



V I L L A G E O F K E Y B I S C A Y N E

Office of the Village Manager

Village Council
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Jorge E. Mendia, *Vice Mayor*
Michael Davey
Enrique Garcia
Steve Liedman
Thomas Thornton
Patricia Weinman

Village Manager
Jacqueline R. Menendez

DT: May 30, 2007

TO: Honorable Mayor and Village Council

FR: Jacqueline R. Menendez, Village Manager

RE: EAR Committee Report and Recommendations
Pertaining to Concurrency for Recreation and Open
Space

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Village Council approve the EAR Committee's recommendations and direct staff to incorporate them into the EAR. At your next meeting, the Council will be requested to approve all of the responses to the comments that were raised by the South Florida Regional Planning Council.

EXPLANATION

At the May 15, 2007 Council meeting, staff was directed to meet with the EAR Committee for purposes of obtaining their recommendations on how the Village should meet concurrency for recreation and open space. The Committee met five (5) times and approved the recommendations as presented in the attached document. Their strategy to meet the deficit in acreage is summarized in the attached May 29, 2007 letter from Frank Caplan who Chairs the Committee.

The Committee approved the following properties in the inventory of recreation and open space: Calusa Park, Village Green, Key Biscayne K-8 Center, East Enid Lake Park, Beach Park, Crandon Boulevard Pocket Parks, Community Center, St. Agnes Field, Monaco Fountains, Library Park, and Hacienda Canal Pocket Park. They did not include the bike lanes on Crandon Boulevard and Harbor Drive or the beach.

Based on our population of 11,160 and the standard of 1 acre per 2,500 people, the Master Plan requires 27.90 acres of recreation and open space. The above inventory results in 25.16 acres. As such, there is a deficit of 2.74 acres. The EAR recommendations provide several strategies to meet this deficit.

May 29, 2007

The Honorable Mayor and Members of the Village Council
Village of Key Biscayne
88 West McIntyre Street
Key Biscayne, Florida 33149

Re: Parks, Recreation and Open Space Concurrency Compliance Plan /
EAR Committee Recommendations

Honorable Council Members:

On behalf of the members of the EAR Committee, I am submitting the EAR Committee's Recommendations for Parks, Recreation and Open Space Concurrency Compliance.

Our Committee members include Luis Arrondo, Nancy Doke-Harrison, Henny Groschel-Becker, Dr. Bob Maggs, Willie Borrotto, Ed Meyer and me. We worked on this with Jud Kurlancheek during meetings on May 21st, 22nd, 25th and 29th. On May 29th we discussed, refined and approved a working draft prepared over the Memorial Day weekend. Carter McDowell attended each of our meetings. Council member Weinman attended several of our meetings, and Steve Helfman attended one. Kathy King attended the meeting on May 25th.

Our recommendations include a number of "guiding principles". Foremost among these, as conceived by a majority of our committee, is the proposition that our level of service standards reflect our real-life needs and that generic acre-counting does not suitably respond to our particular needs. Several of our members expressed a different view: essentially that we should count beach acreage to address the concurrency shortfall, and then separately go about the task of solving our real-life needs. We all conceived that our most compelling needs in reality are ball fields and passive parks. We understand that tax revenues will likely decline as property tax relief is enacted. We considered ways and means to correct our level of service deficiencies, recognizing that solutions to the ball fields and passive parks shortfalls only become more expensive and more difficult over time. The projected financing constraints make for hard choices. Despite this, we've reaffirmed priorities that we believe accurately reflect time-and-need tested community consensus, and we've attempted to propose feasible approaches to address these priorities.

We submit this work to the Council for its consideration. We stand by to help in any way.

Sincerely,


Frank Caplan,

EAR Committee Chair

EAR SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE CONCURRENCY COMPLIANCE

May 29, 2007

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Our particular deficiencies lie in active recreation facilities, ball fields and neighborhood passive parks, particularly with a view of Biscayne Bay and emphasizing a bay-oriented natural resource experience. The Village Council will adopt a financially feasible Annual Plan and a 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan to solve the Level of Service (LOS) shortfall of 2.74 acres for recreation and open space as part of the State Growth Management Act-required EAR Amendment.
2. Just as our needs are specific, our concurrency management plan is correspondingly specific. As a first priority, we require facilities that address ball fields and bay-oriented open space either through view corridors, easements, public-private partnerships, long-term leased land and/or land acquisition.
3. We do not achieve our goals merely by counting generic acreage that does not address ball fields and passive parks. Every Council since incorporation has reaffirmed these identical goals. Prior to incorporation, a "find acres" approach enabled a DRI approval that worsened an already existing deficiency and that substantially limited later solutions. We will not adopt that approach for mere technical compliance. Rather, we will address the LOS standard as we have defined it. Our proper stewardship requires that we not dodge our self-defined standards by contriving a "find acreage" lip-service solution to the LOS shortfall. For this reason, lands comprised of beach frontage and bike paths within the road right-of-way are not included.
4. Ball fields are the greatest challenge due to the large contiguous area required and possible impacts on neighbors. To the extent we successfully address that particular deficiency in the short term, we have greater flexibility in addressing other needs, immediately and over time.
5. Assuming and subject to implementation of the Calusa Park Improvement Plan, described below, it is appropriate to count for LOS compliance certain additional lands within the Village, as identified in the next section. This is because we will have addressed our most difficult goal in a best-outcome manner, which will impart more flexibility and better prospects for implementing the balance of the Concurrency Compliance Plan for Recreation and Open Space.

SPECIFIC ACTIONS TO MEET RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE CONCURRENCY

1. Our goal is to renovate the available space at Calusa Park pursuant to inter-local agreement into active playing fields connected via a pathway to Harbor Drive in the

Village. This Calusa Park Improvement Plan also includes a mangrove boardwalk to Biscayne Bay and, if and when feasible, a connector boardwalk to the Tennis Stadium at Crandon Park. If this plan is accomplished, the immediate pressure to assemble large parcels of land for playing fields within the Village is reduced.

- a. Make improvements to the existing pathway from the Village (Harbor Drive) to Calusa Park and establish a boardwalk with limited mangrove displacement, and mitigation if needed, to provide for passive bay-oriented exposure. If possible, continue the mangrove/bay boardwalk experience toward or into the Tennis Center.
 - b. Establish landscape-shielded ball fields in place of existing tennis courts. Utilize dry and already disturbed lands, with minimal impacts and mitigation as needed. It is recognized that this effort will require close cooperation with Miami-Dade County Departments of Parks & Recreation and Environmental Resources Management as well as the Crandon Park Master Plan Committee.
 - c. If (b) is accomplished, our most difficult problem is alleviated by the best, most proximate and most desirable alternative. The underutilized Calusa Park will achieve long-standing plans for natural resources facilities that already have the support of the Crandon Park Master Plan Committee. Safe access to the ball fields from the Village will be realized and a landscape buffer will shield the fields from the boardwalks and Crandon Boulevard.
 - d. Coordinate with Miami-Dade County Parks & Recreation Department and the Crandon Master Plan Committee to mitigate the loss of the Calusa tennis courts by relocating the Calusa-based tennis program to the Tennis Center at Crandon Park, an extensive tennis facility that is under-utilized by the public.
2. The Village, through its Parks & Recreation Department and other channels, will work with the Miami-Dade County Parks & Recreation Department to develop a tennis program at the Tennis Center at Crandon Park for public use.
 3. The Village will continue to pursue active playing fields at Virginia Key. Anticipate financing reserves as needed for fast response if Virginia Key-based local parks and playing fields become viable.
 4. The Village will continue to buy land in the Village, and/or lease land on a long-term basis for recreation and open space purposes.
 - a. Purchase land within the Village limits as consensual purchase and sale opportunities arise, to the extent the means to do so exist and the acquisition possibilities would further our Parks, Recreation and Open

The deficit will be met through one or a combination of the following:

1. An Inter-local Agreement with the City of Miami and/or Miami-Dade County for recreation and open space land in Virginia Key,
2. Long term lease or purchase of land in the Village,
3. Developer contributions as either land or money or both,
4. Land made available to the Village through public/private partnerships, and/or
5. Land that is made available through donations.

The Village-owned property at 530 Crandon Boulevard (0.52 acre) will be included in the inventory of recreation and open space lands when its current use as a construction staging area is complete. The proposed mangrove boardwalk in Calusa Park also will be included once it is constructed (note that the Mangrove boardwalk acreage will be in addition to the 3.00 acres already counted in Calusa Park).

FINANCING STRATEGY

1. An Annual Plan and a Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan are the first priority, requiring immediate response. These efforts should not displace long-term planning for fullest compliance with our specified deficiencies. The FY 08 Village Budget should include funds to engage the services of environmental and recreation planners to develop a site plan and funding strategies for Calusa Park. Once playing fields are addressed, the remaining public recreation and open space goals can be addressed immediately and over time, with greater flexibility.
 - a. The FY 08 budget should include a \$150,000 line item to engage the services of Environmental and Recreational Planners to develop a site plan for Calusa Park that incorporates active playing fields and the pathway and boardwalk elements. If this item receives favorable consideration at the June 12, 2007 Budget Workshop, the Village Manager should prepare an RFP and solicit proposals in July and August 2007. In this manner, the Council can award a contract at its first meeting in October. The EAR Subcommittee will assist in this effort.
 - b. Funding includes a \$7.0M voluntary contribution from the SBR/Fortune project and FY 07 funded line items of \$480,000 for playing fields and \$300,000 for recreational facilities.
 - c. Starting in FY 08, the annual budget should include \$1 million for recreation and open space facilities.
 - d. In order to achieve the Virginia Key playing fields objective, the Village must have in place substantial funds to influence the decision-making process.

2. Absent debt cap relief through long-term borrowing, the projected financing restraints due to pending property tax relief, and the rejection of condemnation as an option to acquire land, land assemblage within the Village is extremely difficult.
 - a. Consider limited and targeted debt cap alteration to enable long-term financing for priority projects.
 - b. Consider grants.

IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING

Prior to and after incorporation, the Village has identified recreation and open space as one of the highest priorities toward sustaining and improving the quality of life in our community. While the Village has been successful in acquiring additional recreation facilities, we still have a projected 2.74 acre shortfall relative to the 2.5 acres per 1000 residents level of service standard. Immediate monitoring steps are:

1. File an EAR amendment consistent with the Compliance Plan, highlighting
 - a. Our specific goals and underlying LOS and compliance rationale,
 - b. The financing sources summarized below, and
 - c. Coordinate with the State Department of Community Affairs for maximum compliance flexibility in view of projected declining tax revenues and our desire to minimize tax burdens while still addressing long-term goals.
2. Village Council should convene a volunteer Implementation Committee to monitor short- and long-term achievement of overarching EAR-Master Plan/2020 Vision Plan concurrency goals.