

City of Marco Island Florida

*51 Bald Eagle Drive
Marco Island, Florida
cityofmarcoisland.com*



Meeting Minutes - Final

Tuesday, September 7, 2021

3:00 PM

Special-Called Meeting

Community Meeting Room

City Council

*Chair: Jared Grifoni
Vice-Chair: Greg Folley*

*City Council: Claire Babrowski,
Rich Blonna, Erik Brechnitz,
Becky Irwin, Joe Rola*

*City Manager: Mike McNees
City Attorney: Alan L. Gabriel
City Clerk: Laura Litzan*

1. Call to Order

Chair Grifoni called the meeting to order at 3:00 P.M.

MOTION by Councilor Brechnitz, seconded by Vice-Chair Folley to allow Councilor Irwin to participate and vote telephonically on all matters coming before the Council at this meeting. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

Yes: 6 - Councilor Blonna, Councilor Brechnitz, Vice-Chair Folley, Councilor Rola, Councilor Babrowski and Chair Grifoni

Abstain: 1 - Councilor Irwin

2. Roll Call

Present: 7 - Councilor Blonna, Councilor Irwin, Councilor Brechnitz, Vice-Chair Folley, Councilor Rola, Councilor Babrowski and Chair Grifoni

(Note: Councilor Irwin participated via Zoom teleconference connection)

Also Present

GUESTS:

*Dr. Margaret Banyan, Lead Consultant & Professor, Florida Gulf Coast University
Ms. Alexis Crespo, Vice President of Planning, Waldrop Engineering*

CITY STAFF:

*Michael McNees, City Manager
Casey Lucius, Assistant to the City Manager
Laura Litzan, City Clerk
Alan L. Gabriel, City Attorney
Tracy Frazzano, Police Chief
Chris Byrne, Fire Chief
Jose Duran, Information Technology Director
Mary Holden, Senior Planner
Martin Luna, Video/Broadcast Technician
Jim Komas, Recording Specialist
Citizens and Visitors*

3. Business

[ID 21-1763](#) Detailed Review of the Draft Comprehensive Plan

With the comments provided by the Southwest Florida Water Management District and the State of Florida on the initial submission of the City of Marco Island's Comprehensive Plan now received, Chair Grifoni led the Council in reviewing and providing input to the following Plan Elements: 1) Land Use; 2) Transportation, 3) Housing; 4) Infrastructure, and; 5) Conservation & Coastal Management.

Dr. Banyan, Ms. Crespo and City Senior Planner Mary Holden answered questions and provided insight on certain provisions and interpretations as requested by members of the Council during the course of the review.

During the discussion of the Land Use Element, Councilor Brechnitz brought forward the Motion as noted

below for Council consideration and vote. Chair Grifoni solicited public comment prior to the Council's vote on the Motion.

Public Comment

Mr. Ed Issler (S. Joy Circle) pointed out the simplicity of the stated goal of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan. He expressed his belief that the goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to ensure Marco Island's continuing character as a 'small town' that is configured and managed for the benefit of the residents who live on the Island. Mr. Issler also indicated that a citizen petition drive to place this and other directional policy issues to a vote of the citizens of Marco Island is currently underway.

Ms. Linda Goslee (Treasure Ct.) came forward to comment on the process for soliciting public engagement during the development of the Comprehensive Plan and was asked to hold and bring forward her comments during the broader 'Citizens' Comments' portion of the Agenda.

Dr. Bill Trotter (N. Collier Blvd.) expressed his belief that the Comprehensive Plan should focus on the needs and perspectives of the Island's residents to maintain and enhance the residential nature of the Island. In his opinion, including accommodations in the Plan for the tourist and resort communities' interests leads the Island toward a level of 'density' and 'intensity' that is typically associated with some of the larger cities and resort communities along the southeast coast of Florida.

Ms. Nancy Dale (Piedmont Circle), Ms. Christine Dowell (Biscayne Way) and Ms. Daisy Magnus (Dana Ct.) all came forward to state that they echoed Dr. Trotter's comments. In the interest of expediency and time, Chair Grifoni asked those present who intended to come forward to also state their agreement with Dr. Trotter's comments to raise their hands for members of the Council to see. A number of visitors and guests expressed their agreement and support in this way.

MOTION by Councilor Brechnitz, seconded by Vice-Chair Folley, that the phrase " ... consistent with low density and intensity ..." be added to the stated goal in the Comprehensive Plan. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

Yes: 6 - Councilor Irwin, Councilor Brechnitz, Vice-Chair Folley, Councilor Rola, Councilor Babrowski and Chair Grifoni

No: 1 - Councilor Blonna

4. Citizens' Comments

Mr. Bill Hillyer (Rose Ct.) indicated his desire to keep Marco Island a 'small town'. He noted the reference to trolleys and current issues related to short-term residential vacation properties, noise, trash and a constant stream of visitors as characteristics that are not consistent with the Council's Strategic Plan for the Island.

Mr. Ed Issler (S. Joy Circle) referenced a communication to the Council that indicated a 180 day timeline for the City to submit its completed Comprehensive Plan to the State. He implored the Council to not be rushed by the understood ending date of the City's consultancy agreement with Florida Gulf Coast University and Waldrop Engineering. He asked that "... a couple of more ..." public hearings be held to solicit citizen input.

Additionally, Mr. Issler noted that the Island's deed restrictions dictate the expression and implementation of the City's Future Land Use elements. He cited specific references in the current draft of the Comprehensive Plan that, he believes, run counter to these restrictions, and he asked the Council to address those inconsistencies.

Dr. Bill Trotter (N. Collier Blvd.) noted that there were significant modifications to the Comprehensive Plan between the version that was last reviewed by the Council and the version that was submitted to the State

for comment. He recommended that the Council solicit responses from the government agencies that did not comment to date, especially the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). He expressed concern that the current draft of the Comprehensive Plan makes no reference to continuing the current prohibition on density transfers and past Council decisions related to the retirement of density credits attributable to public lands. He further pointed out certain inconsistencies present in the current version of the Transportation Element of the Plan. Dr. Trotter concluded by asking the Council to consider soliciting more public input and review of the entire Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Chris Hansen (Shenandoah Ct.) spoke to the subject of water quality and its deterioration on Marco Island. Referencing language in the Plan on the use of treated waste water and the recent analysis by a member of the Waterways Advisory Committee on dissolved oxygen in the five water basins contained within the boundaries of the Island, Mr. Hansen asked that the Council take its time to address the implications of that study's findings. He believes that the Conservation and Coastal Management Element in the Comprehensive Plan is inadequately framed to address the critical environmental issues facing Marco Island.

Ms. Rozine Grey (Sunflower Ct.) believes that the current draft of the Comprehensive Plan is too complex and confusing. She pointed to its length, as compared to the Naples Comprehensive Plan, and she sees too many ways in which future high-density development can be justified. She asked the Council to "...slow down ..." and allow more input and review of the Plan.

Ms. Christine Dowell (Biscayne Way) indicated that the input of too many citizens on the Island is being neglected because of the 'opt-in' nature of the City's email communication channel and the lack of technological savvy among many residents to effectively access and use Zoom and other communication channels. She believes that residents do not want trolleys, treated waste water and other elements that she sees being encouraged in the current version of the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Danny Mikoszla (via telephone) expressed his belief that the role of the Council and the City's government is to protect and benefit the Island's residents and landowners, and not developers, tourists and real estate agencies. He takes exception to the any reference to Marco Island as a "... resort community...", and he believes that the current draft of the Comprehensive Plan needs to be streamlined and re-focused to bring attention to the needs and wishes of its residents / landowners.

Mr. Howard Reed (Bald Eagle Dr.) noted that every time that a bonus density incentive is made available to developers, the density of the Island is forever and irreparably harmed. He applauded the Council's previous removal of Article 1.5 under the Housing Element of the Plan.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business before the Council, the special-called meeting adjourned at 5:05 P.M.

Jared Grifoni, Council Chair

ATTEST:

Laura Litzan, City Clerk

PREPARED BY:

Jim Kornas, Recording Specialist

