

**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
PUBLIC WORKSHOP – BEACH RE-NOURISHMENT PROJECT
MISSION BY THE SEA CHURCH – ALLIGATOR POINT
AUGUST 24, 2007
5:00 PM**

MINUTES

Commissioners Present: Russell Crofton – Chairman, Noah Lockley Jr – Vice Chariman, Cheryl Sanders, Joseph Parrish, Bevin Putnal

Others Present: Alan Pierce – Director of Administrative Services, Michael Morón – Board Secretary

Call to Order

Chairman Crofton called the workshop to order at 5:03 PM and made opening remarks.

Workshop

Commissioner Putnal stated that the Commission supported the residents of Alligator Point and was eager to listen to their comments on this matter.

Alan Pierce stated that Mike Dombroski, of MDR, was in attendance to answer questions regarding the beach re-nourishment project, and discussed the notice of assessment that should have been received by the property owners of Alligator Point. Mr. Pierce stated that the following 4 items could reduce over cost of the project; lower construction cost, cost of financing including the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) cost sharing, unity of title, and Tax Increment Financing (TIF), and then discussed all four items.

There was a question from the audience that asked about the prepayment process including credits and adjustments. Mr. Pierce explained the prepayment process.

There was another question from the audience that asked about the cost of repairing the beach if any hurricanes come during project. Mr. Pierce stated that because it was a man made beach FEMA would pay for the cost of the repairs to the beach.

Another audience member asked why the project was financed over 8 years; Mr. Pierce stated that at least 50% of beach is expected to remain after 8 years, and 8 years is the minimum life expectancy of the project.

An audience member asked what would happen if project is not done, have there been any studies done on this type of project, and why are non-beachfront lots paying the assessment for the project. Mr. Pierce stated that if the project was not done in 30 years many of the beachfront lots would be in the water and then explained the process of the assessment and how it affects non-beachfront lots.

William Wargo stated that the current erosion is not actually natural, it is caused by rocks that have been added over the years by the County and DEP has informed him that Franklin County is in violation because of the placement of those rocks. Mr. Wargo wanted to know if the rocks would be removed during the project and explained why the rocks will continue to erode the beach if left there. Mr. Wargo also stated that it was unfair to charge the property owners for this project because the erosion was the fault of the County, asked about the lighting violations regarding the turtles, and stated that based on his research he knew of other Florida beach re-nourishment projects that has not been successful. Mr. Pierce stated that the rocks and lighting issue still has to be addressed with DEP but are being discussed and does not agree that rocks are the cause of the erosion.

Rob Henchey is in favor of project including filling in the section known as "the gap"

Randy Miller stated that he is not in an eroding area and asked how much the state would pay for filling in "the gap". Mike Dombroski stated that DEP is paying about 50% of the project cost which includes the state park, 4% is being paid to include the section known as "the gap", and if another beach access point is found within "the gap", state participation would increase by almost 10%.

Randy Miller asked why the County was not using any County tax dollars as a match, was not against the project but was against the style of funding, and taxing for the project should be equitable for all county residents.

Tom Bennett, who lives in the gap, was in favor of the project including filling in "the gap".

An audience member asked if the assessment for the project is extended into bald point area; Mr. Pierce and Mr. Dombroski explained the specific areas that the project covered.

Michael Ferrell stated that he was concerned of the effect this project would have on the other parts of Alligator Point that are not presently suffering from any erosion and thinks that County should be paying for this project not the property owners of Alligator Point. Mr. Dombroski stated that the project would enhance not hurt, other parts of Alligator Point.

Bill Haughton, who was against the project, stated that even though his taxes has increased over the years, the County has done nothing, especially maintaining the road, for the property owners of Alligator Point with the increased taxes, and expressed his dissatisfaction with the services provided by the County for the residents of Alligator Point over the years.

Ken Osborne gave some history of the project, stated how much planning has actually gone into the project, discussed the benefits of a TIF for the property owners of Alligator Point, stated that it was a now or never deal for this project, and that a MSBU was decided upon by a majority of the residents because it was considered the most fair option.

Sam Rogers expressed his support for the project and encouraged the Board to start the project as soon as possible.

Jim Wetherton read letters from two residents of "the gap" that were unable to attend and was opposed to the project. Mr. Wetherton also stated that maintaining the road was the County's responsibility, and asked what would happen if the bids come in over the maximum amount allowed. Mr. Dombroski explained some of the options available to reduce the cost of the project. Mr. Wetherton stated that he was afraid that less sand would be used if the project came in over the maximum allowed, didn't agree with the now or never concept for the

project, stated that because the added sand would be moved over the years the plan is designed to fail, discussed other possible options for beach re-nourishment, did not think the gap should be included, discussed the permit process with DEP for the project including debris removal and who is responsible for debris removal on private property, the incomplete Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) environmental study, turtle lighting violations, and environmental study for the beach including core samples and heavy equipment impact on beach life and homes. Mr. Dombroski explained that beach re-nourishment doesn't stop erosion, environmental impacts have been looked at and is stated on different reports, work will be done more seaward to protect beach life, debris removal is determined by DEP not the County, the County will have their permit within a year of submitting the application, which is a year or two sooner than most other applications, and addressed the vibrations concerns.

Bill Wargo discussed the FWC working with turtle lighting and expressed his concerns with the "poll" that was referred to by Mr. Ken Osborne earlier.

Marsha Tucker, speaking for Mr. Nichols, stated that he was in favor of the project and she was also in favor of the project and suggested a toll road to help pay for the project.

Ruth Van Adams was opposed to the funding process for the project because it involved maintaining and protecting a County road, which is the responsibility of the County and should not be paid for by the property owners through an assessment.

An audience member stated that he was opposed to the project and thinks that it is doomed for failure because nature will overcome any man made beach.

Gloria Rally stated that she was opposed to the funding process for this project, and other County residents should also be assessed.

Alan Fifer stated that he was in favor of beach re-nourishment but was against the financing process, asked the County to contribute to this project because not all property owners can afford to pay the assessment, but felt that if the project is not completed the next major storm would cause a breach of the land at about the location of the KOA.

Bob Woodward stated that his house was lost during the last hurricane, thanked the Commissioners for attending the workshop, was in favor of the project because the property values will increase, and liked the idea of the TIF.

Jim Cummings was in favor of the project but had concerns of the cost and wanted the County to contribute.

Keith Sumner was in favor of the project but the cost should be equitable to include visitors to the beach, and stated that if the project is not done, the breach, referred to by Mr. Fifer would actually be on his property.

Tony Cherry was in favor of the project but stated that maintaining the road was the County's responsibility and asked why the County was not participating in the project. Mr. Pierce stated that the County was involved with some of the cost of getting the project to this point but made a policy decision not to contribute to the financing portion.

Ann Maruszak asked about a map that would show exactly what property owners had to pay.

Bill Hartman asked why the County would not pave the road. Mr. Pierce stated that there are set-aside funds to pave the road but because it doesn't qualify as a state road, there aren't

many grants to assist the County with maintaining the road. Mr. Pierce also wanted to clarify that the County never asked for this road, it was given to them.

Someone from the audience asked that all the documents relating to this project be placed on the County's website so that all property owners have access and can view these documents; Mr. Pierce stated that Ann Maruszak has all these documents posted on the APTA website.

Doug Moody stated that he is in favor of this project and does agree that it is a now or never opportunity.

Eddie Sosebee is in favor of the project, and even though it is not perfect, it is a good opportunity for Alligator Point. Mr. Sosebee asked if there would be another opportunity for other Alligator Point property owners to speak. Mr. Pierce informed everyone that there is a scheduled Special Meeting on this matter on September 11, 2007 at 9 AM at the Commission chambers in Apalachicola and the public would have an opportunity to speak on this matter at that time.

Another audience member stated that he is in favor of the project but agrees that the County should contribute to the cost of the project.

Joe Kittrell stated that he was in favor of the project.

Ken Osborne suggested that property owners should attend the Aug 28 sales tax public workshop and encourage the Commissioners to use some of the ad volerm taxes that is set-aside for the hospital, providing the sales tax referendum passes, for the Alligator Point beach re-nourishment project.

Adjourn

There being no further discussion Chairman Crofton adjourned the Workshop at 7:02 PM.

G. Russell Crofton, Chairman FCBCC

Attest:

Marcia M. Johnson, Clerk of Courts