

# **Florida Greenways and Trails Council**

## **Meeting Summary**

**June 6, 2008**

**Orlando, Florida**

### **Members Present**

Bob Crim  
Jeff Gove  
Mike Grella  
Deno Hicks  
Susan Kennedy

Jerrie Lindsey  
Susan Matthews  
Joe Tyberghein  
John Waldron  
Kent Wimmer

**Alternates Present:** Jim Wood (for Bob Ballard), Becky Nielsen (for Greg Chelius), Malisa McCreedy (for Mike Dannenhauer), Tara McCue (for Phil Laurien), Grant Gelhardt (for Ken Reecy), Frank Starkey (for Kathryn Starkey)

**Members Absent:** Bob Ballard, Greg Chelius, Mike Dannenhauer, Fred Gaske, Linda King, Phil Laurien, Ken Reecy, Kathryn Starkey

**Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) Staff:** Jena Brooks, Jim Wood, Tammy Salmon, Heather Pence, Matt Klein, Marsha Connell, Robin Turner

**Others Present:** Herb Hiller (East Coast Greenway Alliance), Mighk Wilson (METROPLAN Orlando), Barbara Meyer (Brevard County MPO), David Martin (Seminole County)

Absent a chair or vice-chair, the meeting was called to order by Jim Wood, serving as alternate for Deputy Secretary Bob Ballard, in order to hold an election for a vice-chair who would then conduct the meeting.

### **INTRODUCTIONS**

Tammy Salmon introduced the alternates and new Council member Joe Tyberghein, SWFWMD, who has replaced Heidi McCree. Ms. McCree's term on the water management board has expired. Mr. Tyberghein will represent the water management districts. Ms. Salmon also informed the Council that the seat of Ken Bryan has been filled by Ms. Sara Fain with the National Parks Conservation Association. Ms. Fain was unable to attend this meeting but will be introduced at the September meeting. In addition, Dan Simmons did not seek reappointment to the Council. An appointment by the Governor's office is expected shortly for that seat.

## **ELECTION**

Jim Wood explained that since the February meeting, the term of former Chair Ken Bryan expired. According to the by-laws, the vice-chair automatically assumes the chairmanship. Prior to this meeting, Linda King indicated she is happy to assume the role of chairman but was unable to attend this meeting, thus leaving neither a chair nor vice-chair to conduct the meeting. Nominations for a vice-chair proceeded.

Nominees were Kent Wimmer and Deno Hicks.

VOTE: Kent Wimmer 9 votes

    Deno Hicks 7 votes

Kent Wimmer was elected vice-chair and filled in for Mrs. King to conduct the meeting.

## **AGENDA**

Motion to approve the agenda:

MOTION: Bob Crim

SECOND: Deno Hicks

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously.

## **MEETING SUMMARY FOR FEBRUARY 2007**

Motion to approve the February meeting summary

MOTION: Mike Grella

SECOND: Bob Crim

DISCUSSION: Kent Wimmer requested the name of his organization be corrected to Florida Trail Association instead of Florida Trails Association.

VOTE: Passed unanimously as amended.

## **CHAIR REPORT**

### **FUTURE MEETING DATES**

At the February meeting, September 18 and 19 were chosen for the next meeting to be held in Tallahassee. Vice-Chair Wimmer stated this is going to be a very important meeting where the council will review the greenways and trails acquisition applications and the Opportunity Maps. He asked the members to please make sure to work those dates into their schedules.

The meeting after September was tentatively set for December 3 in conjunction with the Public Lands Acquisition & Management (PLA&M) Conference to be held in Jacksonville.

## **OGT REPORT**

Jena Brooks, OGT Director, reported that previous discussions on merging all the land management agencies into one did not happen by the end of the legislative session. Florida Forever was reauthorized; however, there was a change in the funding of the Florida Communities Trust. She asked Grant Gelhardt with the Department of Community Affairs and alternate for Ken Reecy to explain the funding situation.

Mr. Gelhardt indicated the following:

- Florida Forever received \$300 million
- DEP is receiving 35% of Florida Forever
- OGT receives 1.5%
- Division of Forestry receives 1.5%
- FWCC receives 1.5%
- Rec & Parks receives 1.5%
- Water management districts were reduced from 35% to 30%
- FCT went from 22 to 21%. However, 2.5% (\$7.5 million) of Florida Forever money was provided for a new working waterfronts program. So, FCT will have two programs instead of one
- Dept. of Agriculture was funded for a new program. They are to receive \$10.5 million for acquisition of agricultural lands and for a program to acquire new conservation easements over farm lands. This program has been in existence but funding was not available for it to proceed until this year.

Mr. Gelhardt explained the Department of Community Affairs and the Department of Agriculture are both working on rules for the new programs. A list of working waterfront projects will be presented to the Board of Trustees at the second meeting in February of each year for approval. The program is aimed at protecting the saltwater fishing industry wherein the Department would buy existing waterfronts with existing infrastructure and conservation easements.

Kent Wimmer suggested there could be some overlap of access sites for the circumnavigational paddling trail. Mr. Gelhardt responded that in places like Steinhatchee and Apalachicola they would expect to see both working waterfronts and ecotourism at the launch sites, but the focus is on the fishing industry.

Jim Wood discussed the upcoming First Coast Developer's Forum, which is intended to tie together what the development community is doing with what the Office of Greenways & Trails is doing. Mr. Wood and Robin Turner are working on the next Forum to be held in the St. Augustine/Jacksonville area. Several members expressed an interest.

## **REGIONAL OVERVIEW**

*Mighk Wilson* with METROPLAN Orlando discussed how, as a transportation planning agency, they are putting together a network of bike lanes and trails to create a good transportation network for bicycling and walking that extends outward into the region. He also discussed the “How Shall We Grow?” effort involving seven counties in the region. He directed the members to visit MyRegion.org for more information and to view the planning scenarios. In concluding, Mr. Wilson discussed the Florida Bicycle Association’s new project called “Trips for Kids”, a national organization that focuses on getting under-privileged, inner-city children into the woods on mountain bikes.

*Tara McCue* with the East-Central Florida Regional Planning Council stated the RPC supports the regional vision that Mighk Wilson talked about; and so, through the comp plans, DRIs and interaction with the various local governances, they support bike/pedestrian friendly centers that link up to regional trails. They compare comp plans and development efforts with the Opportunity Maps and existing trails database. John Waldron suggested the RPC post a vision statement to let the public understand their efforts better. Jerrie Lindsey suggested that, among the many layers in consideration, the smoke sheds be included and to know what is butting up against them such as housing and hospitals. Ms. McCue was asked if the RPCs are required to map the natural communities and she replied that it is part of their strategic policy plan.

*Malisa McCreedy* with the City of Orlando announced that in 2006, the city adopted a downtown transportation plan, with a study year of 2025, which did a comprehensive overview of all transportation in the downtown area. They looked at how to move around over 100,000 people in the downtown area and integrate greenspaces, connect bicycle and pedestrian trails into the existing network, and connect to commuter rail. The city strives to include trails and bike lanes into all development and road improvements and has incorporated it into code. The parks department is getting ready to do a parks master plan that Ms. McCreedy will be working with them on to facilitate connecting trails, parks and greenspaces to make sure they have as much connected greenspace as possible and connect to trails that lead outward from the downtown area.

Jim Wood invited members of the regional community who were in attendance to speak.

*David Martin* with Seminole County stated the county is finishing projects they intended to complete with the passage of their trail referendum in 2000. He discussed new portions of the Cross-Seminole Trail that are near completion as well as mentioning the existing unique 17/92 overpass and additional overpasses that are planned. Council members were very interested in the planned Seminole-Wekiva Trail SR 434 underpass tunnel and discussed the design and cost at length. Mr. Martin added that a second tunnel is in the workplan at Lake Mary Boulevard. Budget constraints may affect several of these plans.

*Gallus Quigley* with Lake County said one of their biggest accomplishments recently is their trails master plan, to be presented in July. He addressed construction concerns that

resulted in delays on several trails as well as improvements made on existing trails. The South Lake Trail phase III from Clermont to Groveland is a priority and is in their five-year plan; however, funding is not available at this time. Mr. Quigley informed the Council that he does not have trail funding and their parks department has taken a budget cut so staffing facilities has become an issue. Another concern is acquiring right-of-way. The county is not in a position to match funds in situations where it may be required and trails are not the priority at this time.

The discussion turned to motorized transportation on trails and included golf carts, wheelchairs and Segways. State statute has defined Segways as non-motorized and indicated they can go anywhere a bike can go but if a trail receives any federal funding, they are prohibited on the trail. John Waldron added that the traditional way of seeing trails for recreational use is changing and that the Council will probably be seeing more and more attention to other types of use for trails. Mr. Quigley responded that his county is seeing people using the trails as an everyday transportation route to shopping and not just recreation. This is the direction things are moving which is what everyone wanted but they may not be prepared to deal with it yet.

*Barbara Meyer* with Brevard County, on behalf of the Brevard County Commission and the Brevard Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) thanked the Council and OGT staff for the acquisition of the East-Central Florida Regional Rail Trail. As a result of the partnership with the state, the regional planning council, DOT, and Brevard and Volusia counties on this trail, the Brevard MPO has identified five showcase trails, of which the ECFRRT is one, and made them priority for funding. Developers and residents are eager to be part of the process. These five trails will connect cities within both counties.

## **PROJECTS BRIEFING**

Herb Hiller with the East Coast Greenway Alliance informed the Council that a water taxi between St. Mary's, Georgia and Fernandina Beach, Florida has been established. This helps to connect the East Coast Greenway with Georgia and has spurred a greenway between St. Mary's and Kingsland, Georgia that will reach to Savannah. The Alliance helped establish a First Coast Trails Coalition based in Jacksonville. He discussed plans for a 260-mile loop that will run through five counties and hopes for a 2013 completion date. Mr. Hiller indicated he also anticipates funding from the quincentennial *Spain in Florida* event as well as the Florida Wildflower Foundation. He suggested this trail will bring tourism. It will connect to the Amtrak station in Palatka.

Mr. Hiller also discussed an invitational tour of the proposed route with Bike Florida, scheduled for November, annual cycling events through Adventure Cycling, and a January "workshop of wheels" between Savannah and northeast Florida where they will study the best and worst of trails in Florida.

## **OPPORTUNITY MAPS**

Heather Pence with the Office of Greenways and Trails briefly explained the background of the multi-use trail map and the paddling trail map. She explained that in order to be eligible for the acquisition program, a project needs to be of statewide and regional significance and be identified on the maps. Public comment on the proposed maps is being received via the website [www.FloridaTrailsNetwork.com](http://www.FloridaTrailsNetwork.com) and at public workshops over the summer. In the spring, input was received from trail planners statewide. One hundred thirty new corridors were uploaded for the multi-use map (1,370 miles) and 14 new uploads for the paddling trails map (445 miles). The segments will then be prioritized into high, medium, or low ranking. Expert opinion will be considered during this process. Council members were encouraged to be part of the expert panel.

Frank Starkey asked if the web interface program could be used by local agencies. OGT will look into how to provide the system for others to use.

A trail in Suwannee County that was removed from the map was discussed. OGT plans to discuss this further with Suwannee County.

Members discussed why some designations were not on the Opportunity Maps. Specifically discussed was the Charlotte County Blueway Paddling Trail which will be added to the map for the final version to be voted on in September. It was clarified that projects can be designated but not be part of the acquisition program or maps.

Jim Wood explained that the OGT program focuses on buying trails but the ecological network which includes greenways will be looked at probably at the December council meeting. Jerrie Lindsey would like for the FWCC to present on the subject at that meeting. The Century Commission CLIP project will have updates also for the Council to review.

A motion was made to approve the 2008 paddling trails network opportunity map as amended with the Charlotte County Paddling Trail and the 2008 multi-use trails network opportunity map.

MOTION: Susan Kennedy  
SECOND: Mike Grella  
VOTE: Carries unanimously

## **DESIGNATIONS**

Heather Pence indicated that as a direct result of the opportunity maps outreach process, OGT's regional planners were also able to discuss the acquisition program and the designation program at the same time with people around the state, thus bringing more awareness of the programs. Being designated as part of the state greenways and trails system provides points to a public project when going before FRDAP or FCT and other programs. Private owner designations receive the state's basic liability protection. Ms. Pence offered to provide a map with all current designations to the members.

Grant Gelhardt with the Department of Community Affairs suggested that either in the application or by presentation, some information be provided on how the designations further the overall concept of the greenways and trails program. His questions included considering if the project is within an opportunity map corridor, if the project is adjacent to other public lands, and generally how the designation would expand the network. Heather Pence responded that she collects information about each designation and lines them up with the opportunity corridors and the ecological networks; however, it was not included on the map presented with each designation. She added that the criteria for designation is very broad and intended to assist smaller communities that are not involved in larger scale projects a way to participate in the greenways and trails program. A project submitted for designation is not required to be on the opportunity or ecological maps to be designated as part of the statewide greenways and trails program.

Jena Brooks suggested it may be more appropriate to have the applicant present the information the council is seeking rather than OGT.

Jerrie Lindsey added that, from a visitor's viewpoint, a designated trail suggests that there is some quality of user experience that is not being assured of and that there should be some limit or guidelines. As more and more applicants come forward, it becomes an issue.

Jim Wood offered that at times, projects are designated that are not developed or ready for public use yet. They are being designated to carry additional recognition when seeking funding from other sources. OGT does not use the designation process to promote places to visit to the public. It has been more of an intergovernmental relationship. Ms. Lindsey responded that the public does often see it that way and it is something to be cognizant of.

Discussion ensued regarding a future process in which OGT would offer a staff report and recommendation on each designee. First and foremost would be if the applicant is currently within the opportunity map corridors and if not, additional information about the project would be provided along with a staff recommendation. Staff would also indicate if the designee was a previous acquisition.

MOTION	Bob Crim moved to adopt all eight designations.
SECOND	John Waldron
DISCUSSION	None
VOTE	Passed unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS**

No new business.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Kent Wimmer announced National Trails Day on June 7, 2008. Events nationwide could be found on the Internet. This year marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Trails System Act.

Mighk Wilson announced Florida Bicycle Association's Pro-Bike Pro-Walk Conference to be held October 20-23, 2008 at the St. Petersburg Bayfront Hilton.

Jena Brooks reminded council members to please review all the acquisition materials they would be receiving before the next meeting and to contact OGT staff if they have any questions about the process so that the questions may be addressed prior to the meeting time.

MOTION     Susan Kennedy moved to adjourn the meeting  
SECOND     Frank Starkey

The meeting adjourned at 12:20pm.