

# SPRING CREEK NATURE PARK BUTTERFLY GARDEN

9/6/2009

## PELICAN LANDING COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION AMENITIES PROPOSAL 2009

1. **Objective** – Provide the required information to qualify as an official amenity of Pelican Landing by developing and maintaining an eco friendly park and garden at the current Spring Creek Park.
2. **Concept and Beginnings** -- The concept originally started with development of a butterfly garden in Spring Creek Park, but as more people with broader areas of expertise became involved it was apparent that a Nature Park that included a native plant Butterfly Garden was the most appropriate way to proceed in developing (or not developing) this area.
3. **Protecting butterflies, birds and native plants** – There are approximately 150 species of butterflies in Florida – 105 in Southern Florida and 79 in Southwest Florida. Some are diminishing in number because of the expanded roadwork and real estate development that has destroyed their native habitat. Our goal is twofold -- preserve what habitat we can and encourage the propagation and appreciation of these beautiful “flying flowers”. Birds have a similar plight and the goal is the same.
4. **The Task Force** -- A Task Force to develop the park was formed as recommended by the UOC and approved by the PLCA BOD. The Finance Committee did not recommend funding the project, so a compromise was reached, whereas the PLCA BOD agreed to provide \$1,900 per annum to cover reserves, utilities and annual plant replacement if the Task Force raised a minimum of \$5,000 to install the garden. To date the Task Force has raised \$11,379 to date. We completed the initial installation of the garden in April. The Task Force and its volunteers built the pond, the benches, the pergolas and the patios. All supplies and tools have been purchased by the Task Force and they are responsible for maintaining the garden with the help of the CDD.
5. **PLCA and CDD** -- The entire park represents about a third of an acre and is owned by the PLCA as a designated park. There is electricity, potable water, and a sanitary sewer in place. There were also several non-native exotic invasive plants present that have been removed (i.e. Brazilian Pepper, Cardboard Palms, etc.) Repairs to the brick pavers walkway was completed by the PLCA. A state of the art micro-irrigation system was installed and the CDD provided the labor to install over 200 plants purchased by the Task Force. The garden was designed by All Native Nursery and they supplied the plants, which were paid for by the Task Force. The CDD continues to provide irrigation supplies, mulch and handle waste removal.
6. **History and criteria for establishing the park as an amenity:**
  - a. Red Fish Point Task Force and subsequent survey suggestions over the years have often mentioned a butterfly garden in this area.
  - b. Meets all criteria set forth in the community documents for the establishment of an amenity.

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c. Years of exploring and talking with interested residents and outside experts in the development of a butterfly garden at Spring Creek Park:

- 1) John Sibley – All Native Nursery
- 2) Robert Craynor -- WCI Director of Landscaping Pelican Preserve
- 3) Sharon Berg – Owner of Riverland Nursery
- 4) Nelson Glueck – Baycreek CDD
- 5) Jesse Mosheim – Bayside CDD
- 6) Nick Bodven – lepidopterist and butterfly lecturer

d. Personal visits to similar facilities and resources:

- 1) Jim Price – Curator and founder of Pelican Preserve Butterfly Garden a 17,000 sq. ft. butterfly garden.
- 2) Key West Butterfly Aviary
- 3) Fairchild Tropical Gardens – Coral Gables
- 4) Naples Botanical Gardens
- 5) Calusa Nature Center
- 6) Bonita Bay Butterfly Garden and Park
- 7) Corkscrew Woodlands Butterfly Garden
- 8) Callaway Gardens, GA
- ...9) Meijers Gardens, MI
- 10) Butterfly World, FL

e. 2008 Butterfly Conference at Lee County Extension Service attended by Lerew, Hehr, Pospischil and Paver, plus Jesse and Betty Mosheim and Nelson Glueck from the CDD visited Pelican Preserve.

**7. Planning, Measurement and Organization** – The park is both a destination and an activity. This is what shapes our future. Our ubiquity is measured by our donor support, the steady stream and good comments of our passive visitors and our volunteer program. As an amenity the Task Force recommends we form a seven member voting board. Please see the attached financial plan for income and expense controls and planning.

Activities -- The development of a volunteer program is underway with our “Weekly Garden Gatherings”. This is when we tend our garden, discuss new ideas, learn about the plants and butterflies and share in good fellowship. To date we have over 56 volunteers registered. Other measurable activities planned are outlined in the attached Organization Plan.

Planned Improvement Projects – New hardscape elements on the horizon include a utility area by the existing transformer station; where we can have a planting bench, place the storage bin, incorporate a bulletin board for current news and/or a white board, where daily sightings of butterflies and birds can be recorded. We envision this area as a latticed arbor providing additional areas for climbing plants, which will help it blend into the landscape, provide more butterfly host plants and hide the transformer board. Tall narrower similar single panel latticed walls may also be built to provide shade by the benches.

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Additionally, we are planning to build a Butterfly Nursery – a breeding cage off the nature path behind the pine stand, where we can breed butterflies, provide protection for caterpillars, pupas and use as a demonstration area for the metamorphosis process. We plan to fund these additions and any others with current and ongoing donations from the community.

Satellite Program – We envision the amenity as a knowledge, financial and volunteer based entity that can assist in adding native and butterfly plants to other amenities in Pelican Landing (e.g. Canoe Park, Beach Park, Community Park, etc.).

## 8. Community Asset for Everyone –

a. We have provided positive publicity for Pelican Landing via articles with photos in local newspapers – The Banner and Estero Weekender. Based on e-mails and conversations with visitors at the park there is a real sense of community pride in what we have created together. Many other gated communities throughout Florida and our region in particular like Bonita Bay, Mediterra, Pelican Preserve, Copperleaf and others include their butterfly gardens as important amenities that add value and attract buyers.

b. The Nature Center will act as a laboratory and educational facility to assist residents in developing knowledge to create and enhance their own native landscape and butterfly gardens. Both of which are drought and disease resistance. Volunteers will maintain the garden and enjoy a hands-on learning experience.

c. Native gardens have a natural look that tends to give a feeling of being in the wild. Native butterfly gardens treat many weeds as part of the metamorphosis process. They are different from our manicured lawns and parkways for these reasons, and they add a new dimension to the way we experience the environment.

d. It will provide education on the dangers of exotic and intrusive plants that need to be removed in order to preserve the pristine landscape we enjoy.

e. It will provide a serene place to relax and enjoy the marvels of nature, a myriad of butterfly species, birds and native and wild plants. It will be “a place to meditate, celebrate, educate and dedicate...” oneself to the joys and awe of nature.

Respectfully submitted:

Robert Lerew, Chairman

For the Spring Creek Nature and Park and Butterfly Garden Task Force:  
Rosemary Allen, Charlie Hehr, Buck & Anne Deggendorf,  
Ron Glatz and Nelson Glueck

Attachments: Financial Plan, Organization Plan and Butterfly Booster flier