

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE**  
**City of New Port Richey**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**New Port Richey City Hall**  
**Monday - November 9, 2020 - 6:00 p.m.**





**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE**  
**City of New Port Richey**

**The Environmental Committee of the City of New Port Richey** develops and endorses environmental events in the City, renders annual and special reports as members may deem advisable, and explores new environmental initiatives for the City. The ECCNPR was established in 1989 and recreated in 2011.

**Meeting Minutes**  
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**ANY PERSON DESIRING TO APPEAL ANY DECISION, WITH RESPECT TO ANY MATTER CONSIDERED AT ANY MEETING OR HEARING, WILL NEED A RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS AND MAY NEED TO ENSURE THAT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS IS MADE, WHICH INCLUDES THE TESTIMONY AND EVIDENCE UPON WHICH THE APPEAL IS TO BE BASED. THE LAW DOES NOT REQUIRE TRANSCRIBED VERBATIM MINUTES; THEREFORE, THE APPLICANT MUST MAKE THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS WITH A PRIVATE REPORTER (OR PRIVATE REPORTING FIRM) AND BEAR THE RESULTING EXPENSE. (F.S.286.0105)**

**Required text from City Clerk:** Due to the Novel Coronavirus, the Environmental Committee will be conducting its meetings through the use of Communications Media Technology (CMT) until further notice. The City Council chamber will NOT be open to the public for these meetings. During the meeting, comments may be emailed to [doeb@cityofnewportrichey.org](mailto:doeb@cityofnewportrichey.org) or you may call (408) 650-3123, access code: 206-817-797. Please keep in mind that access to the meeting by phone may be limited and email access may be delayed. By waiting until the meeting to make a comment, you may not be able to participate in the meeting. The Environmental Committee reserves the right to proceed on any item whether public communications are delayed or otherwise obstructed.

**Required text from City Clerk:** For those of you attending in person, you will be required to follow social distancing guidelines. Currently, the Chamber is set up in a work session format for Council so there are a limited number of chairs available at the tables. If you have more people show up than chairs available, you may use the gallery seating but maintain a 6ft. distance between seats. For example, we have been putting Department Heads at the ends of each row and then alternating every other row. Barret will need to coordinate with Chris Fitch to have someone in the lobby to take everyone's temperatures before proceeding to the Council Chamber.

**Note from Chair:** As of composition of the agenda, the Chair does not have additional information on accessing the meeting via electronic technology. Original information is as follows:

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## Welcome

### **Roll Call (\* Request for confirmation of Patty Jackson's appointment to the committee)**

Dell DeChant, Committee Chair; Barrett Doe, City Liaison; Elaine Smith, Director NPR Parks & Recreation; Rose Mohr, Vice-Chair; Linda Blake, Secretary; John Kane, Member; Patty Jackson will be appointed as a Committee member at the next City Council meeting; Mike Peters, City Councilman; Don Blake, citizen.

**Vox Pop** (3 minutes for members of the audience – on items not on the agenda)

**Approval of Minutes** – October 12, 2020 Approved unanimously

**Approval of Agenda and request for additional items** Approved unanimously

**Liaison Officer Report:** Barret Doe, City Liaison -

Barret is asked to brief committee on meeting protocols and policies going forward

Note: Advice from City Liaison is requested on all items before the committee

### **Special Items:**

**Elaine Smith, Director of NPR Dept. of Parks & Recreation.**

- **Presentation on Grey Preserve, Phase II – see related message & map**
- Elaine is asked to give a brief report on the status of Phase II planning and development:
  - (1) update on current plans
  - (2) what is coming next (and when)
  - (3) timetable on development
  - (4) has CC approved and (4a) will ENV COM be asked for review and recommendationQ & A with committee after presentation

The Committee was given a map (a draft) that was created for a \$200,000 grant application, which was received. There is flexibility in the actual final design. The original 80 acres must not have hard surfaces because the project was funded by the Florida Community Trust Fund. Only crushed shell and boardwalk can be used. 14 additional acres was a separate purchase by the City. The additional acres are part of the Preserve. There will be a connection bridge from the second parcel to the original parcel. \$70,000 was paid to an engineering firm to do the actual design for Phase II, which is a 7 acres portion of the 14 acres. The total cost of Phase II of the project will be about \$1.4 million. Phase II will have a parking area and rest rooms, boardwalks and trails. It appears that there will be a place for bicycles to be locked on a bike rack, encouraging people to ride bikes to the Preserve and set out on foot through the Preserve. The Committee strongly opposes allowing bicycles to move through the Preserve. The Committee recommends continuing the prohibition of dogs in any part of the preserve. The Committee watched a short video of a baby Gopher Tortoise at the Preserve. These would be threatened by domestic animals, especially dogs. There is a three or four year plan with several phases. Patty mentioned that the boardwalks become slick when they are wet. Public Works is aware of it, and they are considering modifying the situation.

### **Business of Committee – On-Going Projects and Events**

**Vox Pop (VP) for items in this section**

**Agenda Reviewer Report** (John) John reports on any items on upcoming City Council agenda that may be of interest to the Environmental Committee. John told the Committee that he discussed with one of the City Councilmen about the part of Main Street Landing that runs along the river. He declined to explain any plans.

**Update on Committee Membership, and City Policies** (Barret and Dell)

**Committee Membership Considerations** New member, Patty Jackson, completed required novitiate period and will be approved by the City Council for official membership on the Committee.

Once again, we discussed having two open positions on our Committee and the request that we allow two non-city residents to be on the Committee, just like other City Committees. Dell will approach the City on this issue.

Barrett mentioned that there will be improvements to Railroad Square. The pandemic and ongoing protests have somewhat interfered with moving forward on any plans.

**Green City initiative: Update and Note of submission status** (Barret) – No update. Possible information will be available by next meeting.

**Update on inclusion of City Property in Community Garden Ordinance (from annual report/proposals over several years)** (Dell and Barret) Dell receives report from Development Office that current plan is not to have an ordinance to allow for use of city property for community gardens, but still to allow them on city property. No formal communication has been received on this.

- Barret is asked for additional information. No update.

**Urban Agriculture Program** (Dell) Grand Gardens looking good. Madison Gardens looking good.

**Library Seed Lending Program** - No Update on the program (Dell)

**Fruit Tree Peninsula** (Barret) Trees are looking better with a bit of care. Dell mentioned that the cultivars of the Loquat trees might be susceptible to fire blight.

**Tampa Bay Resiliency Collation** (Dell & Barret) See: [http://www.tbrpc.org/resiliency-current\\_members/](http://www.tbrpc.org/resiliency-current_members/)

See also: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WCcEYJVA9NKBdCOORCI3NnPbw4fM2IsJ/view>

- Routine update on City's participation in this committee of the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council and any new developments since last meeting.

## **Business of Committee – New Projects (and projects of limited duration, including annual events)**

### **VP for items in this section**

**Earth Day Events:** Report from Committee Chair, Linda Blake. Communication with Andi indicates that no events can be scheduled at this time. The City will review the policy in December.

**Review of Alleys in the city:** The City studied the alleys, assessing their condition. If there is an issue with an alley, it will be addressed on an individual basis. There is no master plan. There is no particular action by the City on this issue. If an alley is paved, the City will maintain it.

**Monarch Butterfly City** (Dell & Barret) - Need to schedule formal recognition of the City's award of MBC status. Need to assign leadership:

\* Links <http://monarchcityusa.com/> \* <http://monarchcityusa.com/members>

There are signs up at the entrance to the City that tell that New Port Richey is a Monarch City. Milkweed seeds are available at Rose's Bistro.

**Floating Planter Project** (Barret) – No update. Project appears to have been abandoned. *Last listing of this item, unless continued listing is desired by committee.*

**Library Market** – Tasty Tuesday Market has resumed every week just outside of the Library. A Second Saturday Market has being initiated, as well, according to shoppers' requests. Markets apparently follow City protocols limiting gatherings to 50 persons or less.

**City Work Sessions on Projects of Relevance to Committee** (John and Barret) John is concerned about the townhomes that are being built on Central and Madison. Barrett had very little information about this. John will

**Promotion of Sustainability Projects** (Linda and Dell) Linda's list of projects for the Web Page. Linda volunteered to research and write information for the City website.

**Annual Report: Items for Inclusion** Members are asked to offer one proposal for inclusion in the annual report of the committee. Committee asked to set a date for the presentation (maybe February). The next meeting will be devoted to our Annual Report.

John wants more recycling receptacles available in the City. Also, the Committee is concerned about glass and styrofoam recycling.

## **Events**

**Seasonal Events (Information only)** - Note: All events supported and endorsed by Environmental Committee.

- As of now all seasonal events in the city are suspended. Chair has requested to be notified by Elaine and Andi (and Barret) when events can be planned. As of now, none are planned or authorized.

### **Calendar 2021:**

January 9, 2021 - Collards Festival at Grand Gardens\*, 6<sup>th</sup> annual (Host Grand Gardens/New Port Richey FarmNet)

January 15, 2021 Arbor Day, 32<sup>nd</sup> annual (3<sup>rd</sup> Friday in January) (Host ENV COM)

March 20, 2021 The Florida Loquat Festival, 7<sup>th</sup> annual (Host Ecology Florida)

August 16, 2021 - Okra Occasion, 6<sup>th</sup> annual (5:00 – 8:00) (Host ENV COM)

October 10, 2021 – Sweet Potato Round-Up, 5<sup>th</sup> annual (11:00-1:00) (Host Friendship Farms and FarmNet)

### **Meeting Schedule for 2020**

"The environmental committee shall meet once every ninety (90) days unless it determines to meet more frequently."

\* Committee has determined it is best to meet monthly - 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday, at 6:00 p.m.

#### **Next Meeting**

**December 14, 6:00 p.m. – City Council auditorium**