

# **Pasco County Thousand Oaks/Trinity Oaks Problem Solving Task Force Meeting August 27, 2012**

## **August 27, 2012 – Emergency Operations Center, Pasco County**

The following is a summary of the Pasco County Thousand Oaks/Trinity Oaks Problem Solving Task Force (Task Force) meeting held on August 27, 2012. Copies of the agenda, attendees list and documents/presentations provided as part of this meeting will accompany these minutes.

### **Arrival, Sign-In, Greetings, and Introductions**

Michele Baker (Pasco County Chief Assistant County Administrator) facilitated the meeting starting with a welcome. Brief introductions were provided by all attendees. Please refer to the attached attendance sheet for a list of the attendees.

### **Questions and Discussions**

A summary of discussions, including questions and responses, are provided in this meeting summary. Specific questions are presented in italics. The contents of this summary do not represent direct quotes and may or may not represent the group's view as a whole.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of these ongoing meetings was reviewed. These meetings are conducted to discuss and review potential solutions to flooding concerns within Pasco County, specifically focusing on the Thousand Oaks and Trinity Oaks residential areas. These areas have historically experienced flooding which has increased due to the recent wet weather events.

### **Action Items Update**

The following action items were developed during prior meetings. A review of each was presented during this meeting.

#### **1. Neighborhood Training (Office of Emergency Management)**

An educational class "Sandbag 101" was provided by the Office of Emergency Management to discuss proper sand bagging procedures. The class was well received by attendees and thought to be very good. This class was provided on short notice due to the impending storm. A repeat class may be offered with more public notice provided to allow for greater attendance.

It was noted that this would be good training for the County to provide to Home Owners Associations (HOAs).

A graphic poster showing the four main points for sand bag training is available on the Pasco County Emergency Management website and can be posted at sandbagging locations in the future.

Sand Bag locations were moved to more accessible locations for Tropical Storm Isaac. The Mitchell Park location provided assistance to residents that had come to get sand bags. This effort was much appreciated and was noted to be a great service for citizens that needed the assistance.

Stress Management for flood victims is another potential educational outreach that could be provided by the County. The County can reach out to local hospital resources for educators if residents would like these classes.

## **2. Barricades (County Attorney's Office)**

Board action is required to allow for barricades in neighborhoods. It is difficult to place barriers until the County is certain which areas will be affected by wet weather. For Tropical Storm Debbie, 100 barricades were available and the County has since acquired an additional 200 barricades for a total of 300. An additional 100 were obtained (total of 400) in preparation for Tropical Storm Isaac.

A new system for who blocks roads and which roads get blocked is now in use. The down fall to closing a road, is that it is very hard to get it reopened due to the need to ensure public safety before access is permitted.

## **3. Maintenance Dredging Permit Status (Stormwater Management)**

A permit to allow maintenance dredging through the wetland to the west of Kinsmere Drive was submitted to the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD). The SWFWMD performed a site inspection to determine exemption eligibility of maintenance dredging. To qualify for an exemption, there needs to be proof that previous dredging occurred and evidence of how deep historic dredges were. Only a small section, approximately 300 linear feet would qualify but overall the exemption was denied. There was no evidence of previous dredging activity for the majority of the property (see attachments).

Permits through the SWFWMD and Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) will be required.

## **4. Project Plan for a Dredge Through the Wetlands (Stormwater Management)**

The current projected date for completion of the ongoing survey work is October 15, 2012. Work to update the existing stormwater model is ongoing and the update of Duck Slough (entire 14.1 square miles) is currently projected to be completed November 15, 2012. The previous model, originally used during development of Best Management

Practices (BMPs), is known to have errors which are why the model now requires updates.

The County needs to ensure that the updated model covers all relative areas, which may require additional modeling to include the Anclote model. If needed, the addition of the Anclote model could add one year to the time required to complete the model and determine acceptability by the SWFWMD.

The County will need to show that any project implemented to ease the current flooding issues in the Thousand Oaks/Trinity Oaks area does not create flooding elsewhere - "no negative impact". This is the reason why there may be a need to look at a larger model area than just Duck Slough like the Anclote Model. It will depend on the proposed stormwater project that is selected.

The County is working to expedite the Anclote model effort by working with the SWFWMD to obtain funding outside of the regularly scheduled funding cycle. There will be a SWFWMD Governing Board meeting on September 25, 2012 to review the funding potential. By seeking funding from the SWFWMD, the County can expand efforts such that the model can be completed as soon as possible.

The County Stormwater Department is actively working on the following items –

1. Completing the model updates.
2. Determining the cross-sections.
3. Approximately \$350,000 in projects are simultaneously in progress with several projects evaluating wetland mitigation.
4. Working closely with the SWFWMD and ACOE to expedite permitting when needed. The SWFWMD is providing guidance for proposed projects. The ACOE does not provide active guidance but does have a pre-application review meeting process where feedback on the proposed project is provided.

## 5. Project plan for a bypass system (Engineering Service)

A map (**see attachments**) depicting various project options was presented to the group for a bypass system that would allow excess water to be collected and conveyed to prevent residential flooding. Options included various locations for the conveyance system through vacant land within the neighborhoods and along Mitchell Boulevard. A potential pump station with conveyance piping was also considered. It was noted that the pumping option would have higher operations and maintenance costs than a conveyance system which would flow by gravity.

Rough estimates for the costs associated with these options ranged from approximately \$5 million to \$10 million dollars but engineering, mitigation and permitting costs would also need to be considered.

A presentation (**see attachments**) was provided by Mr. Vincent Aiello (Thousand Oaks). The presentation provided photos of the current stormwater conditions around the Thousand Oaks/Trinity Oaks area and also presented a conveyance system option that could alleviate the flooding. The conveyance system included a conveyance channel,

diversion structure and open channel along Mitchell Boulevard. A proposed construction cost of \$9.5 million was obtained from an out of state construction contractor. This project would also require SWFWMD and ACOE permitting. The County thanked Mr. Aiello and will evaluate and consider the proposed conveyance system.

*How is the survey work progressing?*

The engineering firm performing the surveying work (Florida Design Consultants) is currently running two crews (approx. 23 people), on 10 hour shifts, 4 – 6 days per week to try to complete the survey work. The work has been more difficult due to the recent heavy rains which have resulted in submerged pipes.

*Has Pasco County done these types of projects before?*

Yes, the County has completed large projects and it is important to set responsible expectations but to also alleviate the problem. The type of cooperative effort taking place through these meetings has not happened in the past but County has adopted new transparency efforts to improve cooperative efforts.

More stormwater funding is available due to the stormwater assessment. In 2007 the County adopted a stormwater funding assessment which was based on acceptable levels of service. Currently, stormwater is funded at approximately \$45 per Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU). The stormwater stakeholders group was reconvened in 2011 to discuss options for funding the cost for capital improvement projects. It was noted that additional funding is needed but no additional assessment has been enacted since 2007.

It is important to evaluate the cost of a project versus the benefits it will provide. The County looks for various funding opportunities in both the private and public sector. Public funding sources (County, State and Federal) have much less funding available now due to the current economic climate. The County is trying to piece together funding options but some portion of funding may fall to the residents.

Once a project has been finalized and is ready for funding, the County will seek support from the citizens to lobby for funding sources. Depending on the required budget and available funding sources, there may be a need for shared funding from the citizens.

*Has County looked at east verses west?*

The County has looked at basin specific and looks at impact verses benefits.

*Has the County considered a building moratorium?*

The County has not considered a moratorium but is looking at obtaining “basin of special concern” (BOSC) designation which would allow for stricter stormwater criteria. There is a Pasco County Board meeting scheduled for September 11, 2012 where this will be discussed. The County will schedule public meetings and provide notification regarding the BOSC designation.

The current ordinance (BOSC) states that where permits have already issued for construction, new rules cannot be enforced. The law on the side of what is already permitted by law. It is easier to change the rules at the County level and thereby adjust to changing stormwater conditions and concerns. Any new rules do need to be defensible by the County.

*Is Starkey part of Duck Slough?*

No, 98% of Starkey is in the Anclote Basin. New houses for this area have not yet been permitted.

## **6. Complete Permit Review and Report Findings (SWFWMD)**

There are numerous existing permits and the SWFWMD reviews are still in progress.

## **7. Complete Maintenance on Private Systems in Thousand Oaks (Sentry Management)**

The survey is in progress and there is a meeting scheduled for tomorrow.

## **Current Stormwater Activities & Concerns**

The Maple Pond project has been submitted to the SWFWMD.

A map was provided showing the locations where pumps were placed to provide flooding relief and drainage (**see attachments**). The wetlands do not appear to be clearly connected as there are highpoint that block free flow between wetlands. The County is unsure if this situation was intended or caused by natural degradation. The County is looking at solutions for the current stormwater systems as well as looking at new projects to provide a solution.

The citizens thanked Mike Garrett for providing pumps in the neighborhood. They are working and have made a positive difference.

*Doesn't Mitchell Boulevard have a good grade?*

Yes, it appears to have a good grade but the interlocked weirs feed into each other. A project that includes Mitchell Road could potentially tie-in the wetland areas. The County needs to look at long-term solutions and with future conditions in mind.

## **Environmental Survey Updates**

A presentation was provided by Scheda Ecological Associates (**see attachments**). The assessment has identified vegetation impacts, stagnation and some submerged box culverts. No nuisance species were identified and portions of the wetland have been determined to have a quality rating of 70 percent.

There are currently two environmental engineering consultant firms working in parallel to complete the wetland assessment report and to determine the wetland mitigation requirements.

The lower the quality of the wetland, the lower the mitigation required.

There are some mitigation credits that could potentially be used and the consultants are also looking at the potential to use restoration credits.

### **Meeting Logistics**

The next Task Force meeting will be held on September 10<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm at this same location (Pasco County Emergency Operations Center).