To: Council Members
From: Staff
Date: May 20, 2011 Council Meeting
Subject: Local Government Comprehensive Plan Review
Draft Amendments to the Martin County Comprehensive Plan
DCA Reference No. 11-1

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

Martin County has proposed text amendments to the Future Land Use and Transportation Elements and two amendments to the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) of the County Comprehensive Plan. The County requested a formal review of the amendments by the DCA.

Evaluation

A. FLUM Amendments

Information regarding the amendments is portrayed in Table 1. The location of the amendments and other characteristics are shown on the attached exhibits.
Table 1
Proposed Amendments to the Future Land Use Map
Martin County Comprehensive Plan
DCA Reference No. 11-1

<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>CPA# 10-2 Bridgewater Venture, LLC</td>
<td>215.0</td>
<td>Agricultural Ranchette</td>
<td>Rural Density Residential</td>
<td>Located in the western part of Section 28 at the border with Palm Beach County.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPA# 11-3 East West International</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>Low Density Residential</td>
<td>Commercial Office/Residential</td>
<td>Located on the north side of Martin Downs Boulevard, just east of Parkside Drive in Palm City.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>215.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key to FLUM Designations**

- Agricultural Ranchette: Maximum of one dwelling unit per 5 acres
- Rural Density Residential: Maximum of one dwelling unit per 2 acres
- Low Density Residential: Maximum of 5 units per acre
- Commercial Office/Residential: Permits mix of commercial and residential uses

1. CPA# 10-2 Bridgewater Venture, LLC

   This amendment is for a 215-acre tract of property, comprising much of the western part of Section 28 immediately north of the border with Palm Beach County (see Exhibits 1-3). The property would be accessed via SE Island Way (see Exhibits 3). The property is currently vacant, but was formerly used for agricultural purposes.

   The property was originally 317 acres in size. A tract of 102 acres was retained by the previous owner and used as a wetlands and restoration site under a conservation easement. A previously approved development order was issued allowing 36 five-acre lots for a development known as the Bridgewater Preserve (see Exhibit 6). There is a perpetual restriction on the southern 100 feet of the property for a wildlife/greenway corridor; which adjoins an even larger corridor in Palm Beach County.

   The current FLUM designation for the property is Agricultural Ranchette permitting development at a maximum of one dwelling unit per 5 acres (see Exhibit 4). Small farms and nursery uses are anticipated under this FLUM designation. The proposed FLUM designation is Rural Density Residential (RDR), permitting development at a maximum of one dwelling unit per 2 acres (see Exhibit 5). The proposed development of the property is for a Residential Planned Unit Development (PUD).
The existing land uses on surrounding properties are a wetland preserve and Jonathan Dickinson State Park to the north; an undeveloped residential PUD to the east; a 235 foot wide wildlife/greenway corridor on the north side of the Rialto residential development in the Town of Jupiter to the south; and Jonathan Dickinson State Park to the west. The current FLUM designations on surrounding lands are Public Conservation to the north and west; RDR to the east; and Conservation in the Town of Jupiter to the south. Lands to the immediate east were redesignated from Agriculture to RDR in 1993 and 1994.

The proposed FLUM amendment was considered at a prior transmittal hearing in August 2010, but was continued to 2011 to allow consideration of a PUD Master Plan/Zoning agreement and a text change concerning sewer and water services. A PUD/Rezoning application was submitted in August 2010; and a joint County staff/applicant workshop was held in March 2011.

The 2010 County staff report indicated that the RDR land use designation “is not appropriate considering the transition of land use intensities that remain prudent for this land abutting Jonathan Dickinson State Park”. The Agricultural Ranchette FLUM designation was considered an acceptable buffer. The County staff concluded there was no justification for changing the existing land use designation, and recommended denial of the amendment.

However, the staff report was modified in 2011 to recommend transmittal of the FLUM and related text amendment if the Board of County Commissioners were satisfied that a satisfactory level of public benefit is forthcoming from the proposal. The staff acknowledged that provision of public water and sewer service to the site may prevent negative impacts to the shallow groundwater aquifer and wetlands on and off the site. The staff concluded that RDR is a reasonable alternative because of special conditions that can be included in the PUD. In subsequent discussions, County staff indicated there are no conditions attached to the proposed FLUM amendment that would further limit the number of units permitted or impose other conditions. The County anticipates, however, that the PUD application will be finalized so that it can be considered concurrently with the comprehensive plan amendments on August 2, 2011.

2. CPA# 11-3 East West International

This amendment is for a 0.3 acre parcel located on the north side of Martin Downs Boulevard, just east of Parkside Drive in the unincorporated Village of Palm City (see Exhibit 9). The parcel is currently vacant. The current FLUM designation is Low Density Residential. The proposed designation is Commercial Office/Residential. The proposed use is parking for a planned commercial office building on the adjoining property (see Exhibit 10).

The existing land uses on surrounding properties include vacant land to the north, an office building and church to the east, Martin Downs Boulevard with condominiums beyond to the south, and duplex housing to the west. The FLUM designations on
surrounding lands include Low Density Residential to the north, west and east; and Commercial Office/Residential to the south.

B. Text Amendments

1. CPA 10-22 Bridgewater Ventures PUD

This text amendment is directly related to amendment CPA 10-2 discussed above. The amendment would revise the text and map in the Future Land use Element to bring the 215-acre Bridgewater Preserve property into the Secondary Urban Service District (SUSD) boundary. The amendment is considered necessary to serve the increased residential density proposed in FLUM amendment CPA 10-2. The currently approved PUD on the property for 36 lots anticipated on-site septic tanks and private wells. However, the increased density would have the potential to degrade wetlands and the shallow aquifer if not served by public sewer and water. The current SUSD boundary lies at the eastern border of the Bridgewater property (see Exhibit 8). The extension of regional water and waste water service into the SUSD is permitted under the County Comprehensive Plan upon determination of public benefit and protection of public health and safety.

2. CPA 11-5

This amendment revises the map series of the Transportation Element to be consistent with the recently adopted 2035 Regional Long Range Transportation Plan (see Exhibits 12-16). The revisions reflect the adopted needs assessment and cost feasible projects.

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. Martin County provided copies of the amendment materials to all local governments in the County, as well as to adjacent local governments in Palm Beach and St. Lucie Counties. Council sent a memo seeking comments regarding potential conflicts with the proposed amendments to all local governments on May 3, 2011. As of the preparation of this staff report, no correspondence has been received.

Copies of letters from Palm Beach County and the Town of Jupiter were included with the amendment materials. Palm Beach County expressed concerns regarding the adequacy of the existing wildlife/greenway corridor as a result of the proposed increased density on the Bridgewater Ventures, LLC FLUM amendment. Palm Beach County staff indicates discussions have occurred with Martin County and the landowner regarding provisions that could be included in a PUD/zoning agreement to address the County concerns. The Town of Jupiter expressed concerns about the cumulative effect of development on this property and of other approved projects on the signalized intersection of S.E. Island Way and Indiantown Road.
Effects on Significant Regional Resources or Facilities

The proposed land use change and increased density on FLUM amendment CPA 10-2 (Bridgewater) could result in adverse impacts to Jonathan Dickinson State Park, a significant regional facility.

Analysis of Consistency with Strategic Regional Policy Plan

The Strategic Regional Policy Plan recommends a preferred development form. This form consists of:

1. urban development in cities, towns and villages; and
2. a sustainable countryside.

Urban areas should have a complete mix of land uses, including residential, commercial, industrial, institutional and recreational. All future development should be part of existing or proposed cities, towns and villages (Regional Goal 4.1). When new neighborhoods or communities are developed (Regional Goal 6.1), they should also contain a balanced, well-planned, compatible mix of land uses. It is especially important that a range of housing types and affordability is available in proximity to employment and services (Regional Goal 2.2).

The countryside should include natural systems, open space and agricultural lands (Regional Goals 1.1 and 2.1). A network of connected natural preserves is recommended (Strategy 1.1.1). To ensure the compatibility of urban areas, natural preserves and other open spaces, sprawling development patterns are discouraged. If and when re-designation of agricultural land is necessary to meet urban needs, new FLUM designations should require preferred forms and patterns of development (Policy 3.2.3.1).

A. FLUM Amendments

1. CPA 10-2 (Bridgewater Ventures, LLC)

This amendment would change the designation on 215 acres of land from Agricultural Ranchette to RDR. This would increase the number of potential units from 43 to 107. In addition, it would change the nature of the area from one anticipated to contain small farms and nurseries (under Agricultural Ranchette) to very low density residential. Based on the County’s recently completed Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR), there is a substantial amount of land already designated as RDR. The EAR shows a total of 13,568 acres designated as RDR; with 3,503 of those acres undeveloped.

The sprawling residential pattern anticipated in a development of two-acre lots is not consistent with Regional Goals 1.1 regarding a sustainable countryside nor with Regional Goal 2.1 regarding the preservation of natural systems. The property is bordered on two
sides by Jonathan Dickinson State Park and on one side by a wildlife/greenway corridor that is owned by Palm Beach County. The increased density has the potential to create negative impacts for the wildlife and natural systems surrounding the property. The existing Agriculture Ranchette designation would be a much more compatible designation between the Public Conservation designation on adjoining lands and the residential development to the east.

The County intends to negotiate a PUD/Zoning Master Plan with the landowner. Exhibit 7 shows the tentative PUD Master Plan for the property. Some of the potential benefits of the PUD being considered are donation of a 100’ wide corridor along the south side of the property to Palm Beach County to facilitate the long term management of the wildlife/greenway corridor, a reduction in the maximum number of lots to 80, and a monetary contribution for stormwater treatment. However, the PUD agreement has not been finalized. If the PUD agreement called for the clustering of the residential units into a neighborhood of smaller lots on the eastern portion of the property, and as a result, the majority of the property could be preserved to serve as a buffer for the surrounding conservation lands, the amendment would be more consistent with the SRPP. However, based on the potential for negative impacts to Jonathan Dickinson State Park, a designated significant regional resource, the potential for negative impacts to other conservation lands, and the conflict between the proposed very low density development and the preferred form for new development called for in Regional Goals 4.1 and 6.1, the proposed amendment is considered to be inconsistent with the SRPP.

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; with the exception of the FLUM Amendment #CPA 10-2 (Bridgewater Ventures, LLC) which is INCONSISTENT with the SRPP. However, if the adoption of FLUM Amendment #CPA 10-2 is conditioned on: 1) donation of the southern 100 feet of the property to Palm Beach County as an addition to the existing wildlife corridor; 2) the clustering of the residential units into a neighborhood of smaller lots on the eastern portion of the property so that a majority of the property could be preserved as a buffer for the surrounding conservation lands; and 3) the proposed development is served by the regional water and wastewater systems, the amendment would be more 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

Exhibit

1  CPA# 10-2 (Bridgewater FLUM Amendment) – Location Map
2  CPA# 10-2 (Bridgewater FLUM Amendment) – Location – Aerial Photo
3  CPA# 10-2 (Bridgewater FLUM Amendment) – Aerial Map
4  CPA# 10-2 (Bridgewater FLUM Amendment) – Current Future Land Use Map
5  CPA# 10-2 (Bridgewater FLUM Amendment) – Proposed Future Land Use Map
6  CPA# 10-2 (Bridgewater FLUM Amendment) – Approved Plot of 36 Lots
7  CPA# 10-2 (Bridgewater FLUM Amendment) – Proposed PUD Master Plan with 80 Lots
8  CPA# 10-2 (Bridgewater FLUM Amendment) – Urban Service Boundary Map
9  CPA# 11-3 (East West International) – Location Map
10  CPA# 11-3 (East West International) – Aerial Map
11  CPA# 11-3 (East West International) – Current Future Land Use Map
12  Roadway Functional Class and Evacuation
13  Roadway Maintenance
14  Roadway Lanes and Level of Service
15  Public Transportation
16  Non-Motorized Transportation System
Exhibit 1
CPA# 10-2 (Bridgewater FLUM Amendment) – Location Map

Martin County, Florida

Figure 5

Bridgewater Location Map

Lucido & Associates
Land Planning / Landscape Architecture
Exhibit 4
CPA# 10-2 (Bridgewater FLUM Amendment) -- Current Future Land Use Map

Martin County, Florida

Legend
- Expressway/Downtown Demand Commercial Service Center
- Rural Density up to 0 UPA
- Mixed Density up to 5 UPA
- Elevation Density up to 1 UPA
- Low Density up to 5 UPA
- Commercial/Warehouse
- Residential
- High Density up to 10 UPA
- Industrial Density up to 5 UPA
- Commercial General
- Commercial Limited
- Commercial/Office/Residential
- Agricultural
- Erosion Critical Area
- No Water Body

SUBJECT PROPERTY
Agricultural Ranchette
Bridgewater
Current Future Land Use Map

Lucko & Associates
Land Planning / Landscape Architecture
2020 NE 10th Avenue, Suite 202
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33304
954-564-2020 / 954-564-2065
Exhibit 5
CPA# 10-2 (Bridgewater FLUM Amendment) – Proposed Future Land Use Map

Legend
- Expressedway Oriented Transit Commercial Service Center
- Rural Density - up to 0.5 UPA
- Rural Heritage - up to 0.5 UPA
- Estate Density - up to 1 UPA
- Estate Density - up to 2 UPA
- Low Density - up to 5 UPA
- Medium Density - up to 10 UPA
- High Density - up to 10 UPA
- Mobile Home Density - up to 6 UPA
- Commercial General
- Commercial Limited
- Commercial/Office/Residential
- Commercial Waterfront
- Recreational
- Public Conservation Area
- General Institutional
- Industrial
- Agricultural Ranchette
- Major Power Generation Facility
- No Data (May Include Incorporated Area)

SUBJECT PROPERTY
Rural Density
FIGURE 1 – LOCATION MAP WITH MAP OF SOUTH COUNTY DEVELOPMENTS
The location in the western one-half of Section 28 places this parcel to the west of the SE Island Way corridor improvement. To the west of the 36 lots and road/drainage improvements for the 5.0 acre lots in the Plat of Bridgewater Preserve lies the portion of Jonathan Dickinson State Park, which surrounds the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River further to the west. The access road (SE Bridgewater Drive) lies adjacent to the South Martin County Boundary at SE Island Way. There are no potable water distribution or wastewater collection lines existing within the subdivision, but utility lines and fire hydrants exist along SE Island Way to allow the looping of utilities from the Town of Jupiter (potable water service) and Loxahatchee River Environmental Control District (wastewater service).

FIGURE 2 – APPROVED PLAT OF 36 LOTS SHOWING IMPROVEMENTS TO THE PLAT OF BRIDEWATER PRESERVE
Exhibit 7
CPA# 10-2 (Bridgewater FLUM Amendment)
Proposed PUD Master Plan with 80 Lots
Exhibit 10
CPA# 11-3 (East West International) – Aerial Map

Applicant Proposed Development
CPA 11-3, East West International

- Proposed addition for parking.
- Approved but un-built Office Building.
- Approximate boundary of SFWMD conservation easement.
Exhibit 14
Roadway Lanes and Level of Service
Exhibit 15
Public Transportation
Exhibit 16
Non-Motorized Transportation System