

# **Pasco County**

## **Watershed Meeting for Flood Impacted Areas**

### **Pinellas Anclote (West)**

#### **May 16, 2016 – West Pasco Government Center Board Room, 8731 Citizens Dr., New Port Richey, Pasco County**

The following is a summary of the Pinellas Anclote (West) Watershed meeting held on May 16, 2016.

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

Ms. Michele Baker (Pasco County Administrator) welcomed the group and thanked attendees for their participation. Commissioners Kathryn Starkey (District 3) and Jack Mariano (District 5) were in attendance and addressed attendees. The Commissioners thanked residents for their attendance and noted that these meetings provided an opportunity for one-to-one interaction with County staff and that staff was here to listen to the resident's concerns. Although there has been progress made within the Duck Slough area, the work is not nearly complete and it is important that residents continue to be engaged in the process to identify potential solutions. Ms. Cindy Jolly noted that BMP #1A and #5A are now operational and that the contractor for the BMP #6 weir modification project started work this morning. The Commissioners and staff look forward to working with residents to find good solutions to address the flooding concerns.

Ms. Cece McKiernan, the facilitator for the meeting, welcomed the group and reviewed the purpose of the meeting, the meeting format and the agenda. She noted the various maps that were on display in the lobby area for use throughout the breakout sessions. A County representative will be stationed at the various breakout session tables to interact with the attendees.

#### **Comments, Questions and Discussions**

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

#### **PowerPoint Presentation and General Discussion**

A PowerPoint presentation was provided to attendees by Ms. Cindy Jolly (Stormwater Management).

The purpose of this Watershed Task Force meeting was to increase knowledge of the Pinellas Anclote (West) Watershed and to allow County staff to work together with residents to improve stormwater management systems within the watershed. The County is seeking the involvement of local residents in the development of potential

solutions. This results of this effort will provide recommendations to the County Administrator for potential projects/solutions.

In 2012, following Tropical Storm Debby, a residential flood task force was formed to address flooding within the Duck Slough watershed. The Duck Slough flood task force has been on-going and has resulted in the identification and construction of Best Management Practices (BMPs) within that area. To address the recent and on-going flooding concerns throughout the County, the County has been meeting with residents from the various impacted watersheds. In order to get a better “big picture” perspective for flooding impacts within the watershed, the County has combined the residential communities from the Pinellas Anclote (West) and Duck Slough watersheds to form this larger task force which will be known as the Pinellas Anclote (West) Watershed Task Force.

The combined area covers approximately 66 square miles. Unique to this area is a United States Geological Survey (USGS) staff gauge that allows residents the opportunity to monitor the water flows and depths via the USGS website. The water bodies within this watershed, typical stormwater flow path, and areas known to have historic flooding problems were reviewed (see PowerPoint Presentation).

The ongoing Pithlachascotee Anclote Conservation Effort (PACE) project is a multi-year project that looks at the impacts and interactions across multiple watersheds (Pinellas Anclote (West), Pinellas Anclote (East) and Pithlachascotee/Bear Creek). Efforts include an update of the stormwater model which looks at flow paths, flow rates, and impacts over multiple watersheds. The model is currently undergoing peer review and will be used to help identify BMPs. The BMP evaluation will include looking for flow diversion opportunities and areas where stormwater can be impounded.

Recent projects within the area include multiple pipe replacement projects and BMPs #1A and #5A which were constructed within Duck Slough. BMP #1A creates increased stormwater capacity in anticipation of rainfall while BMP #5A restored a natural flow path which had naturally become blocked over time. BMP #6 will construct a new weir at a one-foot lower elevation than the existing weir. Due to the structural condition of the existing weir, modification of the old weir was not a feasible solution. BMP #6 has a 120-day contract period with completion of the bulk of the work anticipated within the first 60 days.

The County received grant funding for a Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) project to clean out the Anclote River and to provide bank stabilization. The project will shore-up the banks and prevent erosion but does not allow for dredging activities. The County is currently in the process of verifying access easements.

The County has been working with the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) through the Continuing Authorities Program. The ACOE met with the County and conducted a site visit in April which looked at potential stormwater projects. The program provides 65 percent cooperative funding for approved projects. The remaining 35 percent could be

shared between the County and the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD).

In 2007, Pasco County adopted the Stormwater Utility Fee. Prior to the Utility Fee, stormwater projects were funded through the County's general fund and stormwater projects had to compete with other projects for funding. The creation of the Stormwater Utility Fee allowed the County to dedicate funding to stormwater activities and to comply with NPDES requirements which included an inventory of the County's' existing stormwater infrastructure. The initial Stormwater Utility Fee was \$47/ Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU) which provided enough funding to start the inventory process and for maintenance activities. To maintain the level of service (LOS), the Stormwater Utility Fee was increased to \$57/ERU in 2015. The increase allows the County to continue maintenance activities and to comply with the NPDES requirements but does not provide funding for the Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

CIP projects construct new stormwater assets. The County is continuously looking for funding opportunities to improve LOS and to fund identified CIP projects (see PowerPoint Presentation). To offset costs to residents, the County also aggressively pursues cooperative funding and grant opportunities with agencies such as the SWFWMD, ACOE, and State of Florida. Attendees were asked to think of potential funding opportunities during the breakout sessions as flooding issues are discussed.

Attendees were asked to join the designated County representatives assigned to one of the tables each designated for a specific area within the Pinellas Anclote (West)/ Duck Slough Watershed. Attendees were present for the following areas:

- Duck Slough
- Anclote River Area
- Colonial Hills/ Colonial Manor/ Beacon Hills

The following is a summary of concerns noted during the breakout sessions which was provided to attendees following the breakout sessions.

***Note that the item numbers noted for each station correlate to dots that can be found on the maps (click on the link to the respective map) which provide the specific location for that item.***

Duck Slough ([Map #1](#), [Map #2](#)):

1. Southeast corner of Mitchell Blvd and Trinity Oaks – Resident asked if it was possible to obtain a lot where the day care had previously been proposed to add retention storage volume.
2. Starkey Ranch Development – Resident requested that the drainage direction flow arrows be added to the overall Duck Slough drainage schematic.

3. Trinity Blvd – Resident asked if a stormwater diversion down Trinity Blvd is possible.
4. Little Road north to Anclote River – Resident asked if a stormwater diversion up Little Road and into the Anclote River was possible. This would follow the path that was used for the pumping operation during the 2015 Summer Rains.
5. Combined Sewer System – Resident asked if a combined sewer system was possible. A combined sewer system includes wastewater and stormwater.
6. Reserve at Oakridge/Magnolia Estates – Resident asked if the outfall canal between The Reserve at Oakridge and Magnolia Estates could be widened.
7. Trinity Oaks Elementary School – Resident, after the meeting, commented that during 2004-2005 storms, water drained down the east side of Mitchell Road and the wetlands under the Wyndgate entrance bridge. In fact, the water ran like a river with a very heavy current for days. After the construction of the Trinity Oaks School, run off under the bridge dropped off significantly. During Debby there was run off/drainage but nothing like 2004-2005. It maybe something to look at.
8. Oakridge Canal – Resident stated that all of the water has to come through the Oakridge Canal, which becomes a river during rainfall and comes across Millstone Road. Resident asked if the weir within the canal could be lowered by one foot.
9. General resident statements - Developers keep diverting water. They should be held responsible. Is a Stormwater Impact Fee possible?
10. Sea Level Rise – staff will provide a link to the NOAA Sea Level Rise viewer

Residents referred back to the existing BMPs on the map for the following items:

11. BMP 12 - Staff stated this is where the Drainage Area 110 was to be cleaned. This does not include the wetlands. Resident asked when the pumps would be turned back on.
12. BMP 16 – Staff stated that a permanent lift station is being considered to alleviate the flooding at Persea Court and Mahaleb Drive.
13. BMP 20 – Staff stated that this BMP would use the draft PACE model to do a preliminary evaluation of various weir elevation modifications.

Anclote River Area (Map):

1. Intersection of Mexicali and Avenal Loop - Common flooding area and two cars were lost during Tropical Storm Debby. Flooding was up to the bumpers of cars. Limited access due to massive flooding for emergency vehicles such as fire trucks and ambulances. Three houses were damaged during the rain event last year. The original pipe that was there floods. Houses on the both sides of his flooded and his garage saw some flooding during the last big rain event.
2. Mexicali and Jenner - Pipe was replaced but still flooding occurs. Citizen was wondering if there needs to be debris removed or possibility of a vacuum truck.
3. Mexicali and Adelaide - Pipe was replaced but still flooding occurs.
4. Berm on backside of lots along Atherton Avenue - Resident stated that there is a berm that keeps the water inside the neighborhood, and that the flooding is not caused by the Anclote river but mostly they see flooding from rain events.
5. Putnam and Mexicali Street - Flooding occurs regularly. The citizen was concerned that the water all flows to one pond located in the middle of the subdivision and there is no route for it to go once it's there.
6. Seven Springs Blvd. - has a bridge (between Gorman Drive and Humboldt Avenue) and the bridge may be too small not allowing enough flow for the runoff.
7. West of McCloud Street - There is a drainage ditch that is not being maintained properly and this could be causing a backup of the drainage for that area.
8. Drainage Pond located in the middle of the subdivision - The resident talked about the HOA being volunteer and that there is no real ambition to take the needed precautions in to helping the ponds get cleared. The ponds have debris and possible silt build up.
9. New Mall at Southwest corner of State Road 54 and Little - The residents are concerned about the potential for more run off and that the contractors and developers are not being held responsible for the increase in runoff.
10. State Road 54 – Road inlet not functioning and water stands on roadway.
11. Elfers Parkway Project Possibility - Acquisition of properties that have been flooded and adding drainage storage and recreation facilities such as

parkland, kayak and canoe facilities. The properties are on septic so acquisition will help with keeping the river cleaner.

Colonial Hills/ Colonial Manor/ Beacon Hills (Map #1, Map #2):

1. 3322 Lanark Drive – Mobile home resident with repetitive yard and driveway flooding created by the overflow at the pump station. Residents would like to know when the pumps will be repaired. There are concerns that the two 6-inch temporary pumps are too small. Residents would also like the County to send someone to check the pumps to make sure they are working during rain events. If County does not check on the pumps proactively, it will be too late to stop the flooding.
2. The area around the depression on the north side of Bluejay Drive and east of Peterborough Street floods.
3. Resident has been told by the Board of County Commissioners that the project to install a new pipe south of the Jarvis Pump Station is imminent but that there are gopher tortoises that need to be relocated. Resident would like to know when the project will be started.
4. 5046 Cape Cod Drive – Home was flooded last summer as were the neighboring homes.
5. 5020 Mecaslin Drive – There is too much water flowing in from the wellheads. Stormwater runs down Manor Drive, heads south, and floods Moog Road to the point that the road is impassable.
6. Eastwood Acres and Colonial Manor II – The roads are washed out and in need of repairs.
7. The pond within the Tanglewood Mobile Home Park, west of the Jarvis pump station is silted in and only 3 inches deep in places.
8. The canals within the Tanglewood Mobile Home Park are full of debris that is blocking the flow path.
9. 3041 Buckner Court – Garbage is coming down from the canals and creating flooding.
10. Dove Drive west of Woodcock Drive – The pipe along Dove Drive may be cracked or blocked and there is flooding in this area.
11. Whipporwill Drive and Grand Blvd. – Area consistently floods.
12. Whipporwill Drive and Jarvis Street – The lake in this area floods. The pump station in this area is a sanitary sewer lift station. This area is at an elevation 12 feet higher than the surrounding homes.

13. Lyra Drive and Victoria Lane – Area of repetitive flooding. Resident has asked County to install storm drains in this area. Mile Stretch Road also floods.
14. Bahia Street – The road is washed out between Elkhorn Blvd. and Festivo Drive. The heavy stormwater flows coming down from the north keep the road washed out.
15. Shadow Oaks Drive – This area was flooded from the Anclote River overflowing.
16. Saturn Drive – Resident inquired where the pipe in this area drains to and how the stormwater system in this area works.
17. There are PVAS projects planned for within Colonial Manor I and II. Any stormwater projects that would require pipe construction and road impacts should be coordinated with the PVAS projects to limit road repairs.
18. Colonial Manor II – This area had portable toilets brought-in because septic tanks were not operating due to the flooding. How is the County going to ensure that septic tanks are not impacted by the next storm event?

Mr. George Romagnoli (Pasco County Community Development Director) provided an update of assistance programs and funding opportunities available through Pasco County to attendees. There is currently no waiting list for assistance but there are eligibility requirements (ownership, income, etc.) that will need to be met. The application deadline is June 30<sup>th</sup>. The program can help homeowners recover the cost for insurance deductibles and help with septic system repairs.

The eligibility requirements for the funding assistance are set by the State and unfortunately older mobile homes do not qualify for repair assistance. If a mobile home has repetitive flooding, the County can evaluate if the mobile home may qualify for replacement. Literature for the financial assistance programs was available to residents at the meeting. The County also evaluates the potential for property purchase within areas with repetitive flooding.

Ms. Cece McKiernan ask attendees thoughts regarding the meeting format and future meetings. Attendees liked the format and the opportunities for breakout session discussions specific to their respective areas. Attendees also liked the meeting location and date and time of the meeting.

The County will research issues noted during this meeting and will provide real-time updates via the County's website and e-mail. A representative from the Colonial Manors HOA offered to include updates in their quarterly newsletter to share information with residents who may not have computer access. To allow adequate time for County staff to follow-up on the issues noted during the meeting, future meetings will be scheduled on a quarterly basis.

Residents inquired if the County could consider an impact fee for all new development that could be used to address the flooding issues. Implementation of an impact fee would need to be legally defensible. Per the SWFWMD regulations, new developments are not permitted to create negative downstream impacts and must retain any additional stormwater flows resulting for development within their own development. If they are not creating any new impacts, then there may not be a defensible basis for levying an impact fee.

The Water Management District is currently working towards establishing the same rules for new development across all of the State's Districts. The County's rules must be as strict as the SWFWMD rules but the County can also add additional restrictions. Residents requested the County consider increasing the regulations to require new developments to use a 100-year storm event instead of a 25-year storm event when evaluating stormwater impacts. The County cannot require older neighborhoods, constructed prior to the stormwater rules, to construct stormwater systems that would meet the latest rules so these areas remain in danger of flooding during storm events.

There are 16 watersheds within Pasco County and currently not enough County inspectors to check that the owners of the private stormwater systems are performing the required maintenance. The SWFWMD also has limited staff available to investigate compliance issues.

Ms. Baker thanked the residents for attending the meeting and for providing valuable feedback. The County will be providing updates regarding the concerns identified by attendees.