

SOUTH MIAMI DADE WATERSHED STUDY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting III

November 8, 2001
South Florida Water Management District
Homestead Field Station Conference Room
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Report of Proceedings

WELCOME

The meeting was opened by Committee Chairperson Roger Carlton who thanked everyone for coming and thanked First National Bank of South Florida for sponsoring the refreshments for the day and South Florida Water Management District Homestead Field Station for the use of their facilities. He explained that the focus of the day's work would be on finalizing a Vision Statement and setting Goals and Objectives for the study in order to achieve that Vision.

Members Present:

Roger Carlton, Chair
Ivonne Alexander, Miami Dade AgriCouncil
Maribel Balbin, South Florida Water Management District
Linda Canzanelli, Biscayne National Park
Carlos Espinosa, Miami Dade DERM
Jeffrey Flanagan, Chamber South
Dick Frost, Tropical Audubon Society
April Gromnicki, National Audubon Society
John Hall, Florida Engineering Society
Louise King, Redland Citizens' Association
Bennie Lovett, Florida City
Lee Rawlinson, Miami Dade Planning and Zoning Department
Mike Shehadeh, City of Homestead
Charles Thibos, Tropical Everglades Visitor Association
Julia Trevarthen, South Florida Regional Planning Council
Craig Wheeling, Miami Dade Farm Bureau
Dale Williams, Miami Dade Agricultural Practices Board
Tim Williams, Homestead/Florida City Chamber of Commerce

Observers:

Armando Perez, CDM
Fernando Miralles, CDM
Daniel Apt, FDEP
Dennis Duke, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Speaker
Bill Dobson, Miami Dade Water and Sewer Dept.
Nem Gomez, CH2M Hill
Anthony Clemente, PBS & J

Chairperson Carlton then turned the meeting over to the meeting Facilitator, Janice M. Fleischer, of the South Florida Regional Planning Council Institute for Community Collaboration.

AGENDA REVIEW, DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

Ms. Fleischer reviewed the meeting Objectives and Agenda for the day. The Objectives were:

- Finalizing the Vision Statement
- Categorizing Issues related to the Study
- Having a presentation by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Having a presentation about the Consultant Procurement process
- Identifying and Prioritizing Goals for the Study
- Identifying Objectives related to the top 5 Goals
- Review of items for next meeting

A copy of the Objectives and Agenda are attached as Exhibit A.

Ms. Fleischer directed the Members to their packets for a list of Websites that may be relevant to the Watershed Study. She indicated that this list would be updated as the Committee became aware of new projects or plans. (Exhibit B) She reminded Members about their discussion guidelines and encouraged any visitors to make use of the Comment Cards and Idea Parking Lot. Ms. Fleischer pointed out an article entitled “Stormwater Paradigms” by Andy Reese which was contained in their packets and can be found on the Internet at: http://www.forester.net/sw_0107_stormwater.html.

Ivonne Alexander, Miami Dade AgriCouncil, Member of the Committee, volunteered to provide refreshments for the next meeting.

VISION FINALIZATION

The next item on the Agenda was to finalize the Committee Vision for the Study Area. Members had divided into small groups and drafted potential Vision Statements at the last meeting on September 26, 2001. The three statements drafted were:

Group No. 1

Viable, model, communities with strong identities and lots of open space including diverse agriculture established on foundations that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable and in a framework which ensures sustainability of a sustainable Biscayne Bay and Everglades National Park.

Group No. 2

South Dade is a vibrant community, blending a healthy economy and environment. Agriculture will be smaller and more intensive. Small, clean industry has moved into the area, drawn by the plentiful labor supply. Well-managed national parks and recreational facilities enhance community life and the tourism industry.

Group No. 3

South Miami-Dade has a viable economy and outstanding quality of life that are based on its natural wonders, economically and environmentally sustainable agriculture, tourism, and other compatible enterprises (e.g., high tech, research, resource-based), water management and land uses support a healthy environment and thriving agriculture, and new urban development is focused in the existing urban corridor with an eye toward preserving the historic quality and rural character with a strong sense of local community and stewardship.

Committee Staff had drafted a Vision Statement combining all the elements of the three above statements to be used as a “starting point” for the Committee to consider. The Facilitator advised Committee members that they would be utilizing their Consensus Rules (Exhibit C) to indicate preferences as their discussion developed. Ms. Fleischer further advised them that she had refined the Consensus Rules since the last meeting to more properly reflect the meaning of “consensus” and how it was to be indicated by this Committee. Committee members indicated their approval of the refined Rules.

A thorough and well thought out discussion followed for the next 1.5 hours until the Committee indicated by complete consensus their approval of their Final Vision Statement:

The South Miami-Dade Watershed area is composed of vibrant communities with strong identities established on foundations that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable, which honor private property rights. It supports economically viable and diverse agriculture; ensures south Biscayne Bay and Biscayne and Everglades National Parks are healthy and sustainable; and promotes open space and tourism and recreational facilities based on its natural wonders while welcoming other compatible enterprises. Sustainable urban development preserves historic quality and rural character with a strong sense of local community and stewardship.

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS PRESENTATION

The Facilitator made a schedule change and, rather than have the group work on Issues and Challenges, she went directly to the presentation by Mr. Dennis R. Duke, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. (which can be found on the SFRPC Website at: www.sfrpc.com, “The Institute”, “Projects”, “South Miami Dade Watershed Study Advisory Committee”, “Meeting 3”, “Exhibit D”) Mr. Duke brought a list of Corps “Critical Projects” which he provided to Committee members (Exhibit E).

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES REVISITED

Before the group broke for lunch, the Facilitator directed the Members’ attention to a list of items that had been placed on newsprint on the wall. This was the original list of Issues and Challenges Members had generated at their first meeting. Ms. Fleischer asked them to take some time to read over these items again, add any that they feel are missing, and work with one another in putting them in groupings and attempting to name the groupings during the course of the remainder of the day. She then announced lunch.

The results of Members categorizing and naming the categories of Issues and Challenges follows:

AGRICULTURE

- How to regulate water without destroying agriculture.
- Keeping agriculture sustained and profitable, not viewed as just a hobby.
- Difficulty of providing timely solutions to problems that only the government can solve.
 - citrus canker
 - flooding
 - economic study of agriculture
- Farm workers are missing
- Drought conditions and the water table; preserving agricultural industry beyond profitability
- The timing and distribution of water supply for agriculture.
- Impacts of large land uses on water quality.

PROCESS

- How will we balance competing equally compelling interests?
- Balancing the issues.
- Getting technical information to the Committee in an understandable way.
- Prioritizing issues.
- Defining the big picture issues/ then focus on small ones.
- Informing the Committee about all plans and projects in the study area.

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Meeting the objectives in Land Use Element 3E (Identifying and protecting lands for Biscayne Bay National Park).
- Developing a scientific basis to identify land to be conserved for Biscayne National Park protection and establishing a realistic funding mechanism.
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- What water quality standards are we trying to achieve?
- Protecting existing wetlands.
- Natural Communities (flora and fauna) habitat (both within and outside the national park system boundaries.*
- Maintaining ground water quality.*

URBAN

- Establishing a healthy, diverse, and sustainable economy that does not rely on urban development boundary expansion.
- Controlling urban sprawl and protecting agriculture as an industry.
- Maintaining ground water quality for residential.
- The development industry is missing from the table.
- Preparing a strategy to address issues during the planning process (i.e. decisions being made while we are deliberating may affect what we can/can not do)
- Impacts on schools.
- How will we meet future housing needed given NIMBY (Not In My Backyard) attitude/ County plan?

OVERARCHING ISSUES

- Water management
 - Current conditions
 - Impact of planned projects
 - Balance flooding/quality/distribution/timing and supply of water
 - This applies to all land uses: agriculture, residential, parks

- Protection of property rights.
- Articulate the elements of a 50-100 year vision.
- Stormwater runoff impacts/tied to population increases and land use changes.
- Financing alternatives.
- Who is responsible for maintaining canals?
- Define the difference between a drainage ditch and a SFWMD canal.
- Wastewater reuse technology in south Dade.
- Who is needed for implementation to take place?
- The study boundary doesn't coincide with the issues.
- Who is responsible for flooding and drainage?
- Getting people to listen to the "locals".
- Flooding*
- Funding*
- Increase spatial extent of wetlands to help with flooding/clean water issues.*
- Being aware of outside forces.
- Coordination with ongoing projects (e.g. Miami Dade Flooding Study, CERP, MWD, C-111, etc.)

*indicates items added at this meeting by Members

PROCUREMENT PROCESS

Upon returning from lunch, John Hulsey, SFRPC Planner, explained the procurement process for hiring a consultant. (Exhibit F)

GOALS IDENTIFICATION AND PRIORITIZATION

The Facilitator introduced the definitions of a "goal" and an "objective" to the Members:

GOAL: The long term end toward which programs or activities are directed.

OBJECTIVE: A specific measurable intermediate end that is achievable and marks progress toward accomplishing the goal.

She explained that their next exercise would be to brainstorm and prioritize the top 5 goals for the Study. Then they would be asked to break into 5 small groups and work on identifying the actions steps (Objectives) to accomplish those goals. However, several members of the Committee felt that the goals had already been identified in the vision statement exercise. After some discussion, the Members decided to generate a list of potential goals but not prioritize them, then to go to their Vision Statement and break out the portions of the Statement which could be defined as goals and discuss them in more detail. Several Members were in agreement that definitions would be

needed for key terms and phrases so that anyone who is hired as a consultant would understand the context in which his/her work would need to be done. The discussion which followed included definition suggestions as well as further detailed thoughts on key concepts.

The generation of ideas for Goals yielded the following:

- ❖ Achieve healthy and sustainable natural areas
- ❖ Achieve environmental, economic and social sustainability
- ❖ Natural resource based economy
- ❖ Limited urban growth (via zoning regulations)
- ❖ Decrease tax rates for agricultural uses land in Miami Dade
- ❖ Cross cultural living communities
- ❖ Houses of worship as part of every local community
- ❖ To increase park attendance to both Biscayne and Everglades National Parks
- ❖ Program for land banking by government creating open spaces
- ❖ Set water quality targets for south Biscayne Bay, for a defined set of parameters.
- ❖ Identify lands essential to the health of South Biscayne Bay and Biscayne National Park.
- ❖ Achieve a healthy and sustainable Biscayne National Park
- ❖ Ensure appropriate land uses on lands essential for health of Biscayne Bay and Biscayne National Park
- ❖ Create mixed use centers that enable people to live, work, and play within walking distance or short transit ride
- ❖ A Miami Dade legal office that honors private property rights
- ❖ Achieve clean fresh water for residents and the environment
- ❖ Create additional parks
- ❖ Water discharges to Biscayne Bay: quality, quantity, timing and distribution that are compatible with a healthy Biscayne Bay
- ❖ High quality of life
- ❖ Clean air and water
- ❖ Finalize Everglades Restoration Project
- ❖ Achieve sustainable urban development
- ❖ Determine and make full use of potential of national parks as pillars of local economy
- ❖ Conservation is part of the culture of the South Dade Community
- ❖ Project expected 2020 and 2050 area agricultural land requirements. Develop alternative land use plans (environmental boundaries, compatible rural development, urban, etc.)
- ❖ Provide housing and infrastructure to meet community needs
- ❖ Outline what compatible enterprises are appropriate for the South Miami Dade Watershed
- ❖ Achieve set water quality targets by definition of sustainable urban development and outlining water quality components of sustainable urban development
- ❖ Land use decisions are compatible with healthy future of national parks and bay
- ❖ Coordination with other groups or effort designed to protect Biscayne Bay
- ❖ Major marketing campaign for Miami Dade agriculture products.
- ❖ Balance flood protection with the needs of the environment
- ❖ Respect the rights of private property owners and protect them from undue and excessive regulations
- ❖ Limit the Plan's applicability to land uses that will have an impact on water quality and flow.
- ❖ Public education program to see our area as a "watershed" vs. another place to build out
- ❖ Continue to restore the South Dade, Everglades, Biscayne Bay environment

- ❖ Profitable and healthy cohabitation between agriculture/urban/environment/parks
- ❖ Protection of property rights
- ❖ Acceptable water quality/quantity for all “camps”
- ❖ Resolve flooding issues
- ❖ Identify the best use for all land areas.

The Members then designated the following phrases from the Vision Statement to be discussed in more detail:

From the first sentence:

1. Private property rights
2. Vibrant

From the second sentence:

3. Economically viable agriculture
4. Healthy Biscayne Bay and Biscayne and Everglades National Parks
5. Compatible enterprises

From the third sentence:

6. Historic quality
7. Rural character

The results of the discussion were:

Sentence #1:

PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS

- ❖ ensure decisions enhance instead of detract from property value
- ❖ “rights” and “values” are different
- ❖ “value” is an important component of property “rights”
- ❖ “use” is component of property “rights”
- ❖ people should be made whole regardless of what happens –future use (this item was identified as a possible GOAL)
- ❖ compensation can occur in many ways
- ❖ what is “fair” compensation
- ❖ farmers do not want to be locked into farming forever/want ability to change uses of their land

VIBRANT

- ❖ what it means should be individual
- ❖ how the community itself defines it
- ❖ getting people out of house and into the community
- ❖ downtown that includes people after 9-5pm (and not just autos)
- ❖ this might be a place where word “thriving” is appropriate
- ❖ this is where “mixed use” is appropriate
- ❖ multiplicity of means as well as needs and leisure pursuits
- ❖ people come and gather and communicate
- ❖ sustainable property values is a by-product of vibrant
- ❖ requires locals as well as outsiders coming in

- ❖ implies scale and good urban design
- ❖ vision of “mega” projects may have changed
- ❖ what makes a community vibrant is the people
- ❖ inter-relations and interaction
- ❖ through design you need to subtly force people to get together
- ❖ institutions and design=exciting

Sentence #2:

ECONOMICALLY VIABLE AGRICULTURE

- ❖ agricultural investments earn a high enough return to induce farmers/investors to continue to invest given market and weather risk
- ❖ things beyond our control will impact economic viability
- ❖ our task is to take data and further refine it
- ❖ agriculture needs to be responsive
- ❖ market conditions define what happens to agriculture down here
- ❖ off shore response is easier right now
- ❖ smaller form, capital intensive is future agriculture in South Dade
- ❖ industry will be in continuing transition
- ❖ looking for study to recommend policies that takes away risk of farming, other decisions are beyond this group’s control
- ❖ develop best land uses by coming up with a plan
- ❖ agriculture needs flexibility to meet changing world and area conditions
- ❖ these are very critical issues to this stakeholder group which holds the most percentage of land in the watershed area

HEALTHY BISCAYNE BAY AND BISCAYNE AND EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARKS

- ❖ fish size and reef size are down
- ❖ push back quality of resources in park
- ❖ do we mean take it as it is now or is it to turn it back into where it was in an earlier time
- ❖ the current trend is not leading to turning it back to an earlier time
- ❖ it is not healthy and sustainable now
- ❖ is it realistic to think we can go back?
- ❖ Is there a cost to the community if we go back to health of an earlier time
- ❖ If it isn’t done now it won’t be possible in near future (5-10 years)
- ❖ Defining water quality standards is how we get to healthier parks
- ❖ Cost and benefit goes into this
- ❖ Some definitions are already on books and we are not meeting them
- ❖ All of this-do you go outside-in or inside out (OVERARCHING ISSUE)
- ❖ Water is at the heart of the issue, single most important but not the only feature
 - Example: birds habitat, terrestrial features
- ❖ Restoration is the key
- ❖ Moving interior development out

COMPATIBLE ENTERPRISES

- ❖ This area has a large population of lower socio-economic population, high tech and other enterprises (employers) would provide jobs
- ❖ Businesses and industries that are compatible with all things already spoken about
- ❖ Area needs all types of jobs, high tech to service oriented

- ❖ To allow more permanent jobs, need entry level jobs
- ❖ Destination, location and attraction
- ❖ Matching work with the labor force, trip lengths, etc.
- ❖ Size of business not as important as matching business with other needs of the area
- ❖ Variety of jobs at different levels
- ❖ Diverse economic opportunities that don't degrade the environment
- ❖ Providing infrastructure an issue? First need to decide on land use

Sentence #3:

HISTORIC QUALITY

- ❖ Like Coral Gables, sense of time and place (balance), community aspect
- ❖ Historic doesn't only mean "old"
- ❖ What makes this area different from other areas of South Florida
- ❖ Community design matters
- ❖ Also retaining the historical
- ❖ What are factors that make this area uniquely rural and historic-
 - Cauley Square
 - Anderson Corners
 - Redlands Hotel
 - Last Chance Saloon
- ❖ Well developed plan and architecture
- ❖ Homestead developing historical districts
- ❖ Look at incentives and encouragement

RURAL CHARACTER

- ❖ Density
- ❖ Not necessarily agriculture; just not urban
- ❖ Can be done with set back of building off the street
- ❖ "feeling" is important, a design concern
- ❖ balancing with buffer areas, so real rural character, not just the "feel" of rural character
- ❖ need to decide; real rural or façade of rural

It was decided that John Hulsey would draft proposed Goals and Objectives using the input outlined above. This would be presented at the next meeting for discussion and finalization.

CLOSING AND ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Carlton ended the meeting with some closing thoughts and thanked all the members. Ms. Fleischer reminded the members to complete their evaluations and turn them in before they left.

The meeting was then adjourned.