

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

**Thursday, April 14, 2011**

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

The following members and staff were present:

Martin County	Tammy Simoneau Cindy Pingolt, Alternate Anthony Parkinson Ed Maxwell, Alternate Tim Dougher Dave Kuiper
Palm Beach County	Gary Hines Paul Skyers Sherry Howard Seabron Smith
Indian River County	Helene Caseltine Andrew Kennedy
St. Lucie County	Harold "Buzz" Smyth Howard Fein, Alternate Michael Corbit Teri Pinney Nate Bray
Staff	Greg Vaday Penny Myszkowski
Visitors	Clifford Morris, Mirzam Holdings Mark Mathes, City of Fellsmere Ken Stephanz, TSG Maureen Woodward, TD Bank Lisa Quaglia, TD Bank

**Roll Call**

Staff called the roll and announced that a quorum was present.

**Agenda**

Motion was made by Helene Caseltine and seconded by Seabron Smith to approve the April 14, 2011 CEDS agenda. Motion was approved unanimously.

**Motion**

**Minutes**

Motion was made by Gary Hines and seconded by Seabron Smith to approve the October 14, 2010 CEDS minutes and the January 20, 2011 CEDS minutes. Motion was approved unanimously.

**Motion**

**Membership Update**

Staff said all appointments to the CEDS committee have now been made. St. Lucie County appointments took place in February and the Palm Beach County appointments took place in April. Staff welcomed new members, members that had been reappointed and visitors. Members self-introduced themselves.

**Election of Officers**

Staff proposed that the Chair positions rotate as follows:

Tammy Simoneau, Martin County	Chair
Paul Skyers, Palm Beach County,	First Vice Chair
Second Vice Chair, St. Lucie County	To be determined
Third Vice Chair, Indian River County,	To be determined

Helen Caseltine made a motion to approve Staff’s recommendation for rotation of officers. Harold Smyth asked about how the appointed Chair from a specific county impacts the direction in which the CEDS meeting is conducted. Ms. Simoneau answered that the officers have representation from each county and all participate in shaping the agenda of each meeting. Each year the position of Chair rotates from county to county. Ms. Simoneau reminded the committee that the goal of the CEDS committee is to build consensus in the region. Harold Smyth seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously.

**Motion**

Nate Bray nominated Teri Pinney, St. Lucie County, for Second Vice Chair and Harold Smyth seconded the motion for nomination. Motion was approved. Helene Caseltine, Indian River County, motioned that she fill the position of Third Vice Chair. Andrew Kennedy seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously.

**Motion**

**New Project Discussion – Mark Mathes, City of Fellsmere**

Staff reviewed the process of adoption of new CEDS projects into the CEDS Plan and emphasized that projects are reviewed for the development of the entire region rather than for the benefit of one particular county. Staff introduced Mr. Mark Mathes, City of

Fellsmere and Mr. Clifford Morris, Mirzam Holdings, who would provide an overview of the Florida Organic Aquaculture project.

Mr. Mathes pointed out that Fellsmere has 25,000 acres of vacant land that is available for urban development. He mentioned the city was examining a number of potential economic development opportunities, one of which involved aquaculture. An overview of the Florida Organic Aquaculture project was presented by Clifford Morris, Mirzam Holdings. The technology underlying the project was developed in this country. Their proposed aquaculture project produces no discharge, and is environmentally friendly. He said that China, Thailand, Vietnam and other food producing countries are using more of the food they produce to feed their own growing populations. This is creating a need for our country to produce more food for export. The aquaculture project will harvest prawns, cobia, high protein shrimp, oysters, and salicornia in addition to algae, produce methane, and livestock feed byproducts. The project will also contain a research and development component comprising Florida Organic Aquaculture in partnership with Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute, Florida Institute of Technology and Texas Tech University.

China is very interested in this technology and foreign investment has begun. \$16 million is the total project cost to implement all project phases. An economic development grant will help accelerate research and development phase of the project. The project is located in a Qualified Census Tract of land that is part of a Brownfield Area. Development of the site will redevelop 40 acres of underperforming land and will create approximately 60 permanent full-time jobs.

Mr. Howard Fein asked what is involved in adding a project to the CEDS plan. Staff explained the two step process. A project is adopted into the CEDS making it eligible to apply for grant funds. If a grant application is initiated, the project applicant, typically a local government, must raise the appropriate local match and put together the grant application. Mr. Mathes said the grant requires that the City of Fellsmere have control of the land. The City of Fellsmere is the applicant.

Helene Caseltine made a motion to approve the addition of this project to the CEDS plan. Teri Pinney seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

**Motion**

### **Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Update**

The South Florida Regional Planning Council, working in partnership with the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, and more than 200 additional members of the Southeast Florida Regional Partnership, was recently awarded a \$4.25 million Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant from the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (U.S. HUD). Staff distributed a brief Executive Summary of the Southeast Florida's Regional Vision and Blueprint for Economic Prosperity. \$100 million is available to fund forty five regions across the country to develop this plan for regional sustainability. These principles will guide the work of the Partnership:

1. Provide better transportation choices

2. Promote affordable housing
3. Enhance economic competitiveness
4. Support existing communities
5. Coordinate policies and leverage investment
6. Value communities and neighborhoods
7. Enhance community resilience to impacts of climate change

This project will cover seven counties and 6.2 million people, from Monroe County to Indian River County.

There are two primary positions to be funded through the grant for three years. South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC) will be hiring an overall Project Director. Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (TCRPC) will be hiring a Project Manager. On March 25<sup>th</sup> the Executive Committee of the Southeast Florida Partnership met. This committee will guide the policy of the plan as it moves forward. There are 200 members in the partnership. The SFRPC has developed a work plan and a budget. The budget has not yet been finalized. Once the budget is submitted to HUD, there will be further discussions on resource allocation.

Staff said that once the Project Director is hired, a request for qualifications will be issued to cover all the elements of the work plan.

Staff mentioned the CEDS Plan will need to be revised starting in September of this year and it will have to be closely aligned with the Sustainable Communities Initiative, the statewide Six Pillars Initiative, and the SFRPC CEDS Plan.

Staff said that the CEDS Committee will continue to meet bimonthly until September. After September the CEDS may meet on a monthly basis because the committee will need to meet regularly to work on the CEDS rewrite.

### **Public Comment**

None.

### **CEDS Committee Comment**

Mr. Howard Fein said he was happy to be a part of the CEDS Committee. He commented that the region cannot have just service industry and tourism to sustain the region. He said that people in the region need the right to develop different industries and encourage private investment and entrepreneurship. Mr. Fein said there is great potential in the Port of Fort Pierce and asked why we have not allowed the property owners to develop the property for what it is zoned for. He believes the Port of Fort Pierce is the economic pathway to this region. He would like to see opportunity for high paying blue-collar jobs in this region.

Mr. Ed Maxwell suggested a forum in which this kind of dialog could be shared with others.

Mr. Anthony Parkinson agreed that downtown Fort Pierce has the potential to be a major economic engine.

Mr. Paul Skyers added that there is an agency, the South Florida Economic Development Forum, which actually trains civic leaders and politicians in economic development. It was founded by Jeb Bush and has training tools for civic leaders. Information about this forum will be e-mailed to staff by Paul Skyers to be shared with the committee.

The next CEDS meeting is on June 9, 2011 at 2:00 at the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council office.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.