

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
LAND ACQUISITION & MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (L.A.M.P.) BOARD  
July 24, 2008, 3:30 PM**

Proceedings of meeting held in Conference Room 1A/1B, St. Johns County Permit Building, 4020 Lewis Speedway, St. Augustine, Florida.

Members Present: Mike Adams, Serving as Chairman, Nicholas McAuliffe, Sarah Owen Gledhill, Charles Metcalf, and Lee Gerald

Members Absent: Mark Middlebrook, Rich Turnbull, Warren Leve, and Charles Padera

Staff Present: Tony Cubbedge and Amy Meide, Real Estate

Guests: Greg Dunn, Roger Van Ghent

**1. Welcome / Call to Order**

Mike Adams filled in as Chairman for the meeting in Mark Middlebrook's absence. Chairman Adams called the meeting to order at 3:30 P.M. and welcomed those present. Charles Metcalf, the newest LAMP Board member, was introduced. He has taken over Sarah Bailey's spot as the agricultural representative.

**2. LAMP Business Items**

**a. Approval of Minutes of the March 27, 2008 meeting**

Motion by McAuliffe, seconded by Gledhill. Carried 5/0 to approve the minutes of the March 27, 2008 meeting as submitted.

**b. Focus Area Update**

It was decided to move this item to the "LAMP Workshop Item" section.

**3. LAMP Workshop Item**

**a. Update of FCT applications**

Cubbedge informed LAMP that the applications for the London Tract/Maratea property and the Usina Boat Ramp have been received by FCT and are currently under review. Approximately 91 applications were submitted to FCT to purchase \$260M in land, but only \$63 M will be awarded. Final rankings are expected by the end of September. Once hearing dates are set, Cubbedge will notify LAMP. Those who wish to carpool to Tallahassee will be notified of arrangements. Van Ghent commented that the Usina purchase seemed to go against LAMP's vision, but it was explained by Cubbedge and Gledhill that recreation purchases were a part of the LAMP objectives and that the boat ramp provides public access to waterways.

It was decided to save the discussion concerning the focus areas (b) until last.

**c. Update on Meldrim Conservation Easement**

Cubbedge informed Board that the Meldrim parcel Conservation Easement (CE) Trustees meeting in Tallahassee has been pushed back to Sept. 16. Cubbedge reminded LAMP that our BCC has sent letters of support to Tallahassee. Gerald asked what the property will be used for and had some concerns about the CE language, especially if it will be opened up as a passive park. Cubbedge explained that timber operations will still be allowed, but there are guidelines that must be followed. Also, that a parking lot and public access has already been identified. Old logging trails will be used as hiking trails through the parcel. Gledhill asked if the Board could get a copy of the proposed CE language and Cubbedge stated he would request from the FDEP. Van Ghent asked if there will be any historical education there concerning the turpentine industry and Cubbedge did not know the outcome of the discussions concerning this. Dunn

mentioned that the idea is to open this up for the eco-tourism industry and the historical aspects of the land would tie into that.

Metcalf asked if horses will be allowed on trails and Cubbedge stated he would find out. Discussion followed concerning the multiple postponements of the Meldrim CE meetings in Tallahassee. Owens asked what the purchase price was and both Cubbedge and Dunn stated it was in the \$20 M range.

**d. Update on sales tax poll**

Cubbedge briefed the Board about the upcoming Trust for Public Land (TPL) presentation to the BCC in which they will discuss the outcome of their recent poll results related to funding options that would go towards conservation purchases in St. Johns County. The results will be presented to the BCC on August 5<sup>th</sup> and they will decide if it should be considered for the November ballot. Discussion followed concerning the written document and questions about the language. Gledhill mentioned she heard that transportation/roads may also be funded out of this potential source and expressed her concern about that.

**b. Working Ag Lands – New LAMP Focus**

Cubbedge stated that approximately 450 letters were sent out to the individuals who fell within our focus areas explaining LAMP and the chosen focus areas and about 20 individuals had called to remove their names from the list. Most were small parcel owners (1-2 acres) and no large landowners have contacted us requesting properties be removed. Cubbedge also mentioned many positive phone calls and letters were received from the public. Gerald asked if we could see the focus areas now that some parcels had been removed and Meide explained that the parcels removed were negligible in the sense that from a large scale, you can't recognize any change. Cubbedge further clarified that the removal of parcels did not leave any gaping holes in the corridor plan.

Cubbedge then explained that per direction from Commissioner Stevenson, Meide and Cubbedge selected agricultural areas around the approved focus areas for the possibility of placing CEs over agricultural lands. The state or the County could purchase developmental rights in the form of a conservation easement and the farming can continue. This ensures that agriculture will remain a strong presence in St. Johns County.

Meide then displayed the GIS map showing the previously approved focus areas and the proposed agricultural areas for possible CEs. A hard copy poster of this same GIS map was provided for the Board to look over and make suggestions. Discussion followed and some suggestions were made concerning the maps. Adams asked if the procedure for the notification letters for the agricultural parcels will be handled the same as they were for the conservation focus areas. Cubbedge clarified that the same procedure would be used. Van Ghent then asked if communications have been going on with other Counties about a regional approach. Cubbedge noted there have already been several meetings/symposiums in which different adjacent Counties have gotten together to discuss a regional approach to habitat conservation.

Gerald suggested we add some agricultural parcels further south in order to set up connections to those adjacent counties. Gerald also expressed concern about agricultural CEs and the town of Hastings. Hastings would like to do some economic development and he is concerned how the LAMP conservation efforts will affect this. Cubbedge suggested that we will put in the Hastings' city limit to determine if any areas we've designated in our draft map are within the city bounds. Adams then reminded the Board that he is on the LAMP board as the Hastings' representative so he can report back to them and present to Hastings what LAMP is proposing.

Dunn suggested adding the agricultural areas surrounding the Meldrim parcel to our potential agricultural CE layer and overall, stated that staff picked good areas. Discussion then followed concerning the intention of the agricultural CEs and it was explained by Cubbedge that if the State or County purchases the developmental rights, agriculture practices will continue in St. Johns County. Also, it is presumed that wildlife can still move through these areas and agricultural lands can still serve as connections (vs. a

more intensive development). Discussion then followed concerning how LAMP would prioritize between agricultural CE purchases and purchasing of natural lands if funding did become available.

Gerald then asked for some clarification about Amendment 4 which will be on the ballot in November. Dunn and Gledhill stated that if Amendment 4 passes, it will give those with CEs on their property a tax break.

Gerald also suggested we look at Consumptive Use Permits to see if they exist on any of the lands we've identified so far.

Dunn mentioned the State is about to go through the agricultural CE process and if we had parcels and willing owners identified, we could possibly be used as a 'guinea pig'. Meide mentioned she will have a list of all the owners at the next meeting.

Gledhill stated she thinks the agricultural parcel selection was done well and that she would like to see this used in the SJC Planning Department to better identify our focus areas.

Van Ghent asked if any other parcels have been purchased in Flagler Estates to expand their park and Meide told him that Wil Smith from the Parks and Recreation Department just received a FRDAP grant to purchase ~ eight parcels surrounding the existing park. These parcels will be used to increase the infrastructure at the park. Van Ghent then mentioned the need to protect swallow-tailed kite habitat and if we had any information as to where they were nesting in St. Johns County. Cubbedge said no but staff will look into any existing data.

#### 4. Member Reports

##### Adams

Reiterated to the Board that he is the Hastings representative. He would report back to the City anything the LAMP board needs him to concerning the upcoming potential agricultural CEs.

##### Gledhill

Mentioned Amendment 4 which will be on the ballot in November and wanted to know if the LAMP Board would formally endorse it. Discussion followed and Gledhill said she will email a draft to Tony so that he can distribute to board members.

#### 5. Public Comment

Van Ghent mentioned the charter government and handed out a sheet he put together with the pros and cons of the charter government. He is meeting with the editorial board of the St. Augustine Record next week as a proponent of the charter government.

#### 6. Adjournment

Cubbedge stated that the next meeting is on Sept. 25th at 3:30 pm in Conference Room 1A on first floor of Permitting building. Meetings will continue to be held there until further notice. Adams asked if there were any other matters to discuss, none were presented, and asked to adjourn meeting. McAuliffe called the meeting adjourned at 4:51 p.m., seconded by Gerald, carried 5/0 to adjourn meeting.

An audio tape of this meeting is on file and available for review in the St. Johns County Real Estate Division.

Respectfully submitted by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Amy Meide, Recorder

Approved  Sept 25, 2008  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Middlebrook, Chairman