

POST-DISASTER REDEVELOPMENT PLAN  
STEERTING GROUP  
KICKOFF MEETING  
FEBRUARY 5, 2010  
10AM

PINELLAS COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT CONFERENCE ROOM

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Commissioner Calvin Harris welcomed the attendees and expressed his appreciation for willingness to participate in this important endeavor. Attendees introduced themselves to the group.

II. PINELLAS COUNTY PDRP VIDEO

A seven-minute video featuring County Administrator Bob LaSala and a briefing of the purpose and elements of the post-disaster redevelopment plan (PDRP) was shown to set the stage to create a more disaster-resilient community. The byline of the video was creating stronger, safer, and better communities.

III. HISTORY AND OVERVIEW OF PDRP

Brian Smith briefly discussed the initial Pinellas County Post-Disaster Redevelopment Guide that was produced in 1994. The purpose of this new effort is to go beyond what the Guide provided. This new Plan is to go beyond the immediate rescue and recovery stage and outline the issues, ramifications, and redevelopment for the following months and years. The new Plan is to provide more than policy direction but also be an operational document to guide redevelopment decisions. It is hoped to learn from others in developing the Plan. With this segue; Brian introduced Mitchell Austin, Urban Planner, from the City of Punta Gorda.

IV. *THE PUNTA GORDA EXPERIENCE – HURRICANE CHARLEY 2004*

Mitchell Austin gave a PowerPoint presentation to go over the City experience to return from aftermath of Hurricane Charley in 2004. The presentation concentrated on 3 areas – housing, public infrastructure, and economic development. On a positive slant of the aftermath, Hurricane Charley became a catalyst in moving forward with redevelopment plans.

Regarding infrastructure, the City found it important to be sure to inventory all your assets and “GPS” everything. New public works structures were relocated in less vulnerable areas. Reconstruction was done to a higher building standard.

Business is key – it cannot be understated. Eighty percent of city businesses were closed due to damage. One year later, 50% still had not reopened. All signs were gone and many landmarks destroyed, so there was a large need when navigating the community. You must have policies and procedures prepared to deal with temporary structures. It was found that private money chases public money, so it was wise to channel public money to strategic locations where redevelopment is desirable. Once public money restores infrastructure, it acts as a catalyst for private reinvestment and redevelopment.

There was opposition to redeveloping housing to new standards in structural construction, design, and site development. It is suggested to hold firm to planned policies and direction. New (public) housing developments are now highly sought after. A grass-roots group began to generate their “own” redevelopment plans – it turned out that group became a catalyst for the acceptance of redevelopment plans already prepared by city staff.

Mitchell noted that if you don’t what you want to do, then you’ll miss opportunities. Another important that was made is to find ways to keep the county population here; relatively few refugees of storm come back. They resettle in their environs.

It was noted that the Economic Development Department works with the larger companies to have COOPs (Continuity of Operations). DT Minich pointed from his experience in Lee County that small businesses like restaurants were up and running after the storm but lacked business because the hotel lagged behind other businesses in reopening.

Jerry Custin, of Upper Tampa Regional Chamber of Commerce, suggested utilizing existing resource groups (like chambers and their committees) for input.

## V. PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Brian Smith discussed the process in preparing the PDRP. He highlighted the seven working groups that will concentrate on select issues. In response to a question about the objective of the PDRP, it was reiterated that the PDRP is to be a comprehensive guide for action and decision-making. The PDRP is intended to address long-term implications in a wide range of physical, natural, and service issues – going beyond the immediate response and emergency operations of the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP). In response to a question about existing redevelopment plans, this effort is not usurping the redevelopment plans that have been adopted. This is intended to be an action plan during extremely difficult situations, where it would be very easy to fall back and just rebuild with little consideration for a stronger, better community. It was also discussed that the PDRP will have connection with other planning efforts – comprehensive plans, local mitigation strategies, and the like. Coordination efforts will be important.

Though this effort is concentrating on County processes, it is realized that the municipalities may use this as a template and coordination with all entities – local governments, business community, and non-profit organizations will be needed. Representatives of these groups will be instrumental in the respective working groups. Commissioner highlighted that it will be incumbent of us to be sure that everyone participates. It is realized that there may be different levels of participation. The City Managers Group was tapped to provide representation on the Steering Group (Dunedin, Pinellas Park, and St. Pete Beach stepped forth). Pinellas Park City Manager, Mike Gustafson, was recognized as attending. St. Pete Beach was represented by its Planning Director, Karl Holley. It may call for meetings with the individual municipalities to solicit their input.

Betti Johnson, of TBRPC, discussed the process of collecting background information for the PDRP and the proposed procedure to collect information about institutional capacity, specific issues and concerns. A survey will be developed on a PDRP website (currently in development stages). Interview will be set up with the members and/or staff to help with background research. Members will be contacted to schedule interviews.

Ms. Johnson stated that it will be attempted to make this PDRP scalable to fit different levels of disasters. She briefly discussed TBRPC companion effort of developing a catastrophic recovery plan – Project Phoenix. There can be parallel issues and concerns that can help in the preparation of the PDRP, for example, disaster housing would be a regional problem, not just a county problem. Human services (public, NGO, faith-based) are becoming a huge concern.

## VI. PROJECT SCHEDULE

Gordon Beardslee presented the proposed schedule for the PDRP. This is expected to be a two-year effort with the BCC taking action on the PDRP in December 2011. He stated that a pending Coastal Initiative grant proposal is driving some of the schedule over the next year or so. Grant funds have been sought to cover the June 2010 to July 2011 time period. To free up time of the Steering Group members, the bulk of the work would be handled at the Working Group level while the Steering Group provides direction. Some of the working groups have some overlap in agency participation due to the nature of the disciplines.

It would be expected that the Steering Group would meet on a quarterly basis as drafts are prepared from the working groups.

Pam Dubov, PC Property Appraiser, stated because of her office's role in damage assessment, the PAO database is a relevant and important resource as to what and where is the value. Sharing GIS resources would be vital, but she cannot do her tasks 25 different ways to satisfy the local governments. An

interlocal agreement may be needed to standardize the processes. She suggested that utilizing the Big C would be a good way to promote the PDRP message for the Beach communities. It was suggested that the PAO be represented on the Financial Administration Working Group; Brian Smith stated that the makeup of the Working Group will be modified to include the PAO.

Lyn Katare, of OMB, briefly discussed the issues with working FEMA in seeking reimbursement. She said that it had taken 2 years for reimbursements from the 2004 storms. The process was very tedious. Document-document-document is paramount. Betti Johnson stated that the books for Hurricane Andrew were finally closed – 18 years after the storm.

VII. SCHEDULING THE NEXT MEETING

Members will be contacted for the next Steering Group meeting.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Given no other business, the meeting adjourned at 12 pm.

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