

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY OF STUART COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT BOARD HELD IN CITY HALL, 121 SOUTHWEST FLAGLER AVENUE, STUART, FLORIDA ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 2013

Those present: Frank Wacha, Jr., Chairman
Paul Skyers
Sharon Fitzke
Brent Wood
Drew Pittman
Austin Tyo

Those absent: Pete Walson, Vice Chairman

Also present: Michael Durham, City Attorney
Dottie Zaharako, Finance Director
Sam Amerson, Public Works Director
Teresa Lamar-Sarno, CRA Administrator
Deanna Freeman, Senior Planner

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman

Chairman Wacha called the meeting to order at 4:02PM

II. ROLL CALL: Secretary

Those answering roll call and others present are referenced above.

III. REORGANIZATION

MOTION: Paul Skyers nominated Frank Wacha as Chair

SECOND: Sharon Fitzke

Motion carried 6/0

MOTION: Sharon Fitzke nominated Drew Pittman as Vice Chair

SECOND: Paul Skyers

Motion carried 6/0

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 5, 2013

MOTION: Paul Skyers

SECOND: Drew Pittman

Motion carried 6/0

Chairman Wacha asked that the February minutes be included in the next agenda.

Public Comments: None

Board Comments: None

1. Request to consider a Major Urban Code Exception to accommodate the renovation of property at 20 N.E. Dixie Highway, Stuart, to the Treasure Coast Community Christian Church (TC3), within the City of Stuart Community Redevelopment Area, as per the provisions of Section 3.01.06 of the Land Development Code

Presentation: Deanna Freeman, Senior Planner
Sam Amerson, Public Works Director
Gordon Mularski, Pastor

Public Comments:

Tom Plymale, owner of the building next door asked if this might bring sewer to that area.

Sam Amerson said the city has embarked on a citywide sewer program and this is not specifically included, but they would try to include it at a future date.

Richard Datz, who lives behind the property asked about the wetlands on the eight acres.

Deanna Freeman said they would have to comply with the codes on protection of wetlands.

Sam Amerson said there are two significant and one insignificant documented wetlands on the property and they would be preserved as such.

Drew Pittman asked if it was a 50 or 25 foot transition off the wetlands.

Sam Amerson said he thought the transition zone was 25 feet from the jurisdictional limits of the wetland.

Board Comments:

Paul Skyers asked how much tax revenue would be lost.

Deanna Freeman said she didn't calculate it. She said there will be lost revenue but they'll be gaining use of an empty, unused building and expand the eight acres.

Paul Skyers asked if they could put a sidewalk along Dixie.

Deanna Freeman said there were no sidewalks to connect to but they could include it as a condition for the future.

Frank Wacha said he loves the idea that they are going to take over this building and there should be some easement for a sidewalk along Dixie if there is something to connect to at some point.

Brent Wood asked what material is on the top portion of the building.

Gordon Mularski said it would be the existing metal but it would probably have to be rewrapped. He said they are very concerned about the aesthetics of the building.

MOTION: Sharon Fitzke moved to approve the request to consider a Major Urban Code Exception to accommodate the renovation of property at 20 N.E. Dixie Highway, Stuart, to the Treasure Coast Community Christian Church (TC3), within the City of Stuart Community Redevelopment Area, as per the provisions of Section 3.01.06 of the Land Development Code including board comments

SECOND: Drew Pittman

Motion carried: 6/0

2. Public Art Proposal for Gazebo Park

Presentation: Teresa Lamar-Sarno

Public Comments: None

Board Comments:

Paul Skyers asked if there was a public arts committee and said he was trying to figure out the significance.

Teresa Lamar-Sarno said it is up to staff to make the request to the review board.

Chairman Wacha said he is getting the impression that the board would like more information on the value, cost to repair etc...

Teresa Lamar-Sarno said staff has done a great deal of research on the piece and have not been able to get a value on the piece, but would continue to try.

MOTION: Drew Pittman moved to continue the item to the next meeting

SECOND: Sharon Fitzke

Motion carried 6/0

3. CRA 2014 Budget and Program Prioritization

Presentation: Teresa Lamar-Sarno

Public Comments:

David Collier said on behalf of the Mainstreet Board of Directors they were concerned about the issue of tram funding. He said the CRA budget has been dipped into by two departments Code Enforcement and Police and it has stopped this year but the dip for the tram operation started out as a small innovative program and it went well but has never left the CRA budget. He said there has been a big increase and they thought a funding

source could be from the Downtown Stuart Special Assessment District for Downtown Parking and thought this was an ideal way to fund the trams and reenact that parking district. He said this is a very strange budget as the department head prepares the budget and the manager reviews the budget and the managers recommendations become the budget that goes to Commission and the CRA but the problem is that there are parts of this budget that didn't come out of the CRA's office or the department, they came out of somewhere and he is referring to the tram operation. He said it was inserted into this budget and CRA staff had nothing to do with. He said if you discussed this budget with the CRA, is this the budget recommended by the manager. He said there are issues in the CRA, lack of funds, the dipping for questionable items and thought they should add a caveat that said you would like to see the manager's recommendations or they would be left out of the picture.

Board Comments:

Paul Skyers asked who is responsible for the TIF graph and where the information on the red line came from.

Dottie Zaharako, Finance Director said the red line is from the original CRA plan that was prepared around 1996 and the blue line is actual, so there isn't anything projected. She said the increase in revenue was the reason the CRA was established and what happened was entirely different because of economic circumstances.

Paul Skyers asked if the Finance Department has revisited the TIF projection going forward to 2020.

Dottie Zaharako said there is really no way to predict what is going to happen to property values. She said the Property Appraiser is projecting flat which is good considering what they have been doing. She said because of the severity of the dip and how long it has lasted it is hard to long range plan.

Chairman Wacha thought they needed to look at it in an entrepreneurial way.

Drew Pittman said the staff of the tram is increasing by 40% and asked if a study had been done to back that up.

Teresa Lamar-Sarno said they are tracking ridership and they are running the trams 8-9 hours per day which is why they are increasing staff.

Drew Pittman said his office is in downtown and he sees the trams empty a lot and wonders why they would double the workforce.

Teresa Lamar-Sarno said last year they moved 15,000 passengers on the one tram, but thought the board needed to speak on the value of it.

Sharon Fitzke asked if it could be split between the City and the CRA.

Teresa Lamar-Sarno said they have had that discussion with city staff and they are looking for grants to assist.

Drew Pittman said the CRA spent about a million dollars on Spoto's and he would like to see them get their pro rata income from the property.

Paul Skyers thanked David Collier for his contribution. He said he is concerned with the budget and it is a "let's not disturb anything" kind of a budget and what they need now is revenue so he rejects this budget as it puts them into a deficit situation, but if it went into development opportunities that generated TIF revenue, he would support it. He said it was a "let me run and hide" budget and petitioned the board to revisit their objectives in the CRA which primarily is to generate TIF. He thought they should engage the city in a citywide discussion about creating the mechanisms that would allow for quick development and thought staff should go back to the drawing board.

Chairman Wacha said the bottom few lines of the budget are disturbing and it is heavy administratively. He said they spend the money on things that aren't really building and agrees with Paul Skyer on that point but he didn't know how to change it. He believes they should be entrepreneurial but didn't know how they could do that. He thought whoever is benefitting from development should be paying for it and agreed with David Collier's idea. He thought they needed to look at where the CRA's have had their funds taken like Spoto's and they needed a mechanism to get those funds back.

Teresa Lamar-Sarno said they have been doing bricks and mortars even with the downturn such as Woodlawn Park, MLK intersection, Colorado Avenue, the purchase of Dockside so there is activity and they are going to see a tax increase from the improvements they've been making. She said the CRA has been working with the Financial Services Department as well as the City Manager on this budget for a very long time and their task is to always increase revenue when they can and also to implement the CRA Plan.

Chairman Wacha said they have a budget deficit and don't have enough sources to make a recommendation.

Teresa Lamar-Sarno said if they look at page 43 there are other departments contributing to their funds.

Chairman Wacha said he didn't think it is their purview to tell the city where to get the funding from.

Drew Pittman said he wasn't interested in approving the budget as it is until they learn and brainstorm more.

Paul Skyer urged staff to revisit the concept of bonding for development because they will never find a better time than now to do it.

Frank Wacha thought incentives to give money back to the property owner if they do projects to improve TIF would be a good idea.

David Collier said that whatever their motion, it should include that the City Manager work directly with the board and Teresa as if the board works directly with Teresa and come back with something they're comfortable with and the City Manager hasn't

