

**Glades Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
March 29, 2001 Belle Glade City Hall**

PARTICIPANTS: Don Brown, Doug Chozianin, Doug Green, Carole Ann Hysse, Carol Meneely, Sandy Mercer, Pam Nolan, Wendell W. Phillips, Ken Schenck, Michael Sklar, Barbara Bell Spence

Participant Reports

BELLE GLADE

Ms. Spence reported that the City is participating in Project Clean Sweep on 3/31 as part of their emphasis on beautification. Creation of a housing task force was approved at the last City Commission meeting with an emphasis on home ownership and infill housing. The City is also considering conducting a new charrette focused on downtown. The Business Park dedication is scheduled 4/16 to kick off National Community Development Week, and on 5/4 and 5/5 the American Cancer Society is having its annual Relay for Life, this time at Glades Central High School.

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Sklar stated that notices on the status of grant awards have been sent to applicants. A discussion took place regarding the application submitted by Pahokee for several Canal Point businesses to obtain sanitary sewer lines, which was deemed ineligible because it didn't serve enough residences. Staff pointed out that the lack of funding to extend sewer lines to Pahokee's treatment plant is a concern because it will limit tourist uses like restaurants needed to support the Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

Ms. Nolan reported that a selection committee will be formed to review proposals received from consultants responding to the County's RFP to prepare a Glades areawide strategic business plan with a USDA Rural Business Opportunity Grant. Staff has been providing technical assistance to Skydive America to obtain financing for this international sport destination. Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council has approved recommending to the state that the unincorporated portion of the Glades be included in the Rural Areaa of Critical Economic Concern. The legislature is considering legislation to create rural tax credits and other incentives to support the above critical area. The Development Regions Grant program has a 4/30 deadline.

HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Ms. Hysse reported that Glades Glen has a new owner, so the future of their various youth programs will be determined next week. A youth entrepreneurship program is being pursued.

CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

Mr. Brown stated that he was proud that the City of Belle Glade has made Lakeshore Middle School a priority; the County is spending \$450,000 from the 1999 Bond Issue and another \$200,000 has been obtained from the Florida Division of Juvenile Justice all to renovate this facility. The RFP for Pahokee Marina/Campground has been requested by 50 people; he pointed out the potential to redevelop Belle Glade and Pahokee's marinas, perhaps jointly. Belle Glade is reevaluating the legality of the ongoing practices at the marina. He also is talking to a promoter about doing an event on the Lake in October; he'll keep us posted. The canal boats may be leaving Pahokee, but he sees it as an opportunity to develop a better-operated, better-marketed boat business year-round rather than during the traditional tourist season.

EDGE CENTER

Mr. Seibert said that the revised business plan was completed to update the pursuit of a building for in-wall incubation of businesses. The goal is to break ground in January; plans have been moved up one year. A profile of businesses is underway. The Center is taking a regional approach to marketing their services.

PAHOKEE

Mr. Schenck reported that the improvements to SR 15 continue; utilities expansion at the Marina/Campground is underway. Bids on renovating the old high school are expected by mid-April. The Sheriff's Office will be absorbing the costs of police dispatch and this function. The development team on the old hospital is still seeking tenants and has 4 months to complete their due diligence. Mr. Chozianin explained that their fish processing plant is moving forward, submitting financial figures to various funding sources. He stated that no training by Workforce Development Board will be needed, and they will share their business plan (which includes buying property and building a 75,000-square foot building) with the EDGE Center, once it is approved.

GLADES COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORP.

Ms. Mercer reported that a crafts cooperative with 40 artisans is being formed based on the folk-artist survey conducted last year under contract to the EDGE Center. NOAH is involved, new artists continue to come forward, and church dollars are being sought. A Haitian town meeting with Belle Glade City Commissioners is scheduled 3/30. Busloads of people came to the School Board meeting recently to support Lakeshore Middle School reuse. Rehearsals are underway for Pot Luck in the Muck.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 am.

**Glades Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
April 26, 2001 Belle Glade City Hall**

PARTICIPANTS: Don Brown, Doug Chozianin, Carole Ann Huysse, Doug Green, Fitzgerald Limontas, Carol Meneely, Sandy Mercer, Pam Nolan, Wendell W. Phillips, Frank Sampson, Ken Schenck, Michael Sklar, Barbara Bell Spence

Participant Reports

GLADES COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORP.

They are coordinating with Glades Employers Advisory Board on taking advantage of job opportunities associated with the pending Wellington Green Mall. They've received preliminary approval from HCD for rehab of the 1939 City Hall. The completion goal is early 2003 and the grant request was for \$197,475; they have a 50-year lease for \$1/year to develop a community development center possibly including an agricultural museum.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

Ms. Nolan mentioned a 5/8 USDA conference in Ocala in case anyone is interested. The Development Regions Grant deadline is 4/30, and she is hoping for a few Glades applicants.

BELLE GLADE

Per Ms. Spence, the 3/31 Clean-up attracted more than 320 people. The Business Park was dedicated 3/16, and once it is more complete, a larger ceremony will be planned. Two housing task forces have been appointed: one for low and moderate income, includes NOAH, Wee Care, and the Belle Glade CD Department, and 2) Middle income development. In addition, the City has slated 28 buildings for demolition after which infill will be encouraged. A public meeting by the Metropolitan Planning Organization is being held at Belle Glade City Hall 4/30 at 7 pm. Mr. Phillips gave an overview of the MPO's mission. The City has hired consultants to prepare a 2025 plan. Black Gold is scheduled for 4/28 noon-9:30 pm.

CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

Mr. Brown reported that the canal boats have not left Pahokee yet, and that other entities have expressed interest in a boat business. The School Board was very receptive to reuse of the old Pahokee hospital for teachers' lodging. Don is preparing a marketing plan for Glades tourism and has requested presentation of this plan at the next Tri-Cities meeting.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Mr. Green reported they are collaborating with the Glades Employers Advisory Board and working with Workforce 20/20. A discussion ensued about the need for trained welders, which reflects a catch-22 situation because employers are

not constantly needing this skill, so residents are not being trained, and local residents continue to not meet the demand by US Sugar and others for these special trades.

PAHOKEE

The City received two responses to their Marina RFP; 1 excellent and the other poor quality. The City Commission will hold a workshop to consider the better proposal on May 1. Old high school rehab will start soon; bids have been received. The City has foreclosed on two properties and 5 more are pending.

Bids have been received on two derelict building demolitions and 4 more are pending. The City is receiving bids on the old High School and renovation will resume soon. The South Florida Water Management District has been very helpful working with the 3 cities to install new water lines, and new pump stations are being installed in South Bay and Belle Glade. The City is awaiting legislative appropriations to upgrade the sewer system. A chlorine dioxide system has been installed at the water plant, and the EPA and the Health Department have shared the cost of two water mills to provide THM-free drinking water.

State Road 15 construction and repaving is underway. Mr. Chozianin added an update on plans to develop a tilapia processing plant. He may get financing from City Bank, and South Florida Regional Planning Council is exploring brownfield dollars for the site, which is next to a former landfill.

GLADES COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORP.

Mr. Limontas reported that they've been discussing employment possibilities for Glades residents with the general manager of the pending Wellington Green Mall.

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Clarke noted that the Board of County Commissioners will consider the Special Pocket of Poverty Allocation and the preliminary recommendations for CDBG applications at their 5/15 meeting. The ceiling per applicant has been raised to \$250,000, and administrative costs are no longer included. He also emphasized the need to get an update from the City of South Bay on the Depot economic set-aside project.

HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Ms. Huyse reported that the Teen Academy was part of a children's coalition which filmed a documentary that won first place in the Palm Beach County Film Festival's high school category. Next year they hope to compete on their own. The Housing Partnership is collaborating with Workforce Development Board on obtaining summer jobs for their youth. Lester Finney is helping start a youth-owned tee-shirt company.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Mr. Phillips reported that on April 3, FDOT Districts 1 and 4 met and agreed to fund bus service between Belle Glade and Clewiston for 6 days per week at a total cost of \$430,000 for two years. Staff is seeking a \$45,000 local match. The deadline for TEA 21 bicycle/pedestrian projects is 5/11; he noted that all 3 cities had received application packets in case they are interested in applying.

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Ms. Meneely reported that the TDC has just updated its nature and heritage tourism map, and will note the future LOST. Along with David Semadny, she has been doing presentations for high school students on the hospitality/workforce development program. In response to comments, she agreed to connect with the West Tech job fair.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Mr. Green reported on pending job fairs as part of continued training services. A 5/16 meeting of the Glades Employers Advisory Board will feature a presentation on the Wellington Green Mall employment needs. WDB has also been working with Workforce 2020.

GUEST PRESENTATION ON TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Sampson gave a computerized presentation on the Glades area's tourism potential, based on a resort in Honolulu.

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 pm.