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Public invited to give input on future of Warm Mineral Springs

Sarasota County and the city of North Port will host three visioning sessions to give the community an opportunity to help determine future improvements to Warm Mineral Springs. The county and city jointly purchased the 81-acre site and are exploring opportunities to enhance the quality of the property and the experience for visitors.

The first session is an open house and site visit:

- **10 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 21**, at Warm Mineral Springs, 12200 San Servando Ave., North Port.
- Rain date is 1-4 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 22.

Residents will be able to explore the Warm Mineral Springs property and talk with experts who are knowledgeable about the archeological and historical resources of the site, along with economic development and recreational opportunities.

Residents will be asked for feedback and ideas about the future of Warm Mineral Springs. Information collected during the open house will be used in future workshop discussions.

Residents also may attend two additional presentations and discussions:

- **5-8 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 26**, at the Morgan Family Community Center, 6207 West Price Blvd., North Port.
- **5-8 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 2**, at the Gulfcoast Event and Conference Center on the Searcy G. Koen Regional Girl Scout Campus, 4780 Cattlemen Road, Sarasota.

“Warm Mineral Springs offers a great opportunity for the county, the city of North Port and all our residents to collaborate on a collective vision of what the property can become,” said Christine Robinson, Sarasota County Commission chair. “The springs are an integral part of our region’s historic, cultural and wellness identity and have an almost unlimited potential as a community and tourism resource. This is part of our effort to realize that goal.”

Beginning Saturday, Jan. 21, North Port will offer an online survey at www.cityofnorthport.com, and Sarasota County will host an online wiki discussion forum at <https://wiki.scgov.net>.

Plans for Warm Mineral Springs also will preserve the lands surrounding the spring and the water source that supplies the downstream habitat of the West Indian manatee.

The Warm Mineral Springs day spa opened in 1946 and draws more than 80,000 annual visitors. The therapeutic waters contain 51 minerals, which is the highest mineral content of any natural spring in the world. The spring holds 9 million gallons that are replenished every two hours. The warm waters are known for their healing abilities and regularly attract people worldwide to North Port.

Warm Minerals Springs is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as one of the most important underwater archaeological sites in America. The ledges beneath the springs have been explored in many underwater archaeology investigations and provide information about the lives of Florida Paleo Indians. Remains found in the spring include an 11,000-year-old man, saber-toothed tigers, giant sloths and tortoises.

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