MEMORANDUM

To: Council Members

From: Staff

Date: July 16, 2010 Council Meeting

Subject: Local Government Comprehensive Plan Review
        Draft Amendments to the City of Stuart Comprehensive Plan
        DCA Reference No. 10-2ER

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 City of Stuart has proposed six amendments to the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and text amendments to several elements of the City Comprehensive Plan to carry out the recommendations of an Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR). The EAR was adopted by the City on September 14, 2009 and found sufficient by the DCA on November 20, 2009. The City has requested a formal review of the amendments by the DCA.

Evaluation

Profile of the City (From City of Stuart Evaluation and Appraisal Report, September 14, 2009)

The City of Stuart, located on the broad St. Lucie River on the east coast of Florida, is the county seat of Martin County. The St. Lucie River and Estuary system divides the City into two areas connected by the Roosevelt Bridge (Federal Highway). On the west side, the City’s southern peninsula is connected to mainland Martin County by one east-west bridge (Monterey
Road/Martin Downs Boulevard). A second bridge has been designed to connect the City to the mainland of the County further south via Indian Street. The City does not abut any incorporated municipalities, although the Town of Sewall’s Point lies just east of the City connected to the City by the Evans Crary Bridge (Ocean Boulevard/A1A). The barrier island of Hutchinson Island further east is connected to Sewall’s Point by the Lyons Bridge.

In 1914 Stuart was incorporated as part of Palm Beach County. In 1925, Stuart was chartered and named the county seat of the newly created Martin County. The City currently encompasses 6.67 square miles of land with an estimated permanent resident population of approximately 16,600 in 2008. In the period following the EAR, 1997 through 2008, the City annexed approximately 1,212 acres.

Stuart’s location on the St. Lucie River and close to the Atlantic Ocean is an asset with a strong influence on the City known as “Sailfish Capital of the World”. The waterways shape the City’s boundaries as well as its character. Public access to the waterfront and protection of the waterways and associated natural resources are important concerns that inform the City’s comprehensive plan.

Throughout its history, the City has maintained its character as a moderately developed waterfront community with a small-town feel. This small-town character has been viewed by the residents as its greatest asset. In the past, height and density restrictions served to maintain this character. More recently, traditional neighborhood development standards have been adopted to guide redevelopment to ensure that the City remains walkable with schools, businesses, shops, community facilities, and professional and medical offices in close proximity to residences.

Stuart has historically served as a commercial hub for Martin County, home to many public entities and private institutions and businesses. Primary employers within the City include Martin Memorial Hospital and Martin County government. The growth of employment opportunities within the City is projected to outpace population growth over the next decade, increasing the ratio of non-residential to residential acreage and potentially the number of employees commuting from outside the City generating transportation challenges.

It was recognized at the time of adoption of the initial Comprehensive Plan in 1991 that the City was approaching build-out. Despite significant annexation since that time, the quality and character of redevelopment is still of primary concern as the City strives to maintain its character. As redevelopment proceeds, the proportion of multi-family development is anticipated to increase. The Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) was created in 1986 for the purpose of planning and implementing redevelopment activities within downtown areas of the City. The boundaries of the CRA have been expanded several times since then. Areas within the CRA are specifically addressed throughout the comprehensive plan and special zoning standards have been adopted to implement Plan policies and the CRA Redevelopment Plan.

The City has operated under the Commission-manager form of government since inception. Policy making and legislative authority are vested in the City Commission consisting of the mayor and four additional members. The City Manager is responsible for implementing policies and programs adopted by the Commission and for overseeing day-to-day municipal operations.
The CRA is composed of the City Commission and two appointed citizens. The Stuart Housing Authority (SHA) was organized for the purpose of providing housing for low-income families. The City appoints the governing board but; its accountability for the SHA does not extend beyond making these appointments.

The City provides a full range of services to its residents and businesses, including general government, police and fire protection, public works, recreation and park facilities, building, planning and zoning services, economic and community development, and emergency management.

A. Future Land Use Map (FLUM) Amendments

The location of the amendments is shown in Exhibit 2 and information about the amendments is shown in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amendment Number/Name</th>
<th>Approx. Acreage</th>
<th>Current FLUM Designation</th>
<th>Proposed FLUM Designation</th>
<th>Approximate Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Water Reclamation Facility</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Recreation/Public</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>On Styppmann Boulevard, east of Flagler Avenue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Dixie Highway and 15th Street</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>East of Dixie Highway and West of Pathfinder Avenue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Poppleton Creek Parcels</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>Multi-Family and Office Residential</td>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>North of SE Central Parkway.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Fire Station 2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>South side of Monterey Road, west of Edler Drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. JD Parker School</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Located on the corner of Palm Beach Road and 10th Street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. 23 Parcels on 18th Street</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>Low Density Residential/Institutional</td>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>East of Palm Beach Road on 18th Street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>24.9</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key to FLUM Designations**

Low Density Residential: Less than 7 dwelling units per acre
Multi-Family Residential: Less than 10 dwelling units per acre
Office/Residential: Less than 10 dwelling units per acre
The City indicates that the purpose of these FLUM amendments is to assign more appropriate designations to these small, publicly owned parcels. With the exception of Site #4, all properties are being assigned a Public or Conservation FLUM designation. The vacant 1.0 acre parcel referred to as Fire Station 2, is not currently under consideration for a fire station. City staff indicates the City may consider leasing the property for commercial purposes.

B. Text Amendments

Most of these amendments are to carry out the recommendations of the City’s EAR. There are a large number of proposed amendments. All elements except the Public School Facilities Element are being amended. Some of the highlights of these amendments are summarized below:

1. Future Land Use Element

   - Revised Policy A2.3 is to encourage extension and expansion of the riverwalk system.
   - Objective A5 (Residential development) is revised to indicate the City will work with developers to integrate vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems, bike paths, parking, building location and architectural design into a cohesive development.
   - Policy A6.5 is revised to promote energy efficiency through land use patterns.
   - Policy A7.1 is revised to allow electric distribution substations in most FLUM categories consistent with 163.3208, Florida Statutes.
   - Policy C2.7 is revised to support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate and protect historic and archeological resources.
   - Objective D1 (East Stuart Special Studies District) is revised to encourage new and in-fill development in the East Stuart neighborhood.

2. Transportation Element

   - Goal Statement A is revised to support mobility city-wide through alternate modes of transportation and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
   - New Policy 4.1 indicates City support for enhanced north/south roadway capacity in both the eastern and western portions of the City.
   - Objective 6 (Mass transit and para-transit services) is revised to indicate City support for multi-modal transportation, with emphasis on the development of downtown Stuart as a transportation hub.
   - Objective 10 (Intergovernmental Coordination) is revised to indicate the coordination of transportation impacts with Martin County is to place particular emphasis on monitoring future development and expansion activities on the Martin County Airport site.
   - Policy 10.2 is revised to encourage expansion of transit including Tri-Rail.
   - New Policy 10.3 supports the reestablishment of passenger rail service on the Florida East Coast Railroad right-of-way including construction of a downtown rail station/transportation depot.
3. Housing Element

- Objective A1 (Managed Growth) is revised to promote the use of conservation, solar and other renewable sources of energy supply.
- Workforce housing is defined under revised Objective A2 (Affordable Housing).
- Revised Objective C1 (East Stuart Overlay District) is to promote affordable housing and economic development in East Stuart.

4. Infrastructure Element

- Objective A4 (Solid Waste) is revised to support solid waste recycling.
- The level of service for potable water under Policy A6.3 is revised to be consistent with the recently adopted Ten-Year Water Supply Facilities Work Plan.

5. Conservation Element

- Goal Statement A is revised to promote the use of renewable energy resource efficiency and the development of low-carbon-emitting power plants.

6. Intergovernmental Coordination Element

- New Policy A1.19 indicates the City’s intent to ensure compatibility of land use by monitoring the County Airport Master Plan.
- Policy A2.11 is revised to indicate the City shall request the County to establish a separate transportation benefit district that corresponds to the Stuart City limits.
- Policy A2.12 is revised to indicate the City shall coordinate with Martin County in establishing a synchronized street addressing system.
- Policy A2.16 is revised to seek a stronger position by the City in the expenditure of County impact fees collected from development activities within the City.
- Under Objective A6 (Implementation of Housing Element), a revised policy indicates the City will encourage new construction through density bonuses and other provisions.
- Policy A8.1 is revised to list the means the City will use to engage in effective intergovernmental coordination.
- New Policy A8.9 seeks coordination with Martin County regarding County fees, taxes, programs, impact fees and capital expenditures as they affect City residents and property owners.
7. Capital Improvements Element

- Policy A1.2 is revised to include increased energy efficiency by shifting to renewable fuel sources in buildings and vehicles and more efficient vehicles as part of the guidelines in evaluating capital improvement projects.

8. Coastal Element

- New Policy A5.15 defines the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA) consistent with State Statutes and new Policy A5.16 indicates the City shall depict the CHHA on a map as part of the map series.
- Revised Policy A6.1 indicates the City encourages water dependent uses over other uses in marine development.

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 City provided copies of the amendment materials to all adjacent and surrounding local governments. Council sent a memorandum to these local governments on June 8, 2010, seeking information on any conflicts between these proposed amendments and existing plans. 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.

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 Exhibits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exhibit</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>General Location Map</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Amendment Location Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Current Future Land Use Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Site 1 – Water Reclamation Facility Amendment Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Site 2 – Dixie Highway and 15th Street Parcel Amendment Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Site 3 – Poppleton Creek Parcel Amendment Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Site 4 – Fire Station 2 Amendment Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Site 5 – J.D. Parker School Amendment Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Site 6 – 23 Parcels on 18th Street Amendment Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Coastal High Hazard Area Map</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Current FLU Map
City of Stuart, Florida

Legend
- Stuart City Limits
- Future Land Use
  LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
  MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
  OFFICE / RESIDENTIAL
  COMMERCIAL
  INDUSTRIAL
  MARINE / INDUSTRIAL
  PUBLIC
  INSTITUTIONAL
  DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT
  EAST STUART
  CONSERVATION
  RECREATION
  NEIGHBORHOOD / SPECIAL DISTRICT

[Map showing various land use zones and labels]
Site 5 - WKA: Russell Holloway Track - 4.6 acs
NKA: JD Parker Elem. School
Current FLU - Recreation
Proposed FLU - Public

Legend
Future Land Use
- Low Density Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Office/Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Marine/Industrial
- Public
- Institutional
- Downtown Redevelopment
- East Smart
- Conservation
- Recreation
- Neighborhood/Special District

Map Date: March, 2010