

MINUTES
VOLUSIA FOREVER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, September 23, 2009

3:30p.m.

THOMAS C. KELLY BLDG., TRAINING ROOMS 1 & 2
123 W. INDIANA AVENUE, DELAND, FL 32720

Approved on January 27, 2010

Board Members in Attendance:

Anne Hallum, Chair
Chris Schlageter, Vice-Chair
Barbara Coomber
Thomas Fleishel
Neil Harrington
Alan Long
Phil Maroney
Kevin O'Dwyer

Also in Attendance:

Ed Isenhour	Tony Goudie
Randall Sleister	Dianne Cade
Stacey Manning	Coren Meeks
Jeanette Munson	Wanda Kowitz
	Ann Brady
	John B. Crowther
	Mary Sizemore

Meeting Called to Order

Anne Hallum, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:32p.m.

Roll Call

Anne Hallum, Chair, instructed the Recording Secretary to record the roll of the Members in attendance, in which eight (8) Members were present after Member Neil Harrington arrived late. Member Wanda Van Dam was recorded as an Excused Absence.

Approval of Minutes

Anne Hallum, Chair, called for a motion to approve the July 22, 2009, Minutes. After a typographic error was noted, Member Alan Long made a motion to **approve** the July 22, 2009, Minutes, as corrected. Member Thomas Fleishel **seconded** the motion that **carried** by unanimous voice vote.

Evaluation and Ranking of Eligible Applications – Ed Isenhour explained that the Committee would be reviewing three (3) properties, which were deemed as eligible during the 1st Cycle of 2009 (January 1, 2009 through June 30, 2009), to determine their placement on the Group "A" or "B" List including the projects already on the List. The ranking determination of each property (Group "A" or "B" List) would be handled one at a time with a voice vote. He reminded the Committee that in order for a motion to pass it requires a simple majority vote of the Members who are present, which would be five (5). He stated that the Committee's recommended Group "A/B" List would be presented to the County Council for final approval.

Ed Isenhour and Randall Sleister provided a PowerPoint presentation of pictures, location maps, and a brief overview of each property, as follows:

- 1. Nordstrom Property** - This partially developed, rectangular shaped property is approximately 40 acres in size. It is located on the west side of Tomoka Farms Road, west of Port Orange. It is situated between the Longleaf Pine Preserve, and the McDonald Property, a Volusia Forever Group "A" Project. Public access to the property would be provided by an easement, Ideis Road, from Tomoka Farms Road. A power line easement crosses the center portion of this property, dividing this property into two (2) distinct areas. The property owners have indicated that they would like to retain a portion of the eastern section of the property containing a small pond, pole barn and picnic pavilion. The eastern portion of the property has been used in conjunction with ATV activities. The western portion of the property is in a more natural state, which is dominated by mesic and wet flatwoods, and basin swamp. The St. Johns River Water Management District (District) has been identified as a potential funding partner. However, the District's participation would be dependent on the potential acquisition of the McDonald Property.

Chair Anne Hallum requested an update on the potential acquisition of the McDonald Property.

Ed Isenhour responded that the County's acquisition efforts had not begun. At this time, it is unknown when these efforts could begin.

Member Barbara Coomber requested clarification on movement of properties between the Group "A" to "B" Lists.

Ed Isenhour explained that at any time properties could be moved from Group "A" to Group "B," or vice versa upon approval by County Council. Additionally, the Group "A/B" List is not prioritized within each group. Therefore, any project within either group could be moved forward in the acquisition process.

Discussion ensued regarding the placement of properties on the Group "A" and "B" Lists that would be contingent on another property.

Ed Isenhour added that County staff approached the owners of the Nordstrom Property to determine if they were willing to participate in the Volusia Forever Program as willing sellers. This was done after the McDonald Property was placed on the Group "A" List in an attempt to fill in the gaps.

Member Phil Maroney made a motion to **add the Nordstrom Property** to the Group "A" List of eligible properties. Member Kevin O'Dwyer **seconded** the motion that **carried** by a roll call vote of seven (7) to one (1) with Member Alan Long opposed.

2. **Albin Hagstrom & Son Property** – This partially developed, lakefront property is approximately 27 acres in size. It is located on the west side of Living Water Street and south of Burts Park Road in DeLeon Springs. It has approximately 1,500 feet of shoreline along Spring Garden Lake. It is in close proximity to the County's Chuck Lennon Park, DeLeon Springs State Park and the Lake Woodruff National Wildlife Refuge. It is presently being used for the production of fern. A pasture is located to the east of the property. Exotic species are present. All of the native vegetation is gone, except along the edge of the lake. An irrigation system and a small shed are located on the property. A potential funding partner has not been identified.

Member Phil Maroney asked if the shoreline provided a beach like area that would allow public access to the lake.

Randall Sleister replied that public access to the lake could be possible by non-motorized boats, but this opportunity had not been thoroughly investigated.

Discussion ensued regarding the potential for passive recreational opportunities as this property provides lake frontage and is in close proximity to other conservation lands.

Chair Anne Hallum asked if it would be possible to restore a fernery back to a more natural state.

Randall Sleister explained that there is an interest in restoring a fernery back to a more natural state. However, this effort could be very costly and time consuming. County staff would rather devote their time and effort in managing properties that were already in a more natural.

Discussion ensued regarding the potential acquisition of others parcels in this area that would help provide connectivity to other conservation lands.

Member Thomas Fleishel asked what management tools could be used to on this property.

Randall Sleister replied that it would be several years before County staff would be able to concentrate their efforts on properly managing this site. In the meantime, a lease involving the operation of a fernery could be temporarily implemented to bridge the time gap. Once County staff was able to concentrate on the management of this site, herbicide treatment of the exotics would potentially be the first management tool used.

Member Barbara Coomber commented that this project did not meet the minimum eligibility requirement of ten (10) primary criteria.

Member Alan Long made a motion to **add** the **Albin Hagstrom & Son Property** to the Group "B" List of eligible properties. Member Phil Maroney **seconded** the motion that **carried** by a roll call vote of six (6) to two (2) with Chair Anne Hallum and Member Neil Harrington opposed.

3. **David Strawn Property** – This undeveloped property is approximately 157 acres in size. It is located on the east side of Lake Winona Road, between Camp Winona Road and Blackwelder Road in DeLeon Springs. It encircles approximately two (2) acres of land owned by another party. It provides frontage on Lake Winona. It is adjacent to the recently acquired 1,200-acre portion of the Heart Island Conservation Area, which was jointly acquired by the County and St. Johns River Water Management District, and is managed by the District. It is also adjacent to the YMCA's Camp Winona. This property lies within the boundaries of the State's Florida Forever Group B List project known as the Longleaf Pine Ecosystem. The natural habitat is a mosaic of pasture and upland areas. Most of the uplands are sandhill with some longleaf pine. The upland areas have been extensively harvested. There is a minimal occurrence of exotics on the property. A small, abandoned building for the butchering of livestock is the only substantial structure on the site. A potential funding partner has not been identified.

Discussion ensued regarding the potential of developing a funding partnership with the District and possibly the YMCA.

Member Kevin O'Dwyer asked if the owner of the 2-acre in-holding had been identified, and if there were any easement issues.

Ed Isenhour replied that the owner of the 2-acre in-holding had been identified.

Stacey Manning, Assistant County Attorney, explained that there could be an easement issue, which would need to be investigated and addressed.

Ed Isenhour added that any easements or access issues would be addressed, should this property move on in the acquisition process.

Member Chris Schlageter asked what management tool(s) (i.e., prescribed fire, mowing) could be used to restore the pasture areas back to its natural state.

Randall Sleister stated that the most likely management tool would be herbicide treatment of the pasture area before reforesting it with pine trees. However, the management of this property, if acquired, could be incorporated into the District's overall management of Heart Island Conservation Area. Other options could include a cattle lease until restoration efforts could be implemented by the County and/or District.

Discussion ensued regarding the desire to preserve this property as it consists primarily of sandhill habitat and its connectivity to other conservation lands. Additional discussion included the desire to maintain Lake Winona Road as a dirt road.

Member Chris Schlageter made a motion to **add** the **David Strawn Property** to the Group "A" List of eligible properties. Member Barbara Coomber **seconded** the motion that **carried** by unanimous voice vote.

4. **Other Properties –**

Ed Isenhour reminded the Committee that two (2) additional applications were received during the 1st cycle of 2009, the Atlantic Center for the Arts and the Lake George Fernery properties. Because these properties are within Volusia Forever Group "A" List project areas, Doris Leeper Spruce Creek Preserve and Lake George Conservation Area, an eligibility determination was not

necessary. These properties automatically became part of the Group "A" List.

Recommended Changes to Current Volusia Forever List

Group "A" List - Ed Isenhour stated that County staff was not recommending any additional changes to the Group "A" List.

Group "B" List – Ed Isenhour explained that in accordance with Resolution 2008-132, the Committee may recommend to the County Council the removal of any Group "B" List property after two (2) ranking cycles or one (1) year. Maps and additional information on each property were provided along with County staff's recommendation.

1. **Lafayette Landings Property** – 152 acre tract of undeveloped land located on the north side of Lafayette Landings Road, east of SR 11, near Lake Dias. The property's eastern boundary abuts the Plum Creek Property, which has a conservation easement. An application for this property was received during the 1st cycle of 2004. It was placed on the Group "B" List in 2004 and has remained there. As there has been no change in the status of this property, County staff is recommending that this property be removed from the Group "A/B" List of eligible properties.
2. **Salanitro Property** – 14 acre tract of undeveloped land located on the south side of Lake Dias, northeast of DeLeon Springs. An application for this property was received during the 1st cycle of 2006. It was originally placed on the Group "A" List in 2006 because it was an in-holding of the Charlene Strawn Old Growth Forest and Recreational Area Property. However, in 2007 the Charlene Strawn Old Growth Forest and Recreational Area Property was withdrawn from the Group "A/B" List at the request of the property owners. In 2008, the Salanitro Property was moved to the Group "B" List. As this is a small, stand-alone project, County staff is recommending that this property be removed from the Group "A/B" List of eligible properties.
3. **McLellan Property** – 5 acre tract of undeveloped land located south of Lemon Bluff Road at the northeast corner of the Lake Monroe Conservation Area in Osteen. An application for this property was received during the 2nd cycle of 2007. It was placed on the Group "B" List. As there has been not change in the status of this property, County staff is recommending that this property be removed from the Group "A/B" List of eligible properties.

Member Alan Long made a motion to **remove the Lafayette Landing, Salanitro and McLellan properties** from the Group "A/B" List of eligible properties. Member Thomas Fleishel **seconded** the motion that **carried** by a unanimous voice vote.

Staff Items and Updates

1. **Proposed Committee Meeting Schedule for 2010** – Ed Isenhour explained that the proposed meetings scheduled for 2010 would continue to be held quarterly at 3:30p.m. on the fourth Wednesday with half of the meetings being held at a facility on the east side and the other on the west side of the County. However, the east side facility would be changed to the Lifeguard Headquarters located at 515 South Atlantic Avenue, Daytona Beach, in an effort to update presentation equipment and continue moving forward with the digital conversion of meeting recordings.

Discussion ensued regarding the difference in distance to the Lifeguard Headquarters verses the VOTRAN Bus Facility.

The Committee accepted the 2010 meeting schedule as presented by County staff with the understanding that this can be modified at any time.

2. **Group "A" List** – Ed Isenhour provided the following updates:
 - a) **Fatio Road Property** – an offer to purchase this 72+/- acre tract located at the intersection of Fatio and McGregor Roads in the southwest area of DeLand has been presented to the property owners. It is contiguous to Blue Springs State Park, the County's Lake Beresford Park, and the Hicks Joint Trust Property. Negotiations with the property owners are still moving forward.

Mr. John Crowther, representative for the property owners, stated that a revised purchase agreement had been received from the County. It is anticipated that a signed purchase agreement could be returned within the next week to 10 days.

- b) **Kagel/Butts (DLSCP) Property** – a signed purchase agreement for this 4+/- acre tract of undeveloped land located on the southern shore of Spruce Creek within the Doris Leeper Spruce Creek Preserve has been received. This project is moving toward closing.
- c) **Pacetta Property** – this 8+/- acre tract located on the west side of Sailfish Drive, south of Beach Street, in the Town of Ponce Inlet is in the process of being appraised by independent appraisers.
- d) **Leffler Property** – this 4,700 +/- acre tract located within the Volusia Conservation Corridor, adjacent to the LeFils Property, has been appraised. The St. Johns River Water Management District, a potential funding partner, is reviewing the appraisals.
- e) **Hart Property** – the St. Johns River Water Management District (District) has entered into an agreement for purchase with the owners of approximately 1,400 acres located in New Smyrna Beach area. The District did not request funding assistance from the County for this acquisition. The District wishes to donate 189+/- acres of the total acquisition to the County. The property to be donated consists of non-contiguous lots, the majority of which are 2.5 acres located within Cape Atlantic Estates, an unrecorded antiquated subdivision east of Turnbull Hammock Conservation Area. The County's Small Lot Acquisition Program has been acquiring parcels in this area of Cape Atlantic Estates. The District has expressed an interest in contributing Florida Department of Transportation mitigation funds for the purchase of additional small parcels within Cape Atlantic Estates. County staff will be the lead agency for these additional acquisitions.
- f) **Lake George Fernery Property** - this 40 +/- acre tract of undeveloped land located south of Lake George Road is being appraised. It is an in-holding of the Lake George Conservation Area.
- g) **Colony Park Property**– this 24+/- acre tract owned by Huntington Trust is located off SR 44 in the New Smyrna Beach area. Acquisition of this site has been completed and is now in public ownership.
- h) **Glenwood Park Property** – this 219+/- acre tract located southwest of the intersection of Grand Avenue and Plymouth Avenue, west of Deland is in the beginning stages of the acquisition process. There has been no progress on the potential acquisition of this property.
- i) **McDonald Property** - this 420+/- acre tract of undeveloped land located on the west side of CR 415 (Tomoka Farms Road), south of Taylor Road and north of Pioneer Trail west of Port Orange is on-hold as County staff is awaiting further consideration from the St. Johns River Water Management District.

Ed Isenhour added that Mr. Sam Roth, representative for the RBD Limited Property, had been present, but left.

- 3. **Committee Remarks** – Member Neil Harrington apologized for being late and stated that the Heritage Preservation Trust has received the first Volusia ECHO grant for emergency heritage preservation of Lillian Place located in Daytona Beach.
- 4. **Public Comments** – Ms. Ann Brady, representative for the Atlantic Center for the Arts, stated that the center supports the Volusia Forever and ECHO programs, and would like to assist the County with raising funds for the Volusia Forever and ECHO programs during these financially challenging times.

Ed Isenhour thanked Ms. Brady for the kind words and interest in assisting with the funding of the Volusia Forever and ECHO programs. He explained that the primary source of revenue for these programs is from ad valorem tax revenue. However, additional creative funding partnerships could be considered to supplement program efforts.

Discussion ensued regarding Volusia Forever's typical funding partnerships, which has included

the St. Johns River Water Management District, the Division of Forestry and Florida Forever, and how important funding partnerships are in an effort to maximize local dollars. It was suggested that supporters of the Volusia Forever program should advocate to their local legislator the funding of the Florida Forever program.

Chair Anne Hallum explained that the Volusia Forever program is a “willing seller” program.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:50p.m upon unanimous consent of the Committee.

Minutes Approved 01/27/2010

Minutes Approved With Amendments _____

N/A

Chair

Date

Program Coordinator

Date