

**TOWN OF DAVIE
DISTRICT BOUNDARIES REVIEW BOARD MINUTES
AUGUST 30, 2012**

1. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 6:09 pm.

Present at the meeting were Chair John Stevens, Vice-Chair Julie Aitkin, Mary Carlton, Tom Gill, Ira Goldberg, Chris Love and Leisa Saltzman. Michael Crowley, Ricki Kasse and Roy Roberts were absent. Also present were The Mellgren Planning Group representative Scott Burton, Town Clerk Russell Muniz and Assistant Town Clerk Evelyn Roig recording the meeting.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2.1 August 9, 2012 Minutes

Mr. Gill made a motion, seconded by Mr. Love, to approve the minutes. In a voice vote, motion carried 7-0.

3. PRESENTATION

3.1 District Boundary Review Plan Options 1, 2, 3, & 4

Mr. Burton referred to the census population map and said Broward County did not intend to produce any more projections until 2015. He said it was key to use population counts that were used in redistricting. Mr. Burton advised that it was easier to see the populations in Google Earth and agreed to provide Mr. Muniz with instructions to access that map. He said he would provide the board with very detailed breakdowns regarding race and ethnic origins as well. Mr. Burton demonstrated how the Google Earth maps could be used.

Mr. Burton stated the criteria for the redistricting were: compactness, population equality and contiguity, and described the challenges in balancing these criteria. Mr. Love asked if any of the proposed plans would put a current councilmember out of his/her district. Mr. Muniz noted that one of the maps had the current district 2 councilmember in district 1. Mr. Burton pointed out that there were different ways to cut up the maps.

Regarding councilmembers' locations, Ms. Carlton said, "That's the whole issue of fair districts in Florida...was creating the districts around the voted representatives rather than the population...you create your districts around your population, you make them contiguous, you make them balanced according to all the other parameters...and then those people will vote for their representatives. You don't have gerrymandered areas because of who lives where." She noted that Forest Ridge seemed "sacred somehow; you keep going around it every single time...because that's not contiguous."

Chair Stevens said the maps as currently drawn met all the legal requirements and of all the options, the one that changed only eight communities complied closest with the law. He stated Forest Ridge was very large and they had to go around it to avoid splitting it up into different districts. Chair Stevens felt they had to look at communities and keep them together.

Ms. Aitken felt Plans 3 and 4 failed regarding compactness, and the annexation of Pine Island Ridge had caused this. She felt there had been a political decision to put Pine Island Ridge in District 1. Chair Stevens felt this map was compact and in compliance with the law.

He thought Pine Island Ridge was more like communities to the east, which were condominiums, not single-family homes. Ms. Aitken disagreed, and said people in Pine Island Ridge were not happy being in District 1.

Chair Stevens felt a small number of the residents may not be happy, but this was not a consideration in redistricting, and this did not reflect the opinion of the majority of that community. Chair Stevens explained there were legal distinctions between homeowners associations and condo associations. He said they had tried to keep communities of interest together in the last redistricting. Mr. Love remarked that interests, concerns and lifestyles were very different between condo and single-family home dwellers.

Mr. Burton stated the Florida Redistricting Amendment ensured that the redistricting would be a transparent, citizen-driven process and the driving force was population equality. He said this was the goal so they would have legal standing in court. Chair Stevens pointed out that all of the plans had variances of less than 10%. Plan 3 had the smallest variance and moved the smallest number of communities, and complied best with the law.

Ms. Aitken wanted to go back to the map used seven years ago as a point of comparison. Chair Stevens felt this would be rehashing the last changes. Ms. Carlton clarified that her use of the term gerrymandering did not refer to Davie but to the State.

Chair Stevens explained that Forest Ridge was a master association with 7 sub-associations and Pine Island Ridge was a master association with 11 sub-associations that should not be split between districts, but the master association was not reflected on the map. Mr. Burton asked the planning department to provide additional information on associations to him and Mr. Muniz agreed to provide it. Mr. Burton remarked that keeping the larger communities together would narrow the options. Mr. Burton agreed to change the communities of interest to reflect the master associations.

Mr. Burton referred to Plan 1, which had an 8% variance, and said the focus of this Plan was compactness while obtaining population equality. Ms. Aitken liked the compactness of this Plan, but wanted to reconfigure it to put the current councilmember back in her district. Mr. Burton said he had tried to do this in Plan 2. Mr. Muniz explained that the charter stated if a councilmember was moved out of his/her district during redistricting, he/she would remain in office until the next election.

Mr. Goldberg made a motion, seconded by Mr. Love, to discard Plan 1. In a voice vote, motion carried 6-1 with Ms. Carlton opposed.

Mr. Burton said in Plan 2, district 2 was not compact because so much of the population was in the northern area. Mr. Love said this plan took similar communities of interest from districts 3 and 4 and moved them. Ms. Saltzman pointed out that two larger communities were also split in Plan 2. Ms. Aitken felt that this was very good for compactness and wanted to work on it. Chair Stevens stated census block 320 was part of Pine Island Ridge and should remain intact. There were several other communities that were being split. Chair Stevens asked Mr. Burton to move census block 320 to district 2 and move census blocks 194 and 214 back into District 4. Mr. Love submitted his own recommendation that maintained all communities of interest and Mr. Burton agreed to examine and evaluate it.

Ms. Aitken made a motion, seconded by Mr. Goldberg, for Mr. Burton to amend Plan 2 per the Board's remarks. In a voice vote, motion carried 7-0.

Mr. Burton described the reassignments in Plan 3 and remarked that this plan represented a minimal change to the existing districts. Ms. Aitken felt this plan made District 1 less compact. Mr. Burton said this plan was not the most compact, especially in district 1, but it

did provide population equality. Chair Stevens stated population equality was the primary goal of the redistricting.

Mr. Gill made a motion, seconded by Mr. Love to continue to study Plan 3. In a voice vote, motion carried 6-1 with Ms. Aitken opposed.

The board asked Mr. Burton to keep census block 194 together in either District 3 or 4, and to use the canal as the separator between Districts 3 and 4. Mr. Love pointed out the canal on the map. Mr. Burton said this was not possible because of a large contiguous block to the north. Chair Stevens described census blocks 211, 212 and 228 to the board and Mr. Burton.

Regarding Plan 4, Chair Stevens asked to relocate census block 320 with Pine Island Ridge, and pointed out that there were several other communities being split. Ms. Saltzman felt this plan was not as compact.

Mr. Gill made a motion, seconded by Mr. Love, to eliminate Plan 4. In a voice vote, motion carried 7-0.

Mr. Burton said he was working on a fifth plan and would forward it to the board.

Karen Stenzel-Nowicki had a copy of one of the maps considered in the last redistricting and remarked that this was more compact than the current configuration. She stated district 1 was now a “salamander” and a number of mistakes had been made during the last redistricting process. There had been a discrepancy with the district 1 boundary south of Griffin Road; it should have been drawn down 61 Avenue instead. This error had been brought to council’s attention, but they had not acted.

Ms. Stenzel-Nowicki stated the gerrymandering of Pine Island Ridge into district 1 had “set a high standard for gerrymandering and the practice of picking voters for electoral advantage or disadvantage.” She said one councilmember had admitted to her that he/she was “doing it for myself this time.” Ms. Stenzel-Nowicki said this had resulted in Pine Island Ridge and the south eastern section of District 1 being disenfranchised because the councilmember devoted no time or resources to these areas “because of the 4,000 strong overwhelming Democratic votes there.” Ms. Stenzel-Nowicki said the Board could choose to correct the errors and gerrymandering of 2007 and make the districts compact and non-discriminatory, or they could perpetuate the gerrymandering and its attendant discrimination.

4. MEETING SCHEDULE

The Board agreed their next meeting would be on September 13.

5. OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Burton explained that the ideal population per district was 22,996. He remarked on the challenge presented by the concentrated population in the downtown area and allowing current Councilmembers to stay in their current districts.

Chair Stevens confirmed for Mr. Love that a census block could not be split up. He explained that the blocks typically contained a community or street. Mr. Love pointed out that the next census might split the blocks if the population increased, so they should be able to split blocks that had no population. Mr. Burton said they could consider splitting an area that had no population, but they could not split any census block that had a population from the census. Chair Stevens noted they could not present evidence of population to justify a boundary change if they split a populated block; they could not account for the population distribution. Mr. Burton said he had agreed to provide the board with a map describing the areas they had asked about.

6. NEW BUSINESS

No discussion.

7. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Chair Stevens reiterated that the board would review revised versions of Plans 2 and Plan 3, and would see a new Plan 5. The board would also receive census data, a copy of the district map from 2006, and the pdf file defining the fields.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:14 p.m.