

Minutes
Sarasota Agriculture Policy Council
July 6, 2005
Twin Lakes Park

A meeting of the Sarasota Agriculture Policy Council (SAPC) was held on July 6, 2005 at Sarasota County Extension Office, 6700 Clark Road, Sarasota. The meeting was called to order at 9:25 am.

In attendance

Becky Ayech (Small Farmer), Jennifer Brundy (SWFWMD), Lisa Eisen (NRCS), Carolyn Gregov (Extension), Mary Jelks, MD (IPM Advisory Council), Robert Kluson (Extension), Rory Martin (Farm Bureau), Ross Martin (SWFWMD), John Matthews (Sarasota Farmers Market), Bill Pischer (Jessica's Organic Farm), and Don Rainey (Extension).

Approval of Minutes

Becky Ayech moved to accept the minutes from the May 13, 2005 meeting as submitted. The motion was seconded by Bill Pischer and passed unanimously.

Old Business

Part Three (3) Submittal to Planning Department for EAR Comp Plan Update
The Council discussed Part 3 of policy recommendations and agreed on modifications (i.e., as far as Policy 4.4.3). See attachment for modified Part 3 policy recommendations, as well as the remainder of Part 3 policy recommendations that were deferred to the July 27th meeting.

There was additional discussion on the following topics:

- 1) There is a need to prevent any negative impacts from County aerial pesticide spraying (e.g., mosquito control) on any areas using organic farming and gardening practices.**
- 2) The inclusion of community gardens and farms on county lands (e.g., parks) does not necessarily produce competition to private farms because community agriculture promotes greater agricultural awareness (i.e., through experiential educational programs) and access (e.g., tours to production areas that are not available on private farms due to safety factors).**
- 3) The concept of community farms on recreational areas designated for Community Food Space includes the option to lease to private growers if their production satisfies a community need, e.g., supply food for the Farm to School program.**
- 4) The urgency of the adoption of these policy recommendations is mandated by the Code 9J5 of the Growth Management Law (FL Administrative Code) that requires the protection of farmland and agriculture.**

BCC Resolution for Sustainable Agriculture

The Council discussed the draft of the BCC Resolution for Sustainable Agriculture and agreed on modifications. See attachment for final version.

June 27th Presentation to Planning Department

Robert Kluson reported that it was successfully completed to 3 of the invited planners, i.e., Brian Beatty, Matt Lewis and Wendy Thomas. It was suggested by the planners that now a presentation directly to the BCC is the next step.

New Business

Farm to Cafeteria Conference

The report was deferred to the next meeting.

Report of Meeting of Final Draft Support Document to Agriculture Reserve RMA

The report was deferred to the next meeting.

Reports

Members

- 1) John Matthews made several recommendations for increased public outreach by Sarasota Extension on the activities of the Sarasota Ag Policy Council:
 - a) begin a TV show (i.e., Blab TV channel) on “Sustainable Agriculture in Sarasota County”. Sponsorships could be solicited from local agricultural groups.
 - b) begin newspaper columns, e.g., East County Observer
 - c) use the Farmers Market Bulletin on the DACS website

Next Meeting and Agenda

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, July 27, 2005 at 9.00 am at Sarasota County Extension Office.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 am.