

**Leon County Post Disaster Redevelopment Plan Focus Group Meeting
Tallahassee Renaissance Center - Tallahassee, Florida
August 16, 2011 – 9:30 am**

Meeting Summary

Attendees

Denise Imbler
Susan Poplin
Lamarr Kemp
Robby Powers
Gary Oberschlake
Tony Park
Richard Smith
Kevin Peters
Janice Watson
Keith McCarron
Larry Strickland
Bruce Ballister
Steve Hodges

Representing

Apalachee Regional Planning Council (ARPC)
Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department (TLCPD)
Leon County Housing and Human Services
City of Tallahassee Emergency Management
City of Tallahassee Electric Company
City of Tallahassee Public Works
Leon County Emergency Management
Leon County Emergency Management
Apalachee Regional Planning Council
Apalachee Regional Planning Council
Capital City Builders Association
Apalachee Regional Planning Council
Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department

Welcome

Denise Imbler welcomed everyone to the Leon County Post Disaster Redevelopment Plan (PDRP) Focus Group Meeting and asked the attendees to introduce themselves and the agency they represented. Ms. Imbler announced that because Lamarr Kemp had another meeting to attend, the Housing Strategy Work Group item would be discussed first.

Form Housing Strategy Work Group

The group was asked to identify key components for developing a housing strategy and potential participants for a housing strategy work group. Lamarr Kemp reported that it was the Leon County Housing Authority's strategy to make available as many units as possible for housing during the 90-day post disaster re-development period. Richard Smith requested an inventory of available rental units, including using assumptions that university students had gone home and units would be available to house coastal residents on a more long term basis. The group discussed providing the information as a map layer in the supporting information. Mr. Smith gave as an example: after Hurricane Katrina, Tulane University closed for the remainder of the semester, which left numerous student dormitories and apartments available to be used as temporary housing during the redevelopment period. Robby Powers asked whether or not an inventory as suggested or a list of realtors would be more beneficial. Ms. Imbler agreed that at a minimum, the scope of work should include this type of inventory as a map layer. Mr. Kemp suggested that a representative from the Tallahassee Board of Realtors be invited to participate in the housing strategy work group. Richard Smith emphasized that available apartment rentals were the most important statistic, because following Hurricane Andrew in South Florida, FEMA housing relocation funding was not enough to pay the higher

rental fees for condos or houses. Richard Smith, Kevin Peters, and Lamarr Kemp volunteered to sit on the Housing Strategy Work Group. Mr. Kemp suggested that representatives from the local housing and financing authority and the local affordable housing authority be invited to sit on the housing strategy workgroup and stated that he would email Ms. Imbler with names and contact information for both. He provided preliminary information on the Housing Finance Authority, Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, and Leon County Volunteer Services. Mr. Kemp also noted that Volunteer Leon may be a good resource to include explaining that the organization had an excellent short term immediate disaster response group with 1,000 volunteers already enrolled. It was discussed that Volunteer Leon might be asked to provide services after the initial post-disaster 90-day period, especially as relocated individuals transition from immediate temporary housing into long term relocation and care. Ms. Imbler asked if Volunteer Leon was a substitute for the Red Cross and Mr. Smith explained that they are complimentary organizations with the Red Cross concentrating more on mass care and Volunteer Leon focusing more on specific needs. Ms. Imbler and Mr. Kemp were going to coordinate work group participants and identify potential meeting dates to work on the strategy.

Hazard Identification and Vulnerability Assessment Chapter Update

As an update to efforts on the Hazard Identification and Vulnerability Chapter, Ms. Imbler explained that Tallahassee-Leon County GIS will be provided a purchase order for the Hazard Identification and Vulnerability Assessment Chapter. She explained that they would identify all the repetitive loss and acquisition parcels as part of the PDRP plan. She noted that the Vulnerability Assessment Chapter should be completed by December or January. A short discussion ensued on the building code requirements before and after Hurricane Andrew in 1994. Richard Smith stated that Leon County had not adopted wind resistance requirements as strict as the ones now in effect in South Florida post Hurricane Andrew. Ms. Imbler will give the Focus Group an update on their progress with the Vulnerability Assessment Chapter at the October meeting.

Review of Draft Local Plan Integration Section

Ms. Imbler reviewed the summaries provided in the handout stating that the three major plans which the PDRP would need to integrate with were the Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS), the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) and the Tallahassee-Leon County Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan). She stated that on initial review, it appeared that there were things in the LMS that might need to be updated to be consistent with the PDRP. Ms. Imbler emphasized that it was the intent of ARPC staff to refer as often as possible to other plans instead of writing all new material. She also noted that local plan integration was a relatively small part of the PDRP.

Steve Hodges reported that the Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department (TLCPD) anticipates updating the Conservation Element of the Comp Plan. Susan Poplin concurred on the update and indicated the timing might be sometime in 2013. She also concurred that the descriptions of the Comp Plan in the draft prepared by Ms. Imbler were adequately descriptive of the Comp Plan as it relates to the PDRP. Ms. Poplin added that the TLCPD also had on its

agenda the update of the Intergovernmental Coordination Element of the Comp Plan. Richard Smith explained that the PDRP will be the bridge covering the time period between the immediate emergency declaration and the long term redevelopment and would assist in determining how to lay out the community in regards to land use. Mr. Smith also noted that there was currently an ordinance in place which gave local government officials a brief overview of what they can and cannot do in a post disaster redevelopment situation. He stated that it had been prepared by Ray Burroughs and was most often referred to as the "recovery ordinance". Mr. Smith and Mr. Peters agreed to research the official title and to provide Ms. Imbler with a link to the document. The group was of unanimous consent that the PDRP needed to be consistent with the previously referred to "recovery ordinance". Susan Poplin stated that it was her understanding that in a post disaster situation, local government decision makers would work from the PDRP for recovery and redevelopment strategies. She suggested that the TLCPD should at the appropriate time look at integrating those strategies, perhaps by referencing the PDRP, into the Comp Plan.

Richard Smith emphasized that the restoration of electric service should be a major purpose of the PDRP explaining that no other types of infrastructure recovery could begin until power service had been restored. The group discussed whether it was beneficial to have an electrical sub-element to the Local Plan Integration and determined that prioritization would adequately address the topic. With regard to stormwater facilities, Tony Park noted that there were on-going major efforts by both local governments to implement the desire of the recent stormwater ballots. A suggestion was made to coordinate with growth management staff, Karen Jumonville and David McDevitt, on the issue. Mr. Park explained that the long term goal was to make both the Comp Plan and the Stormwater Management Plan compatible with the new construction stormwater requirements. He also stated that work on re-writing the stormwater ordinance had already begun.

Institutional Capacity Assessment

Ms. Imbler explained that the capacity assessment portion of the PDRP mainly looked at existing programs, policies, and personnel in anticipation of determining how capable Leon County was to handle a post disaster recovery project, or more simply put, what could be called the "where we are" and "where we want to go" portion of the PDRP. She stated that the main objective to be accomplished by the capacity assessment was to establish who, in what position, and with what department, should be the lead contact for a specific task during the post disaster recovery period. The information gathered in this chapter will also feed into the next chapter which is the Action Plan. Ms. Imbler stated that ARPC staff would be visiting the various agencies to discuss with them one on one, specific programs available and what their agency capabilities were. She explained that the interviews would begin with the focus group members and with the assumption that they would assign specific staff members the task of giving detailed information to ARPC staff for inclusion in the PDRP. ARPC staff are assigned specific topic areas to address in developing the capacity assessment components.

Ms. Imbler reported that Bruce Ballister of the ARPC would be preparing the Economic Development section, Keith McCarron of the ARPC would be preparing the Growth

Management/General Planning section and possibly the Floodplain Management section, and that she would be preparing the Emergency Management, Health and Human Services, and Fiscal Capacity sections of the Institutional Capacity Assessment.

Richard Smith offered to provide ARPC staff with a contact person at Talquin Electric, a major utility provider in the region. Ms. Imbler asked the group for suggestions of any other programs that might need to be considered in reference to capacity assessment. Tony Park asked for clarification on Administrative and Technical Capacity. Ms. Imbler explained that it would be an inventory of individuals that could be called on to provide expertise in reference to things such as protecting existing tree ordinances or reaching out to adjoining counties for the purpose of quickly accessing a list of available land or tree surveyors. Keith McCarron suggested that a matrix of these type positions might be valuable to include in the plan. Richard Smith cautioned putting specific names into what would eventually be an adopted local government document, because of the complicated process involved in amending it. Mr. Smith suggested that the plan might refer to an appendix of specific names and contact information that could be maintained in his office. He also suggested that the plan might refer to organization types such as the American Public Works Association or the Florida Firefighters Association. Ms. Imbler noted that incorporating these suggestions would further address the PDRP requirements for intergovernmental coordination. She stated that ARPC staff would have the capacity assessment completed within the next 5 weeks. Susan Poplin noted that most names on the distribution lists for the PDRP were volunteers that had also served on the LMS committee and should be able to offer valuable input to ARPC staff on the PDRP. Ms. Imbler asked for a contact person from Blueprint. Steve Hodges suggested Dave Bright, noting that he should be contacted right away because of his upcoming retirement. Ms. Imbler concluded by stating that ARPC staff will work first with the focus group members and then branch off from there as time permits.

Input for Financial Strategy

Ms. Imbler reported that she would be preparing the financial strategy and asked for a suggestion of a local contact. Richard Smith suggested Scott Ross from the local Office of Management and Budget (OMB). She explained that one of the objectives of this section was to determine what state and federal grants were available during a post disaster recovery period and how prepared local government staff members were to access those funds timely. Richard Smith stated that former FEMA employees were an excellent resource on how to advise impacted residents and also how to access available funds, especially in the area of federal emergency dollars.

After a brief discussion about transportation needs and how they should be addressed in the PDRP, it was determined that they would be best addressed in the housing section. Richard Smith stated that it could not be pre-determined where a temporary housing location such as a FEMA village would be located. He explained that the availability of public transportation would be of vital concern to these individuals, especially those who had been relocated out of other counties and coastal areas. Keith McCarron suggested that the local road network should also be addressed in the PDRP including specifics on which government entity was responsible

for debris cleaning and removal. Richard Smith stated that there was already a debris management plan in place that addressed both immediate and long term debris removal. Ms. Imbler confirmed that the debris management plan would be referenced in the PDRP. Steve Hodges suggested that policies might need to be implemented to address how public / private transportation issues, including the potential need for mass transit to serve temporary relocation housing areas, were handled in a post disaster situation. Richard Smith explained that main objective of the PDRP was to be an overall guide for local government leaders to know what they can and cannot do during the post disaster recovery period.

Larry Strickland stated that one of the most limiting factors of post disaster recovery was that although temporary construction repairs could be completed during the first 10 days following a disaster, contractors were prohibited to assist in any further recovery efforts until after the insurance companies had settled. The group discussed several past events where residents had been impacted by storms and the recovery was severely limited because there was no fiscal assistance due to the absence of a disaster declaration.

Ms. Imbler thanked everyone for coming and announced that the next Focus Group meeting was scheduled for October 4, 2011. She also stated that anticipated meeting dates for the Housing Strategy Workgroup would be provided as soon as the needed coordination was completed and a schedule identified.