



Alachua County Environmental Protection Advisory Committee

*Jay Rosenbek, Chair
Christopher Stoney, Vice-Chair
Summer Waters, Staff Liaison*

EPAC SEPTEMBER MEETING MINUTES

Prepared by Neesha Anderson
September 3rd, 2024 - 6:00 – 8:00

EPAC Members attending in person: Neesha Anderson, George Papadi, Holly Florence, Jay Rosenbeck, Jan Frentzen, David Vaina, Heshan Illangkoon, Bettina Moser

Staff attending in person: Summer Waters

Guests attending in person: Seven members of the public were present, see sign in sheet for the meeting.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 PM.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Jan Frentzen motioned to add a discussion of the Tara Forest West development to the agenda after the staff presentation. Holly Florence seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes

Bettina Moser motioned to approve; Jan Frentzen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Administrative Updates

1) Overview of attendance policy

The current attendance policy was sent to EPAC members. Enforcement will begin Oct. 1st with the new fiscal year. EPAC members are encouraged to still stay home if they aren't feeling well.

2) Election of EPAC Secretary

There were no volunteers for secretary. The committee will revisit at the next meeting.

3) Staff Presentation

Andrew Coniglio, Forester with Alachua County Growth Management, provided an overview of tree health and tree protection in Alachua County. Andrew discussed Heritage trees, regulated trees, tree anatomy, tree pruning basics, and tree mitigation.

5. Tara Forest West Development Discussion

Jay Rosenbek provided an update on the Tara Forest West Development, which is planned in the city of Alachua. The proposed development is adjacent to mill creek sink within sensitive karst area. Jay read from the article that was published regarding the development. It was anticipated that the Alachua County Board of County Commissioner's (BoCC) would discuss the project at their meeting on September 24th. Summer reiterated that individual EPAC members could attend the BoCC meeting and speak on their own behalf with or without a motion from EPAC. The committee decided to craft a recommendation in time for the BoCC meeting.

Vice-Chair Chris Stoney made the following motion: *EPAC expresses the strongest possible support for the Alachua County Environmental Protection Department and Board of County Commissioners' efforts to eliminate or minimize the environmental damage to surface and underground water, including the Mill Creek Sink, Hornsby Springs, Florida Aquifer, and Santa Fe River, that will result if the City of Alachua Commission approves the Tara Forest West development. To achieve this goal, we endorse the use of all possible data-based, legal and political tools and arguments.*

Bettina seconded. The motion was opened for discussion. There was some discussion about the various water bodies that could potentially be impacted by the development. Hornsby Springs, Santa Fe River, and the Florida Aquifer were discussed although additional information was needed to ensure an accurate answer.

After further discussion Vice-Chair Chris Stoney presented a modified motion that read as follows: *EPAC expresses the strongest possible support for the Alachua County Environmental Protection Department and Board of County Commissioners' efforts to eliminate or minimize the environmental damage to water resources and karst features that may result if the City of Alachua Commission approves the Tara Forest West development. EPAC considers the potential consequences of degradation of these resources by this*

development unacceptable, therefore we endorse the use of all possible data-based, legal, and political tools and arguments to protect these invaluable resources.

George Papadi seconded the revised motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Public Comment

There was no public comment

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:09 pm