To: Council Members                                      AGENDA ITEM 5F

From: Staff

Date: July 16, 2010 Council Meeting

Subject: Local Government Comprehensive Plan Review
         Draft Amendments to the St. Lucie Village Comprehensive Plan
         DCA Reference No. 10-1

Introduction

The Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Land Development Regulation Act, Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, requires that the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (TCRPC) 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 the TCRPC 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 amendments within 30 days of its receipt.

Background

The Town of St. Lucie Village has proposed both text amendments and amendments to the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and map series of the Town Comprehensive Plan. The text amendments, to all elements of the Town Plan, are to update the plan and bring it into conformance with statutory and rule changes. The FLUM amendments are primarily to reflect annexations and approved small scale amendments. The Town also proposes a number of changes to the maps contained in the various elements of the comprehensive plan. The amendments were prepared by the Florida Planning and Development Lab of the Florida State University under an agreement with the Town.

The Town has requested a formal review of the amendments by the DCA.
Evaluation

The Town of St. Lucie Village is one of the three incorporated municipalities in St. Lucie County (see Exhibit 1). Compared to Port St. Lucie and Fort Pierce, the Town is very small in size (464 acres) and in population (2009 BEBR Estimate – 637). It is not, however, merely an incorporated residential enclave. It is an historic coastal village located along the Indian River Lagoon with a mix of land uses, especially along U.S. 1 (see Exhibits 2,3,4).

A. FLUM Amendments

Since 1989, the Village has annexed 43 properties totaling 83.8 acres in land area (see Exhibit 5). The parcels range in size from 0.1 acres to 21.6 acres (See Attachment A). The Town did not provide any detailed information about these proposed FLUM amendments. However, in nearly all cases, the proposed Town FLUM designations are similar to the designation assigned under the County Comprehensive Plan.

B. Text and Map Series Amendments

There are a large number of text and map series amendments to the elements of the Town Comprehensive Plan. The highlights of the proposed amendments are presented in the following:

1. Future Land Use Element
   a. New Policy 1.1.1.2 lists the FLUM designations and the permitted densities and intensities permitted by the Town.
   b. New Policy 1.1.1.3 goes into detail on the densities and uses permitted in the various residential FLUM designations; while Policy 1.1.1.4 includes similar provisions for non-residential FLUM categories.
   c. New Policy 1.1.1.5 addresses compatible uses on adjacent lands.
   d. New Policy 1.1.1.6 indicates development and redevelopment will be analyzed relative to criteria for local mitigation strategies.
   e. New Policy 1.1.2.8 encourages the listing of and mapping of historic resources.
   f. New Policy 1.1.5.5 discourages urban sprawl by mapping and identifying future annexation areas. The policy also calls for a Joint Planning Agreement for annexation between the Town, St. Lucie County and the City of Fort Pierce.
   g. New Policy 1.1.5.8 calls for innovative land use techniques such as clustering, and traditional neighborhood development.
   h. New Policy 1.1.5.9 is to control strip, leap-frog and scattered developed development patterns.
   i. New Objective 1.1.9 and Policy 1.1.9.1 addresses coordination with the County School Board on the location of future educational facilities and the FLUM designations in which schools may be located.
   j. New Policy 1.1.9.2 contains the criteria to be met by proposed school sites.
   k. New Objective 1.1.10 is to discourage any increase in density in the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA).
1. New Objective 1.1.11 indicates the Town will not exclude uses ancillary to working waterfronts from the waterfront area of the Town.

m. New Policy 1.1.11.1 is to develop regulations to preserve working waterfronts.

n. The Future Land Use Element maps are revised and updated.

2. Transportation Element

a. Goal 2.1 is revised to call for a multi-modal transportation system.

b. Revised Objective 2.1.3 is to regulate bicycle and pedestrian transportation ways in order to enhance mobility and accessibility.

c. New Policy 2.1.3.4 encourages the provision of bicycle facilities and sidewalks in new development including connection to regional trails.

d. New Policy 2.1.5.4 indicates the Town will establish an interlocal agreement with St. Lucie County to ensure the Town’s transportation needs are met.

e. The Transportation Element map series is revised and updated.

3. Housing Element

a. Revised Objective 3.1.5 is to protect the existing housing stock by implementing neighborhood conservation, natural resource conservation, and maintenance of the Town’s historic district.

b. Revised Objective 3.17 and Policy 3.1.7.1 commit the Town to assist with relocation housing for displaced persons.

4. Public Facilities Element

a. New Policy 4.1.1.4 indicates that new or replacement septic tanks will not be permitted once a central waste water treatment system is available.

b. Revised Policy 4.1.4.1 adopts Department of Environmental Protection Rules 62.40 F.A.C. and SFWMD Rules 40E-40 for stormwater drainage quality and quantity.

5. Coastal Management Element

a. Revised Policy 5.1.1.5 requires a minimum 25 foot naturally vegetative buffer strip adjacent to all high quality wetlands on new development and redevelopment.

b. New Policy 5.1.2.2 prohibits all development activities which would endanger the continued existence of a listed species on a site or in the area.

c. Revised Policy 5.1.5.1 adopts the statutory definition of the CHHA.

d. New Policy 5.1.5.2 prohibits the use of public funds for infrastructure expansions or increased capacity in the CHHA except for existing development, emergency evacuation or recreation needs/water dependent uses.

e. Revised Objective 5.1.7 is to maintain and enhance public access to the Indian River Lagoon.
f. New Objective 5.1.10 is to determine methods of preserving working waterfronts by allowing uses ancillary to working waterfronts within the Town jurisdiction.

6. Conservation Element

   a. New Policy 6.1.2.3 is to protect wetlands via the use of land planning. Incompatible land uses are to be directed away from wetlands when possible.
   b. New Policy 6.1.2.4 requires the identification of the location and extent of wetlands as part of the development review process.
   c. New Policy 6.1.2.5 defines low quality wetlands as those that have been previously impacted and do not have significant habitat for listed species.
   d. Revised Objective 6.1.6 and Policy 6.1.6.1 address coordination with St. Lucie County on storage, collection, recycling and disposal of hazardous waste.

7. Recreation and Open Space Element

   a. Revised Objective 7.1.2 is to cooperate with State authorities to protect the Indian River Lagoon Aquatic Preserve.

8. Intergovernmental Coordination Element

   a. Revised Policy 8.1.1.1 is to notify St. Lucie County and the City of Fort Pierce about all applications for land use amendments and re-zonings on lands contiguous with their borders or part of annexation, incorporation and joint infrastructure areas.
   b. Revised Policy 8.1.2.2 is to utilize the TCRPC for informal mediation with other local governments.

9. Capital Improvements Element

   a. Level of service standards for required facilities/services are established in policies under revised Objective 9.1.4, which is to review and maintain level of service standards for all concurrency facilities.
   b. New Objective 9.1.5 and several policies under the objective are to implement a Concurrency Management System.

Extrajurisdictional Impacts

Under the informal agreement facilitated by the TCRPC, local governments in the northern three counties of the region are to provide copies of amendment materials to other local governments that have expressed an interest in receiving such materials. The Town provided copies of the amendment materials to St. Lucie County and the City of Fort Pierce. A memo was sent by Council staff to those two local governments on June 24, 2010 seeking comments regarding potential negative extrajurisdictional impacts as a result of the proposed amendments. As of the date of the preparation of this report, no correspondence has been received.
Effects on Significant Regional Resources or Facilities

Analysis of the proposed amendments indicates that they would not have adverse effects on significant regional resources or facilities.

Analysis of Consistency with Strategic Regional Policy Plan

The proposed amendments, as a whole, are considered to be consistent with the SRPP. Council has the following comments/recommendations for consideration by the Town:

1. New Policy 2.1.5.4 of the Transportation Element should be reworded to make it clear how the Town intends to ensure that its transportation needs will be met. Also, reference should be to the St. Lucie TPO (rather than MPO).

2. Policy 3.1.1.4 of the Housing Element is to be deleted. This policy called for an investigation of the viability of allowing alternative housing opportunities such as garage apartments, garage flats, accessory apartments or cottages. These alternative housing opportunities are consistent with Goals 2.1 and 2.2 of the SRPP, and especially with Policy 2.1.1.2 calling for alternative housing and Policy 2.2.1.3 requiring a range of housing types and affordability. A policy to allow these types of alternative housing units should be retained, at least within certain areas of the Town.

3. Proposed new Policy 3.1.1.4 (under an Objective to facilitate public and private cooperation in the provision of affordable housing) calls for the provision of opportunities for the exchange of information. However, it does not indicate what those opportunities might be or who the exchange of information will be with. The policy should be clarified.

4. Objective 4.1 in the Public Facilities Element extends the time for the Town to investigate and implement strategies for conserving potable water resources from 1995 to 2011. In addition, all three policies under this objective are to be deleted. These policies required xeric landscaping, reducing water use in new irrigation systems and requiring water saving plumbing devices. The Town indicates there is no evidence of a shortage in water supply or water supply problems in the Town. However, the conservation of water supplies has become increasingly important throughout the Region and in the Upper East Coast Water Supply Planning Area. SRPP Strategy 6.2.1 is to develop and implement water conservation programs. A number of policies are included under the strategy and include utilization of xeriscape principles, water saving devices, irrigation systems and plumbing fixtures. The Town should reconsider the deletion of policies under Objective 4.1.9 and add other policies to commit to the conservation of water supplies.

5. The Town proposes to delete Objective 5.1.6 and several implementing policies from the Coastal Management Element. This objective committed the Town to implement hurricane evacuation plans. The Town indicates this is not a required component of the comprehensive plan and that “Evacuation is executed by the County”. 

5
The Emergency Preparedness Element of the SRPP contains a number of policies that encourage local governments to cooperate and coordinate with County, regional and State efforts regarding hurricane preparedness and evacuation (Policies 5.2.1.1, 5.2.1.5, 5.2.1.6, 5.3.1.1, 5.3.1.3, 5.3.1.10, 5.4.1.4, 5.5.1.3). While the Town may have limited staff and resources and depend on the County to coordinate evacuation, the Town can still make a difference by providing information to its citizens, developing coordination mechanisms with the County, assisting with evacuation notices, and being fully aware of households with special needs. The Town should meet with the County Emergency Management Department and determine how they can best assist in hurricane evacuation for its citizens. Specific policies can then be considered for inclusion in the comprehensive plan.

6. The heading of section 5.12 on page 5-31 and the heading of section 5.12.4 on page 5-33 refer to the “Conservation Element.” However, these headings should refer to the “Coastal Management Element.”

7. As Exhibit 7 indicates, much of the land area of the Town is within the CHHA. Many of the homes in the Historic District are along the Indian River Lagoon, near sea level. During the Evaluation and Appraisal Report process, it is recommended that the Town include a discussion of climate change issues and sea level rise and include recommendations on how the Town could mitigate the impacts that may occur in the Town in the future.

Consistency with Strategic Regional Policy Plan

The contract agreement with the DCA requires the TCRPC to include a determination of consistency with the SRPP as part of the written report to be submitted to the DCA. The TCRPC finds the proposed amendments to be CONSISTENT with the SRPP.

Recommendation

The Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council should adopt the above comments and instruct staff to transmit the report to the Department of Community Affairs.

Attachments
List of Attachments

Attachment

A  Properties Annexed Into St. Lucie Village Since, 1989
### Properties Annexed Into St. Lucie Village Since, 1989

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Total Acres: 83.78

*Source: St. Lucie County Property Appraiser, 2000; St. Lucie County Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Element, 2002

*This period is based on the Property Appraiser as of part of St. Lucie Village and is surrounded by crossroad parcel.*
List of Exhibits

Exhibit

1 Location Map
2 2006 Existing Land Use Map
3 Adjacent Future Land Use Map
4 2020 Future Land Use Map
5 Properties Annexed into St. Lucie Village since 1989
6 Transportation Map
7 Coastal Planning Area
Map 1.1 Location Map of The Town of St. Lucie Village

Legend
- The Town of St. Lucie Village
- City of Fort Pierce
- City of Port St. Lucie
- Unincorporated Area
- St. Lucie County Boundary
- Major Waterbodies
- U.S. Highway 1
- Streets

Source: St. Lucie County GIS Division, FPUA, FGDL and FDOT

Date: 06/10/2008

Disclaimer: The information presented is based on best available data and is intended for planning purposes only.

Revised June 2, 2009
Map 1.2  2006 Existing Land Use Map, Town of St. Lucie Village

Legend

Existing Land Use

- Single-family, Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Commercial
- Light Industrial
- Institutional
- Recreation/Open Space
- Vacant Land
- Right-Of-Way
- SLC Streets
- TSLV Streets
- Other Streets
- US Highways
- Railways
- TSLV Boundary Revised
- City of Fort Pierce
- Unincorporated Area
- Major Waterbodies

Source: St. Lucie County GIS Division and Property Appraiser, FPUIA, FGD, FDOT and Town of St. Lucie Village

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