 - b. Where are the boundaries of Florida City?, Homestead?, Wetlands protection areas?, government lands?, school board owned lands?, etc. show on the map
 - c. What is the footprint of the CERP going to look like?
 - d. Show flood zones
 - e. Show all government/public owned areas on separate map.

GROUP 4: BONNIE RODDENBERRY, MIKE SHEHADEH, RICHARD ALGER, IVONNE ALEXANDER, CARTER MCDOWELL

Listed below are the questions followed by the group's answers (if a question is not duplicated, it means there were no answers to that question by the group):

1. *With regard to the proposed urban expansion areas, what comments or concerns do you have? Note: approximately 30, 000 dwelling units (du) will be located in these areas.*
 - a. Reserve and provide for the widening of Krome Avenue;
 - b. Reexamine CSX rail extension and SW 147 Avenue as a southerly extension of the 137 Avenue corridor
 - c. West wellfield expansion areas does not make sense north of Kendall Drive
2. *Indicate on the map which agriculture areas, if any, should remain as agriculture until at least the year 2025, and record your comments below.*
 - a. NONE: agriculture needs to take its natural course; "preservation areas" are counter productive to agriculture preservation
3. *Indicate on the map and list below potential locations where new regional, local, and neighborhood parks could be located. In areas where very high densities are recommended, what are some innovative ways of providing open space?*
 - a. Some land owned by the County near HARB should be used for a major new park facility with both regional and local facilities. A similar facility at the western end of Kendall Drive should be created possibly on the west wellfield lands.
4. *Indicate on the map and list below any special places that should be preserved and/or showcased.*
 - a. No additional areas other than already identified.
5. *Does the map adequately set forth a basic outline of the preferred scenario? If not, how should it be revised?*
 - a. Timing concerns-2025 vs. 2050

- b. The boundaries should follow a regular “straight” line boundary pattern unless there is a specific reason for the change.
- c. Westward “wetland restoration areas” need to be relocated to low areas possibly SW of Tamiami Airport
- d. Race track area needs to be reexamined and Homestead preservation areas should be excluded and other land substituted for it.
- e. Policies- 1. for mandatory extension water and sewer infrastructure; 2. County must conform zoning to whatever plan is recommended

OPEN DISCUSSION

Following the small group reports, the Facilitator led the group in an open discussion. The comments of the members were recorded:

- 1. This plan should have been called a “land plan” from the beginning.
- 2. Look at Atlantic Civil plans with regard to a need for housing/densities.
- 3. We need to separate out the maps into 2025 and 2050-going straight to 2050 is unrealistic.
- 4. The CERP footprint is important for us to know.
- 5. Get a hard copy of the map to all members
- 6. You can put parks, treatment areas, water treatment and storage of water along all the canals; in the future there may be new criteria for development in these areas.
- 7. It is easier to prevent the pollution of water than to treat it.
- 8. Transit corridors will not develop as quickly as they will be needed for 2025.
- 9. We should not accept that we must accept all growth and increase in the population whatever that entails.
- 10. Move the UEA south.
- 11. To improve water quality you need marsh lands that the water can flow through before getting to the Bay and it must trickle out not be pushed out in a rush
- 12. We need to see ALL of what CERP is looking at
- 13. We don’t want to be trapped by putting houses somewhere (facilitator’s note: presumably on the map?)
- 14. Rapid transit must be distinguished from public transportation; we need rapid transit along our corridors

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment was invited. One member of the public spoke, Ed Swakon. See Mr. Swakon’s comments at end of this Report.

Members of the public are strongly encouraged to submit their comments in writing on the comment cards provided at each meeting or email the Facilitator; Janice Fleischer (janice@flashresolutions.com) within the first week following the meeting and those comments will be included in the Report.

MEMBER FORUM

- 1. This was a good meeting, I am encouraged. But let’s not end up by looking like NYC.
- 2. Look at both stages 2025 and 2050

3. Compensate farmers for the value of the existing land that surrounds them
4. Eliminate septic tanks
5. With regard to commercial vehicles: agricultural vehicles need to get from one point to the other
6. East/West corridors are important to be developed
7. Get questions to be posed to the members out prior to the meeting so they have time to think about it ahead of time

EVALUATIONS/ADJOURN

Members were reminded to fill out their evaluations. The meeting was then adjourned.

IDEA PARKING LOT

- The Trade Zone should be included as a job center.

OBSERVER COMMENT CARDS RECEIVED AT THE MEETING

*"There has not been any discussion about the critical plans needed to maintain commercial agriculture.
Rapid transit requires 15 du to be viable. Does the CSX route meet that criteria? CSX route competes with US1 proposed rapid transit line for funding.
Programmed 137 Avenue improvements make 147 Avenue not needed.
UEA should not be moved as far west as 147 Avenue in Redland. Area between 142 and 147 Avenue (184 St to US1) should be as an agriculture conservation easement to prevent future expansion.
UDB will never be a "straight line" unless private applications are denied."
-Anonymous*

MEMBER COMMENTS SUBMITTED SUBSEQUENT TO THE MEETING

*"We still haven't identified lands as required under policy 3E. Keith & Schnars has not furnished us with the following, as required under Policy 3E of the Comprehensive Development Master Plan "To identify and protect lands, including their uses and functions, that are essential for preserving the environmental, economic and community values of Biscayne National Park" and it further states that the plan will designate a comprehensive management of land uses and surface and ground water, its quality, quantity, timing, and distribution." (Also see **Exhibit E** submitted by Mr. Losner)
-Bill Losner*

*Hotel and Restaurant Taxes- PDF format- submitted by member Charles Thibos (**Exhibit F**)*

*Economic Development Strategies Meeting Notes (**Exhibit G**)*

PUBLIC COMMENT SUBMITTED SUBSEQUENT TO THE MEETING

*"The reports from the small groups introduced many incompatible uses outside the UDB. I remember: Schools, parks, equestrian facility, roads, water/sewer, Greenways, wetland marshes,

and push agriculture out west on govt owned land; all inconsistent with the current Master Plan. All of these uses are incompatible with the continuation of commercial agriculture. The only reason we have any agriculture in South Miami-Dade is because of the restrictive language in the Master Plan that directs agriculture as the priority/primary land use outside the UDB. I am concerned that all these uses that are not ancillary to commercial agriculture are the slippery slope!"

-Pat Wade

"I suggest the Watershed Plan set aside a 1,000 - 3,000 acre Institutional parcel in its recommendations to expand the UDB. Such a parcel should be reserved for a facility or institution that would:

- 1. Provide educational and training facilities to upgrade job skills for area residents. Everything from vocational to high tech skills or*
- 2. Be a high tech work place*

Perhaps this would end up being another University campus or a consolidation of existing organizations (South Florida Work Force, Job Corps, etc.) at a single location in Deep South Dade. Or a major research center -- like Scripps.

The thought is not well developed, but it is a firm recommendation that the County could use to help with the economic development issues in the area."

*Mike Richardson
President, Vision Council, Inc.
43 North Krome Avenue
Homestead, Florida 33030
305-247-7082
mrichardson@visioncouncil.com*

Letter from Redland Citizens Association, FNGA, and the Farm Bureau (Exhibit H)

"Background information on the South Florida Water Management District and Army Corps of Engineers letters provided by Ed Swakon*, consultant to Atlantic Civil, dealing with the Atlantic Civil Inc. Project and CERP.

General Background

The following information is provided as a very brief summary of Atlantic Civil Inc. (ACI) activity's with the various local state and federal regulatory agencies. From 1995 until mid-2001 ACI was actively involved with DERM, the South Florida Water Management District, and the US Army Corps of Engineers regarding the 3200 acres they owned, located in South Miami-Dade County south of SW 352nd St. As a result of those permit negotiations wetland delineations were conducted, biological assessments performed, and permits were ultimately issued by all three agencies which authorized the following;

- the excavation of a 250 acre lake;*
- the filling, for agricultural purposes, of 980 acres to Miami-Dade County flood criteria;*
- the enhancement and preservation of over 1800 acres, to be used as on-site mitigation for the wetland impacts resulting from the fill and lake excavation.*

More recently a 70 acre lake was authorized for excavation. This 70 acre lake was located

within the previously permitted fill footprint and did not result in any change to the mitigation. Excavation of the 70 acre lake and filling of the 980 acres began in July of 2005.

Over the past six years there have been numerous efforts for various governmental agencies to acquire the ACI property. The state conducted two appraisals. Representatives of ACI worked cooperatively with the South Florida Water Management District in an effort to amend state law dealing with land acquisition appraisals. While an offer by the Trust for Public Land, on behalf of the South Florida Water Management District was made, the price offered was significantly below ACI's market value. The property remains in private ownership.

Since the publication of the yellow book in 1999, which outlined the general objectives and features of the various CERP projects, ACI has been discussing the possible opportunities that existed with the ACI project. Because over half of the ACI property had been placed under the restrictions of conservation easements (1800 acres), we felt that than opportunity existed to work cooperatively with the various CERP agencies. In early 2003 ACI prepared a plan which allowed the filling of the ACI property to continue and the goals and objectives of one of the sub elements of the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands project to be implemented. This plan has been submitted to both the South Florida water Management District and Corps of Engineers.

Letter from South Florida water Management District (Exhibit I)

The South Florida Water Management District letter is a letter requesting additional information on the application for development approval (ADA) of the DRI Project submitted by Atlantic Civil. This application was submitted in July of 2005 and comments were received in August of 2005. Responses to all of these comments are currently being prepared by the applicant and will be submitted to the South Florida Regional Planning Council soon. The letter was provided to the watershed committee to support our contention that the South Florida Water Management District has determined that the property currently permitted for fill will not be acquired by the South Florida Water Management District for CERP purposes. The pertinent information regarding CERP is contained on page 5 of that letter. Other comments and or requests for information contained in this letter should not be used in any manner by members of the watershed committee during their deliberations of the preferred alternative. Because the Atlantic Civil Project has filed a DRI application and is beginning to assess the potential issues associated with converting this property into a planned residential community, in a much more comprehensive manner than the watershed plan could ever hope to accomplish, they should not be used to the projects detriment. Other areas that the consultants have proposed in the current strawman preferred alternative are much more environmentally sensitive and have no regulatory permits in place or proposed.

It should be pointed out that the South Florida water Management District is the local sponsor to the Corps of Engineers for the various CERP projects in Miami-Dade County. As such the water Management District is responsible for the acquisition of all lands needed to implement any of the CERP projects. The Water Management District has clearly indicated that it has no intentions of acquiring the ACI property. Even given that fact, as discussed below, the Corps of Engineers conducted their own independent of evaluation of the need for the ACI property.

Letter from Corps of Engineers (Exhibit J)

The US Army Corps of Engineers letter dated December 20, 2005 is the result of several months of discussions with the Corps of Engineers regarding the potential impact of filling the property for agricultural purposes and its impact on CERP. In October 2005 the Corps of Engineers suspended the permit previously issued to Atlantic Civil to allow their regulatory and CERP staff time to model the various alternatives being considered as part of both the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands and C111 projects. As a result of this modeling the Corps of Engineers technical CERP staff concluded that filling of the 980 acres, originally authorized in 2001, would not impact either CERP project. This determination allowed the Corps of Engineers regulatory

staff to issue the letter provided.

Furthermore, any economic, biological, or hydrological impacts associated with the implementation of a CERP project to ACI's property, or any other property, must be offset by the impacts of implementation of CERP to said property.

Summary

The ACI property has been the subject of more agency review than any other property currently outside the existing urban development boundary line. The issues surrounding the past permitting activity and the proposed DRI are complex and not easily summarized. We would offer to meet with any watershed committee member to more fully understand this project. We have always believed that the ACI property is a logical location for future development in South Miami-Dade County."

- *"How is the work being done now utilizing the information from the test scenario information?*
- *How are the evaluation parameters being optimized during this process?*
- *It has been stated that the exercise should first allocate the units and then figure out what is left over for environmental protection. I could not disagree more strongly with this approach. What has happened to the primary objective to identify those lands needed to protect Biscayne Bay?*
- *The maps provided today and prepared by the consultants identify several areas where the urban boundary could be expanded. Two of these areas, the area shown North East of the Air Force Base and the area west near Kendall are both known wetland areas and adjacent to or in a footprint of a proposed CERP project.*
- *As you know I represent the property owner and project known as Atlantic Civil. This project area contains 980 acres with all permits in place to fill to County flood criteria for agricultural purposes. An application for development approval (ADA) for a development of regional impact (DRI) has been submitted. The maps provided today for your use do not show any areas South of SW 352nd St. The Atlantic civil project is located in an area not shown on your work maps today. It is inconceivable to me that your consultants have proposed expansion of the urban development boundary in the two areas previously mentioned. Had some of that expansion been shown on the Atlantic Civil property, wetland and wellfield impacts could have been minimized and or eliminated.*
- *What is the status of my request to the organizational committee that lands no longer needed by CERP be included in the preferred alternative? We have obtained letters from both the South Florida Water Management District and the US Army Corps of Engineers indicating that the filled portions of the Atlantic Civil property would not be acquired and would not interfere with future CERP projects.*
- *I agree wholeheartedly that the CSX rail line should be identified and utilized in the preferred alternative.*
- *In future meetings it would be helpful if you would clarify the participation of observers with the subgroups.*
- *Additional Observer comments will be provided."*
 - Ed Swakon, EAS Engineering, P.E,
 - 55 Almeria Ave
 - Coral Gables, Fl 33134
 - *Atlantic Civil Consultant
