

TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM

To: Council Members AGENDA ITEM 5P
From: Staff
Date: September 19, 2008 Council Meeting
Subject: Local Government Comprehensive Plan Review
Draft Amendment to the City of Stuart Comprehensive Plan
DCA Reference No. 08-1

Introduction

The Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Land Development Regulation Act, Chapter 163, *Florida Statutes*, requires that Council review local government comprehensive plan amendments prior to their adoption. Under the provisions of this law, the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) prepares an Objections, Recommendations, and Comments (ORC) Report on a proposed amendment only if requested to do so by the local government, the regional planning council, an affected person, or if an ORC Report is otherwise deemed necessary by the DCA. If an ORC Report is to be prepared, then Council must provide DCA with its findings of consistency or inconsistency with the Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP), and provide any comments and recommendations for modification on the proposed amendment within 30 days of its receipt.

Background

The City of Stuart proposes one amendment to the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) of the City Comprehensive Plan. The City did not request a formal review of the amendment by the DCA.

Evaluation

The proposed amendment is for an 11.3 acre property located at the southwestern edge of the City on the south side of Indian Street, just east of its intersection with SR 76 (see exhibits). The property is currently vacant and undeveloped. The proposed use is for a Recreational Vehicle Park (“Class A Motor Coach Community”).

The current FLUM designation is Multi-Family Residential. The proposed FLUM designation is Commercial. The existing land use on adjacent property includes a multi-

family residential development across Indian Street to the north, vacant land to the south, the South Florida Water Management District offices and low density residential development to the east and a gasoline station/convenience store to the west. The FLUM designations on surrounding lands include Multi-Family Residential to the north, Commercial General (Martin County) to the south, Low Density Residential (Martin County) to the east, and Commercial to the west.

According to the City, the proposed development is to include amenities such as a lake, clubhouse and pool area. The City indicates that the 2.2 acres of wetlands on site must be preserved or mitigated. The City will also require a number minimum of 2.3 acres of native upland to be preserved or mitigated.

Extrajurisdictional Impacts

The City provided a copy of the proposed amendment materials to Martin County, the City of Port St. Lucie, and the Town of Sewall's Point. Council sent a memo to each of these local governments on August 20, 2008 seeking comments regarding conflicts with existing plans or policies. As of the date of the preparation of this report, no comments have been received.

Analysis of Consistency with Strategic Regional Policy Plan

The City did not require an environmental assessment to be prepared as part of the amendment application materials. Based on the information available to Council staff, there are approximately 10.2 acres of flatwoods, and 1.1 acres of wetlands. It is likely that gopher tortoises are present on the property. Near the southern and western boundaries of the subject parcel there is a mild infestation of invasive exotic vegetation, including Brazilian pepper, Melaleuca, Australian pine, and climbing fern. However, the majority of the parcel is covered with high quality native communities. Information provided by the City with the amendment materials included a preliminary development plan which suggests that the wetlands may be replaced with a lake and only a small portion (1.1 acres) of native upland habitat would be preserved. This would not be consistent with the SRPP.

Comments/Recommendations

Strategic Regional Policy Plan Goal 6.6 calls for the protection of wetlands and deepwater habitats; Regional Goal 6.7 calls for the protection of upland natural communities; and Regional Goal 6.8 calls for protection of endangered and potentially endangered species. In order to be consistent with the SRPP, the City should require the protection of the wetlands on the parcel; the preservation of a minimum of 25 percent of the upland natural communities (2.5 acres); the removal of all invasive exotic vegetation from the property; and coordination with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission in order to determine the best approach for protecting gopher tortoises on the project site.

Consistency with Strategic Regional Policy Plan

The contract agreement between the DCA and the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council requires Council to include a determination of consistency with the SRPP as part of the written report to be submitted to the DCA. If adequate provisions are made to protect wetlands, native upland habitat and listed species, Council would consider the proposed amendment to be CONSISTENT with the SRPP.

Recommendation

Council should adopt the above comments and instruct staff to transmit the report to the Department of Community Affairs.

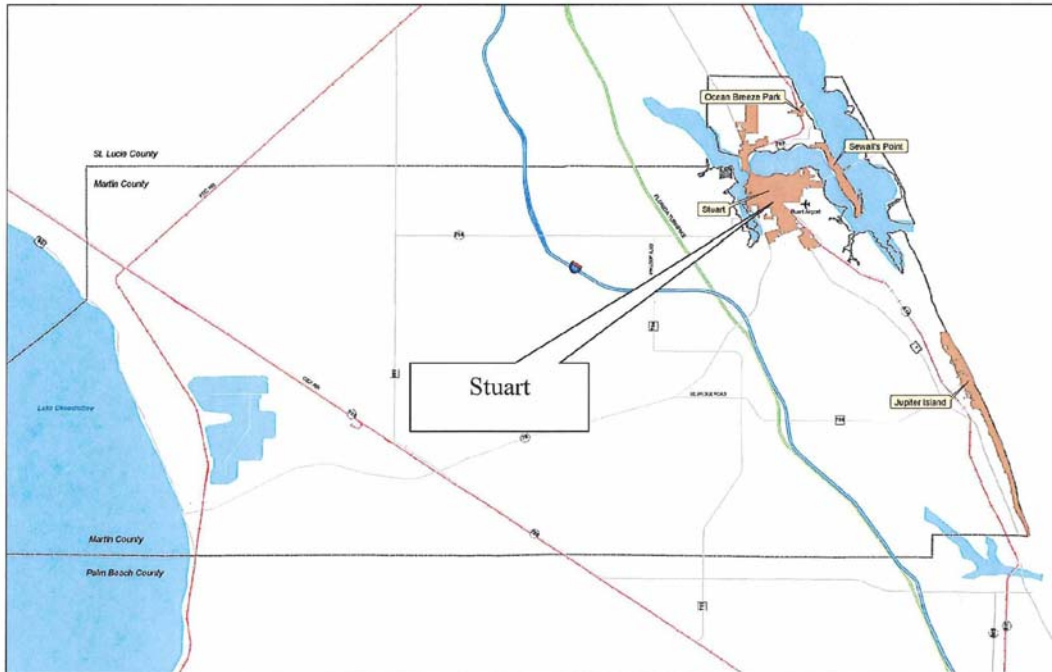
Attachments

List of Exhibits

Exhibit

- 1 General Location Map
- 2 Amendment Location Map
- 3 Future Land Use Map

**Exhibit 1
General Location Map
City of Stuart**



**Exhibit 3
Future Land Use Map**

