

MINUTES
SOUTH GULF COVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SGCAC)
Wednesday, April 23, 2008
Growth Management Conference Rm. B-207 – 9:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Sandy Slater, *Chairperson*
Kendall Leach
April Chattinger
Yvonne Ermirio
Jim Benson

STAFF

Jie Shao, *Staff Liaison*
Gayle Moore, Recorder

MEMBERS EXCUSED

GUESTS

Karen Ireland
Martina Kuche

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chair Slater called the April 23, 2008 meeting of the SGCAC to order at 9:10 a.m. in the Growth Management Conference Room B-207 and it was noted a quorum was present.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

By motion of **Ms. Chattinger** and seconded by **Ms. Ermirio**, the minutes of the March 26, 2008 meeting were approved as corrected.

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

Public Safety/Health, Pedestrian/Bikeways, FireWise Community, Cove Connection

Ms. Chattinger noted that Chief Didio had addressed the HOA meeting last week; EMS response time issues were covered. **Chair Slater** noted recent fires in the neighborhood; she conveyed some community concern that the fires may have been started by ATV use or their riders; the use of these machines may constitute a problem for the community. The legality of their use was briefly discussed; **Chair Slater** said that according to her understanding, ATVs are not legal except when used on the owner's own property.

Ms. Chattinger reported that the Cove Connector had signed an agreement with the Conservancy and Trust this past weekend. She briefly reported on the success of the recent brunch fundraiser that was held; she noted that the last event will be in May followed by a summer break until September. Her next fundraising report concerned the eBay store and the need to set up a bank account to handle those transactions.

FireWise has been spurred into new action because of recent fires. There had been no word back from the State but addition communication brought progress and the grant is to move forward. The state will manage the project, which she hopes will be a good thing, as the need is clearly there.

William "Doc" Pickhardt, the arborist, was approached regarding chemical application as the project requires a licensed applicator (Doc is licensed.) He agreed to supervise application

of the chemicals and also to help with the grant. This information when to Steve Miller for further coordination.

With regard to the Scenic Highway road clean-up project, **Ms. Chattinger** noted that four members of SGCAC went out on Saturday for a clean-up effort on SR 771 to Lemon Bay. The activity was meant to generate publicity for the Scenic Highway Committee and there were many participants. Further discussion ensued about this effort, it was particularly noted that the next effort should be made on SR 771 which has much more need for the clean-up. **Ms. Chattinger** noted that Paul Chattinger is treasurer for the Scenic Highway committee; Barb Holmes and Maria Miller may also become permanent members. She also noted that the letter has arrived officially designating the Scenic Highway effort.

Mr. Benson noted that there used to be signs up for volunteers to clean the roads, but he hasn't seen them lately; he wondered who organized that effort? **Chair Slater** and **Ms. Chattinger** both noted that the same people volunteered all the time, and they may have gotten tired of being the only ones. Further discussion ensued on this topic. **Mr. Leach** asked if Mr. Benson wanted to take on that project and Mr. Benson accepted. **Ms. Chattinger** thought that the original project people, would probably still want to be involved if effort was restarted; **Ms. Chattinger** also suggested considering later start time, since 8 a.m. on a Saturday seemed to discourage people, despite being a cooler time of day. **Guest Karen Ireland** noted that one of the issues encountered by the original team concerned disposal of what had been collected; arrangements would need to be made to properly dispose of collected material. **Mr. Benson** said he would arrange for use of a dumpster to be approved so that won't be a problem. Further discussion ensued on aspects of publicizing the effort.

Mr. Leach noted that Director Tom O'Kane would be leaving the Department of Public Works; **Mr. Leach** had seen him at meeting and thanked him for past efforts. There is no word yet who will replace Mr. O'Kane, but he will be here until end of May.

Chair Slater said that she would get the survey needed by Ms. Chattinger.

Parks, Park Master Plan, Entranceways, Land Acquisition, Funding Resources

Ms. Yvonne Ermirio reported on passing long the paver bricks article so new residents would be made aware of problem of installing these in the public right-of-way. Entranceways are on the back burner; a decision is still needed on lettering size and style. This effort is on hold until October.

Ms. Ermirio noted that there was an update on the Linear Park in *News & Views* this month. She also reported that she had spoken with Doc Pickhardt, who has the mangrove permit in hand; he hopes to meet with the County next week since he will be leaving soon to go to Michigan for an unspecified period of time. On May 7th Doc will give a pruning workshop at the Learning Garden.

With regard to the Master Park Plan, **Ms. Ermirio** noted that copies were received last month and have been distributed to the community leaders and members of SGCAC. She mentioned that she has really had a problem getting any response on this, including from anyone on County government; only Ralph Young from the Yacht Club has commented. **Ms. Ermirio** said that she needed the comments as soon as possible because the Plan needs revision and can't be accepted into the Community Plan "as is". She asked that everyone plan to discuss this. She also commented, with regard to the concept of making

this a golf cart community, it's a very involved issue and should be taken into consideration right at the beginning instead of later on.

Chair Slater reported on Mick Slater's research on golf cart community and handed out a summary of his research into the question. It appears from material available on the internet that this is really becoming a popular option in retirement communities but it is important to note that there are parameters set by the state that have to be met to be so designated; it will coincide with pathways and bikeways effort and due to age of community residents, and could increase interest in the Cove Connector. **Ms. Ermirio** commented that her mother resided in a community where carts are in wide use; it is considered a good alternative for those not able to safely drive autos anymore. At this point, however, **Chair Slater** pointed out that golf cart driving is considered illegal within the community and puts everyone in a bad position. Further discussion ensued on this topic. Upon general agreement that this would be something that falls under the Committee Charter, **Chair Slater** asked for suggestions for a member to research the matter further.

Mr. Leach raised a question regarding the Master Park Plan, noting it was not within his expertise to review; **Ms. Ermirio** said his comments would be welcome despite that.

Ms. Ermirio reported that more money had come in from the MSBU for clearing exotics; she has set the following priorities:

- Nitanny Park. This is also a problem in the Master Park Plan; it is a great resource; especially for native plants.
- Gasparilla Rd. has lots of exotics; can't landscape until cleared.
- Santa Lucia park has natural beauty and needs clean-up.

Site visits to parks would be helpful to better identify priorities.

Chair Slater commented about the money available for the efforts, and the priority list which will be needed at that time. Further discussion ensued on this topic.

Chair Slater also had one comment from the Parks & Rec monthly report regarding the resignation of Kathy Connor which she felt was a big loss for SGC because Kathy was so responsive, a "straight shooter" who followed through on her commitments. She noted there were no plans to fill the position.

Zoning and FLUM; Stormwater Report

Mr. Leach noted that the HOA met with an attorney and new Deed Restrictions are being drawn up to conform with the County's zoning and FLUM. Once the documents are completed, they need to go out to the lot owners to vote on and accept.

Staff Liaison Jie Shao noted that Charlotte County FLUM and LDRs are being rewritten, making it something of a moving target to get the new deed restrictions to match up with County ordinances; **Mr. Leach** responded that the new deed restrictions will be written so that they will automatically adopt any further changes to County ordinances.

Turning next to the subject of Stormwater, **Mr. Leach** noted that the LakeWatch program has gathered some volunteers who will take water samples; he notes there is still a need for co-chairs for the committee and this is a year-round role. The state liaison wants to teach each volunteer individually; he will need to inspect the SGC canals also and determine the location where the samples will be taken. **Ms. Chattinger** asked if issues raised in the

email from Sarah Katz had been received and taken into account; **Mr. Leach** stated they had.

Mr. Leach reported that the West Charlotte Civic Assoc. had a meeting last Wednesday; further information about that meeting followed. **Mr. Leach** raised the issue of vehicles making the turn at 776/771 and how trucks run up over the curb, and made the suggestion to remove curb and reconfigure that area for better drainage. Agreement was offered by the FDOT representative, Mr. Nandam, who said a project is underway already and should be completed within a couple of months; Mr. Nandam noted there was the same problem at 776 and San Casa that needed to be fixed as well.

Parks, Park Master Plan, Entranceways, Land Acquisition, Funding Resources

Chair Slater gave comments on the Boat Ramp Park; she recently received a response from David Milligan to emails she had sent regarding that park, in which he said they would be getting back on track with that project.

With regard to the Entranceways, she noted that a recent MSBU meeting had confirmed that there was \$250,000 available for the project as well as Native Tree Fund monies which can be used for irrigation or other NTF approved items. Further discussion ensued on details regarding these projects.

On the subject of land acquisition, **Chair Slater** noted that the county is still in the process of trading the three lots at McAllister Park with Mr. Morales.

Turning next to the Community Plan budget and funding, **Chair Slater** reviewed the outcome of the recent MSBU meeting, noting that there was over \$512,000 in next year's budget for the Community Plan. She noted that she has Tara Musselman how to go about requesting more NTF dollars; Tara has responded that the process is being redone and everything is in legal at the present time.

Ms. Ermirio wondered whether the group shouldn't be spending what we have already before we ask for more, getting something done with money already available. **Chair Slater** responded with information on how money has been spent to date, noting that part of the \$512,000 is money carried forward. Further discussion ensued on the budget.

Mr. Leach said he understood that the design of the entranceway signs was not yet complete; **Ms. Ermirio** clarified that it the outstanding task was to meet with the sign company to determine the exact lettering style and size, and then surveys are needed to determine the actual placement position. **Mr. Leach** asked if the final design was going to be brought before the HOA before the project was put out for bid, noting that the funding for the signs was "everybody's" MSBU funds, and what would the time frame for that presentation be. **Ms. Ermirio** said she thought that September was likely; **Mr. Leach** said the ideal would be to have plenty of time for feedback and possible changes before time to get the bid. Further discussion ensued on the topic.

Staff member Martina Kuche visited the meeting to talk about Scenic Highway; she was introduced to new Committee members. She spoke about both the Scenic Highway project as well as an upcoming Newspaper Dispenser Ordinance she is working on, and suggested ways in which the Committee might be able to assist with these efforts.

V. **NEW BUSINESS**

Community Plan Review

Mr. Benson stated he has not yet reviewed all the Plan due to illness at home; he also indicated he will be available to work on the Scenic Highway effort if that is what the group wants. **Ms. Chattinger** asked if he could actually be on the Scenic Highway committee; **Mr. Benson** said he could do that and it was noted the committee meets on the first Tuesday of the month. Further discussion ensued on the details of the committee membership. It was noted that the group is now known as Corridor Management Entity (CME).

Chair Slater asked Mr. Benson if he was interested in being assigned to look into the Golf Cart Community question; **Mr. Leach** observed that since this is a new issue, it might be best to look it over first before assigning it to anyone. There was some discussion of the matter being taken on by Sarah Katz. **Mr. Benson** also volunteered for water testing and signs. There was further discussion on Sunshine Law training that Mr. Benson would be undertaking soon also.

The members then turned to their review of the Community Plan "report card" which was being prepared for presentation at the Committee's sunset hearing; **Mr. Leach** urged that the presentation be made in May and not held back until the last minute. Further discussion about and review of the "report card" and plans for the presentation before the Commissioners ensued. **Chair Slater** said that she would draft the letter to be presented to the Commissioners.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

VII. STAFF COMMENTS

None.

VIII. MEMBER COMMENTS

There was a discussion of which members will be gone during the upcoming months and not available for meetings; they will be canceling one of the summer meetings, to be decided later. **Mr. Leach** will chair the May SGCAC meeting in Ms. Slater's absence.

Chair Slater noted that there is a need for Cove Connector displays at meetings; she also indicated that she will supply handouts for the May brunch.

Ms. Chattinger asked about progress on the Penny tax question: **Ms. Shao** indicated she had not yet heard back from Joyce Ross on that matter.

IX. NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the **South Gulf Cove Advisory Committee** is **Wednesday, May 28, 2008** from 9:00 a.m. until 12 noon in the **Growth Management Conference Room (B-207)**.

At 11:00 a.m. **Chair Slater** stated: There being no further business to come before this committee, I declare the meeting adjourned.