

City of Treasure Island Beach Stewardship Committee

August 18, 2010

1:30 PM

Committee Present: Dennis Velasco, George Greenfield, Don Nolan, Ruth Philipon, Mary Daughtry, Commissioner, Alan Bildz, Jim Murphy, and Rick Raus

Chairman Dennis Velasco called the Beach Stewardship Committee meeting to order at 1:30 PM in the City Hall Auditorium, 108th Ave., Treasure Island, Florida.

A draft of the minutes of the July 14, 2010 meeting had been previously distributed and reviewed by all committee members. Upon appropriate motion, the draft was approved as submitted.

Changes to the Agenda: There were no changes to the agenda.

Phil Graham was present to complete a presentation of, what he feels, is a viable and workable beach walk plan, and he scaled down his original plans of 2005. He stated that everyone on the Committee and his firm has worked very hard to review these numbers, both concerning the budget and the scope of the project itself.

He reviewed the many projects he has completed for TI and the various aspects of his firm. He indicated he will review the Project objectives, existing conditions, plan adjustments which were discussed with the Committee and recommended, and the budget summary. He stated his firm went over the original plans for the beach trail he submitted in 2005 stating it included landscaping, extensive decorative pavement, site furnishing, lighting and other amenities. He did a substantial review of the budget and made some refinement to be made in order to focus in on the cost and the scope which would make a very useful and practical Phase I installation.

He reviewed his plan regarding the central beach from 119th to 104th Avenue and will focus on that during the presentation today. He is hopeful that with the continued relationship of joint use with the St Pete Municipal Beach, they will participate in the continued upkeep and even enhancement of the space they are using.

He pointed out that currently there is a space between the current sand wall and the trail; however, in the new plan, the sand wall will be a bench type and abut to the beach trail.

He briefly reviewed the master plan as a comparison to the adjusted plan. The adjusted plan will utilize the existing plants, there will be access points out to the beach, and a seat wall running the whole length, and the sidewalk will meander along the trail. The narrowest part of the trail would be 12' wide and undulates out quite a bit wider

and bulbs out in many areas significantly wider and at one point up to 40'. There are areas that would be developed for a seating and gathering along the beach. A suggestion from the Committee to utilize some portions of the existing beach walk due to keeping costs down was made, and he noted there were some areas that could remain and may be incorporated with some concrete staining, etc. His recommendation, however, would be to remove the whole walk and start all over again. Currently, there are existing walkways to the beach from the commercial properties; however, he is suggesting that they all look alike so there is continuity along the trail. He noted this may be a participation element with the commercial properties. At intervals, there will be some sort of treatment on the walk way such as scoring or pattern or art work, etc.

He reviewed the slides of his presentation indicating the various beach access points and showing the undulating walkway. He indicated that some of the bulb outs may be shortened or done away with if necessary. He noted the wall will be wider with a 14" seat, and he recommended including skateboard impediments every 20' along the way. He stated the color for the concrete is done by mixing color throughout the concrete mix and use various designs in the concrete. He is suggesting turtle friendly lighting with an LED bulb and placed on the vertical side on the inside (eastern side) of the wall which will shine on the path from the wall. No lights will be on the western side of the wall. A discussion took place regarding solar vs. LED lighting but it is his recommendation to use the LED. Trash receptacles will be used throughout the trail.

It was suggested by the Committee that on the beach side of the wall, a strike line be placed where the sand berm should be maintained. This way the tractor operator will know exactly where to keep it leveled.

The wall will be poured in place so it will have a concrete footer with steel and formed and poured solid so there will be no masonry block. There will be pins coming up to tie in with the seat cap. He noted on his slide that the pedestrian access points to the beach will include a wall to prevent the westerly winds from blowing sand on the walk, and therefore, entrance to the beach will be from the sides. There will be approximately 21 entrances along the way. He recommended putting a marking lane in the concrete for a bicycle lane and a different texture for the pedestrian lane.

He reviewed the various costs of items which will be in the Phase I indicating that some of the figures are higher from 2004 and some are lower. The total cost for Phase I for the beach trail is approximately \$1.5 million. Mr. Graham stated he will be scheduling a meeting with the Mayor of St. Petersburg to show him the plans and stress the importance for the City to participate.

The suggestion was made regarding the possibility of obtaining a grant. Jim Murphy also noted that permits will be required by the State. The possibility of cutting down on some of the lighting especially in view of the commercial properties adjacent to

the trail was discussed, and it was his recommendation to use all the lights due to the importance of uniform lighting. Mary Daughtry brought out the practicality of the colored concrete and what it will look like in years. Mr. Graham thought it was more for aesthetic value, and he would recommend utilizing Scofield or Davis colors. He indicated this is what has been used by Disney and has been there for 25 years, and feels it is durable. Mary Daughtry questioned cutting out other amenities in an effort to lower the cost which may be added over a period of time and Mr. Graham felt this was possible. He noted that the estimates are from contractors he has been in touch with, however; the pricing may be different when contacting a contractor for design, fine tuning, and getting the exact square footage. He stated there are a lot of "soft" costs, which include coordination costs, design costs, observation, coordination of the contractors, surveying, etc.

Jim Murphy stated that due to this being a conceptual plan and cost, the budget limit needs to be discussed and see how much of the amenities will be able to be utilized. He noted that this has been considered for quite a while and it is important to have a vibrant beach area to attract people. It is his recommendation to make a statement regarding the beach trail, with keeping in mind the budget; and once funding is identified, create the project. He also noted the importance of requiring resources to maintain the trail on a regular basis to keep it looking well maintained.

George Greenfield recommended attending a Visioning Committee meeting to present this concept since the Committee has been reviewing the original plan. This would clarify the previous discussions of the Visioning Committee and provide some practical points as well as conceptual points. Mr. Greenfield felt that the Visioning Committee is in a better position to make some kind of recommendation in its final statement.

Mr. Murphy felt that the next step is to take the recommendation to the Commission indicating that this plan supports and meshes with what the City's vision is for the future, and one of those visions was to have a vital beach area to attract visitors and residents.

Mary Daughtry feels it is necessary to see other figures due to the budget. She noted this project started in 2006 and it is now 2010, but it is necessary to be able to present something that is realistic to get this in the budget and possibly develop with a multi-year plan. She felt that the Committee should do something, but do it right with the correct dollar figures available. Mr. Murphy stated that the project will be approximately \$1.3 million, plus or minus, but it should be noted that this is a plan that would work and that everyone is comfortable with. He noted that, as Phil Graham commented, the next step would be to get a design since this is just a conceptual plan.

Dennis stated he agreed with Mary about getting yet another modified plan and getting other sets of numbers. He felt it would be best to discuss this with the City Manager prior to presenting it to the Commission regarding the possibilities of funding.

Mr. Murphy noted that the question to the Beach Stewardship Committee would be would they recommend this project to the Commission; and at that time, the need to make a decision and figure out how to fund the project may then be made. He stated that once the funding has to been found, the project has to be set up, an engineer has to be hired, designs need completed, permitting completed, go out for bid and build the project. Dennis agreed this is long overdue. Mr. Murphy stated there are ways to cut costs and that could be done by keeping the existing walkway and put in a simple wall, but in his opinion the City wants an amenity to be proud of and would be attractive to visitors.

Mary Daughtry inquired that if a recommendation is made to the Commission, is it necessary to break the project down. Mr. Murphy stated that the money is going to be spent whether over 3 years or 1 year to create this project and funding needs to be found.

Reid Silverboard, City Manager was present and advised the Committee that there are more projects the City has to complete including 2 bridges to replace, undergrounding Gulf Blvd, this beach trail project, and there is a park in the Isle of Palms the City has been leasing but now must consider purchasing at a substantial cost. He noted that proposed for next year's budget is getting a financial consultant on board to help the City put together a financing plan to pay for the variety of projects. He stated there are ways to do this, but it is going to cost someone money as there are no grants available. This project is part of the overall Treasure Island Improvement Program, which the consultant will assist in developing a financing plan, such as bonding; using some money through the County to pay for all or a portion of the undergrounding; the possibility of an assessment district to pay a portion of the cost for some of these improvements; and possibly a dedicated millage for a set number of years to pay for just these improvement. This could be done by one or a combination of these different methodologies. He informed the Committee that there is \$50,000 which was put in the budget for the central beach trail and that is to get started with engineering and specifications. The total cost will not be known until the project goes out for bid. He felt that the City can start getting the permitting and the specs underway so that once the financial plan is completed this project can proceed rather than waiting another 2-5 years.

Mr. Silverboard continued to explain that the Visioning Committee does not make recommendations; it is the residents themselves that review the projects at community meetings.

Dennis asked if putting through a dollar amount to move forward with a workable design, recommend it to the Commission, and at that time, leave it with the Commission, and Mr. Silverboard felt this is just the way to proceed. He noted the Committee is not required to come up with finite details of the plan. He noted the whole project has been stuck in neutral for the past 5 years. The plan has always been available it is just not knowing which parts of it to do with cost estimates. It is only for the Beach Stewardship Committee to come up with the element and an estimated cost. It is then up to the Commission to work out the specifics that will be included. He strongly urges the Committee to move the plan forward, and the recommendation be kept at \$1.3 million so the Commission can get moving on it. This is a conceptual design and is a "bare bones" project since all that is being recommended is putting in a sidewalk and a wall, and all the add-ons that will spruce it up can be done in Phases. Also, the possibility of abutting properties assisting with the improvements in a "give and take" situation is an option.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding plans for the old Buccaneer property and whether it may be possible to get them to donate space, etc to the City, and include this in the recommendation, however, Mr. Silverboard suggested that the basic concept of the beach trail should be recommended to the Commission and move from there.

Ruth Philipon agreed that this project has been discussed for many years; and as the years goes by, the walkway, the wall and the area looks more and more dilapidated. She noted that there is always someone who will disagree, but she felt it was necessary to get started and Don Nolan agreed. Commissioner Bildz noted that the Committee is satisfied with the design, but he felt there are different areas that may be cut and should be kept in mind when making the motion to present this to the Commission.

George Greenfield made a motion that the Committee accept in concept the plan that Phil Graham has presented and leave the details and financing to the Commission to work out. Ruth Philipon seconded that motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Dennis Velasco wished to thank Phil Graham for his presentation. He felt it was presented in such a way that it was not confusing and something the Committee could work with.

Remarks by Members:

Don Nolan gave the beach clean-up report noting there 30 people attended, and they picked up approximately 460 lbs of trash. He noted there seem to be a lot of tents and these are difficult to pick up and actually took several people to tear it down.

Dennis asked for volunteers for the sea oats plantings. There are 500 gallon containers. He asked everyone to meet at 8:30 am, August 21 at the Beachfront Park

There is parking at 103rd Ave and this is a City free parking lot. He inquired regarding if the water testing was an ongoing procedure, and Mayor Minning stated it is ongoing, however, they only test for bacteria. He stated there was only 1 elevated level on a Monday's test and rescinded on the Thursday's test. Dennis is concerned regarding oil droplets coming south from the oil spill, but the Mayor felt that is something the Government EPA should test for.

Mayor Minning thanked the Committee for getting the beach walk moving forward. He stated it has been a long time coming, and he looks forward to getting it up in front of the Commission and getting a financial consultant in to figure a way to pay for it.

George Greenfield gave an update on the beach renourishment indicating Sunshine Beach has a wide nice beach. They are pumping sand now at 124th Ave so from John's Pass to 124th Avenue is completed. The early part that was done before they stopped for the storm, already has some erosion near John's Pass.

Commissioner Bildz wished to discuss the tents which Don Nolan brought up and was tabled because he was not at the last meeting. He noted he gets complaints where the beach is narrow and these tents are taking up too much room. Also people leaving them overnight; and therefore, in the event of a storm, they may become projectiles. It was recommended to put this item on the agenda for the next meeting. He also wished congratulations to the 4 members who were reappointed to the Beach Stewardship Committee yesterday.

Rick Raus informed the Committee that the beach renourishment is on time, and in approximately 2 weeks, they should be moving to the south. Commissioner Bildz asked if there are complaints regarding the smell; however, no complaints came in to the Public Works office. Rick advised Commissioner Bildz that when the "mud" comes up, there is a smell; however, once it dries the smell goes away.

Since there were no further comments, the meeting was adjourned. The Committee was advised that the next Beach Stewardship Committee Meeting will be on September 8, 2010 here at the City Hall Auditorium.