

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COLLIER COUNTY
RURAL LANDS STEWARDSHIP AREA REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Ave Maria, Florida, June 3, 2008

LET IT BE REMEMBERED, that the Collier County Rural Lands Stewardship Area Review Committee in and for the County of Collier, having conducted Business herein, met on this date at 9:00 A.M. in REGULAR SESSION at the Ave Maria University Academic Building 07 Conference Room 5, 5050 Ave Maria Boulevard, Ave Maria, Florida, with the following members present:

CHAIRMAN: Ron Hamel
VICE CHAIRMAN: Neno Spagna
Brad Cornell
Zach Floyd Crews
Tammie Nemecek
David Farmer
Tom Jones
David Wolfley
Bill McDaniel
Timothy Nance
Fred Thomas, Jr.
Jim Howard

ALSO PRESENT: Thomas Greenwood, AICP, Principal Planner, Comprehensive Planning Department
Michael J. DeRuntz, Principal Planner, Comprehensive Planning Department
Laura Roys, Senior Environmental Specialist, Engineering and Environment Services Department
Mac Hatcher, Senior Environmental Specialist, Engineering and Environment Services Department
Approximately 20 members of the public

I. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 AM by Chairman Hamel.

II. Roll Call

Roll call was taken, and a quorum was established.

III. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Hamel requested that due to the current audio-visual technical problems which are occurring, that some of the items on the agenda may be discussed out of order in the agenda.

Mr. Thomas moved to approve the agenda as presented, Second by Mr. Crews.

Voice Vote - Unanimously Approved 12-0.

IV. Approval of Minutes: May 6, 2008

Mr. Farmer moved to approve the minutes of the May 6, 2008 committee meeting, as presented, Second by Mr. Thomas. Voice Vote - Unanimously Approved 12-0.

VI. Old Business

A. Revised Schedule of the Review Committee and Discussion its Functions, Powers and Duties per Resolution No. 2007-173

Mr. Greenwood reviewed the revised meeting schedule for the committee. He also reviewed the intent of Board of County Commission (BCC) Chairman Henning's letter which requested that all committees and commissions of County government review their roles, powers, and functions. *Mr. Farmer* moved to approve the revised committee meeting schedule as presented, Second by *Mr. Wolfley*. *Voice Vote – Unanimously Approved 12-0.*

Mr. Farmer commented that within the enabling ordinance for this committee, he believed that committee members were entitled financial reimbursement for travel expenses. *Mr. Greenwood* stated that he would look into this issue and try to report to the Committee prior to the June 17th meeting.

Ms. Payton, Florida Wildlife Federation, commented that one of the directives of the committee's enabling ordinance is to pursue public participation. She stated that she observes that most of the committee, staff, and public participants reside in the coastal area of the County, and that it would be much more efficient to hold some of the committee meetings in the coastal area.

Mr. Farmer moved to pursue travel expense reimbursement, *Mr. Wolfley*. *Voice Vote – Unanimously Approved 12-0.*

Mr. Jones stated that he reviewed the committee's function and was concerned if the committee had done something to spur the letter from BCC Chairman Henning. *Mr. Greenwood* stated that all of the advisory committees received this letter. The letter was not directed at this committee, but an informational reminder to each of the advisory committees as to their mission.

B. Phase 1-Technical Review

Chairman Hamel stated that the BCC review the Phase 1-Technical Review and approved the report. *Mr. Greenwood* stated that the Phase 1-Technical Review was

forwarded to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) for their review through Joseph Schmitt's cover letter.

C. Phase 2...Review of Group 1-Group 5 Policies of the Rural Land Stewardship Overlay, including Issues, Concerns, and Questions

Mr. Greenwood stated that, per the direction of the Committee at its May 6 meeting, the following met on May 15 to decide under which policy the particular comment and/or concerns should be associated with. Comments and/or concerns were received from the following groups and individuals: Mark Strain (Collier County Planning Commission), Nancy Payton (Florida Wildlife Federation), Tim Nance (RLSAO Review Committee), Judy Hushon (EAC), Laura Roys (Environmental Services), Nichol Ryan (Conservancy of S.W. Florida), Laurie Macdonald (Defenders of Wildlife).

Mr. Greenwood requested that the Review Committee discuss permitting the following to act as a Technical Sub-committee: Nancy Payton, Anita Jenkins (WilsonMiller), Tim Durham (WilsonMiller), Judy Hushon, Laura Roys, Nichol Ryan, Michael DeRuntz (Comprehensive Planning) and Thomas Greenwood (Comprehensive Planning).

Mr. Cornell thanked those individuals for their efforts with organizing these comments and concerns with the RLSAO plan policies. He stated it is very helpful. He suggested that the committee proceed with Phase 2 by reviewing each group in order, and have these individuals serve as a technical committee to continue to assist the RLSAO Review Committee with the language for any amendments and/or recommendations which the RLSAO Review Committee may propose. He further added that this technical committee should be lead by staff. *Mr. Greenwood* stated that staff would only act as a facilitator at these meetings and to memorialize the recommendations of the RLSAO Review Committee only where the Committee has made preliminary recommendations to amend the RLSA Overlay.

Ms. Payton thanked the committee for their comments. She also thought that it would be a good idea to keep this technical committee functioning, to assist the RLSAO Review Committee, and she stated that she would be glad to serve on this technical committee.

Mr. Purdy stated that the committee needs to stay on track.

Mr. Jones expressed his concern that the RLSAO Review Committee recommendations may not be adhered to, because the technical committee could change the intent through their revisions.

Mr. Hamel stated that it is the staff's responsibility to prepare any amendment or recommendation directed by the RLSAO Review Committee, and that the technical committee would assist the staff. Any amendment and/or revision would be coming back to the RLSAO Review Committee for its approval.

VII. New Business

A. Request of Board of County Commissioners Input Regarding Review of the Half Circle Ranch Growth Management Plan RLSAO Amendment Application

Mr. Greenwood informed the Committee that Commissioner Coletta requested the RLSAO Review Committee to take a look at the Half Circle Ranch GMPA during the BCC action already taken to transmit this RLSAO amendment to the Department of Community Affairs. Input from the Committee, if any, would be available to the BCC prior to its adoption public hearing on this amendment.

Mr. Jones questioned whether review of this GMPA by the Committee would put the Committee in violation of the Committee's enabling ordinance. *Mr. Greenwood* stated that this request from the BCC is on the agenda for the committee's June 17, 2008 meeting for discussion.

V. Presentations

A. Darrel Land, State of Florida Panther Team Leader, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FFWCC) (The Power Point presentation is on the County's Comprehensive Planning web site.)

Mr. Land stated that the goal of the FFWCC is to protect the breeding core of the Florida Panther. He reported that the FFWCC estimated that there is an 80-100 stable population of Florida Panthers that are basically south of the Caloosahatchee River. Ideally, a stable panther population goal of 240 panthers has been established to maintain a healthy gene pool for the Florida Panther. The existing Florida Panther habitat south of the Caloosahatchee River is insufficient to support that goal total population, due to the panther's territorial demands, and is at a saturation point. The FFWCC is hoping counties north of the Caloosahatchee River will follow Collier County's example in establishing RLSAOs in their areas. He emphasized that the area of the RLSAO in Collier County is a significant link between the primary habitat area of Big Cypress National Preserves and the habitat area in Lee County. He is very supportive of how Collier County established the RLSAO with the Flowway Stewardship Areas (FSA) and Habitat Stewardship Areas (HSA). From their records, the areas identified in the County's FSA and HSA are also the primary areas for panther habitat. In the FFWCC studies, the FFWCC has recommended that wildlife crossings are a very valuable component in the protection of these panthers. The establishment of wildlife crossings on roadways that intersect with habitat corridors are imperative. FFWCC recommends that wildlife crossings along Oil Well Road (CR-858) and Immokalee Road (CR-846) at the Camp Keais Strand and the Okaloacoochee Slough be provided. They would also recommend wildlife crossings along SR 29 north of Oil Well Road (CR-858), as well as providing a habitat corridor north of Immokalee to connect the Camp Keais Strand and the Okaloacoochee Slough and the Okaloacoochee Slough.

Mr. Jones asked if *Mr. Land* believed the County's RLSAO plan was too complicated.

Mr. Land responded that there are many variable to be taken into consideration, and that the County did a very good job developing a plan to bring the many variables together to make a plan that works for everyone including the Florida Panther.

B. Dr. Timm Kroeger, Defenders of Wildlife Washington, DC Office: Economic Values of Conservation and Agricultural Lands (The Power Point presentation is on the County's Comprehensive Planning web site.)

Dr. Kroeger stated that there are economic benefits for protecting the natural environment and agricultural area. He stated that he is studying those benefits for five areas within the continental United States. One of those areas being studied is right here in Southwest Florida (Collier, Lee, and Hendry Counties). These five study areas were selected based upon the high priority Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas (SHCAs). SHCA consist of the following variables: uplands and wetland areas that are important habitat and are currently not protected, contain several of the highest-priority significant landscapes

including linkages and conservation corridors and high and highest-priority rare species habitat conservation lands. In addition, vegetation in the area is predominantly characterized as very high threat status in Florida's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS), and mostly prime recharge lands and unprotected recharge lands in natural condition. The study identified that there are direct, indirect, and passive uses that have economic benefits for protecting the natural environment and agricultural area. While the study is not completed, millions of dollars can be attributed to the economic benefits attributed to protecting the natural environment and agricultural area.

VII. Public Comments

None

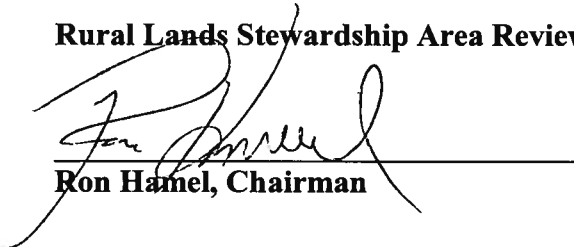
XI. Next Meeting

Mr. Hamel stated that the next meeting will be held on June 17, 2008, at CDES in Rooms 609/610 from 9:00 A.M. – 12 Noon.

X. Adjournment

Mr. Thomas moved to adjourn the meeting, second by *Mr. Jones*.
Voice Vote - Unanimously Approved 12-0. Adjournment 12:03PM.

Rural Lands Stewardship Area Review Committee



Ron Hamel, Chairman

These minutes approved by the Committee on 6-17-08,
as presented X or as amended _____.