

## DRAFT MINUTES -- CRA MEETING 2/4/16

A duly noticed meeting of the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) Advisory Board was held on February 4, 2016, in the Commission Chambers at City Hall, 204 Ash Street, Fernandina Beach, FL 32034.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:18 p.m.

### 1. ROLL CALL

Present were Chair Arlene Filkoff; Members Andrew Curtin, Lou Gold, Marla McDaniel, Anne Thomas, and Lynn Williams; City Commission Liaison Robin Lenz; and Community Development Department Senior Planner Kelly Gibson. Absent was CRA Member Daniel McCranie.

### 2. UPDATE ON CITY COMMISSION

Ms. Filkoff reported that the City Commission voted 3-2 to approve bonus incentives.

### 3. BOARD BUSINESS

#### 3.1. Update on Traffic Circulation and Parking Study by Rex Lester and Kelly Gibson

Ms. Filkoff asked if there were a need for a new parking study based on today's conditions vs. existing conditions of 6 or 7 years ago, and Mr. Lester said there should be a new parking study. His principal issues with respect to Lot B are handicapped spaces, a loading zone, and a bus drop-off area. Eric Bartelt, landscape architect for the current Waterfront Plan, said the Waterfront Plan had been revised to include a bus drop-off area and a loading zone. Ms. Filkoff asked whether there is enough parking to meet today's needs. Mr. Lester said there is not enough parking, but that if Alachua Street were opened to Front Street, a combination of angled parking and one-way streets could create a significant number of new parking spaces. Earlier, Mr. Lester had suggested that additional parking could also be located on the site of the Standard Marine building.

Commissioner Roy Smith commented that he thought a parking study had been done just recently and was told that this was a study focused on church-related parking and it never went anywhere as there was no interest in it. Some members of the CRA Board expressed the opinion that there is no parking shortage in the downtown area, that available parking is simply further than some people want to walk, and that store owners and their employees park in spaces that should be reserved for customers. There was some discussion as to whether a parking study would be just for the CRA District or the whole downtown area. Ms Gibson said that a previous study had been done for \$12,000 but that was in conjunction with another project which permitted cost savings, and that a whole new independent study would be in the \$20-25,000 range. Commissioner Lenz said she was sick of studies and asked if it would be possible to take existing information and reconfigure it. Further comments included Mr. Williams opinions that the hotel will exacerbate the parking issue, that a parking study should be able to be done in-house, as it is not rocket science, and that perhaps Main Streets could be involved. Mr. Gold suggested the Broome Street parking lot as a location for parking buses. Ms. Filkoff said that the City should figure out what aspects of a parking study could be done in-house and

what aspects would require an outside consultant. She also mentioned that she had previously recommended to city permitting staff that a parking plan be required as part of the application process for special events.

The discussion returned to angled parking. Mr. Bartelt said that he thought the City had decided to look into angled parking a year ago, and there was some agreement that it had, but that nothing got done. There was some talk about extending angled parking further south of Centre Street. Then the discussion turned to parking meters and how City spaces had been metered in the 1970's. When asked if new parking lot surfaces need to be pervious, Ms. Gibson said yes, they do. There was some cost/benefit discussion about pervious surfaces but, as Ms. Gibson pointed out, pervious services are required in the code. Mr. Gold noted that the parking spaces behind the courthouse and across from the Health Department are not available to the public at night.

### 3.2. Update on Ownership of Front Street by City Attorney Tammi Bach

Attorney Bach said that, south of Centre Street, the railroad owns the trackage area in fee simple. In the mid 1800's, a Plat of the City of Fernandina Beach was filed with and approved by the State Legislature showing city streets as "right of way". As a legal matter, the City owns its streets as "right of way" rather than in fee simple. On the Plat, the rights of way are shown as extending all the way to the platted waterway. In the 1800's, City gave the RR a 60' easement, in perpetuity, over City-owned right of way at Front Street to the north of Centre Street. When asked, Attorney Bach assured Ms. Filkoff that there is no question as to the ownership of this section of trackage. The City owns it as right of way and the RR has an easement.

Dr. Chip Ross was allowed to speak and told the Board that FDOT has the right to open and close Alachua Street and that Laura Regelado at FDOT has been in touch with Assistant City Manager Marshall McCraney regarding this matter. Ms. Filkoff reminded everyone that the City had obtained a 5-year permit to connect Alachua Street to Front Street, but the permit expired before any action was taken on it. FDOT did not approve an extension of the 5-year permit, but did approve a new permit application by the City, subject to railroad signoff. However, First Coast has resisted signing off on the new permit. Dr. Ross told the Board that FDOT has the power to make a unilateral decision regarding Alachua, in which case, First Coast would have 21 days to object and appeal and an administrative hearing would be scheduled after giving the parties some time to try to come to an agreement. In the meantime, however, the clock is running on the 5-year time period for the new permit. Attorney Bach said the City must act. Someone asked who in the City "owns" this issue, and the response was Assistant City Manager McCraney. Ms. Filkoff questioned why Dr. Ross had had to spend so much of his own time to determine that FDOT can make this decision unilaterally. Commissioner Lenz said she would take personal responsibility for pursuing this issue.

### 3.3. Summary of Overwatering Permitting Meeting with Rob Semmes

Regarding the waterfront property which the City currently has under purchase and sale agreement, due diligence will not be completed within the ninety day due diligence period in the P&S. It was voted to recommend to the City Commission that they request a ninety day extension at a minimum.

### 3.4. Coastal Flooding Study Update

Ms. Gibson said the City needs to budget for this study in the next fiscal year. The item was postponed to the next CRA meeting at which Ms. Gibson will provide an internal cost estimate. The City Manager has scheduled a workshop for the Commission on the Waterfront Plan on April 12, 2016 from 5:00-8:00 p.m.

#### 4. NEXT MEETING

It was determined that next CRA Meeting on March 3rd will include a discussion about the "product" the CRA Advisory Board will submit to the City following its review of various CRA issues over the last six months. Ms. Lenz said the product should include a list of challenges and recommendations, and Ms. Filkoff said that, in her opinion, everything should be on the table including disbanding the CRA designation.

#### 5. PUBLIC COMMENT

The Chair asked if there were any comments from members of the public and there were none.

At this point, the meeting was adjourned.

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