



# SPIKOWSKI PLANNING ASSOCIATES

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Fort Myers Beach Town Council  
**FROM:** Bill Spikowski  
**DATE:** June 28, 2006  
**SUBJECT:** Evaluation and Appraisal Report — Follow-up from June 13 Workshop

At the Town Council's June 13 workshop on the E/A report, many subjects discussed in the draft report were commented upon by council members.

At the end of the workshop, Mayor Boback asked me to suggest an approach for the council to use to move forward based on the comments that were made.

After reviewing and analyzing all of these comments, I have identified seven issues where two or more council members questioned the same statement or conclusion in the draft report. Each of these issues is identified on the following pages.

My suggestion is for the council to review each of these seven issues at the next available council meeting, along with any other issues raised by council members. The council should decide which types of changes should be made in the draft E/A report prior to sending it to the Florida Department of Community Affairs for their informal review.

Upon receipt of the state's review comments, the council can schedule a formal public hearing to consider adopting the entire E/A report with whatever modifications the council chooses to make.

*cc: Town Manager, Town Attorney, Community Development Director, Local Planning Agency*

<b>Page</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Summary of Council Comments</b>	<b>Response and Recommendation</b>
22	Density for redevelopment of mobile home parks (Gulf Colony and Red Coconut)	“The Comprehensive Plan shouldn’t allow such high densities for redevelopment of the town’s existing mobile home parks.”	<p>The existing density of these parcels is about 27 mobile homes per acre. The Comprehensive Plan contains two similar redevelopment plans. The plan on page 3-8 was proposed by staff and would allow up to 10 dwelling units per acre. The plan on page 3-9 was proposed by the owners of the Red Coconut and would allow up to 15 dwelling units per acre. The Town Council decided in 1998 to allow either version; Policy 4-F-2 of the adopted Comprehensive Plan thus allows up to 15 dwelling units per acre.</p> <p>The draft E/A report doesn’t propose reexamining density levels for future development anywhere in the town. The council could choose to initiate the reevaluation of these density levels, or any others, as part of the E/A process. The council could also do so at any other time through the annual plan amendment process.</p>
24-39	Roundabout at foot of Sky Bridge	“A roundabouts is not a good idea at the foot of the Sky Bridge.”	<p>Decisions on specific traffic control measure such as roundabouts or traffic signals shouldn’t be made through the comprehensive planning process. The E/A report as drafted discusses roundabouts in considerable detail because of great community interest in easing traffic congestion, but it does not propose that any decision be made during this process, or through Comprehensive Plan amendments, as to the advisability of roundabouts at Fort Myers Beach. The drawings and discussion about roundabouts could be deleted from the E/A report but such action would impoverish the discussion of alternatives to current traffic flow patterns.</p>

<b>Page</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Summary of Council Comments</b>	<b>Response and Recommendation</b>
28-31	New beachfront park	“A new park would benefit the developer but would have to be maintained by the town.”	<p>The E/A report doesn't address the question of park maintenance; the implicit assumption was that the town would insist on owning the new park to maintain control over its use, with maintenance being an incidental cost that cannot be divorced from the control of real estate.</p> <p>The developer of the adjoining property would probably be quite content to assume the cost of maintaining the park if he retained control over its improvement and use. If the cost of park maintenance is the town's major concern, that could be resolved simply by not assuming ownership. However, it would be very much in the town's long-term interest to own and control the use and evolution of such a park if it were to be created, despite the unavoidable cost of maintenance.</p>
20, 33, 34	Reopening of Center Street	“The reopening of Center Street has already been rejected by the Town Council.”	<p>Nothing in the E/A report supports the reopening of Center Street. The council has apparently reached the same conclusion independently, that the considerable costs outweighed only minor benefits.</p> <p>The E/A report can be easily amended to note that during the preparation of the report, the Town Council has decided not to reopen Center Street; or all discussion of Center Street could simply be eliminated from the report.</p>
40-42	New bridge to San Carlos Island	“There are no funds to build a new bridge to San Carlos Island and it shouldn't be allowed to run across the Beach Elementary School.”	<p>The new bridge to San Carlos Island as proposed by the Metropolitan Planning Organization is considered “financially feasible” by the year 2030. If built, it would be funded solely by tolls collected from drivers entering and leaving Estero Island. Despite local rumors, there has never been any consideration given to building a bridge or road of any road across the Matanzas Pass Preserve or through the Beach Elementary School. The discussion of this bridge in the E/A report is for informational purposes only; the E/A report as currently drafted takes no position on its desirability or the likelihood of a new bridge ever coming to fruition.</p>

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43-45; 49-56	Underground power lines	“Underground power lines are too expensive to install and have problems of their own.”	The discussion in the draft E/A report is frank about the high cost of underground power lines and repair difficulties. However, given the council’s comments, the conclusion on page 56 should be changed. The current wording (“It remains highly desirable to convert the main power lines along Estero Boulevard to underground lines”) should be changed to: “Despite the many virtues of underground power lines, the cost to taxpayers would be too high for the benefits that would be provided.” In addition, if the council is opposed to underground power lines on grounds other than cost, the E/A report should be revised to initiate Comprehensive Plan amendments to Policy 1-B-5 to eliminate the direction for the town to develop a program for placing utilities underground.
70	Beach renourishment	“The council no longer supports beach renourishment.”	<p>This comments were in reaction to two statements in the draft E/A report. The first was this citation from page 5-7 of the Comprehensive Plan: “. . . a large renourishment project for Estero Island would be extremely beneficial to the town.” The second was the report’s statement that “. . . the town has become decidedly less enthusiastic despite a funding formula that is very generous to the town.”</p> <p>If the council decides that the phrase “decidedly less enthusiastic” misstates its current position on beach renourishment, that phrase in the E/A report should be strengthened to match current policy.</p> <p>If the council opposes beach renourishment on principle (rather than objecting to the funding formulas, easement provisions, or coastal engineering details), the draft E/A report should be revised to initiate Comprehensive Plan amendments to Objective 5-D and Policy 5-D-1 to substitute measures other than beach renourishment as the town’s preferred response to eroding shorelines.</p>