

Pasco County

Watershed Meeting for Flood Impacted Areas

Pinellas Anclote (West)

March 06, 2017 – Generation Church (Student Axis Building), 1540 Little Road, Trinity, Pasco County

The following is a summary of the Pinellas Anclote (West) Watershed meeting held on March 06, 2017.

Introductions, Meeting Purpose and Background

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 display boards with watershed maps and new developments located within the meeting room for use throughout the meeting. There was one resident in attendance that had not attended any of the previous meetings. County, Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) and consultant staff provided a brief self-introduction to the group.

The purpose of this Watershed Task Force meeting is 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. The results of this effort will provide recommendations to the County Administrator for potential projects/solutions.

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. Resident questions and/or comments are noted in italic font.

PowerPoint Presentation and General Discussion

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

The combined Pinellas Anclote (West) Watershed area covers approximately 66 square miles. The Anclote River runs from the Suncoast Parkway to the Anclote Holiday outfall. Areas known to be impacted by flooding include Colonial Manor (Jarvis Street), Riverside Village, Seven Springs, Woodtrail Village, Park Lake Estates, Veterans Village, Anclote River Estates, Forest Hills and Duck Slough.

Photos showing the before and after conditions were presented for recent projects which included Mitchell Blvd in the area of BMP 1A, Kinsmere Drive BMP 6 and the Anclote River Debris Removal and Bank Stabilization project. BMP 6 is located on the eastern side

of Kinsmere Drive and is nearly complete, pending the replanting of some of the wetland plant species. The Anclote River Debris Removal and Bank Stabilization project was a \$830,000 project that included cost sharing with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) at 75/25 (NRCS/County) for construction and 100/0 (NRCS/County) for technical services.

The Pinellas Anclote West Study with the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) is an on-going project and is anticipated to be complete within the next few months. Funding for this project included the \$1 million-dollar state grant previously obtained. The preliminary flood plain maps will be developed and reviewed with residents via a series of public meetings. Letters will be sent to watershed residents announcing the open house meetings to review the preliminary maps. The SWFWMD with any needed assistance from the County will provide responses to all comments received during the open house meetings.

The Pinellas Anclote West Flood Control Feasibility Study is a partnership with the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and includes looking for upstream areas to impound stormwater for eventual controlled release. The ACOE performed a site visit (October 2016) and has reviewed the stormwater model that is currently under development with SWFWMD. It is proposed to use this underdevelopment existing model as a starting model for this project which will save time and money moving forward. Funding for this project is a shared cost with the initial \$150,000 funded by the ACOE and \$800,000 funded 50/50 by the County and ACOE. Any project identified in the Feasibility Study would be co-funded with the ACOE funding 65 percent and the County funding 35 percent. The County would look to co-funding with the SWFWMD for the 35 percent.

The County also has an ongoing project to add Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system to existing stormwater operable structures and staff gauges to allow for better system monitoring and control.

Funding applications have been submitted to the SWFWMD, County's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and the State of Florida to obtain co-funding for planned projects. The request to the State includes \$2.5 million dollars for needed Countywide culvert replacements.

The Anclote River Development project looks at potential private property purchases to allow for river restoration. The presentation also included information for the ongoing projects at the Jarvis Street Pump Station, Forest Hills West, Riverside Village and culvert replacements.

County staff noted that the current stormwater utility fee, \$57/equivalent residential unit (ERU), is under review for a potential increase to \$95/ERU. The \$38 increase will be used to fund the design of capital improvements projects (\$15/ERU) and to fund additional maintenance activities (\$23/ERU). The County will add additional pipe, ditch and maintenance crews to allow for increased overall maintenance of County maintained stormwater systems. The County will also target design and construction of ten capital

improvement projects per year to allow for construction of new stormwater systems. The Board of County Commissioners will vote on final approval of the increase at the September 13, 2017 Board Meeting.

Mr. Clayton Watkins (Pasco County Current Planning) provided an overview of new developments including; Trinity, Mitchell Ranch East, Asturia, Starkey Ranch and Mitchell 54 West (see [PowerPoint presentation](#)). It was noted that the Trinity development is part of the larger master stormwater systems and that future stormwater flows will follow the current stormwater flow pathway.

Drainage regulations governing new development can be found in SWFWMD Chapter 40D-4 and 40D-40, Florida Administrative Code and the Pasco County Land Development Code, Section 902.2, Stormwater Management. For all new developments, there can be no increase in the rate of stormwater discharge and retention/detention must be provided for increased impervious areas. The presentation reviewed various scenarios for the management and storage of stormwater for new developments.

Do the stormwater rules also address volume requirements?

No, the rules address the rate or speed (i.e. cubic feet per second) of stormwater runoff.

How is the rate of stormwater runoff determined?

The evaluation looks at multiple attributes including soils, topography, flow path and on-site retention.

Weirs on the stormwater ponds control the outfall flow rates. When the water levels in the ponds get high enough, then the stormwater overflows the control structure (i.e. weir) and allow the flow of the stormwater off site.

Are flow rates calculated for the wet or dry season?

The flow rates are based on specific storm events. For example, a 25-year storm event uses 9.5 inches/hour as the design storm.

What if the soils are already fully saturated which could result in greater than 20 percent flows?

The increase in impervious areas and resulting increased flow to the stormwater collection system are part of the reviewed calculations. The stormwater pond collects the initial runoff and buys time to allow the storm to pass. Ponds are sized to match historic flows from property. The stormwater rules assume that the pond has time to recover prior to the next storm event.

Does the County have flow meters in bad areas to allow for the assumed conditions to be validated?

The County uses both historic data and the current United States Geological Survey (USGS) data. There are flow gauges installed at Old County Road 54 and Little Road near River Oaks subdivision and in the Forest Hills area. The USGS gauge data and high water elevations are used to calibrate the stormwater model. New developments are also added

into the existing models. New developments only get credit for storage above the seasonal high water levels.

Resident has lived in this area for 15 years and has noted new development from the Suncoast Parkway to the coastline. Do stormwater models include future development conditions?

No, it would be difficult to accurately predict future development impacts until there is an actual design. The County could use future land use maps but this would also be speculative.

What is overall scheme for future development?

The stormwater models present the existing baseline condition and developments are submitted showing the details for the proposed development.

Are developments that were constructed prior to the stormwater rules required to construct retroactive stormwater systems?

No, this is not required.

The conditions that existed before the stormwater rules were put in place no longer exist and are no longer valid.

That is correct, those same conditions do not exist. The stormwater models and requirements are used to determine the required on-site storage for new developments. Developers have noted the heightened focus on flooding prevention and are conscientious regarding stormwater concerns and requirements.

Are there any limits directing what percentage of development is permitted based on zoning for land use?

There are existing goals for open space areas. The State Road 54 corridor is an urban service area and has been planned for development in the County Comprehensive Plan. Regardless of how the land is used, there is still a requirement to not contribute to flooding and to not increase stormwater runoff rates. The County has neighborhood park requirements for new developments. It was also noted that some new developments are constructing to a lower density than was permitted.

Mr. David Goldstein (Pasco County Attorney's Office) provided an overview of moratorium rules as applied to new development (see [PowerPoint presentation](#)). Moratoriums must be for a limited time and will not permanently stop development. The moratorium must be for conducting a study or for developing regulations. It would not apply to developments that have already been through the regulatory process.

As regulations are developed, are resident's concerns considered (i.e. insurance rates)?

There are regulations that deal with required stormwater storage and requirements for a portion of developments that must be set aside for park areas. The County is also an active participant in the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS) which is a voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management. Through the County's participation and

requirements (i.e. requirement for finished floor at certain elevations) residents are eligible to receive discounted insurance premiums. Because the County is an active participant and looks at processes, rules, outreach, enforcement and planning related to home protection, County residents are eligible for a 20 percent flood insurance discount.

Can residents get information for the elevations for existing homes?

Yes, these are sometimes available. Residents can contact Cindy Jolly (Stormwater Management) to get that data.

The County also has a Building Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS) which provides homeowners an opportunity to get insurance discounts for building code compliance.

Mr. Steve Wertowich (Heritage Springs CDD) addressed the group and shared photos showing street flooding within Heritage Springs (see attachments). *Thankfully, Heritage Springs has enough funding to maintain its stormwater systems. Culverts have been cleaned and Heritage Springs has spent \$170,000 in maintenance. The County's Development Review Committee was warned that flooding was going to be an issue but new communities were approved anyway. Those new communities to the north and northeast are sending more stormwater flows into Heritage Springs causing our streets to continually flood.*

The County is only planning for average events and we have recently had significant rainfall events that need to be planned for. County needs to look at what is going to happen a year from now when the new developments have been completed. The rate at which water is leaving our neighborhood is too slow and there is too much new concrete. It is frustrating that we have been meeting for 5 years and are still seeing flooding conditions upstream. There is no place for the water to go. The County continues to encourage more development and is losing pervious area. We need a change to prevent this from happening and something needs to be done!

The County recognizes that regulations have evolved and that stormwater management is difficult in older neighborhoods. The Anclote River cleaning project was a big help but the County needs to continuously look at options. One option that should be explored is constructing a canal to take water out of the neighborhoods faster.

The ACOE upstream retention study will help and will be completed in approximately 2 years. The County actively continues to look at solutions.

Where would the upstream impoundment be located?

Possibly in the SWFWMD land near the Starkey wellfield but the exact location will need to be determined through the current study.

Will the impoundment also allow on-site infiltration of the captured stormwater?

Yes, it will be held back to allow some natural treatment and infiltration to occur to replenish the aquifer. It can also be used to replenish wetlands if needed.

Can County provide more details for the Jarvis Street Pump Station project?

The pump station is not large enough resulting in the pump station frequently being out of service. The County is looking at potentially redirecting the stormwater flow path and has recently added a 30-inch conveyance pipe downstream of the pump station but water still backs-up at the pump station. The County has applied to the SWFWMD for project co-funding. The Tanglewood Mobile Home Park stormwater pond is getting silted in and County is not helping to keep the pond clean.

Mr. Doug Lines (Oakridge HOA) addressed the group and submitted a letter (see attachments). *Oakridge is at the tail end and the outfall for all the stormwater flows coming from other neighborhoods. There are three issues that need to be addressed, conveyance, conveyance and conveyance! There is a noted flow restriction through the wetlands that is creating the upstream flooding issues. The existing box culvert can handle the flow but the water can't get through the swamp. All Duck Slough water must go through two 36-inch pipes. BMP 1A is completely submerged. The type of maintenance completed for BMP 5A maintenance is what is needed to get water to the Anclote River faster. County needs to clear the swamps both upstream and downstream to allow the water to move.*

What can be done to improve flows through the wetlands?

Both the ACOE and SWFWMD permits would be required to dredge the wetlands. The Oakridge canal was created prior to the SWFWMD regulations. Flooding prevention is a SWFWMD goal. The natural slough was to the north and not at Oakridge Canal. This is a designated wetland area and any maintenance activity within the area requires an ACOE permit. Although the SWFWMD has a maintenance provision, the ACOE does not.

How can we prove that the clearing is maintenance?

The ACOE does not approve wetland maintenance activities.

Wetlands naturally build up over time and need to have maintenance or flow blockages are created. If we can't ditch through the wetlands can we look at redirecting flow to go around?

The County continues to explore options. Residents requested County look at redirecting flows to Pinellas County, to the wellfields, under Mitchell Blvd., etc.

Would the ACOE upstream impoundment study create an impoundment that would hold water to keep it out of Duck Slough?

Yes, the intent of the project is to capture stormwater flows upstream, allow the water to percolate to recharge the aquifer and then to slowly release flows as needed.

There has been a lot of observations that flows to the Anclote River are arriving more quickly. The Anclote typically rose 3-5 days after a rain event and the river would then recover. The water now increases as much as 22 feet in much less time and residents along the river see much higher flow rates. The County needs to look at all areas when addressing flooding concerns, not just neighborhoods.

The stormwater models will look at all impacted areas when looking at flooding concerns and potential solutions.

Ms. Cece McKiernan ask attendees thoughts regarding the meeting format and future meetings. Future meeting will be scheduled at 6-month intervals but residents can always reach out to staff between meetings. Attendees liked the format and the meeting venue. Ms. McKiernan invited Commissioner Starkey and Commissioner Mariano to address the group in closing.

Commissioner Kathryn Starkey noted that flooding concerns have been a challenge and that County staff has been and continues to work hard to find solutions. It has been a benefit getting to know key ACOE leadership which has allowed Pasco County to get high level attention in Washington DC. The County will continue to look for additional funding opportunities including Department of Treasury grants. The County did a great job at coordinating with the SWFWMD to get the cleaning at the Suncoast Parkway completed. The County is also looking at additional opportunities to do more clearing and to remove silt from the Anclote River.

Commissioner Jack Mariano echoed the great positive impacts the trip to Washington DC has had and the attention Pasco County has received from the ACOE upper management in helping to get project movement. He encouraged attendees to reach out to friends to help get the proposed stormwater fee increase implemented. The County needs to continue to look at stormwater conveyance which is key to preventing flooding. Commissioner Mariano noted the recent Sea Pines culvert cleaning project and that the County is doing good work and partnering with the SWFWMD to assist residents.

Mr. Doug Lines complimented Ms. Michele Baker, other County staff and SWFWMD staff for all their efforts and for always trying to find solutions, which can be expensive. The meeting was adjourned.