

MONROE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN LAND AUTHORITY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

April 26, 2023

The Monroe County Comprehensive Plan Land Authority (MCLA) Advisory Committee held a meeting on Wednesday April 26, 2023, in the first floor Media Room of the Marathon Government Center located at 2798 Overseas Highway, Marathon, Florida. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Leslie Valant at 9:30 AM. Present and answering roll call in addition to Chairman Valant were Linda Cunningham, Erin Muir, Barbara Neal, and Sandi Williams. Also present were Senior Property Acquisition Specialist Mark Rosch and Office Manager John Beyers. Executive Director Christine Hurley, Property Specialist Dina Gambuzza, and Counsel Greg Oropeza participated via Zoom.

Following the call to order and roll call, the next item (Item 3) was additions and deletions to the agenda. Mr. Rosch advised the Committee that the meeting agenda has a revision date of April 25, 2023 and reflects the addition of Item 9. Ms. Cunningham made a motion to approve the agenda and Ms. Williams seconded the motion. There being no objections, the motion carried 5/0.

The next item (Item 4) was approval of the minutes for the March 29, 2023 meeting. Ms. Cunningham made a motion to approve the minutes as presented and Ms. Muir seconded the motion. There being no objections, the motion carried 5/0.

The next item (Item 5) was approval of a contract to purchase Tier 1 property for conservation – Parcel GGG, Cudjoe Acres on Cudjoe Key near mile marker 21 from Rene Alberto Gil, now known as Rene Alberto Besson and Janet Gil, also known as Janet Valdivia for the price of \$67,200. Mr. Rosch addressed the Committee. The subject property consists of a 1.01-acre lot located on Valencia Road on the bay side of Cudjoe Key. The property has a tier designation of Tier 1 – Natural Area, a zoning designation of Suburban Residential (SR) and vegetation consisting of pineland that has transitioned to tropical hardwood hammock. Following discussion, Ms. Cunningham made a motion to approve the item at the purchase price of \$67,200 and Ms. Muir seconded the motion. There being no objections, the motion carried 5/0.

The next item (Item 6) was approval of a contract to purchase Tier 1 property for conservation – Lot 32 in Government Lot 5, Plat of Survey (OR 407-695) on Sugarloaf Key near mile marker 19 from Lisa Marie Gonzalez, Charles Manuel Gonzalez, and Albert Gonzalez for the price of \$67,200. Mr. Rosch and Ms. Hurley addressed the Committee. The subject property consists of a 1.01 acre lot located on Acosta Trail on the bay side of Sugarloaf Key. The property has a tier designation of Tier 1 – Natural Area, a zoning designation of Native Area (NA) and vegetation consisting of buttonwood, tropical hardwood hammock, exotics, and mangroves. Following discussion, Ms. Muir made a motion to approve the item at the purchase price of \$67,200 and Ms. Williams seconded the motion. There being no objections the motion carried 5/0.

The next item (Item 7) was approval of a contract to purchase Tier 1 property for conservation – Block 8, Lot 16, Thompsons on Key Largo near mile marker 99 from Raymond Patrick Lopez for

the price of \$19,000. Mr. Rosch addressed the Committee. The subject property consists of a 5,000 square foot lot located on a platted but undeveloped road on the ocean side of Key Largo. The property has a tier designation of Tier 1 – Natural Area, a zoning designation of Suburban Residential (SR), and vegetation consisting of tropical hardwood hammock. Following discussion, Ms. Williams made a motion to approve the item at the purchase price of \$19,000 and Ms. Neal seconded the motion. There being no objections the motion carried 5/0.

The next item (Item 8) was approval of a contract to purchase Tier 1 property for conservation – Block 16, Lot 12, Eden Pines Colony on Big Pine Key near mile marker 30 from Jennell R. Little for the price of \$50,000. The subject property consists of a 5,000 square feet lot located on the corner of Hibiscus Lane and Bittersweet Avenue on the bay side of Big Pine Key. The property has a tier designation of Tier 1 – Natural Area, a zoning designation of Improved Subdivision (IS), and vegetation consisting of tropical hardwood hammock and exotics. Following discussion, Ms. Williams made a motion to approve the item at the purchase price of \$50,000 and Ms. Cunningham seconded the motion. There being no objections the motion carried 5/0.

The next item (Item 9) was approval of a contract to purchase Tier 1 property for conservation - Block 4, Lots 1 and 46, Harris Ocean Park Estates on Key Largo near mile marker 92 from Miriam Judith Schroeder formerly known as Miriam Judy Sparkman for the price of \$100,000. Mr. Rosch and Ms. Hurley addressed the Committee. The subject property consists of two contiguous lots that total 12,600 square feet. The lots are located on Dove Creek Drive on the ocean side of Key Largo. The property has a tier designation of Tier 1 – Natural Area, a zoning designation of Improved Subdivision (IS), and vegetation consisting of tropical hardwood hammock. Following discussion, Ms. Muir made a motion to approve the item at the purchase price of \$100,000 and Ms. Williams seconded the motion. There being no objections the motion carried 5/0.

The next item (Item 10) was to recommend approval of resolutions of the Monroe County Comprehensive Plan Land Authority approving Option Agreements to sell pre-acquired Florida Forever land as follows:

- a) Lots 15 and 16, Block 3, Big Pine Key, Inc. on Big Pine Key to the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund of the State of Florida for the price of \$100,000; authorizing the Chairman to execute same; and authorizing the Chairman to execute the deed and associated closing documents. [Suarez]
- b) Lots 14 and 15, Block 25, Amended Plat of Key Largo Park on Key Largo to the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund of the State of Florida for the price of \$90,000; authorizing the Chairman to execute same; and authorizing the Chairman to execute the deed and associated closing documents. [Quincoses]
- c) Lots 5 and 14, Block 6, Harbor Shores on Key Largo to the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund of the State of Florida for the price of \$50,000; authorizing the Chairman to execute same; and authorizing the Chairman to execute the deed and associated closing documents. [Gerson]
- d) Lots 27 and 28, Block 6, Bay Haven Section 2 on Key Largo to the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund of the State of Florida for the price of \$50,000; authorizing the Chairman to execute same; and authorizing the Chairman to execute the deed and associated closing documents. [Barnes]

Mr. Rosch addressed the Committee. Following discussion, Ms. Cunningham made a motion to recommend approval of Items 10a, 10b, 10c, and 10d at the prices as listed in the agenda. Ms. Neal seconded the motion. There being no objections the motion carried 5/0.

The next item (Item 11) was the Executive Director's report. Ms. Hurley reported on the budget outlook and recent events including the following:

- a) An update on the discussion regarding purchasing submerged lots. The State of Florida is currently not interested in purchasing submerged lots and does not support MCLA pre-acquiring submerged lots for resale to the State unless the acquisition also includes upland property. Currently the County's Comprehensive Plan requires use of 2009 GIS habitat data, subject to field verification to determine whether a parcel is submerged. The County is in the process of updating the GIS habitat data and will likely update the Comprehensive Plan with the new data set upon completion.
- b) Ms. Hurley presented the budget outlook for FY 2023 year to date and made note of the significant increase over FY 2022. MCLA is partnering with the State of Florida and striving to reach a goal of the State acquiring \$5 million worth of property per year.
- c) Ms. Hurley discussed the possibility of hiring a new consultant to help with the purchasing and closing processes during Mr. Rosch's anticipated six-month separation currently required by the FRS DROP program. The Legislature is considering extending the maximum DROP period from 5 to 8 years. If the extension is approved, Mr. Rosch can continue working and not be mandated to stop working for a six-month period. Regardless of what happens in the Legislature, adding a consultant to assist in purchasing land will help achieve the goal of leveraging as much State funding as possible.
- d) Ms. Hurley discussed the Monroe County Housing Authority's upcoming groundbreaking ceremony for the Lower Keys Scattered Sites affordable housing project on Big Pine Key and Little Toch Key. After Hurricane Irma, MCLA purchased the land for this project consisting of 12 ROGO-exempt subdivision lots. The Monroe County Housing Authority and Monroe County obtained grant funds from the State of Florida to fund the acquisition cost as well as the development necessary to build these rental units. MCLA subsequently agreed to apply the acquisition grant funds to the development of the project and therefore will not be reimbursed for the acquisition cost of these sites. The project's rental income will be used to fund the development of future low-cost rental housing. The Lower Keys Scattered Sites project has an estimated six-month completion timeframe. There is the possibility of a move-in date by the end of 2023.
- e) The next MCLA Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 31, 2023 at 9:30 AM. Chairman Valant, Ms. Cunningham, Ms. Muir, Ms. Neal, and Ms. Williams said they would be able to attend.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:25 AM.

Prepared by: 
John Beyers
Office Manager

Approved by the Advisory Committee on May 31, 2023.

