

**INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA
MEMORANDUM**

TO: Jason E. Brown, County Administrator

FROM: Richard B. Szpyrka, P.E., Public Works Director
Stan Boling, Community Development Director

SUBJECT: Oslo Boat Ramp – Reduced Scope of Construction

DATE: January 30, 2018

DESCRIPTION AND CONDITIONS

On October 24, 2017 the Board of County Commissioners directed staff to reduce the scope of construction for the Oslo Boat Ramp from the current design encompassing 1.41 acres of land with 12 parking spots for trailers and 11 parking spots for cars to the following three items:

- Place a material on the access roadway and turnaround area that would reduce the turbid runoff from the existing stabilized access road into the lagoon. The material used could be asphalt pavement, asphalt millings, crushed concrete, or any material that would accomplish this goal.
- Remove the muck from the 5,000 +/- square foot area shown on the current Oslo Boat Ramp construction plans.
- Add additional channel markers for the Oslo Boat Ramp.

Staff has reviewed the current plans, discussed the changes with the various permitting agencies, and we offer the following information to the Board:

- The Army Corp of Engineers (ACOE) have indicated that they will not issue a permit for the current design. The ACOE have stated that the County will be required to submit a new permit application showing only the improvements that the County intends to construct. This condition will require that the County hire an engineering consulting firm to redesign the project for permitting. This pertains mostly to the muck removal from the channel as depicted on the original design plans. The removal of the muck will require mechanical removal rather than the originally designed hydraulic pumping removal. This is due to the change in the overall design of the project. This is a more costly method of removal, but is the only option available with the reduced project scope.
- The St. John's River Water Management District will require the County to withdraw the current permit and submit a new permit application for the muck removal and stormwater treatment as needed. The District indicated that a variance for the shellfish harvesting in Class II waters would still be required due to the dredging. Since the footprint of the new improvements would be restricted to the existing area, no impacts would be felt by the surrounding mangroves, so mitigation would not be required.

- Staff recommends that millings be applied to the existing roadway cross-section to reduce the runoff of turbidity into the lagoon. Asphalt millings are not considered to be an impervious material as it does not have the same characteristics of asphalt pavement. Both the District and the ACOE have indicated that using a pervious material on the roadway would likely reduce the determination time for permit approval.
- The permitting of additional channel markings can be accomplished by staff.

Also at the Commission Meeting the Board directed staff to meet with City of Vero Beach staff to discuss the possibility of a joint venture for a Mainland Boat Launch, at the old power plant site, as a possible alternative to improvements to the Oslo Boat Ramp. The Chairman and the County Administrator met with Councilman Lange Sykes and the City Manager to discuss the possibility of this joint venture. A Mainland Boat Launch concept plan (see attached) was provided to the County by City staff and County staff reviewed the sketch and found that there will be significant permitting issues associated with this location.

- One of the main issues that needs to be evaluated is compliance with the County Manatee Protection Plan (MPP). The MPP currently prohibits new boat ramps in areas that are deemed both high manatee use and high watercraft-related manatee mortality areas. Recent calculations performed by staff show that the Power Plant location is not in a high manatee use area, as defined in the MPP. The location is, however, in a high watercraft-related manatee mortality area, which may result in design restrictions by permitting agencies. Under the MPP, new boat ramps are also prohibited where the site is located where the footprint of the new boat ramp (including turning basins and ingress and egress pathways) has submerged aquatic vegetation coverage (SAV) of 10% or greater. Although there does not appear to be SAV coverage in the vicinity of the Power plant that would trigger the SAV restriction, that will need to be verified. The FWC once designated the canals adjacent to the Power Plant as one of eight manatee “safe haven” areas in the state due to the warm water discharge from the plant that occurred in the past. Staff will need to determine how state and federal staff will now look at this location since the source of warm water is no longer available due to the decommissioning of the power plant.
- The concept of filling in the north-south finger canal at the water treatment plant for parking, as shown on the concept plan, is problematic and likely a nonstarter for permitting agencies. It also appears to conflict with Criterion 1.3.4(a) in the MPP, which does not allow more than 100 linear feet of native shoreline vegetation to be altered (trimmed, cut, removed, killed, or destroyed).
- The proposed Mainland Boat Launch site is approximately 3.1 miles north of the existing Oslo Boat Ramp. This could preclude or deter some boaters from using the proposed Mainland Boat Launch due to the proximity of the site to a highly traveled area of the City.

- The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) would need to review the proposed location. Based on the attached sketch it is proposed to provide access under the bridge and construct boat ramps under the bridge. This will cause concern with FDOT and FHWA for potential damage to the bridge structure.
- Further discussions with the City would be required to determine the funding of a boat ramp at this location. The County's share of capital costs as well as operating responsibilities would need to be established.

Staff is requesting the Board consider the following options and provide direction to staff.

- **Option #1** – Proceed with obtaining the ACOE permit for the original Oslo Boat Ramp Design and construct the boat ramp and parking as originally proposed.
- **Option #2** – Proceed with a redesign of the Oslo Boat Ramp to permit the demucking of the area depicted on the original plan, to install an asphalt millings roadway in the existing foot print of the current roadway, and install additional channel markers.
- **Option #3** – Construct only the asphalt millings roadway and install additional channel markers.
- **Option #4** – Not to construct any improvement at the Oslo Boat Ramp.
- **Option #5** – Pursue a joint venture with the City of Vero Beach for a Mainland Boat Launch.

FUNDING

Funding for improvements would depend upon the option selected. Once an option is selected and a cost estimate determined, a funding plan will be submitted to the Board.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board take into consideration the necessary design and permitting issues for both project locations and provide staff with direction.

ATTACHMENTS

Oslo Boat Ramp Parking Area
Oslo Boat Ramp Spoil Containment Area
Aerial of Power Plant Location
City Mainland Boat Launch Concept Plan

APPROVED AGENDA ITEM FOR February 13, 2018