

**FORT MYERS BEACH TOWN COUNCIL AND
CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING
CENTER ADVISORY BOARD JOINT MEETING
SEPTEMBER 8, 1999
NationsBank, Council Chambers
2523 Estero Boulevard
FORT MYERS BEACH, FLORIDA**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ray Murphy opened the meeting on Monday, September 8, 1999, at 5:30 P.M.

Council members present at the meeting were: Mayor Ray Murphy, Vice-Mayor John Mulholland; Council members Daniel Hughes, Garr Reynolds and Anita Cereceda. Town Staff present were Town Manager Marsha Segal-George, Deputy Town Manager John Gucciardo and Town Attorney Richard Roosa.

CELCAB members present at the meeting: Chairperson Fran Myers, Cindy Bear, Penny Brown, Terry Cain, Helen Caldwell, Anita Cereceda, Bill Grace, Barbara Hill, Elizabeth Jordan, Jean Mathew, Roxie Smith, Irv Solomon, and Corbett Torrence. Absent: Ceel Spuhler.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

All assembled at the meeting recited the Pledge of Allegiance and Mayor Ray Murphy gave the invocation.

III. OVERVIEW OF CURRENT STATUS OF THE FCT GRANT, CLOSING DATE ON PROPERTY, AND STATUS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL ASSESSMENTS (MARSHA SEGAL-GEORGE)

Town Manager Marsha Segal-George advised that we were currently in a situation where we have to again request from Florida Communities Trust, which is the agency that we have the grant from, an extension of time for getting this project done. Closing has been delayed because the estate is unable to deliver good title to Florida Communities Trust and to the Town. We still have no date as to when the lawsuit with regards to Mr. Thomas and the estate will be concluded. And Mr. Thomas, who is now in the federal penitentiary, has certain appeal rights with regards to that lawsuit that could extend the time for closing.

Mrs. Segal-George also advised that the grants we have received for the archaeological assessment and the historical assessment also cannot move forward, because those grants require us to be owners of the property. This means that CELCAB and the Council are unable to get any kind of detailed information with regards to what the archaeological status of that site is nor the historical status of the building. This has hampered every step of the process up till today with regards to any kind of planning for the use of that property, because key pieces of information are not available.

Our fate is in the hands of the estate and the court system as far as finally extinguishing Mr. Thomas's claim so that they can get a good title.

Marsha Segal-George stated that she had received a phone call today from Bill Hammond of FGCU. He couldn't be here this evening, but he wanted to extend an offer to the Council and to CELCAB that he and approximately eight other professors at the university are willing to assist the Town regarding this project and to get involved. They would like to offer us a bigger look at where this property sits compared with other properties in the area. They have a number of disciplines that they're offering us. There is a hotel that's planned on the other side of the bay on Coconut, and they have made a commitment to be involved in an eco-tourism situation there that may tie in with the Mound House. Dan Hughes asked if this was voluntary on their part, and when told yes, he said he'd certainly welcome it.

Helen Caldwell stated that we should go with Bill Hammond and his group on this. It is a great opportunity for us and will give us help that will not cost the city anything. It will give us an outreach to other places that will help alleviate traffic, etc.

Comments by Paul Abraham:

Vice Mayor John Mulholland asked that Mr. Paul Abraham be allowed to address us regarding a matter that would be beneficial to us, and Mr. Abraham was allowed to do so.

Mr. Abraham stated that he lived at 450 Connecticut Street and wished to share research he had compiled at the library. He described the sites and populations of the Calusa Indians, as well as their politics and way of life. Also touched on were artifacts that have been found, 88 of them in the Caloosahatchee sector.

Mr. Abraham noted that a book was published in 1998 by Gordon Wylie, Senior Dean Archaeologist in the world for North, Central and South America. He has compiled all credited findings of all archaeologists who did research on the Gulf Coast. There is no mention of the Calusa habitats or its people on Fort Myers Beach.

Mr. Abraham felt that Mr. FitzSimons was either misguided or misinformed regarding the Mound House being on a Calusa site. His research does not show that the Indians had a village here. In addition, the Calusas had constant fierce warfare with all their neighbors and were finally relocated by the Spanish. He wondered how much of this information should be relayed to schoolchildren. He feels that it is time that we took a new and exhaustive look into the Mound House project and that no taxpayer money should be used to purchase, keep and support such a project.

IV. DISCUSSION OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN AS TO POTENTIAL CHANGES TO BE MADE BY CELCAB AND THE COUNCIL AND A TIMELINE FOR SUBMITTING CHANGES TO FCT FOR APPROVAL. (COUNCILWOMAN CERECEDA.)

Town Council and CELCAB member Anita Cereceda noted that she is the liaison between the Town Council and CELCAB. She stated that at the last CELCAB meeting, Corbett Torrence had given an absolutely spectacular presentation about the history of the Calusas in our region.

Ms. Cereceda stated that the management plan has been at the heart of most of the discussions that have taken place, both in the public and within the committee. Because they've had no direction from us, CELCAB has been kind of left floundering as to where to go and what to do with the Mound House and what kind of recommendations to make to us so that we can establish policies for this project. Helen Caldwell worked very hard on a recent agenda putting together issues of historic preservation and the analysis that would be done on that and the archaeological analysis. Both of those, as we can see from Mr. Abraham's comments, are of significant importance to the community and to the project, but neither one can be completed until we actually have title to the property. So those two items that were suggested by Helen were deleted from the agenda because there was simply nothing to say about them.

The management plan was placed on the agenda primarily because the Council had adopted it as a closing document for the project to the Florida Communities Trust, and it was accepted. Then there began to be quite a stir on Connecticut Street about some of the things that were listed in the management plan. Primarily all of it drew from the projected intensity in use of that site. Ms. Cereceda advised she met with the people on Connecticut Street and brought back a recommendation to the Town Council that at best the people on that street were only willing to accept a very minimum, passive museum. The management plan, of course, goes into much greater detail about what the future of that site might be.

The discussion of the management plan, Ms. Cereceda advised, is not meant to be whether it's good or bad, but rather to give direction to the CELCAB as to what issues we feel either comfortable or uncomfortable with, what items we may wish to delete or to add so that they can discuss the management plan and then bring back recommendations to the Council. At that point we would discuss it ourselves, form a policy, make necessary changes or alterations and then submit them to Florida Communities Trust for approval.

Discussion by Council:

Vice Mayor John Mulholland advised that the management plan was not acceptable to him. As the Town Manager has pointed out, we haven't acquired the property. Until we do acquire it and do an assessment as to what the uses are, he doesn't see of what value it is to us to discuss the plan in any kind of detail.

Councilman Dan Hughes said he understood John Mulholland's point. On the other hand,

at the Florida League of Cities Convention, he'd had an opportunity to meet with Grant Gelhard who has been directly involved in this matter. We do have to have a management plan as part of the total project and it has to be in place prior to closing. His major concerns were that there be public input and he was pleased to find out that we were having this workshop which also included input from the community at large. We must decide what our purposes are and what uses we're putting to the land. Mr. Hughes stated that he was rather impressed with the CELCAB Committee's goals and procedures memo. They held a meeting on June 2 in which they recommended that the activities promote the unique cultural, historical and environmental aspects of the Mound House site. He agrees with the determination that they be limited in number and scope.

Dan Hughes noted that FCT was concerned that bike facilities and parking be addressed in the plan, and they are. Activities include tours and the use of the House by community organizations, which Mr. Hughes said he also favors. Mr. Hughes said he is also in accord with CELCAB's policy on educational programs and recommendations of a policy for use by community organizations. He feels comfortable with accepting all of their recommendations. However, they don't address some of the other things that are set forth in the plan. We have this dilemma, as pointed out by Anita and John, that we have to have a historic structure report and an archaeological survey before we can determine whether or not it's academic. It could indicate that there is something there, particularly from the historical standpoint. He appreciates the time and effort that Mr. Abraham has put into researching whether or not there was an archaeological site there, but he would point out that despite the material he showed us, it doesn't preclude the possibility that there was some sort of structure at the Mound House site that wasn't a village. He is in favor of having that looked into further before just going in and tearing up the ground. He would like to defer further comments until he gets input from CELCAB and from the public.

Councilman Garr Reynolds stated that he's very pleased that the community is finally being heard. He asked how many of the CELCAB members lived in the immediate community of Mound House. Two members live in the community and one owns two houses on the next street. The ones who actually live in the community, Mr. Reynolds stated, are the ones who are going to be affected. He would like to see more people from the community on CELCAB. He doesn't feel that three people out of 13 is a very good representation for the community.

As far as the Calusa concept, Mr. Reynolds said that someone had asked how many skeletons had been found on the Mound House site and the answer had been none. The lack of skeletons had been blamed on the harsh weather, but he believes that you will find skeletons in most areas. We need to get some proof and not go into the history of something that doesn't exist.

Councilman Reynolds said he'd very much like to see the Mound House purchased for historical reasons. It is one of the oldest or the oldest home on the Island. It's a special type of home. He feels, however, that we should keep it operating minimally.

Asked by Mayor Murphy if there was anything in the management plan that he had a problem with, Mr. Reynolds stated that he liked the direction that Mrs. Jordan has taken and the fact that the committee had suggested keeping the site use minimal. The director should be the manager, but he has no business making programs, initiating those programs or sending them anywhere unless they come through CELCAB, who will run through the plans with the Town Manager as the overseer. After that, they should come before the Council so that we can work together on them. We also need the ideas of the community.

Dan Hughes stated that when he considers the community he doesn't think of Connecticut Street, he thinks of Estero Island. That's the community and we represent the entire community. In matters that involve land use issues, there's the problem of balancing the interests of the entire community, which is all of us, with the interests of the people who do live in an area contiguous and near the property in question. He also feels that the immediate community is well represented on CELCAB.

Councilwoman Anita Cereceda said she felt that Arden Arrington did a tremendous job with this plan and that the reason he's been criticized so heavily is because he's never been given direction to date by this Town Council, and she has apologized for it over and over again. This lack has not been intentional but because this project has hit one stumbling block after another. When we discuss later on what the intensity of that property should be, that in itself will address a

lot of what the management plan should or shouldn't have included.

Councilwoman Cereceda stated her concerns:

She stated that she thinks the mission statement on page 3 is beautifully written and that she agrees with it 100%. She told Corbett Torrence that in her mind his presentation at the last meeting clearly defines that mission statement. She would like for us to give our opinion of it and she read it aloud.

She has a question about the statement that "the Town of Fort Myers will build and operate a regional museum," which makes her see construction. She does not know if that is the intent and would like some clarification. Dan Hughes suggested that we say instead "will utilize the existing structure."

There are named entities in the plan, which she feels is a mistake. She asked if instead of listing different entities, couldn't we say "interested parties" or "higher institutions of learning" so that it included anyone who wished to participate and not give the appearance of exclusivity.

The statement that the Center will develop a kayak and canoe trail has engendered a source of controversy that the Center will develop this as opposed to the emergence and importance of eco-tourism that has been discussed throughout the County and throughout the state.

On page 5 of our comp plan under Recreation is the statement that the Mound House has become an anchor for tourists of Estero Bay's ecological treasures and archaeological sites. In her opinion this more accurately reflects the sentiment of the community as to the utilization of the Mound House as opposed to it being necessarily a destination or an origination of a particular activity. Dan Hughes advised that they're just citing the comp plan there and we wouldn't want to change that language. Anita Cereceda said that in saying that it "has become an anchor for tourists" and "that the Center will develop" there is a conflict in that language.

On page 5 with respect to the Town's vision for preserving its history, Ms. Cereceda would like discussion from CELCAB regarding their opinions and what public input they might get. Again, from our comp plan, is the statement that the Mound House "also hosts festivals and special events." She personally can see the Mound House hosting festivals and special events, such as the party held there last Christmas. She would like input from the immediate community as to what kinds of limitations or parameters they would feel comfortable with respect to festivals and special events and whether they would not want them at all, in which case it would be relegated to us to make a decision as to whether or not we want this for the greater community.

On page 6 under Required Provisions and Designations, the zoning change and land use designation was another thing that was brought up at the meeting Councilwoman Cereceda had with the residents of Connecticut Street and others, and there was tremendous apprehension about this. It is stipulated in our comprehensive plan that that will occur once the Town has acquired it. But, again, she thinks that there needs to be some discussion by CELCAB and recommendation made to the Council as to the intensity of the use there once it is determined what would provide a comfort zone for the people who will be affected by that change.

Page 7, 4., the conversion of the existing garage to a wet lab to be used by Estero Bay Marine Laboratory and Turtle Time, Inc. Again, no entities should be mentioned. Eve Haverfield has stated she has no interest in doing regular necropsies on turtles. She would only do it one time and then only on fresh, small turtles for educational purposes. Ms. Cereceda would like input on how much a wet lab would affect the property.

Page 7, 6., a floating dock. If this is not mandatory, Ms. Cereceda does not feel it should be in there. John Mulholland stated that any docks would have to be permitted.

Councilwoman Cereceda stated that the Calusa Indian village is a very interesting idea but she doesn't know if it will serve the vision purpose. John Mulholland said he disagreed that it should be in the management plan.

Page 8. Overnight dockage of EBML vessels. Should all docks be handicapped accessible? Anita Cereceda said she's uncomfortable with any type of concessionaire using a dock at the Mound House on any permanent basis. Nor does the overnight action sit well with her. John Mulholland said he was also against these things. Garr Reynolds stated he had no problem with a small dock there, but there should be controls on it. And where would people park when they come to get on a boat? The size of the dock became an issue and Bill Grace said that the original dock was less than 100 feet long.

Page 9, Easement, Concessions and Leases. The named entities should be eliminated from the plan, as well as any intensity requirements until this has been discussed.

Page 12 refers to the Calusa Indian village, which depends on whether or not we feel this is an appropriate project for the site.

Councilwoman Cereceda said she finds the whole discussion of the removal of exotic vegetation nonsense. She would like to see them remain, especially the coconut palms. Dan Hughes referred Anita to paragraph 8 of VIII. that refers to Florida's most invasive species. There is not a blanket prohibition against all exotic vegetation, only the invasive ones as defined in the exotic pest plant control list. If coconut palms are not on that list, we should be able to keep them. Ms. Cereceda would like us to establish a policy as to what should or shouldn't be there.

Page 13 -- Grant and survey. Credit should go to Arden Arrington for the acquisition of grants providing the Town with money for these reports to be done although work is on hold until we acquire the property.

Page 14. No conclusions can be made until an archaeological survey is done.

Page 15, 2. Environmental Education Program. Anita Cereceda would like to remove named entities from the grant and leave only the portion stating, "the Town will update the FCT on the educational activities and that net revenues collected by the Town will be used only for the upkeep and maintenance of the project site." Dan Hughes asked if she would eliminate mention of state institutions, such as FGCU, as well, to which she responded yes, unless preceded by the words "for example." She does not like the idea of narrowing things down to stating that this is our proposal and these are the people that we're proposing. Others council members felt that names could be mentioned as showing interest in giving help.

Page 16. Anita Cereceda said she would like some short-term recommendations from us as to what we envision staffing being for the site. The Council should have an established policy that protects the people who work for us from attack. Garr Reynolds stated that he did not see how it is possible that this Council can direct the director of the Mound House. He thought all along that the director was operating under the Town Manager and thinks he should continue to do so. If extra guidelines are needed, this can be brought to us for action. Ms. Cereceda explained that what she was asking was if we should have a renewable contract with Mr. Arrington or whoever would be the director, or should we hire a person who would be paid a salary to do everything that would be called for at the Mound House.

We have a budget workshop coming up on September 16. Anita Cereceda said she'd like to know what we see as a reasonable amount of money that would be allocated by the Town for maintenance, staffing, etc., for the Mound House for the coming year and that her question about funding is not dependent on the archaeological and historical assessment. John Mulholland said that the budget would depend on whether the Mound House would be operated as a cost center where we would derive income from it or whether the Town will give X amount of money for the operation of the House. Mayor Murphy advised that we have provided for operating expenses in the budget -- a certain amount every year just to maintain the Mound House. Town Manager Segal-George said that one of the critical questions that goes with the intensity of the property is whether the Council wants that property to try and do things that helps it pay for itself or whether the Council is willing to continue to appropriate X amount of dollars a year to operate and maintain it.

Dan Hughes stated that the plan contemplates the establishment of a foundation. He wished to know at what point that would come into play as there is no mention of a foundation in the plan. He also asked if it was a requirement that we have to have specific figures in the plan.

Ms. Cereceda advised that she would like to see an outreach program for the community about the Environmental Learning Center. Perhaps the Observer or the Bulletin could do a story and make it easy for people to volunteer their time and services.

Comments from Council:

Mayor Murphy stated that he found the document to be a fine one. It's obvious that a lot of work went into it that needs to be fine tuned a little bit in places Ms. Cereceda has apologized for lack of direction to CELCAB and he thinks we all share in that to a degree. There was maybe a little bit of lack of direction, but this was not intentional and should be understandable. The Mound House did take a back street to the pressures of the day-to-day business of running the

Town.

Dan Hughes said he felt that direction to CELCAB from the Council was kind of putting the cart before the horse.

Mayor Murphy told CELCAB that he was glad they were all on board, he's glad we're working together. He wants to see this thing move forward and he's sure that we can do it.

Mayor Murphy said that, like Anita, he ran through the plan and highlighted some comments as follows:

Page 3. He agrees that the word "build" will send the wrong impression to some people. There won't be much need for building.

Page 4. He agrees with Councilwoman Cereceda that the entities mentioned, the Estero Bay Marine Laboratories and Turtle Time, Inc., can be suggested as participants but maybe not specifically identified.

Page 4. The present location of EBML's facility is at the Ostego Bay Foundation. He'd like to know if they wish to go to the Mound House or if they're happy where they are. He asked if the director was still Tom Lee and learned that he was.

The conversion of the existing garage to a wet lab. This may be contemplated in the historical assessment.

The restoration of the dock to its 1920s configuration of 8'x120'. He has heard this evening that it wasn't that long, but he didn't have a problem with that length. He also thinks it would be great as a water taxi stop.

Page 8. The 8'x150' concrete floating dock. He doesn't know if this would be necessary along with the other dock.

The Calusa Indian village wasn't on the top of his list. He thinks that the Mound House looks beautiful just the way it is without other structures around it.

Page 10. Turtle Time need not be specifically mentioned.

Page 12. The Calusa Indian village needs to be explored a little further.

Comments from CELCAB:

Fran Myers asked if we were to assume that all the council members agree with Councilwoman Cereceda's comments. Vice Mayor Mulholland told her he didn't think she should assume that there is total Council agreement with all of Councilwoman Cereceda's thoughts. Ms. Cereceda stated that her comments were made so that CELCAB would have something to work on and could then make recommendations to the Council so that we could formulate a policy.

Corbett Torrence thanked the Mayor for his comments. He said that as the single archaeologist on the board, he feels that maybe he's under represented here. He referred to Dolph Wittimer's 1980 book, "Evolution of the Calusa." Last year he and Arden Arrington took Mr. Wittimer to Mound Key and Pine Land for the first time in his life. Many sites have been left off his list, such as Shell Creek at the mouth of the Caloosahatchee, which is the sixth largest site in the entire region. The idea that Big Mound Key would be considered a small village while little tiny sites such as Demery Key would be considered large villages are certainly questionable. In other words, the map is bogus and outdated and this is why we need archaeological education.

The second map is taken from Dr. William Marquart's book, "The Domain of the Calusa." In a chapter from Karen Walker, she indicated where the Calusa got their food. As Mr. Abraham very correctly points out, the Calusa were non agricultural and this is what makes them quite unique.

Mr. Torrence also critiqued the work of C. B. Moore, who wrote between 1900 and 1904. Mr. Moore, he said, was really out for museum pieces and wasn't studying human culture at all.

Mr. Torrence advised that you cannot determine true population from skeletons. In the last 20 years more archaeology has been done than during the previous 200 years. Many more sites have been found than have ever been documented before. There are now over 1400 Indian sites documented in Lee County alone and so we're not talking about a sporadically settled environment here, but about an extremely densely settled area by Calusa Indians.

With respect to the Mound House, Mr. Torrence stated that the archaeological design of the site clearly puts it in the realm of the Caloosahatchee site. All cultures have certain ways of designing buildings. He has observed Caloosahatchee pottery there. He advised that he says "Caloosahatchee" and not "Calusa," because we don't actually know when the Calusa became

the Calusa. It might have been around 1800 A.D., but some people argue that it was around 400 A.D. We don't know if this is one culture that developed in situ here or whether other peoples came from other areas and stimulated this growth. And that's the type of thing that the Mound House can help us understand. The real question is when was it deposited, why was it built, how does it fit into our cultural heritage here in Southwest Florida? But it is an archaeological site. The latest research in this area has been done by Dolph Wittimer, who has done a lot of new research since his first publication. Gordon Wiley at the University of Florida has done one of the best pieces for ceramics, but his work would not be considered the bible of archaeology. However, in South Florida, Dr. William Marquart, Dr. Randolph Wittimer and Dr. Jerry Melanis have written the most conclusive works as of late. Dolph Wittimer's book is an excellent book, but a lot has been done since its publication. Most archaeological texts are out of date the day we buy them because of all the new research that we're doing.

What we should be talking about, Mr. Torrence feels, is not whether the Mound House is over a prehistoric cultural deposit but how we want to analyze it, how we want to study it and how it's going to contribute to our knowledge of a greater area.

Terry Cain praised the observations made so far and noted how much she agreed with many of them. She brought our attention to the first page of the management plan where it states that none of it is written in stone. It is a plan of things that could happen.

With respect to the buffer zone requirement, Mrs. Cain felt that the buffer of native vegetation around the Edison House set a good example. Her interpretation of the desire for docks was so that vehicle traffic would be alleviated. When concessions are spoken of, it's not hot dog stands that come to her mind.

Councilman Dan Hughes said he'd like to see more language on the bid procedure process added to the reference to concessions on page 10 of the plan.

Cindy Bear stated that she would suppose that we're following the train of thought that having business partnerships with this facility is something that we ought to try to pursue and that we could work to develop policies as to who those business partners might be in terms of qualifications, philosophies and mission statements. She firmly believes that we can do business in a way that will meet the needs of the community and the needs of the facility for its long-term operation.

Mrs. Bear said that educationally we did develop an interim policy that was addressed. There is a specific policy at this time that limits the number of people to 20. It means that no school groups, which would be larger than 20 people, will be on that site until further discussion has taken place. From an educational point of view, we need to know what we'll be telling the students. It's obvious that this area was significant to the Calusa and that they used the water surrounding the area. We might consider whether the palm trees are a hazard.

Although she doesn't live here, Mrs. Bear stated, she does live on a busy street. She has served in dual roles as both a businessperson and as somebody working as a public servant. She has dedicated her life to the environment and to environmental issues, and she feels that she can work with other members of the committee to take specific suggestions. They weren't sure how hard and fast the management plan was, but with the workshop and discussions she feels that they can move forward to come to some agreements.

Helen Caldwell stated that she used to swim in the pool on the Mound House property as a guest of Florence Long. She has picked up shards around the perimeter of the property and she said that there is something there. Old beachcombers have said that evidence of burial has been found where the pool is now located. She feels that this is a jewel that we have and we must protect it.

Irv Solomon said it is his pleasure to serve on this group. As an educator he's gratified to see people doing their research, both on the Council and in the audience. He salutes in particular Mr. Abraham.

Mr. Solomon said he's been looking for marching orders while sitting on this board. We're really dealing with ambiguity and it seems that now maybe things can gel. It has also occurred to him that Arden Arrington has done an incredible amount of work with the grants that he's generated, which take a lot of time and effort to do. He has an awful lot of respect and admiration for Mr. Arrington's work and commitment not only to this project, but also to the Beach and the historical and cultural betterment and awareness of Southwest Florida. He hopes that at some

point we can discuss the possibility of passing a resolution to commend Mr. Arrington.

Mr. Solomon said he has gained an awful lot of respect for the people on this committee. They are really committed, they are fair-minded, and they articulate their ideas in a very effective manner. We also have a extremely good chairperson.

Penny Brown advised that CELCAB's mission statement is that they are to help and advise the Town Council in the management of the Mound House. They cannot advise without input, and tonight they have received more input in an hour than they have had in eight months, which has been very helpful.

Corbett Torrence displayed a small model of a Calusa village. Dan Hughes noted that he'd had a general concern about cluttering the landscape of the Mound House, which he'd like to see kept pristine and open. He'd prefer it if unobtrusive things could be done there.

Bill Grace stated that he comes to the board with a background in historic preservation and restoration projects that he has been involved in locally over the last 15 years. One of the first things they intend to do is to have the site listed on the National Register of Historic Places. To do so they would have to comply with the Secretary of the Interior's standards. The site should be kept authentic, and that will eliminate a lot of the commercial type activities that were possibly contemplated in the original management plan.

Mr. Grace said that he, too, saw the plan as something that wasn't written in stone but something that would change. He doesn't think that any of us envisioned this as being the center or hub of the whole eco-archo heritage tourism industry here on Fort Myers Beach. We just saw it as a piece of that puzzle. There would not be high traffic. This would not be a place where people would come to get on boats and require parking, although they might get off a boat here. As somebody has said, this is just the first draft of a plan. Once everyone has had a chance to discuss it, Mr. Grace thinks that we can all come to a consensus regarding the site's future use that will be beneficial to everybody.

Vice Mayor Mulholland told Mr. Grace that he agreed with his idea of not making the site a commercial one and his idea about involving the community and the immediate neighborhood.

Dan Hughes feels that if, in fact, the site is ultimately determined to be a historical site, and we should eliminate anything that would make it impossible for the site to be a historical one.

Ray Murphy would like to obtain copies of the Secretary of the Interior's standards.

Regarding Terry Cain's remarks regarding buffering the site, Vice Mayor Mulholland said he thinks buffering would help a great deal to set the site apart. The one big thing in his mind, however, is money and how we're going to run this house. He'd like input as to whether it will be a cost center or totally supported through funding.

Dan Hughes pointed out that as regards to the buffering, we don't really have a choice in that. It has been mandated. Specifically stated is that we must have a vegetative buffer along the boundary that interfaces with the residential developments to the north, west and south of the project property.

V. CELCAB SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INTERIM USE OF THE PROPERTY.

(CELCAB MEMBER ELIZABETH JORDAN.)

Elizabeth Jordan pointed out that the people who were asked to be on the subcommittee were chosen because they brought a variety of information and professional knowledge to the issue of using this site. Cindy Bear works in the schools; Terry Cain is an environmentalist; Barbara Hill has knowledge of our community and community organizations and she, herself, has strong environmental interests.

A report was presented in August to the board, but it was not discussed and no action was taken on it. Mrs. Jordan would like to recommend that if we approve of it, that it could be adopted as a way to facilitate interim activities before we get into any kind of final analysis of how this site is going to be used. Mrs. Jordan read aloud the last paragraph of the report. She stated that among the activities suggested are tours and bringing groups onto the site that could provide information on native vegetation, etc.

Mrs. Jordan would urge us to consider the public access element. A criticism in the paper recently was that we were not allowing public access, and she feels that this is something that could benefit the community in learning about the use of the site. We might be able to get rid of

the chain link fence and we might have some interim activities including the suggested lectures. We could possibly consider this a priority.

Comments from Council:

Vice Mayor Mulholland told Mrs. Jordan that he liked her memo and her objective very much. He is in agreement with most of her points and thinks she makes them very well. He thinks her policy on public access is a good approach, because she is trying to limit the amount of traffic in the neighborhood by introducing carpooling and other things.

Cindy Bear has stated that it might be possible to make an exception when busloads of more than 20 children make field trips to the site. We have been assured by Arden Arrington that the buses can navigate the narrow perimeter road.

Dan Hughes advised he had stated in his earlier remarks that he had no problem accepting this report in its entirety. He would comment, however, that if this was meant to be mutually exclusive, it does exclude some of the other uses that were discussed. Mrs. Jordan told him that the memo was written in response to the neighbors' concerns regarding over-intensity of use and some unwelcome uses. In June the committee envisioned that there were some things that could happen in the summer and, in fact, there were the tours run by Terry Cain. These were done to introduce the site to the community and show them that things could be done in a responsible way for the benefit of the entire community of the Island.

Fran Myers explained to Councilman Hughes that these activities were only supposed to be interim uses until we really owned the property.

Councilwoman Cereceda stated that if CELCAB was asking the Council to adopt that as policy for interim use, perhaps included in it could be some provision for a request from a school group. A formal request could be presented through the director of the Mound House to the Town Council or to the Town Manager that would address both Cindy's concern about school groups and Dan's concern about excluding someone.

Stated was that a 30-student limit is basically a two classroom limit and they do not take more than 30 students during a single tour. But if they were only allowed to take 20 students, none of the schools would come because that's not a full classroom and they couldn't afford the bus. Anita Cereceda felt that the number could be any chosen one just as long as there is an additional provision that could be an avenue for someone to petition it as a recommendation for adoption. Cindy Bear stated that if we put a number like 30 for a basis, she assures us that unfortunately in the Lee County School District there are many, many classrooms with more than 30 children. One bus can hold 60 people. She would say one classroom with additional provisions for larger groups. Dan Hughes felt that more important would be the limitation of three times a week and the hours rather than how many kids are on a single bus. He thinks that what the immediate community would be concerned about is the proliferation of buses coming in and out of the site.

Garr Reynolds told Mrs. Jordan she had asked if we could adopt this as a guide. He believes that what her committee has done here is really very good. However, he would like to see it worked into the management plan somehow. As they explore this again, they might want to enlarge upon it.

VI. DIRECTION AND DISCUSSION FROM COUNCIL AS TO INTENSITY OF USE OF THE PROPERTY. THIS DISCUSSION IS DESIGNED TO GIVE CELCAB PARAMETERS FOR DISCUSSION AND SUBSEQUENT RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COUNCIL.

Vice Mayor Mulholland said that we on the Council should look at the Mound House as something that's going to be on our street, and then we should think how we would like or dislike a Mound House going in. Or, if we could, how we would set it up so that it would have a minimum of discomfort, annoyance and inconvenience to the neighborhood. He would like for the Committee and the Council to work with the community to make sure that this is run as something that's not controversial but something that everyone is happy with and sees as a plus for the Town. He thinks we have an excellent start with Mrs. Jordan's interim memo. And if we have staggered activities, not something every day or two or three times a day but just a couple of times a week initially to get it going and to gauge the reaction of the neighborhood, then he thinks we could go forward. But we should start slow and work very hard with the immediate

community.

Garr Reynolds felt that this topic has been pretty well covered and Dan Hughes agreed. Dan Hughes would not like to see the site materially altered in terms of existing structures. At the same time he would want the site to be utilized for the purposes set forth in the project, which are the cultural, historical, educational and environmental aspects of it. What the interim proposal does not address is the museum. If the museum is going to be part of our ultimate use here it should be open to the public. We will have to look at the parameters there and the limitations on days and hours.

Mayor Murphy said that the first thing that came to his mind is that he doesn't really want it to be intense down there. But if the state is going to give us money, there has to be some use. And we have to determine whether we want the Mound House to partially support itself. If we want to go that way, we then have to decide what kind of uses are going to be there and we have to make that determination early on.

Councilwoman Cereceda said she'd like to see us discuss what our responsibility is to the greater community that we're part of, the stewardship role that the Town of Fort Myers Beach has taken as far as the preservation of the Back Bay is concerned. We have promoted that stewardship throughout the State of Florida directly to the Governor and his cabinet. She would like for the Town to acknowledge some policy or statement to that effect.

To offer comfort to our community, Ms. Cereceda stated, would be to perhaps make a calendar of what might happen in three years and what we might expect it to look like in six years. She is purposely using three-year increments because she is using increments of Town Council elections. What we say here today is all fine and well, but we could have a Council elected next year or two years from now that could undo it all or may want to promote what we've accepted. This would give people some level of expectation even in intensity of use.

Bill Grace stated that it would be difficult to establish a timeline without knowing when we'd be taking possession of the property. He attended the last hearing in the lawsuit and it appeared to him that we're not very close to a resolution.

VII. DISCUSSION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF CELCAB MEMBER CEEL SPUHLER AS TO THE DOCENT PROGRAM.

Fran Myers read the report of Ceel Spuhler, who is absent from tonight's meeting. Mrs. Spuhler has conducted seven interviews to date. Former housekeepers will do a walk-through with herself and Arden Arrington in the middle of September so that they can have a first-hand glimpse of the actual day-to-day activities that took place during the Longs' residency. Public service announcements have appeared in four different weeklies offering the opportunity to either volunteer as a docent or for people who knew the Longs to provide personal stories of the home or the residents.

Ms. Spuhler asked if it would be possible to have the Mound House open for visitors two times a week for two or three hours. The docents could be trained now and ready for visitors in the middle of October. Workers are frequently asked if people can visit the Mound House. Since the Town is paying for the lease, why are the gates chained? Publicity and having the House open to the public for a few hours each week could calm much speculation and show how this home is unique to this Island and what a wonderful museum it will be.

Fran Myers advised that Ceel Spuhler has some great stories about the House from her interviews. She would like for the House to be opened on a limited basis soon and she has four or five volunteers ready to serve.

Garr Reynolds thought Mrs. Spuhler's ideas were excellent, and he would encourage having the House open to the public with volunteers stationed in different areas to assist the visitors.

Vice Mayor Mulholland said that he applauds Mrs. Spuhler's memo, but he has some problems with it. He likes the thought of a slow approach, but if we advertise it, we have no way of controlling the number of people that will respond. He was told that Terry Cain has been conducting tours through pre-registration.

Terry Cain advised that she conducted three environmental tours in July and each of the groups, made up mostly of residents, asked if they could walk through the Mound House. She did take them through. She limits each group to 10-20 people by pre-registration.

Dan Hughes said that he definitely favors Mrs. Spuhler's idea.

Mayor Murphy also favored Mrs. Spuhler's idea and stated that the fact that we have people who are willing to do this on a volunteer basis speaks very well for the community.

Vice Mayor Mulholland stated that Terry Cain recently got a grant from the National Estuaries to conduct these tours. He wondered if the Council would be interested in having Mrs. Cain take them on a tour of the beach and the Mound House just for information.

Mayor Murphy was asked if the Council gave their blessing on the volunteer program, and he responded that it seemed to him that there was a consensus that this was a great idea.

Barbara Hill said she understood that the neighbors of the Mound House had a really big problem with the music and all the loud noise coming from it last year. There was about a whole week of entertainment at the House and she detailed the contributions made by the Pilot Club to which she belongs. Other clubs also helped with the festivities. Her concept is that maybe on one night at Christmas time the House could be open to the public. We could even charge something for it. She would like to see the neighbors come out in full force and really support it. We could do it very low key and it wouldn't be necessary to use amplifiers. She would like some input on this.

Mayor Murphy said he thought that the Christmas concerts at the Mound House were absolutely lovely last year. The ones he attended were pretty low key with the kids singing and soft music. He feels that now that we've had the Mound House for a while we can plan more.

Anita Cereceda said that she agreed with Barbara wholeheartedly. People from all over the Town came and walked through the House and the quality moment of that was that they felt it was theirs, and it is theirs. They took great pride in it. She would support activities just as stipulated in the comp plan as a vision for the future and she would look for a recommendation that we adopt a policy on that.

Garr Reynolds said he liked the idea. Vice Mayor Mulholland would like to see careful planning and getting the opinions of the neighborhood.

Dan Hughes felt that last year's festivities were very lovely and he said that all the comments he had gotten were positive. He wouldn't want to limit them to just to one day this year. To get the service clubs to come in and do what they did last year, we would have to have the House open for at least five days as we did last year.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

A. LEE CONGER

Mrs. Conger of Connecticut Street stated that she still has concerns regarding access to the property and how we are going to fund this. Concessions would make this a launch site so that people would actually have to drive their cars there and park them so that they could rent a boat to go forward. Those kinds of ideas she finds really alarming.

Mrs. Conger is also concerned about access. In the management plan that came out earlier there was reference to this being like the Edison Home or like some sites in Sanibel. But she begs to differ because those sites have a main drag from which people can turn right into an appropriate entrance to those properties. This is different. People have to travel down a very residential street.

The concept put forth by the FitzSimons was museum-like and it was fairly passive. And that's what the neighbors embraced and looked forward to. And they looked forward to having it educational for school children. They would like to keep it as close to those original ideas as possible.

When we talk about events, like at Christmas time, she thinks it would be very important to consider pedestrian access as an option. People can trolley, get dropped off at Connecticut Street and walk down the street. Is there a reason why people have to drive cars? It was not the noise from those events last year that was a problem, it was the traffic. It's a beautiful sight and it should be shared, but it has to be shared in such a way that it's an enhancement to the neighborhood and not a detriment, otherwise it does nobody any good.

Mrs. Conger said that using foliage to buffer against the private residences side -- the western side -- of that property is a fantastic idea and she's glad that's included in the plan. But any dockage that goes onto that property she would like to see not facing the residences but facing the Bay.

Mrs. Conger stated that we talked about public input tonight, and now three suggestions have come forward: the docent program, the interim use and Christmas. But there hasn't been an opportunity for the public to fully discuss these with CELCAB. She would like to know what the plan is regarding that process.

Another element of concern is that right now we have not closed on the property. We have a management plan that people say is not carved in stone. She has asked and would love to have in writing exactly what steps are necessary to make a change to the current management plan and then where it goes. Also, if we want to make a change after closing, what is the exact process for that? The public needs to know where they can be involved, how they can make their feelings known, and exactly what the steps are to effect change.

If we do indeed open this up to the public and advertise it in the paper, she thinks that the reservation idea is one wonderful solution to avoiding an overflow of access.

She questions whether we can think more creatively than the profit center with concessions idea. If this is for the good of the community, why not have the larger community pay for the site. Parking meters could fund this museum. Or we could use the Foundation as the resource and have the funding come from off-site situations and events. Mayor Murphy said he felt that the real money would be raised off-site from auctions or contributions.

A. PAUL ABRAHAM

Also a resident of Connecticut Street, Mr. Abraham stated he liked the idea that the Mound House could be put on the Historical Register. He would also want it to be a small museum.

Two things no one has talked about are the security and safety of the location. He keeps hearing take the gates down, take the chains down. We don't know what happens there after 10:00 at night. He doesn't want the liability of it. A lot of people like to walk around there after dark. What happens in the boats is also questionable. The Back Bay is not all that safe.

Mayor Murphy told Mr. Abraham that those were good points and he's sure the security issue will be taken up. We're covered for the liability with our insurance.

B. MARYANN DEMARIS

Ms. DeMaris said that she thinks this is a wonderful committee, but she also sees the issue of making decisions without public comments. This is what she would like to see happen.

C. DANIEL CURRAN

A resident of Connecticut Street, Mr. Curran said he'd like to know what the association between the archaeological dig factor and the preservation of the House as a museum is. He was told that to be on the National Register of Historic Places it could be an archaeological site or it could be a standing Columbian building or a building built by Europeans. Until archaeological sampling and testing is done, we do not know what that site is or how it operated. There are certain criteria that a site has to demonstrate in order to make that list. There are things called features, which are non-transportable artifacts: things like house floors, cooking pits -- things that are indicative of village life. Or it could be a burial mound; and if it were a burial mound, there would be a lot of restrictions on what one could do out there in terms of movement of soil or any kind of building. In fact, that could limit what we could show in our museum.

Mr. Curran asked if both of those elements intertwined are the resource for acquiring funding to purchase the property. He was advised that the building could be purchased either as a historical site without the archaeological investigation or it could be purchased with only the archaeological excavation. Bill Grace said he didn't think that was part of the FCT grant.

Town Manager Segal-George said that the FCT grant doesn't require the house to be on the National Register or the archaeological site. The Florida Communities Trust has traditionally funded preservation land, and this is one of the few projects that they've ever funded that is a house and an archaeological site. FCT is particularly interested in buffering and native vegetation. They traditionally get involved with managing a pristine, vacant piece of property that would not have any of these things on it. In order for the Town to keep the grant and receive the money in dollars, they would have to commit with regards to vegetation and such and also with regards to environmental education. Beyond that, she would say that FCT is very flexible.

Mr. Curran said he thinks we're dealing with two totally different issues when we talk about archaeological diggings and preservation of a home that is a relic to this beach and a historical monument to Estero Island. He would like to charge both the Council and the Committee with preventing any private association or corporation or any individual from any personal monetary

capital gain over the property; seeing that any revenues that are generated should go back to the city; protecting the immediate neighborhood as well as the total neighborhood's integrity and quality of living.

To set the record straight, Anita Cereceda declared that there has never been a public meeting without public comment excepting for a five-minute emergency meeting that was called when Ted FitzSimons resigned. She also explained the procedures that would follow this workshop. CELCAB will formulate recommendations based upon this meeting to go back to the Council. The Council will accept or make policies at that point or make recommendations for changes to the management plan. Then those changes will be written by the Director, the originator of the management plan, and submitted to FCT, who will approve or not approve them, and their recommendation will come back to the Town Council.

Vice Mayor Mulholland noted that all committees are subject to controversy, including CELCAB. He thanked Paul Abraham for his research and his positive comments, which he thought were excellent. He also appreciates the comments made by Lee Conger and Daniel Curran. He stated that we have needed community involvement, and now that the community has shown interest, we can move forward. He thinks we can do something for everyone that is acceptable when the Town gets use of this property.

Lee Conger told Anita Cereceda that she appreciated her clarifying the process and that she would like a copy of the minutes so that she can have it in writing.

Dan Hughes said that Mr. Curran's remarks reminded him of a basic question that he had. Mr. Graves has indicated that the House is apparently going to qualify as a historic site. We don't know about the archaeological, but let's assume that there are some really great things but they're under the house. Now what do we do? He was told by Corbett Torrence that the archaeologists would just as soon not dig. The process of archaeology is destructive. A good archaeologist minimizes the impact on the ground. We would certainly not want to do anything that would jeopardize the integrity of the structure in any way, shape or form.

Garr Reynolds advised Anita Cereceda that he also was not aware of the outline of procedures that she gave. He has been under the impression all along that everything that happened at the Mound House to this point was through Mr. Arrington and the Town Manager. Now that we have CELCAB, he thought that it would still continue to operate basically the same way, that the Town Manager would still be working with CELCAB very closely. Is he wrong? he asked. Garr Reynolds was told no.

Fran Myers gave dates for future CELCAB meetings:

Wednesday, September 29 at 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, October 6 at 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, November 3 at 5:30 p.m.

Mayor Murphy thanked all of the CELCAB members for being here this evening. In his opinion all of their input was great and he thinks we learned a lot this evening. He also extended thanks to the people from Connecticut Street for their comments. He thanked the Council for all their comments and input in this process. He looks forward to more meetings like this.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorraine Calhoun
Transcribing Secretary