City of Stuart

MINUTES

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT/HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
JANUARY 7, 2020 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: Tom Campenni, Nathan Ritchey, Frank Wacha, Cristina Maldonado
Absent: Chris Lewis, Pete Walson, Faye James

ANNUAL BOARD REORGANIZATION
Action: Frank Wacha appointed Chair
Moved by: Tom Campenni
Seconded by: Nathan Ritchey
Motion passed unanimously.

Action: Nathan Ritchey appointed Vice Chair
Moved by: Cristina Maldonado
Seconded by: Tom Campenni

Motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Action: Approve
Moved by: Tom Campenni
Seconded by: Nathan Ritchey
Motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA
Action: Approve
Moved by: Tom Campenni
Seconded by: Nathan Ritchey
Motion passed unanimously.

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

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD MEMBERS: None.

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT BOARD

1. Resolution No. 01-2020 CRA Wayfinding Sign Program Extension

PRESENTATION Pinal Gandhi-Savdas, CRA Administrator  4:04 PM

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD MEMBERS:

Tom Campenni asked if the program could be run by Stuart Mainstreet or Downtown Business Association under contract with the city.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas said that the program is in the city's right of way, so there may be legal issues with that.

Nathan Ritchey asked how much time it takes staff to implement project and how has the response been thus far.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas explained that there is more work up front, but that levels out the initial application process is complete. The response has been positive and now we plan to expand it to the Arts & Entertainment District.

Tom Campenni said that it is more of a private contract program in his opinion.

Frank Wacha asked if there was a conflict of interest.

Mike Mortell said that it would have to be a non-profit to run the signs downtown. He said from a legal perspective, we could put it out to bid like valet parking, but that might drive the price of the signs up.

Nathan Ritchey confirmed that Tom Campenni's suggestion was to free up the city.

Tom Campenni said that the businesses should help themselves instead of the city managing them. He recommended that they approve the extension but encourage staff to look into passing the program to a contract.

Tom Campenni made a motion to extend the program.

Cristina Maldonado said that it might take more time to restructure.

Kev Freeman suggested coming forward with a cost benefit to the board of outsourcing this.

Tom Campenni said his goal is to make sure the private business have a stake in what is going on.

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

Nancy Turrell, Executive Director of Arts Council - said that the businesses in the Arts & Entertainment District are very excited about the expansion.

MOTION
Action: Extend the program. Staff needs to see if the Downtown Business Association and/or Stuart Main Street are interested in assuming the responsibility of the program. Staff create a cost analysis of the possible transfer.
Moved by: Tom Campenni
Seconded by: Nathan Ritchey
Motion passed unanimously.

2. Resolution No. 02-2020 CRA Amendment to the Mural Matching Grant Program

PRESENTATION Pinal Gandhi-Savdas, CRA Administrator 4:17 PM

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD MEMBERS:

Cristina Maldonado asked how much money went toward that in 2019.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas said we only had one application.

Tom Campenni said that he has a problem with the program. He said that he would like the art to be raised by the private sector and thinks that private property should not be using public money to beautify their businesses.

Nathan Ritchey said that we are enticing the public to apply for these grants.

Tom Campenni said that he is against us spending money on private property art.

Nathan Ritchey asked if Tom Campenni felt the same way about all of the business improvement grants.

Tom Campenni said that he believes that the business community should not receive any beautification help from the city.

Mike Mortell said that the Community Redevelopment Board sets policies, so they can change that. He explained reasons why programs such as these exist and gave examples of other ways the city can reinvest tiff money back into the community.

Tom Campenni said that the triangle property is a great example of a positive impact, and the mural program is not. He does not believe that a program such as this is what was intended for CRA funding.

Frank Wacha said that he thinks this program is important because of the cultural feel art gives a community and it is an incentive that is a good use of our money. He thinks it is a tool to get the Arts & Entertainment District going.

Nathan Ritchey said that the artistic vibe is given back by the feeling people get in the community.

Tom Campenni asked Jim Chrulski to take the program over.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC (5 min. max):

1. **Steven Vitale (Colorado Ave.) –** gave examples of murals he has done in the past and thinks it is more likely for a business owner to do a mural if there is a matching grant.
2. **Duncan Hurd (Colorado Ave.) –** His mural was started this past Friday and said that putting public art on private spaces brings people to the city. He encourages the board to look at the larger benefit of the murals.

Kev Freeman said that this is in the CRA plan as it stands. He said it is important to recognize that the murals around the city should be considered transient. He said the initial purpose is a form of marketing and advertisement. We are seeing them becoming more permanent than transient, which can cause a problem if they are covered or hidden by future development. His only concern they become permanent.

MOTION
Action: Approve.
Moved by: Nathan Ritchey
Seconded by: Cristina Maldonado
Motion passed with Tom Campenni opposing.

3. Presentation of New Applicants for the Business Improvement Reimbursement Program FY2020

PRESENTATION Pinal Gandhi-Savdas, CRA Administrator 4:36 PM

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD MEMBERS:

Cristina Maldonado asked about the scoring system that was used in the presentation.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas said this is criteria that was established before her time, but these two applications did not score very high.

Frank Wacha said that when the program first started, they used to get more applications than funding, so we had to rank them.

Nathan Ritchey said that he believes that some of the projects directly benefit the property owner, such as helping pay for impact windows.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas said that she agrees, but since it is a historic building it deserves the funding.

Frank Wacha said that he agrees with that as well. He wants to help preserve the buildings that are historic and there should be an incentive but doesn't know how far we should go with it.

Tom Campenni said that they could change the program to only historic structures, not all structures in the CRA. He said he has a problem with the blanket way we are handling things, but as a board we should change this policy.

Cristina Maldonado asked about changing the ranking and payout system.

Tom Campenni asked staff to look at changing the program to move forward with a historic preservation program instead.

Frank Wacha said that is something that we always envisioned. He discussed some examples of private structures that need to be updated.

Tom Campenni argued that was not the job of the city. He said that we should vote on this, but discuss the policy moving forward. He thinks that the CRA needs to be developing in a different way.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas said that is part of the CRA plan as those properties come along.

BIRP APPLICANTS:

1. **Sherry Lee (Lee Property Real Estate Building)**

Frank Wacha said that he does not believe the improvements being proposed grants all the money requested. He asked about specific improvements.

Sherry Lee said that she has spoken with a contractor and some changes might have to be done to the original plan. She explained that window units will be removed, and they have already invested $4,000 to have this done. She said they are providing affordable housing to multiple units and they are investing a large amount themselves, but the city is making it possible for these improvements.

2. **Steve Vitale (Historic Lyons House/Enchanted Cottage)** gave examples of why esthetic improvements, such as windows are important. He said this program allows us to preserve historic charm and protect it for future generations.

Nathan Ritchey said that he would say no to this, if they were not talking about the oldest building in Stuart. He thinks the historic buildings need to be restored.

Frank Wacha said that he would like to see the Lee Property include the front deck and landscaping as part of what is being funded because those things will improve the streetscape. He asked about their neighbors and the status of updating their property.

Chair, Frank Wacha passed the gavel to Nathan Ritchey to make a motion.

Sherry Lee said that she has reached out to them but has had no response.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC (5 min. max):

Sherry Lee asked if she had to submit a new application.

Mike Mortell said that the order from the board will have those conditions.

Sherry Lee voiced her concerns about not receiving the full funding.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas said that in order to be reimbursed for the windows you would have to do it all.

Sherry Lee said that she would like the $10,000.

MOTION
Action: Approve Lee Property Real Estate Building reimbursement for $6,500 with a requirement that there is an approved landscape plan and a deck at the front of the street with a railing that fits the rest of the building as well as window upgrades.
Moved by: Frank Wacha
Seconded by: Cristina Maldonado
Motion passed with Tom Campenni opposing.

MOTION
Action: Approve Historic Lyons House reimbursement for $9,838.
Moved by: Cristina Maldonado
Seconded by: Nathan Ritchey
Motion passed with Tom Campenni opposing.

OTHER MATTERS BEFORE THE BOARD:

Mike Mortell asked where the CRA area of interest is.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas said there was a map.

Tom Campenni clarified that staff will look into the historic aspect to reorganize the program.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas said that she agrees, but she had to go with what was eligible for the current application. She said that she will bring it forward.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MATTERS: None.

STAFF UPDATE: None.

ADJOURNMENT
Motion: Adjourn.
Action: Approve.
Moved by: Tom Campenni
Seconded by: Nathan Ritchey
Motion passed unanimously.

Frank Wacha, Chair

Jordan Pinkston, Board Secretary