

Planning Board meeting
Minutes and proceedings
April 11, 2011 (continued from April 5, 2011)

Meeting called to order by Board member Kenneth Venables at 4:30 pm. **Other members present:** Sue Roskosh, Earl Wallace, Joseph Petrucci and Joe Pickens. **Members absent:** Anthony Harwell, Zachary Landis, Carl Stewart and Ezekiel Johnson. **Also present:** Planning Director Thad Crowe, Recording Secretary Pam Sprouse and City Attorney, Don Holmes.

Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) of the City of Palatka Comprehensive Plan for consideration of recommendation to the City Commission to transmit to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA)

(Public Hearing)

Thad Crowe gave the Board members a handout (attached) and explained that when we talk about the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, we're talking about whether we've done all the things that were set in the Goals, Objectives, and Policies (GOP's). Based on the evaluation of the GOPs the EAR will then tell us what we need to change to better address the needs of our community objectives, and what we need to do to address the changing positions and trends. A great example is that the economy has changed in the last several years – the Comprehensive Plan was done seven years ago when everything was booming. With the EAR we got input from other agencies, like the DCA, Regional Planning Council and the St. Johns River Water Management District as well as the public at various meetings and workshops. He felt that it was important to stress when we get into the EAR Major Issues, like the historic districts, economic development etc... these are only recommendations, if we were to approve them now, 18 months later when we revise the Comprehensive Plan, such changes are not mandatory. We do not have to make a decision on them until we revise the Comprehensive Plan. We are not locked into them. He explained that the two sections of focus today are really the essence of the EAR:

Section B (7) – The Assessment of the Elements (an analysis of each Goal Objective and Element of the Comp Plan) and;

Section C – Evaluation of Local Major Issues. These are two sections provide us a basis to update the Comprehensive Plan GOP's and the other sections just mirror what we are, who we are and what we're doing.

Mr. Crowe reviewed the Assessment of the Elements and the changes by consensus from the April 5, 2011 meeting.

Page B-109, Policy G.1.6.5: new policy as required by water management district that commits the City to adopting a water supply plan if required by Statute.

Mr. Pickens asked if there was any requirement that the plan be approved, blessed or agreed to by the District, or does the City just have to adopt a plan? Mr. Crowe advised that we just need to adopt a plan if and only "if" it is required by Statute.

Issue 1: Historic Preservation

Mr. Crowe explained that this is an optional element and is not required. The purpose of adopting indicates that the City thinks it is important to place emphasis on Historic Preservation. He explained

that it is meant to be broad in general, basically overriding goals to protect historic resources, implemented through the land development code.

Mr. Venables asked about classifications for historic buildings in the districts. Mr. Crowe advised that typically there were just two classifications, contributing and noncontributing properties. Contributing properties contributed to a historic district's architecture and/or history. Mr. Holmes asked how historic surveys were done. Mr. Crowe advised that a historic survey is an architectural survey of existing structures, and how those structures fit into a period of significance for a potential historic district, determining a beginning point and an ending point for the historic period. You would set parameters such as the date of construction, materials used to construct the house, architectural character or historical significance, such as a famous person or event that is associated with the site. Sometimes there is state funding for such surveys. The City now has programs in place for historic homeowners to assist them in painting and maintaining structures and if the City decides that historic resources are important to these areas, than they can basically provide support and incentives for people to maintain historic structures, that is a policy decision down the road that the City has to make. Mr. Wallace asked who initiates a survey. Mr. Crowe advised that the first step is to assess the potential inventory area, and then to gauge the interest of the property owners in performing a survey. A lot of this work can be done by volunteers. Mr. Venables spoke in regards to last week's workshop discussion regarding historic tax exemptions, and Downtown not being in the Historic district. He referred to Florida Statutes Chapter 193.503(3), and said it looked like this section specified that a Historic Tax Abatement tax exemption does not require a historic district to be present, but only requires an area that is in support or contributes to the historic district, which he believed Downtown would qualify as supporting the North and South historic districts. Robbie Correa commented that the Downtown area could be recognized by the City as a local Historic district and provide an ordinance that says that, and that would qualify without having to go through the National Register process. The CLG would help provide the resources & funding to do the inventory of Historic buildings throughout the City. Mr. Crowe looked at the statute in question and said he believed that the tax exemptions required either individual or district local or National historic designation.

Discussion continued regarding using more flexible language making the recommendations more an optional or encouraging type strategy. The following changes were recommended with the consensus of the Board:

- "Adopt" policies to enable historic tax exemptions - **change "Adopt" to "consider"**
- Add policy "calling for" historic survey of older areas of the City – **change "calling for" to "allowing for"**
- Adjust current CRA boundaries "to match" historic district boundaries – **change "to match" to "to include"**

Issue 2: Economic Development

Downtown marketing

- Encourage and consider providing incentives for establishment of live-work artist district – **add: "and ancillary uses."**

Planning Board meeting
Minutes and proceedings
April 11, 2011 (continued from April 5, 2011)

Tree City Strategies

- Identify additional funding sources for tree planting – **add: “and maintenance.”**

Rail and Water Transportation

- Add new recommendation to market and promote rail daytrips to City from regional origins such as Jacksonville, Orlando, South Georgia, etc; with hiking, water taxi, and downtown shopping/eating as a draw.

Eco-Tourism

- Plan for bicycle routes or trails to link terminus of Lake Butler-Palatka rail trail to downtown - **add: “and/or equestrian trails.”**

Issue 3: Transportation LOS

- Encourage new bus stops and transit routes – **add: “and encourage extended service hours.”**

Mr. Pretucci’s questioned the use of the word “appropriate” in **Objective C.1.4 on Page B59** of the EAR: “The City’s Zoning Code shall continue to provide for the appropriate siting of housing for low and moderate income families, mobile homes and group home facilities.” Mr. Crowe advised that the way this policy reads now without the word “appropriate,” it allows for mobile homes and group homes to go pretty much anywhere, and we would like to say where they are appropriate, for instance, there is a distance restriction of 1,000 ft for group homes as regulated by the State, and that mobile homes can only go in the R4 zoning district. Consensus was to change: **“appropriate” to “compatible.”**

Motion made by Joe Pickens to recommend approval of EAR as submitted with the Planning Board’s recommended revisions. Motion seconded by Earl Wallace. All present voted affirmative, motion carried.

With no further business, meeting adjourned at 6:04 pm.