

**Minutes of the
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
Committee Meeting
Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council
421 SW Camden Avenue, Stuart, Florida 34994**

Thursday, January 20, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

The following members and staff were present:

Martin County	Tammy Simoneau Pauline Becker Anthony Parkinson Ed Maxwell, Alternate Tim Dougher
Palm Beach County	Gary Hines Paul Skyers
Indian River County	Helene Caseltine
St. Lucie County	Harold "Buzz" Smyth
Staff	Greg Vaday Penny Myszkowski

Roll Call

Staff called the roll and announced that a quorum was not present.

Agenda

The January 20, 2011 Agenda was not approved due to lack of a quorum.

Minutes

The October 14, 2010 CEDS minutes were not approved due to lack of a quorum.

Membership Discussion

The CEDS committee is waiting for appointments from St. Lucie County and Palm Beach County for 2011. Indian River County appointments are Ray Coniglio, Rich Stringer, Helene Caseltine, Randy Riley, and Andrew Kennedy. Martin County

appointments are Tammy Simoneau, Anthony Parkinson, Tim Dougher, Pauline Becker, and Dave Kuiper. St. Lucie County appointments will be finalized in February. Staff welcomed Tim Dougher, Anthony Parkinson and his alternate Ed Maxwell, new appointees from Martin County and Buzz Smyth from St. Lucie County.

Staff noted that the CEDS Committee Bylaws define a quorum as consisting of 2 members from each county, which would be eight members, or nine members from any of the four counties. Quorum requirements may need to be amended at a future meeting.

Staff will keep the committee updated on St. Lucie County's EDA grant request for infrastructure at the Treasure Coast Education and Research Park that was discussed at the October 14, 2010 meeting and presented to the committee by Michael Brillhart. The grant request was for just under \$1 million.

2011 Schedule

Staff said that in 2011, the CEDS committee will meet bimonthly after February, on the second Thursday of the month at 2:00 p.m. Meeting dates in 2011 are: February 10, April 14, June 9, August 11, October 13, and December 8.

Tammy Simoneau suggested the committee might want to meet monthly to discuss new projects. Helene Caseltine thought there might be a problem asking members to meet monthly after they agreed to bimonthly meetings and Gary Hines suggested that if the committee decides to meet monthly, perhaps every other month could be a conference call meeting.

CEDS Vital Projects Update

The original CEDS document had 13 projects in it which have now expanded to 25 projects. Some of these projects are no longer feasible and will come off the list. There is a wide range of projects, but the key for a project is that it must focus on a broad regional impact. Sherry Howard, Palm Beach County, is having discussions with Florida Crystals in regard to the inland port project. Pauline Becker asked about a possible project of the dredging the St. Lucie Inlet for moving large boats being built in Martin County. Buzz Smyth mentioned the deep water Port of Fort Pierce. Staff reminded the committee that the Corps of Engineers also has to be involved in these projects.

Buzz Smith mentioned that the Fort Pierce Wastewater Treatment Plant on the island along the Fort Pierce Inlet will need to be relocated in the near future. He said there are developers that are willing to move forward with this project. The City has already purchased the new location for the wastewater treatment plant, but there is presently a lack of capital for this project. There was discussion regarding the Port of Fort Pierce, its ownership, and its importance as a gateway to St. Lucie and Indian River counties.

Pauline Becker asked about the funding available for projects. Staff said that nationally there is about \$250 million but funds have not been appropriated for the Economic

Development Administration (EDA) as of yet. Last year, funding for CEDS projects totaled about \$9 million.

Sustainable Communities Planning Grant

Last year the South Florida Regional Planning Council, in partnership with The Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, submitted a grant application to the US Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under their Sustainable Communities Grant Program. South Florida RPC was awarded \$4.25 million to develop a regional plan for sustainable development. Forty-five regions across the country were funded to develop this plan. One funding stage is to write the plan and the second stage funding opportunity is to implement the plan. This plan will cover the region from the Keys to Fellsmere, a seven county region of almost six million people. All the winners of the grant met in Cambridge, Massachusetts recently. The plan will cover land use, environment, transportation, housing, and economic development. It will be an economic development blueprint. The funds have not yet been allocated. There are 48 consortium members and many agencies throughout the region that are included to participate in the funds.

Tammy Simoneau said this would be a good time to unify the two regional planning councils that have been acting independently. Staff said it could result in a combined CEDS with south Florida, but it covers a large distance and two different cultures with different focuses. There is a three year time frame. The plan that will be developed could be the basis for larger funding in the future that will include more government agencies. There will be a project manager at the TCRPC and a project director at the SFRPC to oversee the planning effort. Buzz Smyth said that a small committee rather than a large group of people could better consider the assets that the region has to offer.

Staff noted that there is presently an executive committee with ten members. That committee will add more members and make recommendations. Each county has unique qualities and will play a role. In discussion that followed, it was noted that Miami has a very large port. Also the widening of the Panama Canal will have a big impact on the shipping in the region. Some of the big issues are transportation improvements (road, commuter rail, high speed rail), alternative energy, and biotech industry and supporting infrastructure. Universities will also be involved in the sustainable communities planning.

Staff noted that our CEDS region was recognized in a national study as one of the twelve best economic development districts in the country.

Tammy Simoneau mentioned that our demographic population has a big influence on businesses in the region. Each member of the CEDS committee knows their area well and works together well based on the needs of the region. Pauline Becker pointed out that we do not have skilled workers because of the failure of our educational system to teach technical and relevant skills needed for today's industries. Buzz Smyth added that a good work ethic is not presently taught in the schools.

Tony Parkinson shared that Pine School in Hobe Sound is taking on the Ted Franchise. Twenty speakers are scheduled to speak as well as local speakers.

Staff encouraged members to get feedback from their municipalities regarding projects for the sustainable communities initiative.

Ed Maxwell spoke about the fiber optics project in Martin County and how it can help surrounding counties. It is under construction now and is scheduled to be completed in the fall. It is a fiber optic network at a 10 gigabyte speed. The network in Martin County will connect government and non-profit sites, commercial industrial parcels, and residential parcels. Within 2 miles of the network, 97% of the government, 81% of commercial industrial parcels, and 97% of residential are included so far. The county can resale this network as a utility to new businesses in the region.

Staff said that application could be made for another grant for this project as it is developed further. Kevin Kryzda, Martin County, could be invited to make a presentation to the CEDS committee.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.