
MINUTES
Downtown Redevelopment Advisory Board
Wednesday, October 29, 2008 8:30 AM

Florida Community Design Center
300 East University Avenue
1st Floor Suite 110

A. ROLL CALL

Vice-Chairman Williams called the meeting to order at 8:35 am.

Members Present

Michael Amish
Cristina Barone
David Castine
Michael Giddings
Jay Reeves
Janie Williams

Members Absent

Kinnon Thomas

Staff Present

Kelly Huard-Fisher
Stephanie Seawright
Matt Dubé

Guests

David Ballard

B. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Board unanimously approved the motion made by Member Reeves, seconded by Member Giddings.

Recommendation: Adopt the Agenda as presented.

C. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Board unanimously approved the motion made by Member Reeves, seconded by Member Amish.

Recommendation: Approve the Minutes for August 27, 2008.

D. ELECTIONS

Nomination for all officers took place. Elections followed nominations and all officers began service immediately.

Chairman

Nominations: Member Castine (by Member Reeves)

Vote of 6-0 in favor of Member Castine as Chairman

Vice - Chairman

Nominations: Member Williams (by Member Castine)

Vote of 6-0 in favor of Member Williams as Vice-Chairman

Secretary/Treasurer

Nominations: Member Amish (by Member Castine)

Vote of 6-0 in favor of Member Amish as Secretary-Treasurer

The Board unanimously approved the motion made by Member Reeves, seconded by Member Barone.

Recommendation: Accept the slate of officers, Members Castine, Williams and Amish, to serve as the Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary-Treasurer respectively for the DRAB 2009 program year.

E. REQUEST TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Member Barone addresses the board on the topic of roundabouts. She stated that they need signage for yielding to bikes or better striping. They are very dangerous as they are now especially on the SW 2nd Avenue corridor.

Member Amish addressed the board on the topic of recycling issues. Staff apprised the board of the city code which mandates that trash pick-up may not occur before 7:00 am. Member Amish asked staff to look into the possibility of the codes being changed.

Staff apprised staff of the difference between a Request to Address the Board and Board Member Comments section of the agenda. To request to address the board there needs to be a formal written or emailed request to come before the board on a matter where action may be taken in the future and is open to the public. Board Member Comments are specifically for additional items or matters that a board member feels they want to share with the other board members.

F. COMMUNICATIONS

1. **Chair's Report** – There was no report.
2. **Staff Report – Information Items**

Members were given the opportunity to give comments or ask questions in an open format instead of staff presenting each of the following topics in sequence. When the members had no more questions, the meeting moved on to the next agenda topic.

Downtown Community Plaza – Working with DRAB, staff is examining the issues and opportunities at play, and is also examining how the Plaza compares to examples of healthy, vibrant public spaces found in other cities. These sessions will continue at the next DRAB meeting.

Bethel Station – At an upcoming meeting, the City Commission will consider leasing the Bethel Garage to the CRA. Should this lease agreement be approved, the CRA will proceed with issuing an RFP to attract new businesses that wish to locate at the Bethel site. The selected business will sublet the Bethel Garage from the CRA.

Lynch Park – The landscape architect is finalizing design documents for the park. Staff hopes to bid the project for construction in late autumn, with a groundbreaking by the end of the calendar year.

GRU Redevelopment – The consultant team continues to refine the vision for the area surrounding the Kelly Power Plant. Consultants are developing a potential regulatory toolset that will allow flexibility and high-quality redevelopment to occur in the manner they have described to the CRA and to local stakeholders. Additionally, the consultant team is also considering economics and business considerations associated with redevelopment. Representatives from Lord-Aeck-Sargent will return to Gainesville in late October to work with staff and meet with key stakeholders.

Hampton Inn/Lot 9 Redevelopment – It is anticipated that the project will be complete and the hotel will be operational by July 2009.

CRA Streetscaping for Depot Ave – The CRA is coordinating with the Public Works Department to add CRA streetscaping materials to the Depot Ave Reconstruction project, to be bid this year. Streetscaping elements include brick sidewalks, crosswalks, and decorative lighting.

Gainesville Responsible Hospitality Partnership – GRHP is pleased to welcome a new intern, Jenni Skinner. Ms. Skinner is a marketing student at the University of Florida, and she will be working to help publicize and promote GRHP, as well as to enlist new Responsible Hospitality members. ***Members discussed the garbage issues and wanted to know how the GRHP could assist with this issue. Staff identified that the GRHP has an intern that would be asked to broach the garbage issues at a future GRHP meeting.***

Downtown Parking Study – Consultants from Rich & Associates visited Gainesville during the first two weeks in October. During that time, the team collected on-site data and began a series of stakeholder meetings. Consultants will likely return the first week of November to complete field data collection and to meet with interested parties. Preliminary findings are anticipated for early December.

G. OLD BUSINESS

1. **Lot 10 Redevelopment Update**

Staff apprised the board that, the City, the CRA, and the Developer have agreed to rescind previous agreements related to the development of Gainesville Greens. On September 30th, the CRA and the Developer formally executed a mutual rescission of the Development and Disposition Agreement. This action has helped bring this matter to rapid closure while simultaneously providing a clean background for the issuance of a new RFP for redevelopment of the Lot 10 site.

2. Depot Park Update

A summary of recent activity was presented to board members.

3. Porters Neighborhood – SW 3rd Street Improvements

The CRA engineer and DRMP met with representatives from utility companies within the corridor, including GRU, Cox, and AT&T. Plans for undergrounding activities were discussed, and all agreed that joint-trenching the utilities was the best course of action. Designs from each utility have been solicited, and utility designs were received from both GRU and Cox Cable to be compiled into the preliminary plans. The utility design from AT&T is anticipated, however has not been received to date.

4. University Avenue Improvements

Staff apprised the board that the CRA has added the long median on East University Avenue in front of City Hall to the University Avenue Improvements project. The plans were developed by Zamia Design Landscape Architecture with input from the FDOT landscape architect. The City Hall median currently has irrigation in-place; therefore the only improvements will be plant materials that consist of hardy evergreens adapted to highway use.

5. Downtown University Avenue Medians Construction

The objective of the median project is to provide visual improvements along University Avenue that coordinate with redevelopment activities such as the streetscape improvements, façade grants, development projects, and roadway resurfacings.

CRA staff included the roadway median in front of City Hall, 200 East University Avenue.

Staff anticipates the following project schedule:

- 1) *November 17* - CRA to approve the landscape contractor bid
- 2) *November 24 week* – Begin median landscaping

H. NEW BUSINESS

1. Strand Update

Staff updated the board on the Strand Case. As the legal process is currently ongoing, the Gainesville CRA has not yet approved re-opening its TIF incentive programs or negotiating multi-year development agreements. Staff will continue to update Advisory Board members on the status of *Strand* as the case continues to progress through the judicial system.

2. Bike Racks

..Explanation

Staff gave a presentation on proposed bike racks in the area. In order to facilitate redevelopment and provide an attractive and uniform aesthetic along streetscapes located within Community Redevelopment Areas, the CRA has identified a preferred set of street furniture and fixtures to be used in redevelopment projects. Currently, the CRA streetscape fixtures are traditional in style and black in color, and these elements are uniform throughout all parts of the district. However, in the future it is possible that the CRA may expand the catalog of approved fixtures.

I. REPORT OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

No report of officers and committee

J. BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

No Board Member Comments

K. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments

L. ADJOURNMENT – 10:10 am