

SOUTH MIAMI DADE WATERSHED STUDY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Sixteen

December 18, 2003
9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Report of Proceedings

WELCOME

The meeting was held at the Miami-Dade County Cooperative Extension Service, Agricultural Center in Homestead, Florida. Member Richard Alger, sponsored breakfast and lunch through his business, Alger Farms.

Roger Carlton, Chair, welcomed everyone and wished them Happy Holidays in the weeks to come. He encouraged all members to stay the full length of the meeting, as there was much work to be done.

Members Present:

Roger Carlton, Chair
Richard Alger, South Florida Potato Growers Exchange
Humberto Alonso, SFWMD
Daniel Apt, Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Subrata Basu, Miami-Dade DP&Z (prospective member)
Linda Canzanelli, Biscayne National Park
Carlos Espinosa, Miami Dade DERM
Dick Frost, Tropical Audubon Society
April Gromnicki, National Audubon Society
John Hall, Florida Engineering Society
William Losner, Greater Homestead/Florida City Chamber of Commerce
Bennie Lovett, Florida City
Howard Nelson, Building Industry Representative (prospective member)
Lawrence Percival, Kendall Federation of Homeowner Associations
Bonnie Roddenberry, Sunny South Homeowner's Association
Jorge Rodriguez, Miami-Dade Water & Sewer Department (prospective member)
Mike Shehadeh, City of Homestead
Charles Thibos, Tropical Everglades Visitor Association
Julia Trevarthen, South Florida Regional Planning Council

AGENDA REVIEW/GUIDELINES/POLICIES

Janice Fleischer, Facilitator, announced that there would be several policy changes that would be put into effect as of this meeting. To begin, Ms. Fleischer went over the day's Agenda (Exhibit A) and reviewed the contents of the meeting packets. She explained that some changes had become necessary due to the increased attendance by Observers at the meetings.

The Meeting Guidelines have been modified to include Guidelines for Observers (Exhibit B). Public comment will be regularly scheduled twice for each full day meeting; once just prior to lunch and again just prior to the meeting adjournment. If the meeting is scheduled for a half day, public comment will be taken prior to adjourning. Anyone wishing to comment during the Public Comment period must submit

their name on a 3x5 index card provided at the Registration table. Public comments are limited to three (3) minutes each. Public comment is not a dialogue; it is a time for the public to make suggestions, express concerns or make the Committee aware of information or events. Comments made by the public during Public Comment do not appear in the Reports of Proceedings. If a member of the public wishes to have his/her comments included in the Reports, there are two avenues to ensure this: 1) writing any thoughts or suggestions on the "Idea Parking Lot" provided at every meeting; and 2) completing a "Public Comment Card" and turning it in at the end of the meeting. If the writer indicates their name or affiliation along with their comments, that will be included in the Report as well.

Ms. Fleischer went on to explain that on occasion over the last few months, several members had expressed a desire to discuss topics that were not on the Agenda for the meeting. It has become apparent that a better method for bringing individual Member issues of concern before the Committee needs to be devised. In response to this need, two procedures will be added. First, Members will be given a "Member Comment Card" in their packet at every meeting. Any thoughts written on these cards will be included in the Report of Proceedings. Additionally, each meeting Agenda will include a time for Members to bring up matters they wish to have discussed at future meetings.

In closing this section of the day's Agenda, Ms. Fleischer reminded Members that meetings are scheduled for the fourth (4th) Thursday of each month unless there is a conflict. She also encouraged Members to complete their Evaluation Forms at the end of each meeting as an important tool in keeping a pulse on how the Committee feels about its progress.

All Reports of Proceedings of the Committee, Discussion Guidelines and Committee related information, can be found on the SFRPC website at www.sfrpc.com/institute/watershed.htm.

PROJECT MANAGER'S REPORT

The meeting was then turned over to the Project Manager, John Hulsey for his Project Manager's Report (Exhibit C). Mr. Hulsey described a revised process for reviewing work products associated with the project, and emphasized the role of each Committee Member in communicating information to their constituent groups and returning their comments by a time certain.

Members were told they could e-mail either Mr. Hulsey or Ms. Fleischer if they needed a hard copy of the Consultant Report (which was lengthy this time).

Members were reminded that, when requested by the media to make comments concerning the work of the Committee, they are speaking only on behalf of their constituency and should make that clear to the interviewer. It is the policy of the Committee that all questions from the media regarding the Committee as a whole are referred to the Chair, Roger Carlton. One Member asked whether Alternates could be designated, if more cities could be added, and how the incorporated areas were represented on the Committee. Cindy Dwyer, Miami Dade County Project Manager, explained that the Committee had previously discussed appointing alternates and decided against it. She indicated that, although more cities could be added to the Committee, plan recommendations would have the most impact on unincorporated areas of the County where the remaining undeveloped lands are located. Finally, Ms. Dwyer provided a brief description of how unincorporated areas are represented on the Committee, which is based on the boundaries of the Community Councils located in the Study Area.

THE COMMITTEE AND COLLABORATION

Mr. Hulsey turned the meeting over to the Facilitator for a discussion of Committee procedures and decision-making policies. Ms. Fleischer explained that this stage of Committee deliberations often brings with it more concern and debate on the part of Members. This is a normal part of multi-stakeholder

decision-making and deliberations and a healthy part of Committee growth and should be welcomed and embraced. Facilitator's often refer to this stage as the "Groan Zone" because it can cause Members who have previously been interacting passively some anxiety when emotions become more intense. While there should be no cause for concern, she reminded Members that due to the possibility of increased debate or emotional reactions; it was a good time to review the Committee's process regarding consensus and collaboration. She reminded Members that they had adopted the Consensus decision-making model when they were first formed. While consensus can take a little longer than traditional voting methods, research has shown it leads to longer lasting and stronger decisions and agreements. It is hoped that the Committee would reach all decisions by consensus and never have the necessity to vote. Pure consensus (100%) is extremely time consuming and difficult; therefore, a "super majority" is being used in any instances where a vote may be necessary (66 2/3%).

All Members of the Committee have a vote with the exception of the signatory agencies to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): the South Florida Regional Planning Council-SFRPC, the South Florida Water Management District-SFWMD, and Miami-Dade County Planning and Zoning; the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department (M-D WASH- a prospective member organization) and Miami-Dade Department of Environmental Resource Management (M-D DERM). All Members, regardless of voting status, have an equal voice in the consensus deliberations and rankings. The impact of decision-making by consensus is that Members should voice all issues of concern at the meetings. There should be no need for minority reports or Member's opposing Committee decisions.

Members of the Committee have responsibilities in their capacity as representatives of constituent groups. Each Member should be reporting regularly to his/her constituent group and receiving feedback from them to bring to meetings. Each Member serves in a representative capacity; not as an individual (with the exception of the "at large" Members who are deemed to represent the community as a whole) and as such, has a duty to bring up topics of concern so they can be fully explored and discussed.

Ms. Fleischer then turned the meeting over to Mr. Carlton.

COMMITTEE BALANCE DISCUSSION

Mr. Carlton acknowledged that some Members had raised the issue of Committee balance in the last few months. He explained that Member comfort with the balance and diversity of the group is very important and that he wanted this discussion to occur prior to his making appointments for the two now vacant "at large" positions on the Committee- Dr. Roy Phillips and Kenneth Harms have both resigned. He reminded the Committee that they had done a thorough "Stakeholder Analysis" in the first few months after the Committee was formed. As a result of that analysis, members were added. Further, the Committee had decided it consisted of three (3) stakeholder categories: Environment, Economy and Community. Each of these category groups gave an initial presentation to the Committee as a whole.

Mr. Carlton reminded the Committee that adding members requires a Board of County Commissioners Ordinance and should not be requested unless really necessary. He had asked Mr. Hulsey, as Project Manager, and Ms. Fleischer, as Committee Facilitator, to draft a table indicating the groups represented in each category (environment, economy and community) upon which this discussion could begin. This document was presented for initial discussion purposes only and was changed considerably during the deliberations which followed.

An extended discussion ensued. During the discussion, several items were repeated and noted by the Facilitator: Committee members don't want to be "labeled" as belonging to any one category; lack of attendance by Members creates Committee imbalance; and Committee members should trust each other and speak for all Committee members.

The following Member comments were recorded during the discussion:

- 1) We are all here to help one another – not to divide into separate categories. Categories really have a lot of overlap.
- 2) Is there enough commonality of interest in the Economy category?
- 3) We need to consider what kinds of recommendations will be made by the Plan. Should all municipalities be represented on the Committee?
- 4) The Chamber of Commerce does not represent cities in their area.
- 5) The Committee is not so unbalanced, but ATTENDANCE is the real issue.
- 6) Do not pigeon hole folks – each category has folks that consider themselves interested in all 3 categories.
- 7) The more important issue is that taking the group as a whole, is it holistic?
- 8) Government representatives are constrained by agency policy – limited to what their agency lets them talk about. Environmental representatives have a range of concerns - can't count on government to espouse those. If we were to move government agencies out of the table – environment only has three representatives.
- 9) Use “At-Large” spots to help balance – include a university representative
- 10) In appointing an “At-Large” member; use as criteria “Preservation of drinking water”
- 11) In appointing an “At-Large” member – environment and community at large
- 12) Very difficult to add new folks now
- 13) Suggestion: missing renowned urban planner – balancing open space/multi-uses/environment
- 14) Suggestion: consensus includes support from all 3 categories
- 15) Suggestion: a collection of the community councils: choose one of the At-Large members
- 16) Environmental Groups (non-governmental) are underrepresented
- 17) Farm interests are over represented, suggest replacing or eliminating non-participatory farm groups with environment or removing from the Committee

In wrapping up this session, Mr. Carlton indicated he would take all discussion and comments into consideration when making his “at large” appointments. Additionally, the Organizational Committee would discuss the suggestions made at this meeting.

Public Comment was called; then the Committee broke for lunch.

CATANESE CENTER PRESENTATION

Upon the Committee returning from lunch, Jean Scott, Consultant, gave a short presentation on the Catanese Center. Ms. Scott described the history of the Catanese Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions (CUES) including its founding by Dr. John DeGrove, a principal architect of Florida's Growth Management system, and its early existence as the FAU/FIU Joint Center for Urban and Environmental Problems. Ms. Scott described the experience and attributes of CUES that made it particularly appropriate for managing the Watershed Study's Technical Review Committee, including work done in an agricultural area facing intense development pressure in Palm Beach County, as well as her own similar experiences developing a plan in Kentucky.

IMPACTS ON GROUND WATER LEVELS

SFWMD representative and Committee Member, Humberto Alonso and Paul Linton, Lead Engineer in charge of Combined Structural and Operations Plan (CSOP) Project Management gave a presentation on the District's Interim Structural and Operations Plan (ISOP) (this plan was temporarily used to protect the Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow from 200-2002), CSOP (this plan is currently being developed), and the Interim Operational Plan (IOP) (this plan is currently in place). These plans were or are being developed

as temporary solutions until the Modified Water Delivery Plan (Mod Waters) and the C-111 Project in South Dade are completed. Until Mod Waters and the C-111 Projects are complete, these interim plans provide the operational protocol to protect the endangered sparrow while providing the additional water deliveries to Everglades National Park. Several members had expressed concern over excessive flooding in the South Dade area and the failure of the water to drain as quickly as it had historically. Mr. Alonso explained the reason for this temporary condition and answered Committee questions. (Exhibit D)

CONSULTANT REPORT-DRAFT FINAL WORK PRODUCT SUBTASKS 1.1-1.7

Following Mr. Alonso's presentation, a presentation was made by the Consultant, Keith & Schnars, on Subtasks 1.1-1.7 (Exhibit E). Prior to the meeting, all Members received a full electronic copy of all Subtask 1.1-1.7 Work Product in the form of a CD. In order to conserve on paper, this is the process to be used whenever possible; however, if a Member does not have the capacity to download or print out documents this way, the Consultant will provide a hard copy.

In response to each task's presentation, Members were asked to fill in survey sheets with their comments, concerns and suggestions. Some members turned in their worksheets at the end of the meeting; others wanted to keep them and send them in at a later date. The deadline for worksheets to be in is January 22, 2004. Tropical Audubon requested doing a presentation regarding Task 1.

Survey sheet results received at the meeting are attached to this Report as Exhibit F. Additionally, Members made the following comments after each Task (if a Task is not listed below, no one made verbal comments):

Task 1.2

- 1) Use other (other than just Miami-Dade County) entities data and reflect that when gathering data
- 2) Political jurisdiction designations on map as well as those shown
- 3) What about undocumented population – how well do you think Miami-Dade County has captured those numbers accurately?
- 4) Homestead has plans for 17,000 homes – will this relieve water needs of north portion of county? (i.e. are northern folks moving south, reducing loads north?)

Task 1.3

- 1) Water gallons per day by business and household
- 2) Where are no water facilities – septic tanks and wells?
- 3) Costs associated with provision
- 4) Look at desalinization

Task 1.4

- 1) Natural resource – are lands important to preservation of natural resources within watershed being identified from existing agency plans
- 2) With regard to protecting private property rights, there should be an emphasis to government that funds are obtained to purchase property and until purchased no moratoriums and property owners have continued use as provided under current CDMP.

At the end of the Consultant presentation and Committee discussion, the floor was opened to Public Comment once again.

Ms. Fleischer thanked members for their participation and asked them to turn in their Evaluation Forms.

ADJOURN

The meeting was then adjourned.

MEMBER COMMENTS (CARDS) RECEIVED:

“Need meeting to address salt water intrusion problem for coastal communities and Miami-Dade SUR land program and its impact on cities and villages: Coral Gables is considering opening the closed canals in Gables By The Sea which will impact salt water intrusion. This is an immediate political issue.” Anonymous

*“To combine the comments of Linda Canzenelli about needing an expert in the field of Urban Planning and my own comment that a university perspective would be a good idea, I would like to suggest that for an At-Large Member, a faculty member from the FAU Department of Urban & Regional Planning who is at the cutting edge of Urban & Regional Planning would be a neutral choice and give an expert perspective of all three areas.”
Daniel Apt, FDEP; (305) 795-3486; daniel.apt@dep.state.fl.us*

Please add the following people to the “Interested Parties’ List:

Richard Yeager, writer, Kendall Gazette – Community Newspapers: www.communitynewspapers.com; R. Kenneth Bluh (305) 828-1818; rkbluh@aol.com; Michael Milke, Executive Editor – Community Newspapers; (305) 669-7355, x249; michael@communitynewspapers.com; Jon O’Neill, editor; (305) 671-4342; joneill@herald.com; The above editors or the writers want to write about the WSAC and work product facts.”

Lawrence Percival, Vice-President, KFHA, Inc. www.kfha.org

“RE: Committee balance – Should be noted that though non-voting members, by definition, do not vote, they certainly have an influential effect on the direction of any discussion preceding a vote and thus on the vote’s outcome. This effect should not be discounted. It also should be noted that in organizing the committee, there have been (perhaps) extra lengths and efforts made to include environmental interests on the committee. It could be argued that certain representatives of these groups do not live in the watershed area and represent extensive interests outside the watershed area: Sierra Club, Tropical Audubon South, National Audubon Society are examples (probably more South within the area). I personally do not have a problem with this, but if we are going to start making changes now to the committee structure, then there are definitely other outside groups that can argue that they also have an interest in whatever decisions come out at the Advisory Committee and should also be represented. For example: sportsman’s groups, national business groups, and others that perhaps would disagree with the environmental groups. I think you can expect this issue to be raised if structural changes are made that change the present balance.”

Charles Thibos

“RE: Consensus Process – It may be good to note at which point a consensus decision has been made by the committee. I heard several statements made today to the effect that certain things had been decided by consensus by the committee. I have not missed many meetings, but I was not aware of the decision having been made by the committee. One example was the decision to use the consensus process itself. The process works and I have no problem with it at all, but I seem to recall that it was presented to us as the method that would be used. I don’t recall that it was adopted by the committee. It may well have been, but if more emphasis was placed on it having been a decision that was made at the time it happened it would stand out in each member’s memory better. We need to be aware of when a decision has been made. Just because something was discussed doesn’t mean it was resolved. Like Roger said, “Is that OK with everybody?” That kind of makes the point clear that a decision has been made.”Anonymous

*“I sincerely hope the current committee imbalance is rectified and the issue is resolved at the next meeting.”
April Gromnicki*

OBSERVER COMMENTS (CARDS) RECEIVED:

“On balance: too many Agriculture groups; comment was made that Homestead and Florida City have most of vacant land and therefore need representation. Not true. The vacant land is in unincorporated Miami-Dade. Who represents them? Other than Redlands Community Association /Kendall Federation Of Homeowners Associations /Sunny South – who represents the people? Need more grass roots people!”

IDEA PARKING LOT COMMENTS:

Mission and Purpose of the Watershed Study is to provide “framework” for making future land-use decisions, while protecting “water resources” and other aspects of the natural environment.

Advisory Committee membership should be assessed by areas of expertise – what one brings to the table to help move forward a workable plan for growth while protecting resources. It is presumed “a priori” that each member is able to set aside any particular “favorite” agenda to contribute to final, implementable “framework for growth”. A complete set of “skill-and-experiences” is currently lacking. Individuals with knowledge of and experience with the entire “Built and developed environment” are not represented. The Committee would be able to have more informed deliberations and allow for a productive exchange of knowledge – in both directions – with the addition of some of those individuals who may be regarded as those individuals the study was designed to protect the “environment” from...

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