

Southeast Citizens Planning Advisory Committee

January 25, 2021 Meeting Summary

Mandarin Senior Center, 3848 Hartley Road, Jacksonville, FL 32257

Meeting Attendance

Members: Nancy Barry, Brierwood Neighborhood Association; Walter Bryant, St. Nicholas Area Preservation; Ramon Day, Northwest Quadrant Equity Owners, Inc.; Carol D’Onofrio, Deercreek Owners Association; Joanne Parker Griffin, Villa San Jose Civic; Donna Herrin, Sweetwater by Del Webb; Jim Hill, Greater Hood Road Community Association; Ralph Hodges, Council-At-Large Group 4; Debbie Johnson, The Gables HOA; Scott Koslowski, James Island Homeowners Association; Joe Luczak, Bartram Springs HOA; Jon Malmind, Oak View Corner Oaks Owners Association; Sherry Marks, Kernan Mills Community Association, Inc.; Robin Pickle, Brierwood Neighborhood Association; Kathleen Perera, Alumni Civic Association; Kathy Soares, Highland Glen HOA; Denise Torres, The Arc Jacksonville Village; Marcie Turner, Kernan Mills Community Association, Inc.;

Excused: Joyce Brown, Pine Forest Community Action; Anne Davis, Riverbrook at Glen Kernan HOA, Inc.; Sharon Ervin, Riverbrook at Glen Kernan HOA, Inc; Eric Laner, East Hampton HOA; Gary Weise, Secret Cove Civic Association

Visitors: Rich Horvath, Nocatee; Richard Skule, Englewood; Charles Garrison

Staff: Danny Becton, City Council District 11; Michael Boylan, City Council District 6; Bradley Clayton, Municipal Code Compliance; Jessica Denson, Neighborhood Services Office; Renee Goode, JEA; Lori Hershey, Duval County School Board; Keli Likins, JPL; Lisa Ransom, Neighborhood Services Office; Cheryl Riddick, JTA; Keli Likins, JPL; Cheryl Riddick, JTA; Robin Smith, JSO; Paul Soares, Duval County Public Schools; Arimus Wells, Planning and Development Department; Rosemary Wesolowski, Neighborhood Services Office; Dave Westberry, JFRD; Sargent Wiggins, JSO

Call to Order/Verify Quorum:

Chair D’Onofrio called the January 2021 SE CPAC meeting to order at 6:30 pm and welcomed everyone to the meeting at the Mandarin Senior Center. Rosemary Wesolowski verified that a quorum was present.

Approval of the Previous Meeting Summary – The December 2020 meeting summary was approved by the CPAC.

Presentation(s): Jim McCarthy, President, North Florida Land Trust informed the CPAC that the North Florida Land Trust (NFLT) was founded in 1999 and has the focus is to preserve our natural resources, historic places, and working lands of North Florida. North Florida Land Trust serves twelve counties in the north Florida area, maintains over 20,000 acres of natural land, and protects over 25 threatened and endangered species’ habitats. They achieve their mission by purchasing or receiving donations of land and conservation easements, as well as facilitating conservation transactions for public agencies.

One of their largest projects is the Ocala to Osceola Conservation Corridor (O2O). O2O is a network of forested and rural lands that make up a 1.6-million-acre wildlife corridor connecting Ocala National Forest to Osceola National Forest. The O2O is part of the larger Florida Wildlife Corridor, which is a

network of connected lands throughout the State that serves as Florida’s “conservation blueprint” for optimal protection of natural resources, wildlife habitat, agriculture, and open space. Additionally, this area is instrumental in functioning as a re-charge area for the aquifer.

Roughly half of the O2O is already public land, including two large National Forests and several state-owned management areas. The goal of the O2O is to provide habitat for a wide-range of animals and imperiled species, such as the Florida black bear, red-cockaded woodpecker, eastern indigo snake, and gopher tortoise. In addition, the O2O contains some of the best remaining upland pine forests, wetlands, and waterways in North Florida. Additionally, O2O is working to add another 140,000 acres of unprotected private lands in the O2O in the next 20 years, connecting our natural landscape for wildlife forever.

In the Jacksonville area, North Florida Land Trust’s first publicly accessible park is Bogey Creek Preserve; this is a 75-acre property in the Pumpkin Hill neighborhood of north Jacksonville that was owned by the Spencer family for four generations. North Florida Land Trust worked with the Spencer family to protect their land and raised the funds needed to purchase the property in 2017, a few months after Sue Spencer’s passing at the age of 97. Bogey Creek Preserve is now part of the 7 Creek Recreation area.

The 7 Creeks Recreation Area is a connection of parks and preserves that is a compilation of 5,600 acres of contiguous conservation lands. The 7 Creeks Recreation Area will be managed by a partnership between NFLT, the City of Jacksonville, Florida State Parks, the National Park Service, and Timucuan Parks Foundation. To learn more about 7 Creeks Recreation Area visit www.7CreeksJax.org

The North Florida Land Trust has also purchased Brewster Hospital and Nurse Training School. NFLT recognized the importance of this hospital in Jacksonville history and the history of the LaVilla community. The hospital was vital to Jacksonville’s African American community because it was the first and only medical facility available to blacks until the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The hospital was originally built and located at 915 West Monroe Street; thanks to a donation given by Mrs. George A. Brewster. The building was used as the Brewster Hospital and Nurse Training School until 1910, when the Hospital and School outgrew its location and moved to a much-needed larger facility.

Brewster Hospital was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on May 13, 1976 for its local significance in Jacksonville’s social and ethnic history. In 2004, the hospital was moved from its original location at 915 W. Monroe to the northwest corner of Monroe and Jefferson Streets where it stands today. With a need to expand office space to accommodate a growing staff, NFLT identified the old Brewster Hospital as an ideal office location that fits with the organization’s mission. North Florida Land Trust has completed many exterior and interior renovations, structural improvements, ADA accommodations, office outfitting and design, as well as a museum component and memorial to the Brewster Hospital and Nurse Training School.

Mr. McCarthy mentioned that land conservation has become an economic driver in Florida tourism. Many travel to Florida to visit our rivers, oceans, and woodlands. Birdwatching, hunting, kayaking and of course enjoying a day at the beaches draws a multitude of visitors annually.

Several CPAC members inquired about or made recommendations on land purchases throughout the SE CPAC boundaries. Mr. McCarthy did illustrate the role NFLT did play in the Julington – Durbin Creeks land swap that allowed over 400 additional acres to be preserved from development in the Southeast

District. Unfortunately, in Duval County most of the land that is east of I-95 is cost prohibitive to the North Florida Land Trust. For more information about the North Florida Land Trust, please visit: <https://www.nflt.org/> or call 904.479.1967

Elected Officials Report:

Danny Becton, City Council District 11 – informed the CPAC on December 16, 2020, the St. Johns River Water Management District hosted a virtual public hearing for the Julington-Durbin Preserve to discuss the District’s 10-Year Land Management plan for the 2,000-acre nature preserve off Bartram Park Blvd with the community. The importance of maintaining the preserve is not only important to protect wildlife, but it is important to the residents of Jacksonville.

The District 11 Hazardous Waste Mobile Collection Event was the first of the 12 mobile events that will occur this year. The City of Jacksonville’s Solid Waste Division was at the Fort Family Regional Park at Baymeadows Road on Saturday, January 9, 2021 from 9 am to 3 pm. The turnout was tremendous.

Michael Boylan, City Council District 6 – thanked Council Member Becton for recognizing him in his newsletter for his work on the JEA Investigative Committee.

Council Member Boylan stated that he has served as the Land Use and Zoning Committee Chair for the past two years and he is acutely aware of the amount of land use zoning applications there are. For the last LUZ cycle there were 56 applications for re-zoning. Managing our local growth is a task we all must be aware of and act wisely when making recommendations.

Council Member Boylan shared he is also serving on two other committees that Council President Hazouri has started. The committees are the Social Justice & Community Investment Special Committee and Resiliency Special Committee. One of the programs that Council Member Boylan would like to see grow is the Jax Cares Connects; this is for underinsured or those without insurance.

Lastly, Council Member Boylan is working with Art in Public Places to commission two pieces of public art. Two locations have been identified for placement of the art: Losco Regional Park and Chick Rogers Park. Updates on the art projects will be provided at future meetings.

Lori Hershey, Duval County School Board, District 7 – stated they are busy working on the Strategic Plan for the funds from the half cent tax increase. There are five things they are working on now:

- The citizens oversight committee is being appointed and organized. Plans are underway for initial meeting this month.
- A project management firm will be selected to oversee the early projects as the school district ramps up its own personnel to manage the construction internally. The district’s facilities team has requested proposals. After the proposals are evaluated, the district will make a recommendation for the School Board’s approval in early 2021.
- A prototype design for Rutledge Pearson Elementary is underway. Rutledge Pearson is scheduled for a new school on the same site as the current facility, located in Northwest Jacksonville. The new school will receive students from three separate schools being consolidated into a larger, brand new facility with an estimated cost of \$28 million. The school is named for Rutledge Pearson, an educator and civil rights activist.

- Prototype designs are also underway for safety and security improvements. The design plans will include safety and security measures specifically designed for elementary, middle, and high schools. Within three years, safety and security upgrades will be made to every school building.
- The first revenues will arrive in February or March. The district's finance and bond counsel team are currently exploring the best timing for a bond issue, which will allow the district to borrow against the guaranteed revenue of the half-penny over 15 years. A bond issue will provide funds to allow the district to start building and improving schools at a faster pace.
- The district will also launch a new website in early 2021 to track all the projects and finances associated with the voter approved half-penny.

Lori Hershey - hershey1@duvalschools.org or 904.390.2375

Paul Soares, Duval County School Board, Assistant Superintendent confirmed that the citizens that are on the oversight committee will be a broad and diverse group. The upcoming meetings are open to the public and a calendar of future meeting will be provided.

Paul Soares - (904) 390-2008

Staff Reports:

JSO (Jacksonville Sheriff's Office) – Sargent Wiggins informed the CPAC members in Zone 3 in the last 30 days most crimes are down or stayed the same. The only problem noted was there has been a slight uptick in auto burglaries robberies in Zone 3. Once again, the CPAC was reminded about the 9 pm Routine; everyone was encouraged to not leave money, valuables, car keys, wallets/purses, and guns in their vehicles unattended.

There was some discussion about panhandling and an increase in homeless population. Sargent Wiggins stated that JSO is partnering with the City of Jacksonville to address the needs and find housing for the homeless populations that will accept assistance. JSO is aware and actively working in areas that panhandlers are known to frequent. Please call 630-0500 or the Zone 3 Substation 828-5463 to report panhandling. JSO maintains a database on those that have been presented with a warning and/or ticketed for panhandling.

One CPAC member expressed concern about an Air BNB in the Highland Glen community. It was reported that she has called JSO and Code Compliance multiple times and she feels that she does not get any assistance with this issue. It was recommended that she contact her HOA to get them involved to enforce their association covenants and by-laws.

Another member shared there is a lot of litter at the corner of St. Johns Bluff Road and Town Center Boulevard and inquired if JSO can assist with littering? JSO stated that they must witness someone actively littering before an officer can cite the person for the violation.

It was announced that Assistant Chief Restivo would be leaving Zone 3 and Assistant Chief Mark Romano will take his place soon.

Zone 3 substation – 8875 Liberty Ridge Drive, Suite 110, 32256 – 904-828-5463

JFRD – Chief Dave Westberry announced that JFRD currently has 72 recruits in school right now and 60 of the recruits are scheduled to graduate on January 21, 2021. JFRD will be adding a fourth team

member to several of the fire stations. The station in the Tinsletown area (9200 Hogan Road) is such a busy station JFRD has made it a double station to keep up with the volume of calls. This double station is referred to as Station 28/72. Construction on a new fire station (Station 63) is underway on Gate Parkway and it is proposed that the e-Town area will also get a fire station due to the rapid growth. The proposed new fire station in the e-Town area will be called Station 74; no further details or a timeline are available at this time

JPL – Keli Likins, South Regional Manager, announced all libraries are expanding their hours starting February 1, 2021. The regional libraries hours: Monday – Thursday 10 am to 7pm and Friday – Saturday 10 am to 6 pm. The branch libraries hours: Monday – Tuesday 12 pm to 8 pm and Wednesday – Saturday 10 am to 6 pm. All libraries are closed on Sunday. Please use the following web address to confirm the hours of operation for the library that you use: <https://jaxpubliclibrary.org/locations>

Keli Likins – Klikins@coj.net

JEA – Renee Goode announced JEA has a new CEO, Mr. Jay Stowe. Mr. Stowe took leadership of JEA in late November. Mr. Stowe is very engaged and has three areas of focus: safety, health, and economic development.

Ms. Goode informed the CPAC that JEA has started a new program to report a street light outage. Visit <https://www.jea.com/> at the bottom of the page you will see Outage Tools. Click on outage Tools, then look for and click on Streetlight outage. With the new system you will use a map to drop the pin in the location of the outage; you no longer need to know the street poll number.

It appears that scammers have engaged new tactics to fool the public. From reports from the community, JEA has learned that scammers have found a way that on caller ID it reads both the JEA name and number. Please hang up and call JEA back at 665-6000. JEA will never call to demand payment or to request gift cards regardless of what is shown on your caller ID.

JTA – Cheryl Riddick announced JTA is working in partnership with the City of Jacksonville and the Florida Department of Health to provide transportation to Covid-19 vaccine distribution sites. The vaccination transportation program will be called ReadIRide. All Senior Citizens 65 years old or older and healthcare workers (with employer ID) can ride free roundtrip from a vaccination site. Please call 904-679-4555 to confirm eligibility and to make a reservation for roundtrip transportation for your vaccine appointment.

Cheryl Riddick -904-632-5522 or criddick@jtafla.com

Municipal Code Compliance Division – Bradley Clayton introduced himself as the new supervisor for the Southeast District. Robert “Bob” Crawford has retired. In the Southeast District, a systematic inspection was conducted in the Greenland Road area which netted 116 violations. The next systematic inspection will on take place in the Brackenridge community.

The Jacksonville Assistance and Relief or JAR program was discussed. The purpose of the Jacksonville Assistance and Relief Program is to facilitate a means of compliance to those who would otherwise be unable to achieve it due to disability or economic disadvantages. The Program’s objective is to provide the abatement services required at no cost to those citizens who qualify, thereby achieving compliance and beautification of the City while not unduly burdening its most vulnerable citizens.

If you cannot comply the violations on your property due to a disability or economic hardship, please feel free to visit:

<https://www.coj.net/departments/neighborhoods/municipal-code-compliance/jacksonville-assistance-and-relief-program>

Bradley Clayton – bclayton@coj.net

Public Works – Robin Smith, Chief of Engineering Construction Management provided updates on three projects in the Southeast District:

- The Gate Parkway Traffic Calming Project – between J. Turner Butler Boulevard and Southside Boulevard raised cross walks will be added to increase pedestrian safety. This project should be completed by the end of 2021.
- The Southside Senior Center – this new center is located off Beach Boulevard, just east of Southside Boulevard. The land has been cleared and construction should begin soon. This is a large (11,000 square foot) building and the estimated completion is by the end of 2021.
- Hartley Road Drainage Project – the box culvert is being replaced. The larger culvert will improve the drainage in the area.

There was a question about the schedule of cleaning drainage ditches. Mr. Smith asked to have the location emailed to him at RobinSmith@coj.net so he could follow up with that division of Public Works.

Robin Smith – 904-255-8710 or RobinSmith@coj.net

Planning & Development Department – Arimus Wells did not have a report but was available for questions.

Arimus Wells – 904-255-7824 or ArimusW@coj.net

Subcommittee/Liaison Reports (3-minute time limit):

LUZ– Joanne Parker Griffin and the LUZ Subcommittee reviewed six LUZ applications and one motion was made.

Denial of AD-21-03 at 1939 Hendricks Avenue asked to reduce the landscaping and buffering requirements in RMD-A Zoning District. The SE CPAC recommended that all requirements of landscape buffers and quantities of trees should be maintained. By not allowing this administrative deviation to go forward we are maintaining the criteria of Zoning Administrative Deviations: Sec 656.109 section H, item 3. The proposed deviation will remove the required landscape buffers, green space and trees that will alter the essential character of the area surrounding the site.

The CPAC voted to approve the motion.

North Florida TPO – Jim Hill – not present

TRUE (Taxation, Revenue, and Utilization of Expenditures) Commission – Ramon Day –stated he was unable to attend the January meeting, but the meeting minutes reflect that several audit reports were requested. One of the biggest and most complicated budgets to review is JSO’s budget.

Neighborhood Coordinator Report – Rosemary Wesolowski shared sad news that former CPAC Chair Pat Corrado passed away. Details for a service were unknown. Rosemary also introduced new team member Jessica Denson. Ms. Denson will work with the Urban Core and Northwest Districts.

Rosemary Wesolowski 904-255-8261 or rosemary@coj.net

Chairs Report – Chair D’Onofrio inquired if the CPAC membership if they had any concerns or requests to share with the Mayor’s Staff at their February 12, 2021 meeting? If so, please share them with Rosemary or Chair D’Onofrio.

The Southeast CPAC will be the site captain at the Walter Jones Park for the March 20, 2021 St. Johns River Celebration Cleanup. An invitation to join Chair D’Onofrio and Rosemary at the clean up site was extended. Additional details will be provided as the event gets closer.

Unfinished Business – None

New Business: - None

Public Comment – None

Motion to Adjourn

The next meeting of the District 3 CPAC will be in person on Monday, February 22, 2021 at 6:30 pm – at the Mandarin Senior Center, 3848 Hartley Road,