

Southeast Citizens Planning Advisory Committee

February 22, 2021 Meeting Summary

Mandarin Senior Center, 3848 Hartley Road, Jacksonville, FL 32257

Meeting Attendance:

Members: Nancy Barry, Brierwood Neighborhood Association; Joyce Brown, Pine Forest Community Action; Walter Bryant, St. Nicholas Area Preservation; Dick Cardell, The Lakewood Community; Anne Davis, Riverbrook at Glen Kernan HOA, Inc.; Ramon Day, Northwest Quadrant Equity Owners, Inc.; Carol D’Onofrio, Deercreek Owners Association; Sharon Ervin, Riverbrook at Glen Kernan HOA, Inc; Joanne Parker Griffin, Villa San Jose Civic; Donna Herrin, Sweetwater by Del Webb; Jim Hill, Greater Hood Road Community Association; Ralph Hodges, Council-At-Large Group 4; Abby Howard Murphy, Hampton Glen at Deerwood HOA; Debbie Johnson, The Gables HOA; Scott Koslowski, James Island Homeowners Association; Eric Laner, East Hampton HOA; Joe Luczak, Bartram Springs HOA; Kathleen Perera, Alumni Civic Association; Robin Pickle, Brierwood Neighborhood Association; Craig Shoup, Council At-Large Group 2; Kathy Soares, Highland Glen HOA; Denise Torres, The Arc Jacksonville Village; Marcie Turner, Kernan Mills Community Association, Inc.; Gary Weise, Secret Cove Civic Association

Excused: Jon Malmind, Oak View Corner Oaks Owners Association

Visitors: Rich Horvath, Nocatee; Richard Skule, Englewood; Will Crosby; Eric Stupski; K. LuCi Bennett, Mandarin Community Club

Staff: Danny Becton, City Council District 11; Michael Boylan, City Council District 6; Bradley Clayton, Municipal Code Compliance; Gloria Crawford, Senior Services; Elizabeth Kenny, JSO; Keli Likins, JPL; Cindy Pearson, DCPS; Cheryl Riddick, JTA; Keli Likins, JPL; Cheryl Riddick, JTA; Mark Romano, Assist Chief Zone 3, JSO; Paul Soares, Duval County Public Schools; Arimus Wells, Planning and Development Department; Rosemary Wesolowski, Neighborhood Services Office.

Call to Order/Verify Quorum:

Chair D’Onofrio called the January 2021 SE CPAC meeting to order at 6:30 pm and welcomed everyone to the meeting at the Mandarin Senior Center and on Zoom. Rosemary Wesolowski verified that a quorum was present.

Approval of the Previous Meeting Summary – The January 2021 meeting summary was approved by the CPAC.

Presentation(s): Lisa Rinaman, St. Johns Riverkeeper, presented the current the State of the St. Johns River Report to the CPAC.

The State of the River Report summarizes the “health” of the Lower St. Johns River Basin. By “health,” it refers to several factors, which impact human health, the economy, recreation, and the environment. These factors of the river basin’s health include:

- The condition of fish, crab, and shrimp populations in the area

- Whether river and wetland habitats support thriving populations of plants and animals, while also providing economic, recreational, and health benefits for the people who live in northeast Florida
- Whether there are too many materials like metals, pesticides, and other toxic substances in the environment.

To summarize the State of the River Report:

Water quality in the main part of the St. Johns River in northeast Florida is generally suitable for boating and fishing. At the same time, water quality in some of the streams that flow into the river (tributaries) is polluted, and unsuitable for boating and fishing. There is some good news. Local governments and private agencies have made some reductions of contaminants by replacing failing septic tanks, improving wastewater treatment facilities, and conducting other measures to reduce the flow of pollutants into local waterways. At the same time, upstream nutrient pollution sources are increasingly undermining water quality and public/private investment.

Numbers of redbird (red drum), trout (spotted seatrout), mullet (striped mullet), and other popular species of fish are unchanged. There is uncertainty about populations of some fish, such as catfish and largemouth bass.

Numbers of rare animals such as manatees, bald eagles, and wood storks appear to be unchanged, and increasing in some cases.

There are some reasons to be concerned about the health of the Lower St. Johns River Basin; the reasons are:

Continuing pollution of the river by a variety of human activities threatens human health, the economy, and the ecosystems that support animals, plants, and recreation. Run off from roads, residential and commercial development, and agriculture adds nutrient pollution to the Lower St. Johns River Basin.

Urban development and agriculture also contribute to the loss of swamps, marshes, and other wetlands. Pollution, run off, and invasive species also threatens the health of valuable wetlands.

Water withdrawals are increasing salinity in some locations and leading to a decrease in submerged aquatic vegetation. Submerged seagrasses and other vegetation are currently below levels desired to support fisheries, prevent erosion, and provide flood protection.

Some undesirable non-native animals and plants, like Asian clams, blue-green algae, hydrilla, and other species are threatening ecological systems and/or the local economy.

Dredging of the river will likely increase salinity and reduce submerged aquatic vegetation. Increased vessel traffic and especially the increased traffic that accompanies dredging will threaten manatees.

There are too many metals, pesticides, and other contaminating materials in the Lower St. Johns River and some of its tributaries. There is also little data about metal in other tributaries. Over time, metals, pesticides, and other contaminants may negatively affect plants, animals, and humans.

Fecal coliform levels in the tributaries still greatly exceed water quality criteria.

Total Phosphorous concentrations in the marine section of the Lower Basin are worsening.

Salinity continues to increase despite recent storms over the past three years that have contributed significant freshwater to the system. Increases in salinity can damage or destroy freshwater wetlands, trees, and submerged grasses.

Submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) has dramatically declined in the basin due in part to severe drought followed by major storms. SAVs provide critical habitat for fisheries and invertebrates and absorb nutrients.

Wetlands continue to be lost due to development pressures, which will likely contribute to future flooding from storm surge and sea level rise.

Recommendations:

More funding is needed to remove failing septic tanks that continue to pollute our tributaries with harmful bacteria and nutrients and create a human health hazard.

More attention must be placed on how to improve the health of our tributaries, and in turn, benefit surrounding neighborhoods. The St. Johns River is only as healthy as our tributaries.

Excess phosphorous is still a problem for the St. Johns. The land disposal of sewage sludge in the Upper Basin and Middle Basin is likely a major source and must be more tightly regulated.

Resiliency policies must include better protections for tributary headwaters and wetlands, and improvements in how we manage stormwater.

Elected Officials Report:

Danny Becton, City Council District 11 – did not have a report but was available for questions.

Council Member Becton – dbecton@coj.net or 904-255-5211

Michael Boylan, City Council District 6 – shared that he just left Council Member Morgan’s monthly Town Hall Meeting. He and Council Member Morgan are working together on an initiative that Council President Hazouri started called Safer Together. Safer Together is a series of five workshops that will focus on community policing and how to help improve the relationship between JSO and the community. The first workshop was held on February 4, 2021, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. At this meeting, JSO discussed some of their community engagement efforts such as the Police Athletic League, Neighborhood Watch Program, Community Walks, and the Sheriff’s Watch Program. The next workshop will be held on March 5, 2021 at 9:30 a.m. and the topic will be mental health and police interactions. At a future workshop they will discuss use of force training. Council Member Boylan emphasized the importance of community participation in these workshops. In June or July, after all the workshops have been completed, a report with the recommendations from the community will be compiled and shared.

Council Member Boylan – Mboylan@coj.net or 904-255-5206

Cindy Pearson, Duval County School Board, District – stated they are busy working on the Strategic Plan; this is a five- year plan that establishes to goals and direction of the DCPS. The four goals of the Strategic Plan are:

Goal 1 – DCPS will improve from the bottom quartile of Florida Standards Assessments (FSA) reading and writing performance in August 2019 to the top quartile of performance statewide by August 2026.

Goal 2 – DCPS will be recognized as being high-performing with the percentage of district-operated schools earning an A, B, or C rating increasing from the baseline in 2019 to 96% in 2026.

Goal 3 – DCPS will improve the post-secondary readiness of graduates by increasing the percentage of students earning soft skills credentials from the baseline in August 2023 to Y% by August 2026. This will include interviewing and communication skills.

Goal 4- DCPS Career Technical Education (CTE) programs will be recognized as high-performing with the percentage of programs becoming Novice or moving from 1 performance level to the next (Advanced, Master or National Model) increasing from the baseline in July 2021 to Y% in July 2026.

Duval County Public Schools will kick off a series of community meetings concerning the renaming of Jacksonville schools named after Confederate leaders. There are a total of nine schools that potentially could be renamed. The first four schools that will be discussed are: Finnegan Elementary, J.E.B. Stuart Middle School, Stonewall Jackson Elementary, and Kirby Smith Middle School.

The process for changing the names is as follows:

- Schools will invite the community stakeholders who can verify their involvement with the institution.
- Each school will host meetings with those stakeholders, during which the school's namesake figure will be scrutinized and examined. These meetings will also allow stakeholders to make recommendations for alternative names to the School Advisory Committee.
- The School Advisory Committee will create a shortlist of possible names on which the school community will vote.
- The school will provide the results of that vote to the superintendent.
- The superintendent will make a final recommendation on any name changes to the school board which will have the final say.

Cindy Pearson -pearsonc1@duvalschools.org or 904.390.2239

Paul Soares, Duval County School Board, Assistant Superintendent confirmed that the members on the Master Plan Facility Implementation Citizens Oversight Committee have been finalized. The committee includes representatives from a number of community organizations and an appointee from each of the seven school board members. Their role is to monitor how the revenue from the surtax is spent and to help keep the public informed on the progress and implementation of the sales surtax plan as set forth in the school board's resolution leading to the referendum. All meetings will be open to the public. Meetings were held on January 19, 2021 and January 26, 2021; the next meeting will be held in March. The committee will function under School Board Policy 9.66. The CPAC membership did request a list of members of the Master Plan Facility Implementation Citizen Oversight Committee.

Paul Soares - (904) 390-2008

Staff Reports:

JSO (Jacksonville Sheriff's Office) – Assistant Chief Romano introduced himself to the SE CPAC and provided the following report. There has been an 17% increase of violent crime and a 15% decrease in property crime. JSO has been busy working problem areas in the Toledo Road/Powers Avenue area. There has also been an increase to auto burglaries at gyms citywide. Assistant Chief Romano encouraged everyone to lock their leave their valuables at home, lock them inside the gym or lock them in their trunk. Once again, the CPAC was reminded about the 9 pm Routine; everyone was encouraged to not leave money, valuables, car keys, wallets/purses, and guns in their vehicles unattended.

Several CPAC members informed the Assistant Chief about speeding and illegal passing on Mandarin Road, late night auto racing in the Baymeadows Road/I-295 area and speeding in other areas within the district. It was acknowledged that JSO is aware of these problems and is working on them.

Zone 3 substation – 8875 Liberty Ridge Drive, Suite 110, 32256 – 904-828-5463

JFRD – not in attendance

JPL – Keli Likins, South Regional Manager, announced all libraries have expanded their hours of operation. The regional libraries hours: Monday – Thursday 10 am to 7pm and Friday – Saturday 10 am to 6 pm. The branch libraries hours: Monday – Tuesday 12 pm to 8 pm and Wednesday – Saturday 10 am to 6 pm. All libraries are closed on Sunday. Please use the following web address to confirm the hours of operation for the library that you use: <https://jaxpubliclibrary.org/locations>

Keli Likins – Klikins@coj.net

JTA – Cheryl Riddick informed the CPAC that JTA is now offering Ride to Health. In partnership with the City of Jacksonville, the Florida Department of Health for Duval County and other health service organizations, the Jacksonville Transportation Authority provides safe, clean, and reliable transportation to available COVID-19 vaccination distribution locations.

JTA's ReadIRide service is also providing on-call transportation to vaccination locations. To provide additional support to the community during COVID-19 vaccine distribution, JTA has expanded the coverage of their ReadIRide zones. Call (904) 679-4555 to confirm your eligibility and to make a reservation Monday through Saturday, 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. To learn more about the ReadIRide Program, please visit: <https://www.jtafla.com/riding-jta/ride-to-health/>

Cheryl Riddick -904-632-5522 or criddick@jtafla.com

Municipal Code Compliance Division – Bradley Clayton introduced himself as the new supervisor for the Southeast District. Supervisor Clayton informed the CPAC that a systematic inspection was conducted in the Brackenridge community and 84 violations were cited. In March 2021, the Zone 3 Compliance team will conduct a systematic inspection in the Spring Park area. In addition, the Code Compliance Team has responded to over 400 concerns that were reported through 630-CITY.

The Jacksonville Assistance and Relief or JAR program was discussed. The purpose of the Jacksonville Assistance and Relief Program is to facilitate a means of compliance to those who would otherwise be unable to achieve it due to disability or economic disadvantages. The Program's objective is to provide

the abatement services required at no cost to those citizens who qualify, thereby achieving compliance and beautification of the City while not unduly burdening its most vulnerable citizens.

If you cannot comply the violations on your property due to a disability or economic hardship, please feel free to visit:

<https://www.coj.net/departments/neighborhoods/municipal-code-compliance/jacksonville-assistance-and-relief-program>

It was brought to Supervisor Clayton's attention that there are several 6-to-8-foot banners along Baymeadows Road near the new Rowe's Grocery Store that have created a visual barrier for drivers. Additionally, it was noted that there is a lot of construction on Baymeadows Road and Gate Parkway. Many of the storm drains along both roads do not have booms on them to keep construction material from floating into the drains during heavy rains.

Bradley Clayton – bclayton@coj.net

Parks, Recreation and Senior Services – Gloria Crawford provided updates:

- The Fort Family Regional Park (formerly 9A-Baymeadows Regional Park) has a bid out for new quad baseball diamonds, parking lot and restrooms.
- At Walter Anderson Park (formerly Flynn Park) construction for the new pickleball courts are underway and the parking lot improvements will begin soon.
- The Chuck Rogers Park restrooms are scheduled for a restroom update.
- The Mandarin Park kayak launch will receive modifications to make the launch area ADA accessible.
- New playground equipment for Crabtree Park has been ordered and the basketball courts have been completed.
- Spring break camp will be held March 8 through 12, 2021- 8:30 am to 5:00 pm; extended care drop off is available at 7:30 am. Registration is available online at: tinyurl.com/JaxParksSpringBreakCamp2021 – flyers were available and emailed to the community.
- JaxParks has several lifeguard positions to fill. To become a lifeguard there are three prerequisite skills: you must be able to swim 300 yards; tread water for 2 minutes without using your hands and be able to retrieve a 10-pound brick from the bottom of the diving well. There will be a series of training classes offered. To learn more about the training date a flyer was provided; both in person and emailed to the community.

Gloria Crawford – 904-255-8710

Planning & Development Department – Arimus Wells did not have a report but was available for questions.

Arimus Wells – 904-255-7824 or ArimusW@coj.net

Subcommittee/Liaison Reports (3-minute time limit):

LUZ– Joanne Parker Griffin and the LUZ Subcommittee reviewed twelve LUZ applications and one motion was made.

Denial of Ordinances MM-21-03, 2021-0101, 2021-0102, 2021-0103, and 2021-0104 (all located at 7981 Baymeadows Circle West). The CPAC contends that the individual applications should be submitted as one application since it totals over ten acres and circumvents the process. The combination of all requests will allow clear vision to compare the zoning changes to the Zoning Code Section 656, Sect 125, b1, 2, and 3. After considerable discussion, the CPAC voted to approve the motion.

North Florida TPO – Jim Hill – did not have a report.

TRUE (Taxation, Revenue, and Utilization of Expenditures) Commission – Ramon Day –informed the CPAC that the TRUE Commission has received updated reports from the City Council Auditors at their February 4, 2021 meeting and started discussing areas that they would like to review more in depth. On February 9, 2021, the TRUE Commission held a Zoom workshop. At the workshop, the members further discussed studies they would like to further investigate. Those studies would include project management for the City of Jacksonville; Jacksonville Small and Emerging Businesses; how Jacksonville compares to peer cities nationally and in Florida; and public health with the focus on prenatal, maternal, and pediatric care in under-served communities. Additionally, at the same Zoom workshop, they discussed a large study that would focus on specific areas of JSO. Those specific areas would include utilization of the annual JSO budget as it compares to peer cities; JSO staffing per capita; and how JSO relates to peer cities regarding crime prevention.

Neighborhood Coordinator Report – Rosemary Wesolowski introduced Dan Durbec, Environmental Programs Specialist, Neighborhood Services Office. Mr. Durbec informed the CPAC about the St. Johns River Celebration 26th Annual Cleanup on Saturday, March 20, 2021. There will be over 40 sites throughout the city. The SE CPAC Chair has adopted the Walter Jones Historical Park & County Dock Boat Ramp and will serve as the site captain. This park is located at 11964 Mandarin Road and the clean up event hours at this site will be from 8 am to 11 am. All CPAC members are invited to join the event. This is a great opportunity for local students to get volunteer hour credits. A flyer with complete details of the clean-up sites listed are available and will be emailed to all the CPAC members. Additional information and reminders will be shared with the SE CPAC as the date gets closer.

Rosemary Wesolowski 904-255-8261 or rosemary@coj.net

Chairs Report – Chair D’Onofrio informed the CPAC that the CPAC Chairs met with the Mayor’s Staff on February 12, 2021. All the CPAC Chairs shared their concern regarding the hybrid meetings and how the CPAC by-laws only allow voting if you attend the meeting in-person. The CPAC Chairs were informed that the Office of General Council (OGC) is actively reviewing the CPAC Executive Order/By-laws and the CPAC boundaries. The CPAC Chairs also inquired about the Capital Improvement Project (CIP) CPAC recommendation list. It was announced that COJ staff is finalizing the CIP program and CPAC Chairs will receive a letter soon. The Mayor’s staff encouraged everyone to use the 630-CITY service to report their concerns.

Unfinished Business – None

New Business: - None

Public Comment – Member Abby Howard Murphy stressed her concern regarding the CPAC by-laws that dictate CPAC members must be in attendance to vote on CPAC issues. It was noted that other boards and commission supported by the City of Jacksonville allow their members to vote if they attend a

meeting virtually. It was recommended that it would be a good idea to make a special amendment to address the voting component of the by-laws to reflect the current needs due to the pandemic. Then, once we have the pandemic behind us, then take the time to analyze and update the CPAC Executive Order and By-laws.

Motion to Adjourn

The next meeting of the District 3 CPAC will be in person on Monday, March 22, 2021

at 6:30 pm – at the Mandarin Senior Center, 3848 Hartley Road, 32257