

MARCH 14, 2011

A [Workshop Meeting](#) of the Board of Lee County Commissioners sitting as the [Board Management and Planning Committee](#) was held on this date with the following Commissioners present:

Frank B. Mann, Chairman  
 John Manning, Vice Chairman  
 Ray Judah,  
 Tammara Hall  
 A. Brian Bigelow

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

Chairman Mann welcomed Joseph Collum, a student from West Geauga High School in Chesterland Ohio who was in attendance to report on the conduct of the meeting as a school project.

### 1. FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY'S (FGCU) LONG RANGE PLANS

FGCU Vice President for Administrative Services and Finance Joe Shepard, Ph.D., on behalf of President Wilson Bradshaw, provided an overview of FGCU's plans and direction. Using a [slide presentation](#), Dr. Shepard identified four (4) Lee County property sites owned by FGCU and outlined their long range planned uses, as well as overall progression plans. Dr. Shepard responded to questions on their Master Plan process, and FGCU's role regarding alignment plans for 951. The Board thanked Dr. Shepard for his informative presentation.

### 2. ON-SITE TREATMENT AND DISPOSAL SYSTEMS/SEPTIC SYSTEMS LEGISLATION AND ALTERNATIVES

**Consider adoption of septic system inspection and maintenance program to reduce pollutant loading to impaired waters in Lee County regardless of state-wide rule outcome. Priority should be given to areas of known high failure rate and within watersheds with established TMDLs. Enter into an agreement with the Department of Health to implement.**

#### OPTIONS:

- 1) Do nothing – nutrient and bacterial loading from failing septic systems will continue unabated. No direct financial burden on homeowner.
  - 2) Adopt County-wide program – establishes means to insure septic systems are functioning and providing necessary treatment countywide. Financial burden on homeowner. Conservatively covers all areas regardless of current water quality conditions.
  - 3) Adopt phased program concentrating on known problem areas – less conservative than County-wide, but focuses on areas of likely impairment. Shifts program costs to already financially burdened neighborhoods.
- Central sewer – preferred, but not available or cost effective in all circumstances.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

Proceed with phased implementation in known problem areas. Source control of pollutants is much more efficient and cost effective than treating diffuse source in stormwater downstream. Also removes potential health hazards of problematic septic systems.

Natural Resources Director Roland Ottolini addressed a question from Commissioner Judah on the legislative impetus for recommending this program, and indicated he was seeking Board support for Lee County's lobbyists to have the appropriate language included in the current legislation. Assistant County Manager Holly Schwartz advised of action taken to date on this matter and the current Legislative position. Mr. Ottolini narrated a [PowerPoint presentation \(copy on file\)](#) on the current Septic System Legislation and Lee County's position, and he and Department of Health Environmental Administrator Jim Love responded to Board questions. Further discussion was held with CREW's (Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed) Environmental President and Florida On-Site Wastewater Association representative Bob Himschoot on the Legislature's pending bills on septic systems and the potential for an opt-out clause for Counties. Mr. Ottolini indicated staff was seeking Board support to implement either a statewide program if adopted or, if no program is adopted, allowing the County to conduct its own program. He and County Manager Karen Hawes agreed to closely follow the legislative proceedings on this matter and bring additional information back to the next Management and Planning meeting with a comprehensive inventory, and potential costs of a geographically phased-in inspection program.

### 3. HANSON STREET EXTENSION-CONSERVATION 2020 PROPERTY

**A four-lane extension of Hanson Street from Ortiz Avenue across the interstate to Forum Boulevard, and continuing east of Forum Boulevard and crossing State Road 82 where it becomes two lanes and links to Buckingham Road, is a project proposed by the City of Fort Myers and reflected in the Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)'s new 2035 Needs Plan. However, the extension east of Forum Boulevard was not included in the MPO's 2035 Financially Feasible Plan. That extension would have to cross the Orchid Isles property purchased under the County's Conservation 2020 program, as well as some conservation lands recently purchased from the Heuthers and the headwaters of the Six Mile Cypress Slough. Because some recent changes in cost estimates of projects to be undertaken by the City have freed up some forecasted revenue, the City is now interested in adding the eastern extension of Hanson Street to the MPO's Financially Feasible Plan. The City's interest in this project is reflected in the recent alignment work by a City consultant on the County's Orchid Isles property, which led to a wetland impact violation and for which a settlement is currently being negotiated. When the Board authorized purchase of the Orchid Isles property in August, 2007, a note was included on the blue sheet which read "Both Conservation land Acquisition and Stewardship Advisory Committee (CLASAC) and Lee County Department of Transportation (LDOT) have acknowledged that right-of-way may be needed from this property for the widening of State Road 82 and Hanson Street Extension." Despite that acknowledgement, the City cannot condemn the land needed for the Hanson Street Extension, so the County would have to be a willing seller. Although the MPO staff has not yet done the necessary modeling to verify the need for the extension from a future traffic standpoint, DOT staff questions its significance, given the on-going six-laning of the two immediately parallel routes (SR 82 and Colonial Boulevard), and the future emphasis on alternative modes of transportation. The Lee County MPO Director, Don Scott, has asked the question – is the County willing to sell this right-of-way to the City for this project? If a majority of the Board is not willing, then that effectively kills the Hanson Street Extension east of Forum Boulevard. Staff is seeking Board direction prior to the issue coming before the Lee MPO in April.**

**OPTIONS:**

- 1) Agree to sell Conservation 2020 property to City for Hanson Street Extension east of Forum Boulevard;
- 2) Don't agree to sell conservation 2020 property to City for Hanson Street Extension east of Forum Boulevard;

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Option 2.

Department of Transportation Planning Manager Dave Loveland reviewed a City-proposed Hanson Street Extension in advance of an April Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) meeting. He outlined a request of the County for completion, and indicated that Board consensus today on whether to sell some required Conservation lands through Orchid Isles would be crucial to moving forward. He elaborated on [two handouts](#) consisting of a map showing the proposed extension in relation to conservation lands, and a table provided by MPO staff with 2035 model traffic volumes, with and without the requested extension. Mr. Loveland advised of a CLASAC recommendation that an environmental impact study be done before the sale of any conservation lands, and Planning staff recommended discussion with the City regarding de-annexing purchased conservation lands to avoid future City permitting requirements. Mr. Loveland responded to Board questions on an additional SR 82 intersection.

Commissioners Hall and Manning noted support of further dialogue and both left the meeting and were absent for the remainder of the meeting. Commissioner Judah expressed opposition to adding a SR 82 intersection, and to selling right-of-way for a Hanson Street extension; and recommended formal action be taken at the March 15<sup>th</sup> Regular Board meeting. During discussion, with input from Mr. Loveland, Chairman Mann re-stated the consensus reached that this Board was not supportive of the City's proposal to extend through Conservation 2020 lands or connect on SR 82; that further Board action was not necessary, the City would be informed prior to the April MPO meeting.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 4:09 p.m.

ATTEST:

CHARLIE GREEN, CLERK

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Deputy Clerk

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[Chairman, Lee County Commission](#)