

SUMMARY OF MEETING
Glades Technical Advisory Committee
9:40 am January 8, 1998
Glades Community Development Corporation

Participants:

June Boglioli, Gwen Calloway, Autrie Moore-Williams, Pamela Nolan, Wendell W. "Bil" Phillips, Ken Schenck, Carl Seibert, Deborah Thatcher, and Bill Wilkins

Staff:

Vicki Silver, Chair

CHAIR'S REPORT

Ms. Silver reported that her main technical assistance efforts this month involved the City of South Bay, which has proposed a commercial development project on the RV Park outparcel with input and assistance from the County's Parks and Recreation Department. The Crossroads Lake Depot project has already received a Developing Regions grant and rehab of the historic railroad cottage is the subject of a pending state preservation grant request. The Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail Master Plan also recommends an interpretive center at this site, which the plan designates as a trailhead.

Other efforts include trying to organize a Glades tour for the County Commission (BCC) as an update to the BCC workshop on 4/29/97. On this subject, Mr. Wilkins agreed to obtain a target date through the Commissioners' offices, so that Public Affairs staff, Ms. Thatcher as well as the Cities' staff members can help arrange the itinerary and logistics like transportation. He noted the importance of inviting the Municipal League members who signed up for the mid-December tour.

Ms. Silver also reported that she researched the availability and cost of Herb Marlowe as a potential facilitator for public input into the Empowerment Zone process. Mr. Marlowe is willing to facilitate 4 2-hour public meetings and write a strategic plan for a total of \$2500. Mr. Schenck and Ms. Boglioli offered to approach the Tri-Cities League to share this cost. However, the group agreed to delay pursuit of the EZ facilitator until Ms. Nolan receives sufficient information on the status of the EZ program's guidelines, submittal deadlines, available funding, and reasons previous grants were awarded or rejected.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Nolan noted that she still needs quarterly reports from Developing Regions recipients including Glades CDC and the City of Belle Glade, which needs to make sure they have received their entire grant award for the Business Park. She also noted the importance of all 3 cities identifying community projects that qualify for the state's Community Contributions Tax Credit program, which starts again in June 1998. Mr. Wilkins suggested sending the program's regulations to those businesses which would benefit from the tax credits (a maximum of \$200,000 per business). The Business Loan Fund is now staffed by Director Mike Filipiak, who

will begin meeting with community-based organizations soon. The first participating loan will close 1/9/98.

PAHOKEE

Mr. Schenck reported that the City is still pursuing development of a business park; a plastics company has recently shown some interest in locating there. Design drawings are underway for the State Road 715 FDOT improvements. The status of the state recreation grant for MLK Park has not yet been announced. Aquaculture development is still in the works. The Mexican village has obtained its commitments for Community Development Block Grant funds. This week, a technical professional will assess the needed activities and costs to upgrade the Prince Theater. Mr. Wilkins recommended preparing a promotional video featuring Captain J.P.'s boat tour.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION BIKEWAYS PROGRAM

Mr. Phillips reported that he has toured the gravel roads south of Lake Harbor with Ms. Silver and believes they have potential for cycling, but a promotional map is needed to inform cyclists about available scenic, historic, and recreational resources (like the nearest campground and restaurants). Ms. Thatcher agreed that a cumulative map, showing bikeways as well as other facilities, would offer more to visitors than each facility or resource individually. In response to Mr. Wilkins' questions, Mr. Phillips mentioned the potential for lakewide cycling events, more than the existing surface street bike ride by the West Palm Beach Bicycling Club and the Big O Bike Ride atop Hoover Dike. Mr. Wilkins recommended that Ms. Thatcher ask the Sports Commission to help organize one or more recreational events involving the Lake Trail and area roadways, and the need for communities to participate was emphasized by the group. Mr. Phillips noted the potential to involve local schools via bike safety events organized by law enforcement agencies and bike clubs. He also mentioned the untapped potential for use of railroad lines for tours such as destination rides to agricultural or historic facilities perhaps using vintage rail cars, tied in with other tourist offerings such as campgrounds and bike tours. Ms. Thatcher noted that the cancellation of this year's Big O Bike Tour, being planned by the Okeechobee Chamber of Commerce in November, opens an opportunity for the Glades communities and Western Communities Tourism Alliance to plan a springtime lakewide bike tour. Mr. Phillips suggested a presentation by WCTA to the countywide Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee, which could provide input on organizing and/or marketing such an event.

SOUTH BAY

Ms. Boglioli submitted the enclosed progress report. She also called attention to several activities including the upcoming Teen Summit, which local resident Kim Abrams is helping the City organize, and the February 25 reception in Tallahassee, at which the City will promote its historic preservation grant application for the Railroad Workers Cottage restoration project. Staff is devising a railroad-themed logo for name tags to be worn by the project spokespersons (still being determined). The City is also very close to announcing a tenant for the Park of Commerce, and a trucking company is considering locating here if sufficient land is available. Ms. Boglioli noted that as part of a settlement with Concerned Citizens of South Bay, Wackenhut and the City recently awarded 10 scholarships to youth from throughout the Glades.

WESTERN COMMUNITIES TOURISM ALLIANCE

Ms. Thatcher reported that she is heavily involved in organizing an exhibit for the South Florida Fair, which has an Ecotourism theme this year. WCTA has received \$20,000 from the Convention and Visitors Bureau for a new brochure and for ongoing marketing efforts.

EDGE CENTER SMALL BUSINESS INCUBATOR

Mr. Seibert reported that he has obtained funding for an administrative assistant, extending his staff capabilities. He was glad to learn that the Business Loan Fund has hired a staff director because access to capital was a constraint for people starting small businesses. Next weekend is the EDGE Board's retreat, for purposes of developing a 3-year plan. In February, the Center's first youth entrepreneurial training program will be held, followed by a second adult training course. A longer report is anticipated for the next GTAC meeting.

GLADES COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Ms. Moore-Williams reported that the School Board has decided to demolish the Old Glades Central High School buildings within the next 3 years and to redevelop the campus as the new Lakeshore Middle School. The GCDC Board has requested adequate advance notice from the School Board to allow them to secure a new location; some materials such as the storefronts can be relocated. The desirability of buying a packing house owned by George Towell is being considered at a GCDC Board meeting later today; various other community purposes such as a performance hall and museum are possible uses to attract funding. Cost estimates for rehab of the packing house are being completed. The MacArthur Foundation, in partnership with GCDC, has funded production of "Potluck in the Muck", a play based on local residents' life stories; a local organizing committee is being formed. Upcoming meetings include a meeting of GCDC's funders on 1/26 and a 2/23 meeting of the Donors Foundation Forum, chaired by the Community Foundation of Palm Beach and Martin Counties, involving community development-related organizations.

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 am.