

(revised 12/16/08)
Glades Technical Advisory Committee (GTAC)
Meeting of November 20, 2008
9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Pahokee Recreation Center

Minutes

Attendees:

Chief Michael Arena, Palm Beach County Fire-Rescue
Jacques Beaubrun, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
Regina Bohlen, Bridge Investment & Realty, Belle Glade
Tish Burgher, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
Erika Dennard, City of South Bay
Zina El-Daghar, Sam's Investment Stop & Shop, Canal Point
Kim Erickson, Canal Point Community Development Inc. (CPCDI)
Duane Gainer, Palm Beach County Office of Community Revitalization (OCR)
Suzanne Harper, EDGE Center
Alvin Johnson, City of Pahokee
Juanita Maybia, Essence Unique Ladies Club, Pahokee
Roy McGinnis, Palm Beach County Health Department
LJ Margolis, PBC Parks & Rec / Glades Emergency Operating Area (EOA 1)
Pam Nolan, Palm Beach County Economic Development
Annette Parchment, City of South Bay Community Development
Jeremy Ray, GBF Engineering, Inc.
Ted Roberts, City of Pahokee
Houston Tate, Palm Beach County Office of Community Revitalization (OCR)
Rashonda Warren, City of Pahokee Community Development
William Wynn, Palm Beach County Office of Community Revitalization (OCR)

1. Welcome and Introductions:

Duane Gainer introduced himself and asked the group to introduce themselves. Houston Tate commended the City of Pahokee for their work renovating the old school building which now houses Pahokee's Recreation Center.

2. Follow-up Issues:

The issue of the cut-through for the proposed location of the new South Bay Fire Station has been determined to be moot at this time, because the plans for the station are still not finalized. Therefore, a cut-through cannot be incorporated into the roadwork now in progress.

There was follow-up discussion regarding the re-designation of US 98 from SR 700 to US 441. Tish Burgher, FDOT, reported that the matter has been delegated to the State level, and recommended that Kim Erickson follow up by submitting a letter to Houston

Tate's office, which he would then forward to the appropriate decision makers. In the letter, specific concerns regarding economic development, funding, road maintenance, safety, character of the community, etc. should be explained in detail in the letter.

Correction to October minutes: the letter read at the October 23 meeting was from Jim Wolf of FDOT, not Jane. The question was raised why the road designation matters, if people can still use SR 700 regardless of what it is called. Ms. Erickson stated that Canal Point is trying to promote tourism, and while locals will still use SR 700, on maps or computer searches such as MapQuest, people will be directed along the newly-designated US 98 / US 441. After discussion, the primary concern was determined to be how the general public will be informed to travel to Canal Point via Highway 700 rather than thinking that they are bound to stay on "US 98." It was suggested that a sign be placed at SR 700 indicating that it is the route to Canal Point.

3. Discussion/Updates:

Pam Nolan, EDO, questioned whether there had been any discussion regarding zoning issues in relation to implementation of economic development projects in Canal Point. Houston Tate replied that discussions have not yet reached that point. Kim Erickson reported that the zoning issues are mainly in the downtown area and neighborhoods. The lots are very small in terms of today's standards. If someone wants to build or rebuild on the lot, they cannot build it as large as it should be or as it was originally, due to Palm Beach County's current setback standards and building codes. Also, Canal Point wants to make it easy for small businesses to build while keeping the historic character of the community. It is hoped that Planning and Zoning, along with OCR, can help the community with making any changes necessary, or to get exemptions from some of the limiting codes and requirements. Mr. Tate stressed that the economic development plan needs to be presented to the community and property owners for their support, and then other approvals must be obtained.

Pam Nolan stated that on Friday, November 21, she will visit the Glades with Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation to look at the sites for the Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail (LOST) kiosks. Canal Point's site is at the Community Center. Pahokee's location is at the historic old school. Belle Glade's location is behind the historic Old City Hall. South Bay's is at the Crossroads Depot site in front of the South Bay RV Campground. Some of the locations need beautification or enhancement. Parks and Recreation will be overseeing the construction of the kiosks. The County will maintain the signs, and the communities are asked to report any damage to the signs.

Pam Nolan reported that the north trailhead, north of Canal Point, has been installed by Environmental Resource Management (ERM) with horse trails and bus parking.

Jacques Beaubrun, FDOT, observed that often when meetings are held to discuss proposed projects, changes, re-designations, often attendance is very light. Often people do not realize that a project is in the plans until the work actually begins.

Tish Burgher reported that on December 8, there will be a meeting covering planned construction and projects that will affect Palm Beach County. Visit www.dot.state.fl and look under Public Meetings for more information.

Jeremy Ray, GBF, reported that in April 2009, a FDOT construction project will begin on State Road 700. A pre-construction meeting will be set closer to the start of the project, and OCR, GTAC and CPCDI will be notified.

Houston Tate stressed that Neighborhood Associations are very important to give the residents a method to get together, discuss their needs and concerns, and present a unified message to get those needs met and concerns addressed.

Annette Parchment, South Bay, reported that South Bay's Vice-Mayor had attended a meeting regarding community revitalization, and Ms. Parchment had been able to let him know that South Bay is beginning discussions about Neighborhood Associations.

Suzanne Harper, EDGE Center, reported that the renovation of Belle Glade's historic Old City Hall has met some challenges, with new standards that have to be followed which they were unaware of in the beginning of the project. The project is back on track after having met those challenges. Ms. Harper reported that the first merchant on Avenue A, Glades Gas, has gotten their grant approval and will begin renovation soon. About five others are preparing to begin renovations. Several buildings on the street are for sale very reasonably. Grant money and loans are available. More grant moneys are being pursued to finish the renovations and beautification.

Juanita Maybia told attendees about The Essence Unique Ladies Club, which helps youth in the communities to develop into productive adults. They also help AIDS victims through fundraising activities.

Ted Roberts, City of Pahokee, reported that Pahokee is still waiting for the Neighborhood Partnership Grant (NPG) so they can begin repainting in the downtown area. They also received a grant from Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) because of the city's low crime rate. The grant money can be used for youth development and anti-gang programs. Relay for Life will be held in Pahokee next year. Mr. Roberts stated that Pahokee's cemetery, which is located in Martin County, needs work. Suzanne Harper notified him that there is a grant which is due soon which may be helpful. Mr. Roberts reported that Light Up Pahokee, a holiday celebration, will be held December 8 beginning at 6 p.m., and the Tri-Cities Annual Barbecue will be held on December 5 at the Belle Glade Marina (changed from the Pahokee Marina).

Zena El-Daghar, Canal Point resident, requested that there be a Sheriff's Deputy designated for Canal Point. She stated that her family runs a 24-hour business which has been the victim of crimes. Other small businesses in the area had also been victimized. Kim Erickson reported that Lt. Renaldo Alonso will attend the next meeting of the CPCDI so they can let him know what is going on in the community and request

assistance. Duane Gainer stated that this need will be brought to the Sheriff's Office from the OCR as well. Ms El-Daghar will write a letter of request to Houston Tate.

Kim Erickson stated that Canal Point community members have noted that people are speeding down SR 700 as they approach the intersection of SR 700 and US 98. There is a long distance between the existing speed limit sign and Triangle Park. Ms. Erickson requested that an additional speed limit sign be placed closer to Triangle Park. Tish Burgher asked her to write a letter of request to Ms. Burgher.

Roy McGuiness, Health Department, stated that the Health Department is still trying to encourage the testing of children aged 6 and under for lead poisoning. Houston Tate reported that there is a grant available for lead abatement and beautification (repainting).

Chief Michael Arena, Palm Beach County Fire Rescue (PBCFR), spoke about the smoke detector program. About a month or two ago, PBCFR installed at least 350 smoke detectors in Belle Glade, mostly in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. area where many of the properties are rental properties. The Belle Glade Fire Station should be ready for occupancy sometime before March 2009. PBCFR is looking in the city of Pahokee for a new location and is trying to finalize plans for the South Bay station.

Tish Burgher stated that US 27 construction is going along very well. Traffic re-routing has been done and traffic is flowing well. The work in South Bay is also progressing well.

Jeremy Ray reported that the road work is almost complete in Canal Point.

The next GTAC meeting will be held at the South Bay City Hall on December 18, from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. This meeting date was moved up a week due to the Christmas Holiday.

At the January 2009 meeting, Jacques Beaubrun and Tish Burgher will present information on upcoming projects in the area.

Minutes prepared by LJ Margolis and Duane Gainer

Approved By Houston Tate, Director