

# Partners in Planning

A PUBLICATION OF THE HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CITY-COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

## RIVER NEWS

*Serving Tampa, Temple Terrace and Hillsborough County*

### Publications

- Newsletter
- Permits Report
- Economic & Demographic Summary
- Tampa Neighborhood News
- River News

### Tampa's Mayor Takes June River Tour

On June 11, 2003, Tampa Mayor Pam Iorio embarked on a tour of the Hillsborough River thanks to Tampa City Councilwoman Linda Saul-Sena who organized the cruise on behalf of the River Round Table, a loosely organized group of citizens and governmental representatives galvanized by their concern for the Hillsborough River's future. The tour enabled those on board to express concerns relating to the river and to visually highlight problems and successes in the river's management.



*Tampa Mayor Pam Iorio*

The river tour embarked from downtown Tampa's Convention Center and proceeded upstream. The tour allowed those onboard to tout many of the successful projects carried out in Tampa by various departments with help and support of the River Board and TAC. Acquisition of riverfront parcels for parks, public walkways along the river, signs marking the river at roadway crossings, vessel safety markers and manatee awareness signs were viewed by those on board.

The tour also pointed out many areas of improvement that could be made. As the boat moved upstream trash and debris floated by, marring the river's otherwise pleasant surroundings. There was discussion regarding the need for improved storm water treatment prior to being directed into the river and various techniques that could be used to accomplish this. The Mayor was reminded how important freshwater inflow is to the river below the dam. She was updated about studies being carried out by the City and water

management district regarding establishment of a minimum flow and why it is so important to the health of the lower river and bay. There were many opportunities to see the effects of tidal and wake action on the river's shoreline which led the on-board discussion to the benefits of natural shorelines.

Past, present and future projects directed to improve the quality of the river improve the community's overall quality of life. They promote a cleaner, vibrant environment, acknowledge an understanding of our dependence on our natural resources and instill a pride in community. The Hillsborough River Board and TAC have a long, proud history of working to make things happen for the river and for the community. The River Round Table adds a new voice that can help to promote projects that will benefit the river.

A renewed interest through a boat tour will certainly serve as a reminder to the Mayor as she leads the City of Tampa forward with the river at its heart.

### Inside

- TAC Meetings Summary, p.2
- High River Flows Stall Studies, p.2
- Tower Lights Have Practice Run, p.3
- Temple Terrace River Greenway Trail, p.3

## **TAC Meeting Summaries**

The TAC met on May 20th at the Sulphur Springs Pool Park. Among discussion and reports at the meeting were:

A briefing/discussion with Lowry Park Zoo staff regarding possible Hillsborough River manatee tracking and awareness programs ;

A status report by Southwest Florida Water Management District staff regarding the District's evaluation of a proposal to exchange permitted withdrawals from wells at Two Rivers Ranch to allow additional permitted withdrawals at Crystal Springs;

An update report on a Hillsborough County re-zoning application that could have impacts to Flint Creek, a tributary to the Hillsborough River;

A status report on recent Hillsborough River levels;

A status report/discussion regarding the City of Tampa Parks Department plans for Hillsborough River canoe launch facilities at Rowlett Park and recent Tampa Water Department objections to the project in view of the project's proximity to the City of Tampa dam and related security concerns;

Reports on public communication/awareness projects including the posting of signs marking the river along roadways;

A special report on the springs system in central Tampa and impacts that may lead to alteration of existing water quality and other associated environmental conditions at Sulphur Springs and in the river;

A report/discussion regarding the on-going lack of public access at Blake High School along the waterfront ;

A briefing on the new Tampa Water Works Park in downtown Tampa which features a freshwater spring that flows to the river.

The TAC met on June 17th at the Southwest Florida Water Management District. Highlights of that meeting included:

Review of three Tampa Port Authority Permit Applications including the proposed 40th Street Widening Project;

Discussion pertaining to the status of the Rowlett Park canoe launch facility and security concerns for the reservoir/dam;and

Presentation /discussion regarding a proposed greenway trail in the City of Temple Terrace that would cross the river.

The July 15th TAC meeting will be held at the Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County in Ybor City and the August 19th meeting will be held at the Tampa Port Authority. Both meetings begin at 1:30 p.m. To review the most up-to-date River Board and TAC agendas visit our website at [www.hillsboroughriver.org](http://www.hillsboroughriver.org) and click on *Agendas* under the River Board/TAC logo or contact the River Board/TAC staff at 273-3774, extension 323.

## **Persistent Rains Continue's River's Flow**

Local area water suppliers were pleased over the last couple of months as flow in the Hillsborough River continued at unexpected rates. In recent years, May and early June have been extremely dry, making water in the river in short supply and creating dicey times for water suppliers dependent on the river. This year however, frequent substantial rainfall events have continued to bring what seems to be an endless supply of water, a good thing for us all and for the health of the river. High levels of rainfall were recorded in late June and the river level rose to capacity and then some, creating a strong downstream flow into the lower river. Flows at the United States Geological Survey monitoring station at the dam showed the reservoir at capacity and flows over the dam hovering at nearly 2000 cubic feet per second (cfs) which is well above the average stream flow records at that location for this time of year for over the past 50 years. Typical flow for this time of year has been around 50 cfs.



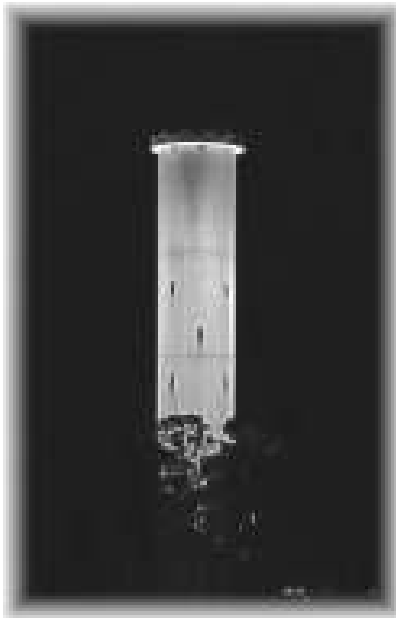
High flow conditions at the dam in June brought studies on various flow levels going into the lower river to a halt. Water managers have been trying to study the effects of lower, controlled flows at the dam but with the rainfall events and resulting higher, unexpected flows, these studies have been postponed until Fall, thanks to Mother Nature.



## **Summer Fun on the Hillsborough River**

Students from a local Tampa school got the opportunity to learn and practice rowing skills on the river this summer. Besides getting outdoors to enjoy the river's natural beauty, these students also learned the importance of cooperation in the sport of rowing and how to navigate safely in waterways that are shared with motorized craft.

## Historic Sulphur Springs Tower Lit The Real Deal!



The Tampa Parks & Recreation Department continues to work diligently to light this extraordinary historic structure for your evening viewing pleasure. The last issue of the *River News* ran a computer-generated photo depicting what the tower might look like lit up. It didn't come close to the real thing! While testing the lower lights this photo was snapped, capturing the true beauty of the lower portion of the tower basking in a soft illumination. The sight was so breath-taking it caused a noticeable slow down on surrounding roadways as on-lookers circled to look at the lighted tower. The test also created quite a buzz of excitement and anticipation in the surrounding neighborhood.

A bit more work needs to be completed to light the upper portion of the tower but that is underway. Once the lights and power are ready to go so the whole tower can be properly lit up the City will turn the lights on nightly, marking one of Tampa's signature structures located in Sulphur Springs, along the Hillsborough River, for all to see and enjoy. In addition to the tower lighting project, the Tampa Parks & Recreation Department is in the process of formulating preliminary plans for River Tower Park, the 13-acre tract of land where the tower is located, east of Florida Avenue on the Hillsborough River's north bank. A management plan is underway that provides broad guidance for the site's management and development. A more detailed, "master plan" for this new park site is expected to begin sometime next year. Community input will be an important part of this process as plans for the park site progress.

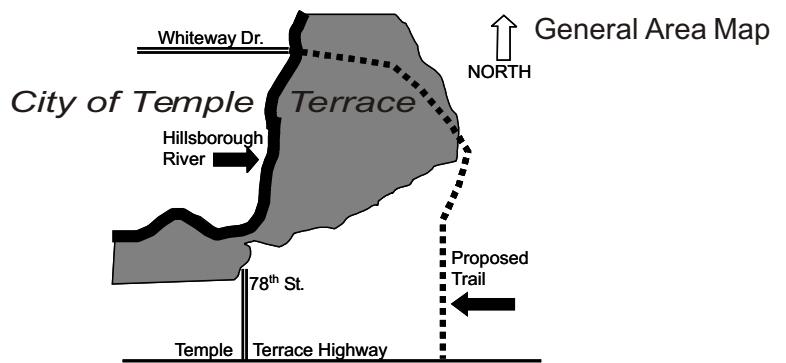
## Temple Terrace Working Towards River Greenway Trail

The TAC was provided with a briefing by Temple Terrace Parks & Recreation Department staff regarding funding the City is seeking to be used in the development of a greenway trail that would cross the Hillsborough River. The funding is being sought through the Florida Department of Transportation as an Enhancement Project.

The project is a proposed 2-mile long paved, multipurpose, 12-foot wide asphalt surface trail along an abandoned railway line located in the City, with a small segment in the County. The southern terminus is 2 miles east of 56th Street, east of the river on Temple Terrace Highway. The northern terminus is at the intersection of Whiteway Drive and Riverhills Drive. A bridge approximately 300 ft. long will be required to cross the Hillsborough River from the existing railway bed east of the river to Railway Park on the river's west bank. The project is intended to serve pedestrians, bicyclists, and skaters. Other amenities, including signs, rest stops with benches and trash receptacles, bike racks, interpretive displays, and minimal landscaping will be provided where appropriate.

This proposed trail would provide a type of facility to the public that the City of Temple Terrace does not currently have. The 2-mile scenic trail would be an outlet for wellness and exercise activities as well as an alternative transportation link by bicycle and foot from the southeast are of Temple Terrace to the north. The trail would connect the bicycle lanes on Temple Terrace Highway to the proposed bicycle lanes on Whiteway Drive, to the Family Recreation Complex, and Riverhills Drive. This would lead to bicycle lanes currently located on Fowler Avenue.

Total cost of the project is estimated at 1.6million dollars which would include most aspects of the project, including further design work, construction, and of course a bridge to span the river. Plans currently call for a rustic suspension bridge that would blend into the natural surroundings while accomodating the multiple types of non-vehicular use. Actual work on the trail is projected to be years down the road as reflected in the budget request which proposes a start time in 2008-2009. Still, as the River Board & TAC have learned over the years, its never too early to start planning.



**YOUR River Board  
wants to hear from YOU!  
Call the River Hotline at  
272-5940**

# RIVER NEWS

Editor: Alan Wright



Hillsborough River Interlocal Planning Board  
& Technical Advisory Council  
601 E. Kennedy Blvd., 18th Floor  
PO Box 1110  
Tampa, FL 33602 1150

Robert B. Hunter, FAICP - Executive Director/HCCCCPC

---

PRSR STD  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
TAMPA, FL  
Permit No. 2411

---

**Rain falls. Water rushes. The river flows.  
A celebration of renewal?  
Into streets, pipes and drains. Picking up  
the dirty litter.  
The river flows. I do not know  
where it goes.  
But the river tells where  
Uncaring hands have dropped  
Their trash and discarded their  
Unwanted burdens to the ground.  
The river knows.**

*A. Wright*

