

New Peace River Wildlife Center Joins TEAM at Henry Street Campus

The new site planned for the Peace River Wildlife Center is a win-win for everyone. This program is a local treasure and a valuable resource for the community. Not only do they save our wildlife, but they are a vibrant addition to the local and tourist landscape. The original plan, had them building their new facility in Ponce Park at enormous cost to them, and to the City because of its location in a velocity zone. The new plan, to join the Henry Street campus, has everyone breathing a sigh of relief. While the Peace River Wildlife Center was always fully responsible for its own construction costs, the City would have been financially challenged to provide the needed infrastructure on the Ponce Park site. Also, the community gets a valuable section of the park returned to public use.

The newly proposed piece of land has so much more space to do it right, with 7.4 acres available instead of the single acre proposed in Ponce Park. This means that the Wildlife Center will be able to provide a very attractive building on that site. The building itself, along with



extensive landscaping, will be a buffer between the Center and the residential component of Henry Street. There is plenty of room to set it deeper onto the property. This will also allow an exhibit design that provides a better viewing experience for the public. The building will house an education center, the gift shop and offices. This area is already used for public access with its close proximity to Fisherman's Village. The Punta Gorda Library, the Dog Park, The History Park and TEAM Punta Gorda's Community Gardens are already on the site. A meandering sidewalk to connect the parts of the campus would be a nice touch. We look forward to opportunities for new partnerships and synergy between the tenants.

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