



Pinellas County

Staff Report

File #: 16-1220A, Version: 1

Subject:

Ordinance amending the Future Land Use and Quality Communities Element of the Comprehensive Plan to establish the Crystal Beach Community Overlay (first hearing).

Recommended Action:

Conduct a public hearing on the proposed ordinance to establish the Crystal Beach Community Overlay and authorize its transmittal to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (FDEO) for review, with a second adoption public hearing to be scheduled upon receipt of comments from the FDEO.

Strategic Plan:

Practice Superior Environmental Stewardship

3.2 Preserve and manage environmental lands, beaches, parks, and historical assets Deliver First Class Services to the Public and Our Customers

5.1 Maximize partner relationships and public outreach

Summary:

The Local Planning Agency (LPA) conducted a public hearing on July 14 and found that this proposed amendment to the Future Land Use and Quality Communities Element of the Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan (Plan) to establish the Crystal Beach Community Overlay (Overlay) is consistent with the other Goals, Objectives and Policies found in the Plan. Further, the LPA unanimously recommended that the Overlay be adopted by the Board of County Commissioners. (Revisions to Policy 1.24.4 were recommended by the LPA and have been incorporated into the attached proposed Ordinance. These revisions are detailed in the LPA Recommendation section on the first page of the attached LPA Staff Report.)

Specifically, this amendment would add the Crystal Beach Community Vision, Objective 1.24 and associated Policies 1.24.1, 1.24.2, 1.24.3, 1.24.4, 1.24.5, 1.24.6, and 1.24.7 to the Future Land Use and Quality Communities Element of the Plan. The proposed amendment has also been reviewed for consistency with the Local Government Planning and Land Development Regulation Act (Growth Management Act), Chapter 163.3161, Florida Statutes, as amended.

Background Information:

In 2008 the Plan was amended to provide for the development and application of Community Overlays as a means of recognizing distinct communities in Pinellas County. The Board supported the purpose and need for Community Overlays as a means of allowing citizens to better participate in planning for their future, as well as enabling the Board to understand and better plan for a community by recognizing and understanding its existing and desired characteristics and features. Subsequently, the Alderman, Tierra Verde, Ozona and East Lake Tarpon Communities requested and have gone through the process of having Community Overlays adopted into the Plan.

In March of 2015 staff was invited to make a presentation at the Crystal Beach Community Hall on

the purpose and process of adopting Community Overlays to a group of approximately 50 Crystal Beach residents who had indicated a desire in creating an overlay for their community. With staff guidance, a core group of residents who attended that meeting have subsequently drafted the proposed Community Vision, Objective and Policies, and the boundary for which they would apply, for consideration to be adopted into the Plan. Staff reviewed and commented on these materials and is of the opinion they are consistent with the Plan's objectives for establishing Community Overlays.

Between May 16 and June 13 of 2016, staff conducted a vote to determine the level of support Crystal Beach property owners had for the Overlay. Property owners within the boundary were sent an informational packet that included a cover letter explaining the purpose of the mailing, a one-page 'Fast Facts' document explaining what community overlays are and their intended purpose, a copy of the proposed Crystal Beach Community Overlay vision, objective and policies, a boundary map for which they would apply, and a pre-addressed, postage-paid voting card to be sent back to the Planning Department.

Nearly 500 property owners voted, with approximately 90% voting in favor and 10% opposed. The voting packets mailed out by the County to property owners stated that if at least 60% of returned votes were in favor of the initiative, staff would support bringing the proposed Overlay to the Board for a final decision on whether it will be adopted into the Plan. Given this threshold was exceeded by 30%, and roughly 50% of eligible property owners participated in the vote, staff is supportive of adoption. (It should be noted that residents of the Crystal Bay Mobile Home Club, which is adjacent to the Crystal Beach Community Overlay Boundary, were inadvertently mailed voting packets, but their votes were not included in the final results.)

Staff has consistently advised the residents who drafted the Overlay that they will need to be able to demonstrate extensive community outreach was conducted on the initiative, so community-wide engagement can be documented. Staff is of the opinion that sufficient community outreach was conducted by the drafting group. A summary of the community outreach efforts includes:

- four community meetings held by the Crystal Beach Community Association where presentations were given on the concept and/or status of the Overlay;
- an information table at the annual Crystal Beach chili cook-off (a well-attended annual community fundraiser);
- a children's essay writing contest that was designed to spur conversation about the Overlay;
- information tables at the community post office during the voting process (The majority of Crystal Beach residents receive their mail from PO boxes at the post office. Tables were set up for approximately 24-36 hours during the voting timeframe and an estimated 300 residents were engaged on the topic.);
- written communications including an article in The Scoop, a community newsletter, and seven community eBlasts, which reach 632 resident email addresses; and
- informational signage posted including at the post office and throughout the community, providing information on who to contact in the community or at the County if they had questions concerning the Overlay, or if they lost their voting packet or did not receive one and wanted to request one.

Fiscal Impact:

N/A

Staff Member Responsible:

Renea Vincent, Planning Director

Partners:

Crystal Beach residents

Attachments:

LPA Staff Report

Proposed Ordinance - Clean Copy

Proposed Ordinance - Strikethrough Copy

Proposed Ordinance, Exhibit A - Overlay Boundary Map

Sample Property Owner Voting Packet:

- a. Cover Letter
- b. Community Overlay 'Fast Facts'
- c. Crystal Beach Community Overlay Document
- d. Boundary Map for Proposed Community Overlay
- e. Sample Voting Ballot

Supporting Historical Documents:

- a. "A History of Crystal Beach"
- b. "Crystal Beach, Florida: A Better Place to Live"
- c. Revised Plat Map of Crystal Beach

Crystal Beach Community Association Letter of Support