

City of Fort Lauderdale

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Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 5, 2023

11:30 AM

Joint Workshop with Northwest-Progresso-Flagler Heights
Redevelopment Board
The Parker

707 Northeast 8th Street, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33304

CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP

FORT LAUDERDALE CITY COMMISSION

DEAN J. TRANTALIS Mayor

PAM BEASLEY-PITTMAN Vice Mayor - Commissioner - District III

JOHN C. HERBST Commissioner - District I

STEVEN GLASSMAN Commissioner - District II

WARREN STURMAN Commissioner - District IV

GREG CHAVARRIA, City Manager

DAVID R. SOLOMAN, City Clerk

D'WAYNE M. SPENCE, Interim City Attorney

PATRICK REILLY, City Auditor

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trantalis called the meeting to order at 11:39 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Commission Members Present: Commissioner John C. Herbst (arrived at 11:46 a.m.), Commissioner Steven Glassman, Vice Mayor Pamela Beasley-Pittman, Commissioner Warren Sturman, and Mayor Dean J. Trantalis

Northwest Progresso Flagler Heights Redevelopment Board Members (NWPFHRB) Present: Vice Chair Dylan Lagi, Lisa Crawford, Noel A. Edwards, Sonya Burrows, John Quailey, and Alfredo Olvera

Northwest Progresso Flagler Heights Redevelopment Board Members Not Present: Rhoda Glasco Foderingham, Steffen Lue, Christopher Murphy, Michael Lewin, and Kenneth Calhoun

QUORUM ESTABLISHED

Also Present: City Manager Greg Chavarria, City Clerk David R. Soloman, Interim City Attorney D'Wayne M. Spence, and City Auditor Patrick Reilly

OLD/NEW BUSINESS**BUS-1** [23-0644](#)

Joint Workshop with the Northwest-Progresso-Flagler Heights (NPF) Community Redevelopment Advisory Board - (Commission Districts 2 and 3)

City Manager Chavarria provided an overview of this Commission Workshop that will include a strategic-level discussion about the current Northwest-Progresso-Flagler Heights Community Redevelopment Agency's (NWPFH CRA) investments and plans over the next two (2) years before its sunset. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Clarence Woods, NWPFH CRA Area Manager. Mr. Woods said today's Workshop will include a discussion on the status of the Economic Development Corporation, a/k/a Invest Fort Lauderdale, and the Historic Sistrunk Arts Culture and Entertainment District Plan (Plan). Staff is preparing a strategic work plan outlining the scope and responsibilities of the Plan for presentation and approval from

the NWPFHRB and the CRA Board. Mr. Woods expounded on related details.

Mayor Trantalis recognized James Carras, Carras Community Investment, Inc., Project Director. Mr. Carras narrated the first portion of a presentation entitled *Historic Sistrunk Arts Culture and Entertainment District Plan Recommendations: Catalytic Programs, Projects, and Initiatives (Plan)*.

A copy of the presentation has been made part of the backup to this Agenda item.

Mayor Trantalis recognized George Gadson, George Gadson Studios. Mr. Gadson continued narrating the presentation portion focusing on the Arts and History of the Plan.

Mr. Carras continued narrating the presentation focusing on the Community and Economic Development included in the Plan.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Elbert Waters, E.L. Waters and Company, LLC. Mr. Waters continued narrating the presentation focusing on the Design, Land Use and Zoning of the Plan.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Mr. Waters explained conceptual options for visible and identifiable entranceways to the Arts and Cultural District on the Sistrunk Corridor by creating an Entertainment and Cultural Overlay District. Mayor Trantalis remarked on similarities in the City of Oakland Park, confirmed his support, and pointed out that this creates a visitor's impression of entering an identifiable destination.

Mr. Carras narrated the final portion of the presentation focused on the Plan's marketing and promotion and transit. Based on Commission feedback, Mr. Carras confirmed the goal is to bring a final Plan forward in thirty (30) days.

Vice Chair Dylan Lagi commented on the NWPFHRB's discussions, including transit, land use, and the development of an Entertainment and Culture Overlay District. He noted the timeliness of this presentation and the evolving development culture resulting from the significant investment in the NWPFH CRA over the past decade.

Vice Chair Lagi remarked on concerns from investment groups related to the remaining NWPFH CRA timeline and the need for Staff to continue its focus and prioritize approved NWPFH CRA Projects (Projects),

specifically in the development review and permitting process. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding the need for additional parking.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding the availability of public parking at The Adderley, Mr. Woods confirmed that the four hundred fifty-five (455) parking spaces are for resident parking, not public parking.

Mr. Woods commented on proposed zoning changes and expounded on related details. He discussed existing zoning along Sistrunk Corridor and explained plans include extending the Northwest Regional Activity Center (NW RAC) north and south, allowing for higher densities and uses.

Mayor Trantalis commented on previous neighbor conversations that included pushback due to the number of residential units in the areas one (1) block north and south of the Sistrunk Corridor and cited examples. He commented on challenges related to maintaining the existing residential experience while working to attain economic goals. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Board Member Lisa Crawford. Ms. Crawford remarked on rental housing investments and efforts to maintain affordable housing. New businesses are concerned with safety in transitioning communities and the need to maintain a police presence in the community. Ms. Crawford expounded on her viewpoint and cited examples. She commented on her understanding of infill housing efforts and inquired about Commission efforts to address related concerns.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' request for input on Ms. Crawford's concerns, Mr. Woods explained the infill housing strategy. The City conveys infill housing lots to make the houses more affordable and expounded on related details. No money returns to the NWPFH CRA. Mayor Trantalis clarified the goal is to reduce the cost to a homeowner for their primary residence. He noted this is occasionally done for a commercial property. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Board Member Sonya Burrows. Ms. Burrows discussed the need for Staff follow up to ensure purchasers of infill housing are not investors. Further comment and discussion ensued. Mayor Trantalis confirmed Staff would follow up.

In response to Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman's question regarding what is being done to address Ms. Burrow's concerns, Mr. Woods explained his understanding of the general contractor's sales process.

Mayor Trantalis recommended instituting a vetting process before closing on a property. He requested CRA Staff perform an inventory of infill home purchasers to determine the ultimate purchaser and the occupant, ensuring it is not being used as a rental property. Ms. Burrows remarked on her understanding of an additional infill housing residence that the Staff should investigate. Mayor Trantalis requested Ms. Burrows provide Mr. Woods with the address of that residence at the end of the meeting.

Ms. Burrows discussed the importance of promoting the Sistrunk community's diversity and history and expounded on items for inclusion in the cultural literature. She cited examples, including the Fort Lauderdale Negro Chamber of Commerce, established in 1949, which now has a cornerstone that speaks to the history of black community leaders at the time, and the Burrows Electric building, founded by the first black licensed electrician and is the oldest black-owned business on the Sistrunk Corridor.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman echoed Ms. Burrows' comments and agreed these two (2) buildings should be included in the Plan's cultural literature for Sistrunk Corridor. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question, Mayor Trantalis remarked on his understanding that the NWPFHRB has been working with Carras Community Investment, Inc. Mr. Woods noted that historical assets of Sistrunk Boulevard included in the Plan are illustrative, not exhaustive, and explained related details. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Vice Chair Lagi discussed the involvement of the NWPFHRB with the development and progression of the Plan and noted that today's feedback will contribute towards the finalization of the Plan within thirty (30) days.

Commissioner Glassman commented on his viewpoint in support of the historic designation of the Sistrunk Corridor and expounded on related financial resources and opportunities.

Mr. Carras responded to Commissioner Glassman's feedback on historic designation of the Sistrunk Corridor. Mr. Carras discussed his perspective and acknowledged the significant emphasis on development, historic preservation over the past six (6) years along the Sistrunk Corridor and the upcoming sunset of the CRA. He discussed the implementation of the Plan, its components, options, goals,

resources for historic preservation, and cited examples. Commissioner Glassman expounded on his viewpoint regarding the importance of pursuing historic preservation and related funding resources. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Board Member John Quailey discussed the opportunity to have deed restrictions for the infill housing lots. Mr. Woods explained existing deed restrictions that require the homeowner to remain in the home for seven (7) years before the CRA can release the mortgage. He confirmed CRA Staff would research including a deed restriction mandating that the house built on an infill housing lot be the homeowner's primary residence.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding the ability of an infill housing property homeowner to rent out part of the residence as a vacation rental, Interim City Attorney D'Wayne Spence confirmed the CRA could put declarations of restrictive covenants on these properties that can be enforced. The Office of the City Attorney would research.

In response to Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman's question, Interim City Attorney Spence commented on the ability to foreclose on individuals who violate the declaration of restrictive covenants. Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman remarked on the need to ensure compliance with affordable housing restrictions and expounded on her viewpoint. Mayor Trantalis commented on the foreclosure process. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Board Member Alfredo Olvera remarked on the inability to monitor and enforce deed restriction declarations. He commented on historic designation and parking concerns and the importance of pursuing affordable housing needs.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman discussed an existing Ordinance regarding restrictions on mural wording and recommended a balance allowing a mural to include a narrative. Interim City Attorney Spence explained the Ordinance addresses signage and is designed to identify and regulate the size of commercial signs in an effort to control sign pollution. Planning Staff would need to manage and determine the distinction. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding related court decisions on this topic.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman read a statement from District 3 residents who have reached out in support of pursuing an Arts and Cultural Entertainment Overlay District and expressed their desire for this portion of the City to be appropriately invested in, served, and recognized for its history and contributions.

Commissioner Glassman discussed feedback from residents in the District 2 portion of the NWPFH CRA. He commented on the need to step up safety efforts, connectivity, sidewalks, streetscapes, and parking issues to address the needs of Flagler Village and upcoming area projects like Thrive Progresso. He noted the need for additional transportation options to bring visitors to the Sistrunk Corridor, including updated Circuit routing. Commissioner Glassman requested City Manager Chavarria and Mr. Woods address these needs.

Commissioner Herbst requested clarity on the evaluation and vetting of infill housing purchasers. Mr. Woods discussed details of the closing process to ensure the purchaser is not a corporate entity.

In response to Commissioner Herbst's question regarding a mechanism in place to ensure an infill housing property does not become a vacation rental or a rental property after the closing, Mr. Woods explained indicators that would alert CRA Staff. He acknowledged the need for additional checks to be put in place following the closing of the property.

Commissioner Herbst remarked on the need for improvements to the CRA process and noted that Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Programs require annual substantiation of qualifications. He recommended Staff follow-up one (1) year after closing to determine whether the residence had been homesteaded. Should the property not be homesteaded, Staff should investigate the possibility of enforcing mortgage provisions. Mr. Woods concurred.

Mayor Trantalis noted his understanding of a follow-up process being in place. Commissioner Herbst discussed his impression that the majority of ongoing City Programs included continuous compliance and income verification and cited examples. He commented on the need for Staff to develop an ongoing compliance process across the board to be presented to the Commission.

Commissioner Sturman echoed Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman's comments.

Mayor Trantalis noted that two (2) years remain before the CRA sunsets. He commented on the need for the Board to discuss an extension of the City's portion of the CRA to continue funding projects in the NWPFH CRA, which would assist Invest Fort Lauderdale funding.

Mayor Trantalis requested the NWPFHRB consider ways to identify and maintain the historic cultural integrity of Sistrunk Boulevard. Mayor

Trantalis commented on rezoning and the need to be mindful of residential areas north and south of Sistrunk Boulevard.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Trantalis adjourned the meeting at 1:11 p.m.