

**MINUTES
LAKE COUNTY
MT. PLYMOUTH-SORRENTO
PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

SEPTEMBER 12, 2007

The Mt. Plymouth-Sorrento Planning Advisory Committee met on Wednesday, September 12, 2007 at 3:30 p.m. at the Sorrento Christian Center, 32441 CR 437N, Sorrento, Florida. The Mt. Plymouth-Sorrento Planning Advisory Committee is an advisory committee for continued planning efforts within the Mt. Plymouth-Sorrento area as defined in Ordinance 2004-67.

Members Present:

G. Curtis Duffield, President
Priscilla Bernardo-Drugge, Vice-President
Betty Ann Christian, Secretary

Judy Weis
Jeff Richardson

Members Absent:

| | |
|--------------|-------------------|
| Tim Bailey | Minnie Bollar |
| Jeanne Etter | Dr. Ronald Holman |
| Scott Taylor | Clark Morris |

Staff Present:

Donna Bohrer, Public Hearing Coordinator, Planning & Community Design
Kimberly Williams, Assistant County Attorney
Karen Ginsberg, Senior Planner, Planning & Community Design
Rick Hartenstein, Senior Planner, Planning & Community Design
Dottie Keedy, Director of Lake County Economic Growth & Redevelopment

Guests:

Commissioner Linda Stewart, Lake County Board of County Commissioners
Jimmy Connor, Lake County School Board
Keith Schue, Local Planning Agency member
Peggy Belflower, Local Planning Agency member

G. Curtis Duffield, President called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m. and noted there was not a Quorum present; however, he said the meeting would proceed although no action would be taken. He confirmed that Proof of Publication was on file in the Planning and Community Design Division and that the meeting had been noticed pursuant to the Sunshine Statute.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| <u>AGENDA DESCRIPTION</u> | <u>PAGE NO.</u> |
|---|------------------------|
| Jimmy Connor Lake County School Board Elementary School Site Selection Process | 3 |
| Karen Ginsberg, Senior Planner Architectural Design Principles | 4 |

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SITE SELECTION PROCESS

Jimmy Connor, Lake County School Board, said they were in the process of evaluating two possible sites for Elementary School J in the MPSPAC area. He said the School Board uses a comprehensive site evaluation system and presented a copy of the staff site comparison report. He said the owner of a possible third site had not responded to the School's inquiry regarding purchase price.

Mr. Connor said it was very difficult to find affordable school sites that meet their size requirements and other criteria that do not have environmental issues. He said donated lands frequently have issues outside of the School Board's control. He said time was an issue because Round Lake Elementary is over-capacity.

Mr. Connor said the Simpson Property in the City of Mt. Dora has utilities available, the transportation issues are minor, but it does not have the best student demographics and the Board would prefer not to re-district schools. He said the potential site in the Sorrento Village development does not have utilities. There are some higher costs for this site, but the student demographics are better.

In response to a question from Judy Weis, Mr. Connor said because of the cost of land and construction they are no longer building single-storied schools. He explained how difficult it was to add stories to existing buildings.

Keith Schue, Local Planning Agency member, and Mr. Connor discussed the option of building package sewer plants for schools in areas without central utilities.

Will Davis discussed some of the State regulations regarding school sites and other issues such as site size and transportation. He said staff compiles a list of suitable properties and then the Board's land acquisition staff contacts the property owners. He said many sites were not available because they had been recently sold or the land owners were not willing to sell so the final result was these two sites. He said a safety and transportation study had been done on both sites and a comparison of the number of students that could walk to each school. He said although both of these sites have been offered, there is nothing in writing on either site.

Mr. Connor said the School Board is looking for willing sellers. He said it was important to build this school as soon as possible, and at the same time, to build the school in the right place. He said they have been unable to determine when the Sorrento Village property would be available.

President Duffield said during a recent visit to Round Lake Elementary, he became aware of their very long lunch period because the school was over-capacity.

Betty Ann Christian asked about the number of students in the area riding buses. Mr. Davis said no children walked or rode bicycles to school at Round Lake Elementary; all students rode by car or by bus. Mr. Connor said locating the school where the kids lived

was part of making the best decision on school sites.

Commissioner Stewart suggested the Sorrento Village developer and the School Board could cooperate on transportation costs.

Priscillia Drugge asked if the Committee could help and Mr. Connor suggested it would be helpful if this community made their desire to have a school located here made known to the School Board.

There was discussion regarding property adjacent to the recently purchased County Park and locating schools within the Wekiva River Protection Area (WRPA). Jeff Richardson discussed the school location criteria written by the County. There was additional discussion regarding the Comprehensive Plan and school locations within the WRPA, the Sending and Receiving Areas and the Urban Compact Node.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lou Fabrizio said it was his understanding that the Sorrento Village developer intended to provide an elementary school site and discussed possible ways to resolve this situation so building the school could move forward.

President Duffield thanked Mr. Connor and said when the Committee had quorum they would be sending a letter to the School Board supporting the Sorrento Village school site.

ARCHITECTURE DESIGN STANDARDS

Karen Ginsberg, Senior Planner, provided written material regarding general architecture concepts. She said the purpose of architecture design standards was to create continuity, without making everything the same.

Ms. Ginsberg said community design had been focused on automobiles instead of pedestrians, which had created large signage, large windows and large parking lots. She said architectural design standards should help to find a balance between cars and pedestrians.

Ms. Ginsberg discussed some of the questions that the Committee would be considering, such as the following:

- Which areas should be considered for guidelines and what are the priorities
- What could be improved in the community and how can guidelines help to do that
- What characteristics of the community should be protected and preserved
- What is right for this community
- How can spaces be framed by massing buildings
- What scale is appropriate
- How to mark the community's location

She said guidelines should not be too specific because that could create a "cookie-cutter" effect. She discussed the importance of consistency without rigid rules that kill the character of the community. She said the area should be designed to look like Florida

and discussed the positive aspects of the Altamonte Springs Downtown project.

Ms. Ginsberg reminded the Committee to focus on the big picture and said the details could be worked out later.

There was discussion about the community meeting date in October including some organizational details.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Schue asked about the purpose of the October community meeting and President Duffield said it was intended to be a progress report. Mr. Schue said the Wekiva Parkway was outside of their planning area and suggested the focus be on the planning area. President Duffield said discussion of roads was inevitable and noted that the Executive Director of the Lake Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization (L/SMPO) may be attending that meeting. Mr. Schue added that he thought appropriate scale would be very important in planning for the community.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:27 p.m.

Donna R. Bohrer
Public Hearing Coordinator

Betty Ann Christian
Secretary