

Myakka River Management Coordinating Council
March 9, 2007
Meeting Minutes

Morning Session

- I. City of North Port – Warm Mineral Springs, Isles of Athena, Thomas Ranch updates.
- A. Warm Mineral Springs
1. Golden Spa Resort
 - 80 acres annexed in 2003
 - Hotel planed with 50-70 rooms
 - 300' buffer around spring
 - Concept Plan. No formal applications submitted
 - DRC will review and Council will be contacted for comment
 2. Ortiz Place Townhouse Development
 - Critical area along spring run
 - Submittal was sent back for more information. Nothing has been resubmitted.
 3. River Road Office Park
 - Annexed in 2000
 - Headquarters for Major Company (not named)
 - Property near US 41
 - Concept Plan only. No formal applications
 - Will provide housing development for employees
 - Also included 25 acre park on Myakka River for passive recreation
 4. Thomas Ranch
 - Concept Baseball Park
 - Near River Road Office Park
 - Mangrove rookery in area. Potential impacts will be evaluated.
 5. Thomas Ranch
 - Annexed in 2000
 - 9000 acres
 - Village Land Use Zoning
 - No formal applications submitted

6. Isles of Athena
 - 5000 acre development; evaluating wetland impacts
 - DRI
 - Reduced dwelling units from 15,000 to 13,000
 - No formal applications submitted
 - Will construct own wastewater treatment plant
 - City will provide drinking water for 5,600 units
 - Evaluating groundwater resources

7. Myakkahatchee Creek
 - City has purchased environmentally sensitive land along creek (Tier 1).
 - City is looking for grants to purchase Tiers 2 and 3 lands (lands outside Tier 1, not directly on creek).
 - Any new homes in Conservation Restriction Zones 2,3,&4 will be required to install advanced treatment systems for septic systems.

II. City of North Port

A. Big Slough Watershed Study

- The City of North Port is addressing both flooding and water quality issues.
- The watershed is 195 sq. miles. Big Slough flows to Myakkahatchee Creek and to Myakka River.
- Development at bottom of watershed experiences major flooding. A Watershed Model has been developed and will be calibrated with a real storm (100 yr.).
- Planning to expand sewer system to remove septic tanks and are looking for funding.
- Planning to impose stricter requirements for stormwater treatment to improve water quality of discharges to Myakkahatchee Creek.
- Myakkahatchee Creek and Coco Plum Canal are both drinking water sources.

III. City of Venice - 2007 Comprehensive Plan update

- Still in development phase – moving forward
- \$8,000,000 shortfall in property taxes if bill is passed will reduce CIPs to protect the river.

IV. Sarasota National Cemetery Update

- Hawkins Ranch Property (SR 72 4 miles east of I75) was purchased for \$14,000,000.
- Reduced acreage from 466 to 295.
- Development farther away from Myakka River.

- \$27.8 million to develop Phase I, which will develop 60 acres and provide for 10 years of burial capacity.
- Phase I will provide 18,200 gravesites including 15,200 pre-placed concrete burial crypts, 500 in-ground gravesites for cremated remains, a 7,000-niche columbarium for interring cremated remains, and a garden for scattering cremated remains (?).
- No maps provided – will be provided at next Council meeting
- Need to see maps to see if added phases are closer to river.

V. Sarasota County

A. Myakka River Protection Zone update

- 2 dock permits are under review
- 24 reported incidents
 - 5 cases were unfounded
 - 4 were issued information letters to gain compliance
 - 4 were issued courtesy letters
 - 5 are in compliance
 - 2 are still being investigated
 - 1 is in plans review
 - 3 were referred to land management

B. Environmentally Sensitive Lands Update

- 130 acres purchased in Old Miakka for \$4.2 million in August of 2006. All is sand pine scrub and is the 1st sand pine scrub purchased under ESLPP. Good scrub jay habitat (hasn't been occupied for 10 years). Scrub jays occupy area just to the north and there is a very good chance that they will return to the site.
- 100 acres adjacent and at the southern end of the State Forest was purchased for \$3,000,000 in October of 2006. It is mostly marsh, with 30 acres of upland.
- 3 lots in Warm Mineral Springs along the spring run were purchased for \$119,000 in February of 2007. It was purchased strictly for Manatee protection and there will be no public access. They are looking to purchase more lots.

VI. DEP Update

A. Dredge and Fill Permits

- North River Road Lot – 1 dock
- Boat lift – no address
- 16' dock and boat lift in canal contiguous with the Myakka River
- 45 linear foot seawall in canal contiguous with the Myakka River
- 52 linear foot seawall in canal contiguous with the Myakka River

- B. TMDLs – no report.

VII. SWFWMD

A. Cooperative Funding Initiative

- Cycle began December 2006
- 362 applications District-wide
- 63 for Manasota Basin funding
- 5 applications for FY 2008 in the Myakka Watershed
 - 4 from City of North Port
 - 1 from CHEC

B. Myakka River Watershed Initiative (MRWI) project.

- Reported on at the 8/26/06 Council meeting.
- WMP project underway
- Consultant has been contracted and Work Order #1 has been executed.
- Consultant team gave presentation of the project to the CWM Team meeting

C. CWM Team

- Organizational meeting 1/24/07
- Goal was to update the 2004 Myakka River CWM Plan
- Second meeting 2/14/07. MRWI project presented to team
- Third meeting is to be held 4/11/07. The Myakka River CWM process will be run concurrently with the MRWI to provide outreach and technical support for the MRWI project.

VIII. State of Florida Law Enforcement

A. River Patrol Update

- A task force is being formed to include Sarasota and Manatee Counties
- Concentrating on Memorial Day weekend – heavy traffic and offences
- Public education to emphasize boating safety and preservation of the Myakka River environment
- To report violations, call toll free from cell phone #347

IX. Friends of the Myakka

- A. Clean-up scheduled for 5/12/07.

X. Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program Update

- A. New 2007 Calendars available
- B. 5/29-5/31/07 CDOM Workshop will be held in Punta Gorda. Draft agenda is on website
- C. Currently mapping bay and estuary shoreline in Charlotte County. Will go up into the tidal portion of the rivers next.

XI. DOT SR 72 Resurfacing

No update – representative not present.

DOT – I75 New interchange for Isles of Athena development. No update.

XII. Myakka Wild & Scenic River Biologist Report

New Biologist, Stacia Hetrick, has been employed since January 2007.

A. January 16 & 18 Report

- USGS Park gage recorded 2.65 ft.
- 11 Wood Storks, 21 Great Egrets, and 3 GB Herons on mangrove rookery
- 5 Manatees observed in Warm Mineral Springs creek

B. February 8 & 12 Report

- USGS Park gage recorded 2.99 ft.
- 74 Wood Storks, 23 Great Egrets, and 3 GB Herons on mangrove rookery. Already mating and nesting.
- Dead manatee found south of the US 41 bridge near Lazy River Village. It appeared to have died from cold stress.

C. Permit Program

- 2 boat dock applications under review
- No known docks under construction
- Harbor Cove interested in trimming mangroves

D. Violations

- Violations continue to be an issue. Most are vegetation clearing violations, and mangrove trimming and dumping violations. There have been dock improvements done without permits and structures within the buffer, which were reported to Sarasota County Code Enforcement.

E. Future Projects

- Collaborate with Sarasota County to document illegally moored vessels on the river.
- Document existing river conditions with video and/or digital camera.

XIII. MFLs for the Lower Myakka River

- The Upper Myakka River MFL was adopted in November 2005. Report is available on the SWFWMD website.
- The Lower Myakka River MFL report will be available late spring or early summer of 2007.
- Fifteen percent loss of habitat considered significant harm.
- Lower river has good DO and is considered pristine black water tidal river system.
- No natural flow regime because of agriculture – extra 22 cu ft/sec water during rainy season.
- Sid doesn't feel that agriculture water has hurt estuary. He says to take out ag. water and then count percentage loss to calculate significant harm.
- Cow Pen Slough redirection has already reduced freshwater flows.
- Blackburn Canal (tidally affected) also captures 10-12% of flow and pushed water down to Curry Creek.

XIV. Old Miakka Area Neighborhood Plan

- Following Sarasota County 2050 Plan
- Developing plan to preserve rural heritage estates
- Will have one area for Hamlets and another area for Villages with a significant greenway
- Stormwater treatment and disposal is a concern with the development.

XV. Cattedock Boat Ramp

- SWFWMD owns and Parks and Rec. manages
- 5 acres within a lagoon
- 30 parking spaces
- No wash down facility
- Composting bathrooms
- Following Clean Marina guidelines
- Conceptual Plan

XVI. Myakka Wild & Scenic River Designation

- Need to designate portions in Manatee County and Charlotte County
- Desire to get BOCCs support
- Council voted to support

XVII. Myakka Conservancy Report

- Next meeting is 3/16/07
- Considering Cumulative Impact Study for Myakka River similar to the one for the Peace River
- Tatum Sawgrass restoration
- Will vote whether or not to support Wild & Scenic River designation.