

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Adrienne Burke at 3:33pm.

ROLL CALL

Members present:

Steve Rieck, Jose Miranda, Robin Lentz, Nick Gillette

Staff present:

Adrienne Burke (CDD Director), Kelly Gibson (Senior Planner), Scott Schultz (Planner II)

1.1 DISCUSS CREATION AND GOALS OF WORKING GROUP

1.2 REVIEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENTS IN CITY'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Adrienne reviewed agenda items 1.1 and 1.2 together. She explained the purpose of the group as conveyed on the meeting agenda:

Implementing Elements of Future Land Use and Economic Development Goals of Comprehensive Plan

This project will be a two year effort, given the substantive nature of the Comprehensive Plan direction. Both the Future Land Use and Economic Development Elements direct review of the commercial corridors within the City – 8th Street/Downtown, 14th Street, Sadler Road, and the Main Beach/Seaside Park areas. Given the built out nature of these parts of town, redevelopment and infill activities will be the focus. The Economic Development Element directs evaluating these parts of town as Job Opportunity Areas, and laying the groundwork to introduce new business and employment opportunities to the City.

- In 2014, Planning Staff will conduct research on potential policies and land use mechanisms to foster and support these directives. As part of the research, staff plans to convene a technical working group, similar to the CRA Density Bonus working group, which will assist staff in evaluating potential options. Stakeholders from particular fields or interest groups related to the commercial corridors will be invited to meet with the working group. The group will meet in the sunshine and be open to the public. At this point, monthly meetings are planned throughout 2014.
- Based on information and data collected in 2014, staff will work in 2015 to draft the updates to the LDC and prepare them for Planning Advisory Board and Commission review. Depending on how the working group and staff decide to tackle the updates, the changes may come in sections or as a bundle. Due to the nature of these updates, which promise to be a significant update to the LDC, it's possible this effort will continue beyond 2015, although staff's goal is to be done with the updates by December 2015.

Adrienne provided copies of the Future Land Use and Economic Development Elements to the members, and briefly reviewed the applicable policies. She noted that she also provided the Data and Analysis for the two elements, which provide good background information. She encouraged the members to review the documents outside the meeting.

At this time, the group went around and introduced themselves and explained their interests and how they can contribute to the group.

1.3 REVIEW EXAMPLES OF LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE-RELATED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Adrienne explained that since the first meeting, there is no set process for the group's work yet and that staff hoped the members would give us input on the process. To help generate thoughts on what the group's efforts will be, Adrienne further explained that staff had researched different communities around the state to provide examples.

Kelly shared that she looked at Gaines Street in Tallahassee, and that they utilized zoning districts, design guidelines, and significant public investment to generate revitalization along the Gaines Street corridor. Hollywood Boulevard in Hollywood focused on a “complete streets” project providing access for cars, pedestrians and bicycles. Young Circle in Hollywood is a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA), and relied on private investment and creation of a zoning overlay. She also reviewed Ft. Myers, who focuses on being business -friendly. They compile information on federal, state, and local business assistance programs and provide a centralized location to access that information. They have a website available to search for vacant property, and a team to assist once a business locates a particular property. Ft. Myers uses CRA’s and special taxing districts to help foster revitalization and redevelopment. They have a website called Shop Ft. Myers that helps businesses advertise and illustrates parking areas. Ft. Myers also uses an Annexation Assessment Team to assist people with the annexation process.

The group discussed some of the challenges facing Fernandina Beach – aging population, currently no residential densities in the commercial areas, underused areas, and high commercial rents in some areas. Steve shared some of the information he had recently provided to the City Commission.

Scott reviewed information from Oakland Park, which enhanced pedestrian access from residential neighborhoods to the adjacent commercial districts. Nick pointed out an example from South Carolina where meaningful incentives are given for density and floor area ratio increases if certain criteria are met; for example, providing parks or improving the streetscape. Scott also found examples of streamlined processes for permitting and incentives, such as reduced impact fees and ad valorem taxes in exchange for meeting certain criteria. He also found consistency in regulations for businesses across all districts, and in Wilton Manors, business friendly strategies such as not having a sign permit fee for new businesses, and having a temporary banner month, where businesses could hang temporary banners with no fee or permit.

Adrienne shared information from Vilano Beach in St. Johns County, Winter Garden and Winter Park. Vilano Beach has a future land use and zoning district of Town Center Mixed Use to help foster the development the community wants to see. Winter Park had an Urban Land Institute technical assistance study done that recommended changes to the Land Development Code, and Winter Garden has a commercial corridor overlay. All of the towns recommend design standards for buildings, and for site design such as having buildings pulled forward to the street. Adrienne pointed out that the towns focused on what they wanted to see and what they did not want to see; for example, Vilano Beach disallows drive-throughs unless it is a bank in order to limit fast food chains. The study for Winter Park’s Fairbanks Avenue recommended the same thing. Another component Adrienne noted is that all of the towns emphasize the importance of visioning to create an identity for the area being revitalized, buy in from the property owners for that vision, and the need to meet the community where it is and not plan for something that is not a good fit.

1.4 DETERMINE PROCESS FOR GATHERING DATA AND NEEDED RESEARCH

Adrienne stated that the group will help drive this research and data process that will take place this year in anticipation of LDC updates next year. She asked how the group wanted to proceed. The group discussed the need to identify stakeholders for each of the commercial areas. It was discussed that getting input is critical, and coming up with a list of questions for the stakeholders would be beneficial. The group discussed working on stakeholders for each area, or tackling one area first – identifying stakeholders, questions, and a process – to use as a model for the other areas. It was decided to start with one area, 8th Street. At the next meeting, the group will define the area, come up with a list of stakeholders, and questions to ask them. Staff will send out information to the group about prior 8th Street efforts in advance of the meeting. Steve suggested inviting Doug McDowell from County planning to join the next meeting.

1.5 DETERMINE NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting will be Tuesday, April 8th at 3:30pm.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.