

## DRAFT MINUTES -- CRA MEETING 12-3-2015

A duly noticed meeting of the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) Advisory Board was held on December 3, 2015, in the Commission Chambers at City Hall, 204 Ash Street, Fernandina Beach, FL 32034.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:16 p.m.

### 1. ROLL CALL

Present were Chair Arlene Filkoff; Members Andrew Curtin, Lou Gold, Daniel McCranie, Marla McDaniel, Anne Thomas, and Lynn Williams; Commission Liaison Robin Lenz; and Community Development Department Senior Planner Kelly Gibson. Also in attendance were members of the public.

### 2. INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

Ms. Filkoff introduced and welcomed the new City Manager, Dale Martin, and the new Main Streets Director, Jeffrey Kurtz. She provided the two gentlemen with a brief summary of the CRA and a brief history of the CRA Advisory Board from its inception to the present.

### 3. BOARD BUSINESS

#### 3.1 Marina Expansion Potential

Ms. Filkoff explained that the purpose of this item of business is for the Board to gain an understanding of the potential for expansion and/or replacement of the existing marina. Mr. Williams told the Board that a consultant by the name of ATM will be updating a previous study which is now more than 15 years old.

Mr. Joseph Springer of Westrec, which manages the Marina, was asked to describe existing conditions. He said there is a siltation problem that requires dredging. He emphasized that there are no empty rentable slips -- those that appear to be vacant and rentable are actually not rentable because the water depth is too shallow as a result of siltation. The Cook property to the south of the slips, where the shrimp boats are located, has a deeper draft, as does the property to the north of the marina. Mr. Springer explained that the docks are improperly oriented east-west, which obstructs the water flow and exacerbates the siltation problem; the docks should be oriented north-south so as not to impede the scouring effect of the natural water flow. Mr. Springer went on to say that the marina has 20 mooring balls and could put up to an additional 100 mooring balls within the City limits -- and perhaps as many as 150 in total. He mentioned that the fee for a dock mooring is \$200/night, whereas the fee for a mooring ball is only \$20/night. In response to the question "how suitable is the northern area for a marina?" Mr. Springer said ATM will be evaluating this. Mr. Joseph Lewis, also with Westrec, added that additional data is needed as to how far the docks can be extended and what the siltation problems will be.

One major issue is whether the Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) will allow expired permits to be reinstated. Ms. Filkoff asked if the ATM study would provide an analysis of these permitting requirements. Mr. Williams then provided some background on the ACE permitting process.

There followed a brief discussion of the Marina's financial condition. Mr. Springer said that the Marina makes a profit of approximately \$300,000/year, but when the enterprise debt fund of (\$600,000) is applied against the profit, the result is a loss. He agreed with Ms. Filkoff's statement that the marina suffers under the weight of its existing debt service and he promised that a cost/benefit analysis would be provided to the City Commission to support each recommendation presented to them. The ATM study, which will be completed by mid to late February, will address three possibilities, which are being studied as separate projects: 1) moving the marina to the north; 2) rearranging the southern end docks; and 3) expanding the mooring field.

Mr. Lou Gold asked about encroachment on submerged state-owned land. Mr. Springer said that he had spoken with DEP people who had told him that now is the time to acquire the submerged land, and that the fee to acquire a submerged land lease would be nominal – perhaps around \$500.

### 3.2 Waterfront Park Area

Ms. Filkoff requested an update on Parking Lot B from Mr. Eric Bartelt, Landscape Architect for the project, who said the Parking Lot B is in the engineering phase. He said that north and south Front Streets were out of alignment at their intersection with Centre Street and that two solutions had been discussed: first, creating a roundabout, which city department heads did not favor; and second, making the streets align, which would result in the loss of four parking spaces. In response to Ms. Filkoff's question about next steps, Mr. Bartelt said that an RFP would be issued. Mr. McCranie asked if an engineer's cost estimate would be provided, and Mr. Bartelt said that he had prepared one based on earlier cost estimates prepared by an engineering firm hired by the City. Mr. McCranie stated that he felt it was important to obtain a revised engineer's assessment. The Board determined that it should make a request for an updated engineering cost estimate at the next Commission meeting.

Mr. Gold asked to see an updated copy of the plan and Mr. Bartelt said he would email it to Kelly Gibson. He reminded the Board that the 2012 plan embodies the concept that was approved, but last year the Commission decided to create a small park located solely in Parking Lot B. Implementation of the Parking Lot B plan has been delayed because it included perpendicular parking up to the railroad tracks, and since parking within 18 feet of the center line of the tracks is prohibited, revisions were required. The net loss of parking attributable to the revisions is 4 spaces – a reduction from 48 spaces to 44 spaces. Mr. Springer asked about bus circulation, and Mr. Bartelt responded that buses will go down Front Street and stop at the traffic island at Lot B. He added that there will be a landscape buffer and a fence from Centre Street to Ash Street along the west border of the tracks to prevent people from crossing over the tracks. There will also be a fence along the east side of the tracks. Ms. Filkoff asked if the fences will match. She also wondered if there is anything planned for the east side of the Depot. The Board requested coordination of the fencing. There was also some discussion about the possibility of increased usage of the boat ramp at the Marina by smaller boats and trailers, as the ramp in that location is much more protected than the one at the Pogy Plant, where the current is stronger.

Mr. Bartelt was asked if there were any more park plans and he answered that he had been working on some revisions to the original WAG plan. The Board requested an opportunity to review what he proposes as a park plan revision.

Finally, Mr. Gold inquired as to whether any thought had been given to using the parking lot at Broome Street for bus parking, and Ms. Filkoff asked Ms. Gibson to find out what city department coordinates such matters. Mr. Bartelt responded that the bus drop-off will be at the end of Ash Street.

3.3 Parking (this item was moved to the January agenda).

#### 4. MINUTES

Mr. Gold made a motion to approve the October 8, 2015 Meeting Minutes and the Board voted unanimously to approve the Minutes.

#### 5. DISCUSSION OF MEETING DATES

There was some discussion that the CRA had traditionally met the first Thursday after the first Commission meeting of the month and did the Board want to change that. No one indicated a desire to change the meeting. The next meeting was scheduled for January 7, 2016.

#### 6. PUBLIC COMMENT

The Chair asked if there were any public comments. There were none. However, earlier in the meeting, Dr. Chip Ross, a member of the public, had asked if there were any plans for the waterfront that were known to members of the Board, but not disclosed. Ms. Filkoff said she was aware of some discussion regarding construction of condominiums at the waterfront. Ms. Thomas said that in her opinion that would be a terrible idea and that she was completely opposed to it. A few members of the Board expressed the opinion that "something" had to happen to move things forward. Ms. Thomas responded that it would be far better to do nothing and wait for the right thing to come along than rush ahead with the wrong project and be stuck with it for generations.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.