

MICA Minutes

January 21, 2019

Board Members Present: Carol Gonnella, Bud Ayres, Susan Petek, Sandy Barrett, Patti Ivers. Absent: Ward Mefford

Carol called meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Welcome all.

Pledge of Allegiance

Business Meeting:

Approval of Minutes of November, 2018. Approved.

Treasurer's Report: Susan Petek reported \$12,200 Cemetery CD; Cemetery Checking \$20,062; and MICA Checking \$1,750. Susan reported that new members can sign up or renew their memberships now.

Friends of Fort Flagler: Barry Lerich reported that the Friends are planning to renovate the theatre building. FOFF will hold a fundraiser on Saturday, March 16, from 4 – 7 p.m. in the Fort Flagler Theater - Celtic and Cajun food and music will be provided by the Alternators.

Kilisut Bridge: Carol gave a brief presentation on the Causeway. Kevin Long will come to our March meeting with more information. He is hoping for June construction, but there are still a number of hoops to jump through. Kevin stated, "We are on the launch pad."

County Panel: Carol thanked the island community for their participation to stop the marijuana growth facility on our island. We spent thousands of hours and \$50,000. No community should go through this and we do not want this to happen again. County officials, past and present, were invited to discuss the 1978 Marrowstone Island Plan and its validity, and how to change the County Codes.

Kathleen Waldron introduced the County officials on the panel. Kathleen, Patricia Earnest & others, have been working on ways to prevent future marijuana light industry permit on rural residential properties. They talked with County Commissioners, County Planning Commissioners, and Department of Community Development (DCD) staff & received some ideas. They also talked with Islanders about what we should do, and learned that many Islanders believed the 1978 Marrowstone Island Community Development Plan was still in effect. The county told us that due to the State Growth Management Act, the 1998 County Comprehensive Plan "incorporated" all the area plans, & ours is no longer viable. We decided to invite a panel of past & present County officials to provide the history of the 1978 Plan, how it was absorbed into the 1998 County Plan & how they can help us move forward, simply, effectively, & inexpensively.

David Goldsmith, a past County Planner, spent 2 years facilitating the Marrowstone Island Community Development plan, & gave a brief history of it. He said it was done in response to issues concerning water, growth management, and keeping our rural character. In 1978 our Plan was adopted by County Commissioners. In 1995, some Islanders were revising the 1978 Plan. Our neighbor, Janet Welch, was a Planning Commissioner at that time, and participated in incorporating our 1995 revisions, & other area plans into the 1998 County Comprehensive Plan. The County wanted regulations & zoning to be consistent, if you moved from one area to another. The Planning Commission convened all the groups and they found they all valued the same things. The County Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1998, & our 1978 Plan was no longer valid.

Kathleen asked why were “6 Adopted Sub-Area Plans”, including our 1978 Plan, still listed on the County website as recently as August 4, 2017? Austin Watkins, DCD Planning Manager, said it was a website issue.

David Sullivan, District 2 County Commissioner, said the Comp Plan was again updated in 2003, before he was county commissioner. The Unified Development Code was reviewed by bi-partisan commissioners. You couldn’t pass anything without land use being a challenge. What would I do if I were you? The CUP has criteria. The Hearing Examiner is the legal expert for land use and applying code correctly. First, recognize what kind of process you are in. CUP involves applying code. Is it harmonious with character of area? Is it detrimental? You need to characterize your community accurately, & could use your 1978 Plan to provide this.

Cynthia Koen, Vice Chair on Planning Commission, said they looked at marijuana regulations and we were aware of community concerns. Is it agricultural crop or industrial? We didn’t have experience as State or County. Does this fit into Cottage industry standards? I think it is time to have those regulations looked at for the current Comp Plan cycle. A proposal needs to be ready by March 1. She discussed the CUP as a double edge sword. You want to give business people an opportunity to make their case to meet standards and fit into Jefferson County. On other hand, it is a process and by time everyone goes down this long road, everyone gets entrenched and they spend money. If the Code says no then answer is no.

Austin Watkins, Planning Manager for DCD, discussed rural character and that each community has a definition of their own rural character. The CUP has criteria that must be met, data to support it and experts in field. The Hearing Examiner reviews and makes decisions. These permits bring revenue into the county. The community has an opportunity to update to a sub-area plan, which should look at zoning and the Unified Development Codes (UDC). Is marijuana a cottage industry and is it in conflict with our code? County Code revisions occur on an annual cycle and requests will close on March 1, 2019.

Q & A: How does community provide you with info at Planning Commission level before March 1 deadline. How do you incorporate?

Cynthia informed audience that Planning Commission Meetings are 1st and 3rd Wednesday at Tri Area Community Center 5:30 -7:30 and open to public. Write a letter submit by e-mail to all Planning Commission members. We will meet with you in person. Planning Commissioners are interested in this topic. We are a recommending body and County Commissioners make the decision. Have the County Commissioners looked at other counties? David told us they looked at other counties re marijuana. We rely on CUP and it should be dealt with through application process, agricultural use, and it does need to fit in the community. We need to have better guidance up front to get a better outcome. How did County decide to go against State? The CUP has too many holes in it. The Community should see the CUP first and have stricter rules on the process, where burden of proof is on applicant instead of residents.

We want to see marijuana as a business eliminated in rural residential areas. Cynthia stated that changing the use table to “no marijuana in residential areas” is the simplest.

Austin Watkins explained the costs involved in changing codes and the process and compliance. Carol gave a passionate speech regarding the process we went through to keep a marijuana facility out of our community and asked the panel to initiate the changes needed so that we don’t go through this process again. We want to be represented.

Fire Chief: Jim Walkowski, EJFD, gave an update on the volunteer program, EMT and Firefighter training in our county. More volunteers are needed to staff our fire stations on

Marrowstone, Kala Point, and Cape George. Two classes (spring and fall) are available and we have two people from Marrowstone that completed the program and another one close to completing. Training facility is closer and more convenient for students. We plan to replace the roof and remodel station on Marrowstone so it can be used. Indian Island fire station can aid as long as they do not have a vessel in so this is not always dependable in an emergency situation.

Citizen of the Year: Mike Zimmerman announced that Vigo Anderson is the 2018 Marrowstone Island Citizen of the Year. CONGRATULATIONS Vigo! More information will be announced at the next meeting.

Carol thanked everyone for coming.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Submitted by: Patti Ivers, Secretary