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JACKSONVILLE WATERWAYS COMMISSION

JACKSONVILLE WATERWAYS COMMISSION September 2, 2004 9:00 a.m.

The monthly meeting of the Jacksonville Waterways Commission was called to order at 9:00 a.m., Thursday, September 2, 2004 in the City Council Chamber by the Chair, Council Member Lynette Self.

The minutes of the August 11, 2004 meeting of the Commission were approved and the Chair requested that those minutes be posted on the City's website.

Mr. Jeff Regan, a Mandarin resident, made a presentation on Tacito Creek siltation concerns. Mr. Regan had previously come before the Commission to raise awareness of the siltation problem that he and his neighbors had encountered which greatly reduced their access to the St. Johns River. It appeared that the problem was particularly noticeable on weekends and after 5:00 p.m. on weekdays. Mr. Regan and others detected that effluence was being pumped into the headwaters of the creek on San Jose Boulevard. It was further discovered that the effluence pumped into the creek's headwaters was coming directly from a commercial construction site at 11150 San Jose Boulevard. Pumping operations at the site and huge sand deposits running under a silt fence appear to be responsible for the effluence entering the creek. (A gas station, car wash and restaurant are being constructed on the site).

The silt fences were not being maintained. City inspectors (Dana Morton) confirmed that the construction site on San Jose Boulevard was emitting the effluence flowing into the creek. Commissioner Lowe said that we need to start getting tough with fines, that we need to enforce the laws, both civil and criminal, already on the books. Commissioner Bryan suggested that when people see and experience similar violations, that they first contact the Riverkeeper, that the Riverkeeper would respond faster and more effectively than the City. Commissioner Bryan said that he saw dredging Tacito Creek as a remote possibility. Commissioner Anderson said that the contractors on construction sites have to be self-policing. He suggested that everyone must be "run-off rangers."

John Croft, Deputy Director of the City's Planning & Development Department made a presentation on the National Parks System Overlay in relation to the proposed JPA cruise terminal site. The Commission had previously raised the question as to what a management area was what a management plan was (in relation to areas within the Timucuan Preserve). Special Management Areas (land development regulations) were incorporated in the City's Comprehensive Plan adopted in 1990.

SMA (Special Management Areas) designation was thought to be an innovative way to focus on wetland systems, to establish a policy to protect the wetlands. The City committed to creating SMAs. In 1993, the policy and objectives were re-stated. Recommendations and proposals were supposed to be a precursor for an overlay-zoning district, a development that did not materialize. There is no overlay that addresses SMAs. There had been recommendations and strategies but they were not implemented. Why? (a) property owners were not notified. (b) in 1995, a property rights act was adopted that created a new climate regarding government and land policy. (c) Planning & Development's annual wetland report suggested that maybe wetland policy *is* working (d) the Mayor's Preservation Project incorporated a management component entailing the protection of wetlands. Commissioner Lowe asked if the Port

Authority's proposed site for a cruise line terminal is approved, what would happen to the Joe Carlucci park/ramp? JPA spokesperson Kaufman said that the park and ramp would remain intact, that JPA might create a separate access route for the park.

Major Jim Brown's (FWC) river signage update was postponed.

In his monthly Manatee Report, Dr. Quinton White reported that on August 18th, an additional death was discovered in San Pablo Creek, possibly the result of construction work in the Pablo Creek area. Dr. White reported that there was a drop in the number of manatees sighted and that this was typical for this time of the year. Manatees are leaving the area as the days get shorter. Legislation for an idle zone for Goodby's Creek will be introduced in the City Council by Council Members Self, Copeland and Jones (for the Waterways Commission).

Ordinance 2003-1132, changing manatee protection motorboat speed zones from year-round to seasonal is still pending and the Commission voted to defer action.

Commissioner Anderson reported on the work of the Run-off Subcommittee. Implored all the players to attend an October 14th meeting. Wants participants (contractors, agencies, etc) to come up with a methodology to resolve the issue.

Commissioner Bryan provided the Commission with an update on the August 30th meeting of the Mayor's Task Force on Parks that met at Ribault Clubhouse. The Fort George Inlet dredge project was discussed. A number of Commissioners expressed reservations with the City committing any funds to the Fort George Inlet dredge project, as Duval County had a number of projects that merited a priority status.

The next Waterways Commission meeting is scheduled for October 7, 2004.

John J. Jackson
City Council Research Division