

City of Treasure Island Beach Stewardship Committee

March 8, 2006

1:30 PM

COMMITTEE PRESENT: Robert Minning, Alan Bildz, John Burke, Dennis Velasco, George Greenfield, Rick Raus; Lynn Rosetti, City Planning Dept.; Cliff Truitt, Coastal Tech.

Chairman Robert Minning called the Beach Stewardship Committee meeting to order at 1:35 PM in the City Hall auditorium, 108th Avenue, Treasure Island, Florida.

1. The draft minutes of the February 8, 2006 meeting had been distributed and reviewed by the Committee members. There was a question and discussion of Item 7, about the Committee's role in the Trail Project. The wording on the minutes was revised to strike the reference to the Committee not having "control" over the design and substituting simpler wording to the effect that the Committee's role in all situations is only as an advisory group. Upon appropriate motion the minutes were approved as amended.
2. Without objection the regular Agenda was amended to add a follow-up presentation on the City Comprehensive Plan and EAR process by Treasure Island City Planner, Lynn Rosetti.
3. Lynn Rosetti provided additional information about the State-mandated Comprehensive Planning program and the periodic Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) that each community does. The EAR is essentially a 'self evaluation' process that communities go through on a 7 year cycle. Lynn outlined the general steps and parties involved. In the present cycle, only four issues were identified for which the City wanted to investigate its own progress in greater detail. However, one of the four involved the beaches and was phrased as the question: "*Do Treasure Island's Comprehensive Plan Objectives adequately provide for the beach-dune system's retention, rehabilitation and maintenance.*" It is this issue that the Committee may want to have input on together with the Planning Board over the rest of the EAR period.
4. Cliff Truitt reported progress on the FDEP permit application for Sand Sharing. The FDEP has determined that the permit application is 'complete' and will process a Notice of Intent to Issue shortly. The actual permit will follow a public advertising period and should be formally issued in mid-April.
5. Rick Raus reported on the progress in the "no-rake" beach areas. He said that things were going very well and he was going to start a formal monthly monitoring program, with photos, etc. to determine the effects of stopping the beach raking. The "no rake" program is on public beach areas from 110th to 119th and 100th to 101st. There are still private raking companies that work on upland areas. They have generally been cooperative, but will need to be reminded to lift their rakes when crossing public beach.
6. Lara Valverde, a representative of a group called "Citizens for a Natural Treasure Island Beach," spoke about her group's interests and membership. She said that the group is a new

civic association with about 75 members already on a mailing list and was formed as a result of the community input process for the beach trail project. She sees other positive opportunities including beach vegetation, access locations/improvements and a self-guided signage 'trail.'

Ms. Valverde then spoke about a number of marine turtle behaviors and conservation issues. Among those issues were human impacts to habitat such as lighting, beach armoring, driving/compaction, pesticides and obstructions like beach chairs. Included in her discussion was a description of a community-based program called "NESTS" (Neighbors Ensuring Sea Turtle Survival: www.nests-certified.org). The organization hopes to promote individual education, awareness and participation through a multi-level 'certification' program.

Ms. Vaverde asked the Committee to reflect on and discuss the information presented and perhaps make some formal statement or endorsement at a future meeting.

There was general Committee discussion about beach lighting, including the City's lighting ordinance, and about types of 'turtle friendly' lighting available. Alan Bildz commented on the pesticide impact and noted that problems with pesticide use, in general, had been part of the EAR discussions. There was also a question about an Environmental Assessment previously done for projects in the county including the Pinellas Trail; the concern is that such studies have a limited 'shelf life' and may need to be updated.

6. John Burke had contacted the Estuary Program office and got a copy of the video "Wicked Weeds" dealing with control of invasive, exotic plants in Florida. The Committee viewed the short video which included identifying invasive plants, specifics of which herbicidal chemicals to use and how to apply them.

7. Mr. Minning began additional discussion of the potential Eleanor Island clean-up by saying that Commissioner Gayton had mentioned the project at the last City Commission meeting. We have been asked to develop a plan for the island including coordinating with groups like Audubon, SWFWMD as well as the County. A \$7,000 grant will be available in 2007 and we may be able to use a portion of the Beach Fund.

8. Committee Member Remarks:

John Burke said that 35 people attended the February beach clean-up and about 545 pounds of trash was collected.

Alan Bildz mentioned an article in the St. Petersburg Times about invasive animal species including finding crocodiles in Key West.

George Greenfield asked what public input Phil Graham had received and felt that Graham should report back to the Committee with his progress and updated plans. Robert Minning noted that there was supposed to be survey results posted on the City website; also, the City Manager had said there will be additional public input for the project in the later phases of the contract. Mr. Minning said that the Committee had received a letter from the McLeans objecting to the Trail plans.

9. The next regular Committee meeting date was set for April 12, 2006 at 1:30

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30.