City of Stuart

MINUTES

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT/HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
July 2, 2019 AT 4:00PM
CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS
121 S.W. FLAGLER AVE.
STUART, FLORIDA 34994

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT BOARD MEMBERS
Chair – Chris Lewis
Vice Chair – Frank Wacha
Board Member – Faye James
Board Member – Tom Campenni
Board Member – Pete Walson
Board Member – Cristina Maldonado
Board Member – Nathan Ritchey

ADMINISTRATIVE
Development Director, Kev Freeman
CRA Administrator, Pinal Gandhi-Savdas
Board Secretary, Jordan Pinkston

CALL TO ORDER 4:00 PM

ROLL CALL 4:00 PM
Present: Pete Walson, Frank Wacha, Chris Lewis, Faye James, Tom Campenni, Nathan Ritchey.
Absent: Cristina Maldonado

APPROVAL OF MINUTES 4:01 PM
Motion: Action: Approve
Moved by: Pete Walson
Seconded by: Tom Campenni
Motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA 4:01 PM
Motion: Action: Approve
Moved by: Tom Campenni

Seconded by: Pete Walson
Motion passed unanimously.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC (5 min. max): None.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD MEMBERS:

Faye James thanked City Attorney for Public Meeting Workshop.

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT BOARD

1. Resolution No. 07-2019 CRA - Community Redevelopment Plan Amendment

PRESENTATION: Pinal Gandhi-Savdas, CRA Administrator

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD MEMBERS 4:12 PM:

General Comments:

Frank Wacha asked if there was a new LPA Board Member and if the LPA board was going to see this CRA plan. He would like programs to be included together instead of separately in hopes of improving participation. He would also like to see before and after photos in the plan for a visual aid. He said it would be helpful to have a cost benefit analysis in the plan, financial or not.

Pinal confirmed that this plan would not go to the LPA board.

Tom Campenni said he had a similar comment and wanted to know about the financial benefits to the City that each project will bring. He wants to know when they will see a return on their investments and where the money will come from by seeing a financial analysis.

Pete Walson congratulated Pinal on a great effort presenting the plan, but he requested clarification on the extension of the Tiff fund in regards to bond status.

David Dyess came to the podium to explain that a new law just passed. The law has a new outline of extensions and they are a carry-on to the CRA. It will be brought back in August to extend CRA, but we are still in the process of evaluating.

Pete Walson said he would have liked to see an analysis of TIF monies generated.

Tom Campenni asked about bonds and how they will be affected.

David Dyess said it is an affirmation of the governing board that created the CRA to continue the CRA; the CRA must vote to extend the CRA by October 1st.

Pete Walson asked about bonding.

Frank Wacha asked how long it could be extended.

David Dyess said the long point would be 2029.

Tom Campenni asked about future city manager bonds.

David Dyess said you have to do a finding of necessity for what is out on that bond.

Faye James thanked Pinal for meeting with her prior to the meeting. She was wondering if we know what monies were spent for 2019, and does that money roll over to 2020. She asked if there were any long term projects that will overlap into the next years.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas said that the 2020 budget will be shown next month, and it will show what money was spent in 2019.There will be no phase out and most of this year was used for new projects and conceptual.

Faye James asked about the Paint Up and Brush with Kindness programs and who our partner was for each project.

Pinal confirmed that each project is separate. Paint Up Program is for a homeowner in the CRA and through Love Thy Neighbor program, the CRA allocates money to East Stuart Partnership for painting homes in East Stuart and Brush with Kindness is implemented by Habitat for Humanity.

Faye James said that she had never heard of Brush with Kindness through Habitat for Humanity.

Pete Walson spoke with Margo at Habitat for Humanity and she said they spent no money on the Brush with Kindness program this year. He thinks the program helps people pass code violations, but it has dropped and is only there in words.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas confirmed that last year there were no projects we helped with, but this year there are a few homeowners we are helping.

David Dyess explained how the program initially worked. He explained that the city then used funding through CRA and partnered with Habitat for Humanity to improve homes that were not meeting code violations. He gave specific examples of some properties that can no longer be restored. He said the program is available and open for suggestions, other than the certain requirements that Habitat for Humanity has to live by.

Faye James asked what makes a person eligible to apply.

David Dyess said it is on a need basis and does not need to be a code violation.

Faye James wanted to know how to better inform the public.

David Dyess said that the Paint Up Program is general for all CRA.

Pete Walson said that the Habitat for Humanity program is very impressive, but wants to see it work if the program is still happening. He made comments on owner occupied requirements and that they need to open the program up to not make it a requirement.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas said that is a requirement for Habitat for Humanity, but they do look at it on a case by case basis.

Tom Campenni asked about a specific situation last year.

Mike Reading explained how successful the program was in the first ten years. He said they expected to get a rush of applications, but only received a few towards the end of this year. He is finding it hard to engage with homeowners that need help, but they are working hard to get the word out. They are willing and trying to do as much as they can and appreciate the help of code enforcement.

Pete Walson thanked Habitat for Humanity for all that they do in the community.

Frank Wacha asked about owner occupied requirements.

Mike Reading confirmed that the requirement was an international rule mandated by Habitat for Humanity.

Faye James asked how the community finds out about the program.

Mike Reading said that they rely on code enforcement and their outreach could improve. He is open to suggestions.

Faye James asked how she could help and made suggestions for outreach.

Kev Freeman answered questions regarding the economic modeling. He said they are working on a very detailed economic model and would like to present it at the next CRB meeting. It will show a large variation of economic benefits, not just monetary. It will look at job creation and where those jobs come from, type of jobs, local spending, production of Tiff revenue, impact fees. It will also look at additional benefits or what is being displaced. I think you will be impressed.

Residential Property Development Program

Faye James asked if the plan involved rezoning.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas confirmed that there was no rezoning.

Pete Walson said if we are serious about developing these lots then a partnership with Habitat for Humanity to buy the land then maybe we can fix some housing issues.

Frank Wacha said that he thought the city did this for houses being built right now.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas said start with East Stuart and then go to different neighborhoods.

Pete Walson agreed to start in East Stuart then moving on to other communities.

Faye James asked if she owned property in East Stuart, if the City wanted to lease the city is that the same premise.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas said if the parcels were aggregated together than that might be something that we could do with the program flexibility.

Bike Walk Colorado Avenue Program

Tom Campenni asked if they have given thought to making a second story a requirement for Colorado and East Ocean. He said that it is not walkable because there is nowhere for people to walk.

Frank Wacha agreed and said it also provides shade from the height of the building.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas agreed and said the commercial program would give us the opportunity to form the partnership if someone does not have the financial ability.

Tom Campenni said that we will miss a golden opportunity if we do not make two stories a requirement.

Frank Wacha asked if creating green bike lanes be eligible for impact fee. He recommended adding it under funding source.

Kev Freeman said that in terms of mobility part of the impact fee structure he would say yes. House bill 7103 brings to light the need for connection between development and taking of impact fees.

Frank Wacha asked that the language be added.

Kev Freeman confirmed that it is added.

Pete Walson said the parking plan looks long term. If that is the commercial street, which it is then the wedge south of it could be residential or housing units. He recommended at looking at putting property behind those units.

Parklets
Frank Wacha asked if there was a cost attached to this project.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas said she only included capital improvement projects in the Budget summary. The FY2020 CRA Budget will have all the projects and that will come before the board in August.

Nathan Ritchey asked about the parklet project.

Downtown underground utilities

Pete Walson asked about the price of two million and the feasibility of the project. He asked if it was worth reconstructing all of Seminole.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas said there are two phases and broke down the cost of each.

Nathan Ritchey said that if we are to reconstruct all of Seminole, then it will become part of downtown.

David Dyess said that he has seen Pinal's vision and explained the outreach and plans that have been done.

Nathan Ritchey confirmed where the location was.

Tom Campenni asked about thoughts given to a business district to fund projects, different from CRA district.

David Dyess said that the expansion project did not do well last year.

Tom Campenni said that it would be an improvement district to fund things like this instead of CRA funds.

David Dyess said it would have to be a bond type situation. He said that there is an opportunity to expand if City Hall moves.

Pete Walson said he agrees with David Dyess if it is achievable, but he is skeptical.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas confirmed the breakdown of the estimated revenue.

Frank Wacha said that his only question was about cost benefit.

Kev Freeman said these are just the beginning of our economic analysis and the value is perpetual and will continue on after CRA is gone. We have not fully taken in redevelopment potential of those lots. He confirmed that it will create a vibe that varies with retailers.

Nathan Ritchey made a comment that the benefit of this is not all monetary.

Pete Walson said that he would move forward with the Seminole underground planning, but would not commit to the second phase until this is achieved.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas said that developers have shown interest in the project.

Pete Walson said that we have an opportunity through the years to go down Osceola.

Faye James would like to talk about the feasibility of Seminole Street and underground utilities. On page 38 there were four streets, but it this necessity or because you have money to spend. She asked if there were any other streets that would benefit more instead.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas confirmed the studies that were done and what the board advised the next step to be.

Faye James asked if it was for sake of beautification, because East Stuart has poles that are very ugly that need to be addressed. She requested that underground utilities be put on MLK instead. She asked if in the future these four streets change how will it work for other neighborhoods.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas said they looked at the conceptual and feasibility study at the same time. Next year will be the conceptual for MLK.

David Dyess confirmed that this will be the first time ever doing underground powerlines. He would not recommend East Stuart getting underground powerlines because they were just updated and is a main line for FPL.

Pete Walson confirmed that during the planning phase underground is looked as part of the process and this plan was already in the works.

David Dyess confirmed that Faye James will see funds allocated for East Stuart.

Frank Wacha said that on Seminole underground utilities would be very beneficial and increase walkability.

Nathan Ritchey said that if it was all level it would be improved.

Frazier Crescent Subdivision Improvements

Pete Walson said the project sounds like a lot of money for what we are getting. He said it bothers him that we are improving the property next to Aycock Funeral Home that is resisting to do anything to their building.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas confirmed that we are only improving the right-of-way and not private property.

David Dyess stated that there is movement on assessing Aycock Funeral Home.

Riverside Park

Frank Wacha said there is a neighborhood that has a lot of plotted lots that need to be assessed.

Nathan Ritchey asked about another plan that was possibly in the works.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas confirmed what they planned on doing for the project.

Pete Walson suggested a long term goal of the city to make parks more walkable and would like to add one.

Frank Wacha said that he agreed, but there are walkable parks they are just not well connected.

Pete Walson said that one of our problems is the housing market and there is not enough land in the City of Stuart to do anything about that. He emphasized walkable, active parks being essential in neighborhoods.

Dixie Hwy and SE Florida St Sidewalk Extension

Pete Walson said that he wants to make sure we are being active in getting partnerships with grants to achieve some of these things.

Shepard Park Boat Trailer Parking

Pete Walson said it is creative, functional and beautiful. Cost summary page is not included and he would like to see the updated budget summary.

MLK Jr Blvd Complete Street Project

Frank Wacha asked about the connector street and would like to add impact fees to funding source.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas agreed.

Pete Walson said there were a lot of issues he found. He asked if we did this kind of project, will we get resistance from older businesses or will they be supportive.

Tom Campenni said we just go with the plan for now and then it can be changed as we go. We may run into the same problems down the road, but if you look at the streets they are main streets that people travel. At the end of the day we bow our head.

Faye James asked if the project was going to be on both sides and if it affected parking.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas said she would have to look at the design and see how to configure parking.

Pete Walson asked who owned the building opposite of Cherokee.

David Dyess confirmed that it was Salvation Army who owned the building.

Faye James suggested the project connect the MLK creek to High School Avenue.

Tom Campenni said that they tried to do that in the past and it was not successful and there was a neighborhood veto on each side.

Frank Wacha asked if Pinal could reorganize the plan into categories that are easier to follow.

10th Street Community Park Improvements

Pete Walson recommended getting the dirt parking lot paved right off the bat.

Frank Wacha asked about impact fees.

David Dyess confirmed that the County changed the way the collect and it will not go to parks.

Faye James asked about phase three of the Center. She recommended going up as an addition instead of down to add a multipurpose level. It could be used to generate income for rentals.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas said they are expanding the building and as we get closer to the project we will decide how much we can do with funding.

David Dyess said this is our singular gym location for youth and athletic programs. In the next year’s budget the covering of the basketball courts will happen from CRA and impact fee funding to show the community we are wanting to do immediate things for the center. He asked the board what they are comfortable bonding.

Tom Campenni recommended that they bond phase one immediately and complete this work. He said we deserve to have a good recreation facility in the city and this is the only one, so we should do as much as we can do at this moment. He said they are taking away are ability to bond, so if we can get a bond to do this project and use Tiff

that would be tremendous. It will make a huge difference and nothing else on MLK will compare.

Pete Walson agreed to bond the entire thing and pave the parking lot. He asked about ball fields.

David Dyess said the ball field was up to the commission.

Pete Walson asked about the likelihood of them approving this and them still keeping the other ball fields.

David Dyess said his pitch to them would be don't do this if you are going to do something there.

Pete Walson warned the commission that if they do this than the next step is the ball field property.

Tom Campenni this is the most important thing that we can do as a board. This will be something that will go on for our city and community. He thanked David Dyess for bringing sports back to 10th Street and have brought back things that have not been here.

Frank Wacha asked about funding and how long the building/ bond process would be and what portion of Tiff would go towards paying these bonds.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas said they can't start construction on phase one until 2021. She explained the budget.

Chris Lewis said that he loves the parks and thinks it would be great.

Capital Improvement Projects Timeline and Budget Summary

Pete Walson asked for confirmation on budget numbers.

David Dyess said he would like to do it in accelerated phases. He recommends doing phase one and two then start bond pay off. Then two to three years into bond payout we can reevaluate.

Pete Walson said that he did not see any section to foster development of housing or adding new residents. He said he did see where it would make things easier, but he would include a look at housing and demographics of the city.

Tom Campenni agreed and asked to add it to the motion.

MOTION: Approve that we bond phase one and two of the 10th Street Project immediately as per the City Manager's suggestion.
Action: Approve
Moved by: Tom Campenni
Seconded by: Faye James
Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Accept Master Plan with the following additions: present a cost benefit analysis as things come through, reorganize the plan for a better flow and clearer understanding, include a look into housing demographics of the city, and include impact fees and grants where they can be appropriately used.
Action: Approve
Moved by: Tom Campenni
Seconded by: Pete Walson
Motion passed unanimously.

OTHER MATTERS BEFORE THE BOARD

Pete Walson requested that staff focus on street scape. He suggests look into fostering a tree ordinance for the City of Stuart.

Frank Wacha said that he agrees and we need to take our responsibility as the board looking at this stuff as projects come through.

Tom Campenni said that Martin County now has a tree ordinance. He said a live oak has an economic benefit of about $20,000 and suggests looking at the County's analysis to piggy back.

Pete Walson discussed the tree fund and asked where the tree fund comes from.

Kev Freeman said the fund comes from PUD negotiations inside or outside the CRA. He has spoken with commission to use it as a dual purpose for beautification.

Faye James asked about the small business language be removed and she was concerned about that.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas said that she would feel more comfortable covering small businesses under commercial property development program.

Faye James does not want it to be left out.

Tom Campenni said that the current language gives that leeway to work with all business sizes.

Pete Walson requested that this be brought back at the next meeting.

STAFF UPDATES

Kev Freeman said if a program is in the plan and it is not being utilized then there is something wrong with that program and staff will reword the language.

ADJOURNMENT **6:14 PM**
Motion: Action: Approve
Moved by: Chris Lewis
Seconded by: Nathan Ritchey

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Chris Lewis, Chair Jordan Pinkston, Board Secretary