

**APPROVED
MINUTES
NORTHWEST PROGRESSO – FLAGLER HEIGHTS
REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD
FORT LAUDERDALE
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
8th FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
APRIL 25, 2012 – 3:30 P.M.**

Cumulative Attendance

<u>Members Present</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>May 2011 - April 2012</u>	
		<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Steve Lucas, Chair	P	11	0
Ella Phillips, Vice Chair (arr. 3:36)	P	7	4
Jessie Adderley	A	9	2
Sonya Burrows	P	10	0
Ron Centamore	P	10	1
Nate Ernest-Jones	P	9	2
Alan Gabriel (arr. 4:29)	P	9	2
Mickey Hinton (arr. 3:40)	P	10	1
Brice Lambrix	P	9	2
Richard D. Powers	P	2	0
Yvonne Sanandres	A	7	4
Doug Sterner	P	9	2
Scott Strawbridge	P	8	0
John Wilkes (arr. 3:36)	P	8	3
Samuel Williams	P	8	3

Currently there are 15 appointed members to the Board, which means 8 would constitute a quorum.

It was noted that a quorum was present at the meeting.

Staff

Alfred Battle, Director, CRA
Sandra Doughlin, Clerk III, CRA
Bob Wojcik, CRA
Barbara Hartmann, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communications to City Commission

Motion made by Mr. Wilkes, seconded by Mr. Sterner, that the Board renew their request to rename the portion of NE 6th Street from Federal Highway to the City limits as Sistrunk Boulevard. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed 12-1 (Mr. Lambrix dissenting).

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

Chair Lucas called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m. and roll was called.

II. Approval of Minutes from February 22, 2012 and March 28, 2012

Motion made by Mr. Lambrix, seconded by Ms. Burrows, to approve the minutes of the February 22, 2012 meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Motion made by Mr. Sterner, seconded by Mr. Williams, to approve the minutes of the March 28, 2012 meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

The following Item was taken out of order on the Agenda.

Discussion Item

IV. Reliance Housing Foundation Proposal

Mr. Battle explained that shortly after the grand opening of Progresso Point, the CRA was approached by its developer, the Reliance Housing Foundation, to partner with them on two adjacent piece of property, a former retail location. These two parcels would be purchased for development into a passive park. The CRA would purchase the property, and the developer would spend up to \$100,000 to improve it, including demolition of the existing building.

The developer's request is based on the appraised value of the property: the CRA would purchase the parcels for roughly \$290,000 to create the passive park. As this appraisal was made in December 2011, the CRA would need to update it to verify the value.

Vice Chair Phillips and Mr. Wilkes arrived at 3:36 p.m.

Mr. Battle continued that the Board's comments and recommendation would be advanced to the CRA Board for further discussion of the proposal. He concluded that Staff does not yet have sufficient information to make a recommendation, and must verify the estimated cost of the parcels, as well as the potential cost of ongoing maintenance responsibilities. There would also be discussions at the City Commission level regarding the securing of grants to create and maintain the park.

Sandra Seals, Executive Vice President of the Reliance Housing Foundation, noted that the Progresso Point Apartments were completed earlier in 2012. The apartments are 100% occupied at present. She stated that Progresso Point's

location serves as a gateway to the downtown area from the north; if the adjacent parcels are developed into a passive park, it would significantly enhance this entrance.

The original proposal, submitted in March 2012, suggested that Reliance Housing enter into a partnership with the CRA for the purpose of redeveloping the park. While the original proposal included the parcel as part of the tax credit structure of Progresso Point, this is no longer possible, as the development has since been completed.

Mr. Hinton arrived at 3:40 p.m.

Ms. Seals continued that under the current proposal, Reliance Housing would contribute \$100,000 toward the redevelopment of the parcel. This is possible due to savings in the Progresso Point development's budget. Reliance would have no ownership or control over the parcel, which would serve as a passive City park. The City would assume responsibility of maintenance for the parcel. No estimates have been received regarding the total cost of renovating the site.

Mr. Centamore commented that he was in favor of the idea, but would like to know what would happen if redevelopment of the parcel cost more than \$100,000. Mr. Battle said this was difficult to answer at present, as the purchase of the property would be contingent upon this cost for improvements. It has not yet been determined how passive the park would be, although benches and landscaping are planned. If the cost is greater than \$100,000, it is expected that grant funds rather than CRA dollars would make up the difference.

Mr. Williams remarked that the proposal does not currently contain concrete concepts, such as what it would look like. Mr. Battle agreed that in addition to awaiting the second appraisal, a more concrete estimate of the potential improvements would also be necessary. He stated that Reliance Housing would like some feedback regarding whether or not the Board felt the project might proceed. He characterized today's discussion as disclosure rather than planning.

Chair Lucas said while he was in favor of adding the park as an amenity to the neighborhood and the CRA, and felt it complemented the efforts toward the Flagler Greenway, he was concerned regarding the potential cost. He also agreed that another appraisal was necessary, and felt it could have been made a part of the adjacent project. He added that the landscaping of the existing project is not in compliance with the requirements for Andrews Avenue, and suggested that the CRA could leverage landscaping compliance if they purchased the parcel.

He continued that the potential lack of a sufficient budget to complete the park was another concern, and suggested that studying the costs of existing parks, such as Feldman Park, might be helpful in making the decision.

Mr. Strawbridge agreed that he was in favor of the project, but felt the taxes paid on the property, the loss in tax increment funding (TIF) revenue, and the expected cost of maintenance must all be determined first.

Mr. Wilkes stated that the adjacent parcel should be purchased by the property owner, with an agreement by the City to support the park through planting. He did not believe the City should reward “overbuilding” of the project, and pointed out that CRA funds would be better spent toward acquiring one of the 134 parcels available within the district. He concluded that the CRA should not accept the proposal as it currently stood.

Mr. Williams said he was not comfortable with “taking a pass” on the proposal, and stated he would like to see more information before the Board made a decision. He recommended that concepts for the park and the appraised value be presented, as well as the possibility of leverage, be presented before the Board decided not to proceed.

Motion made by Mr. Williams, seconded by Mr. Sterner, to table any action on the part of the Board until additional information can be presented relative to a second appraisal, relative to a concept or what the park would look like, and the amount of money that it would really take to make it presentable to the Board.

In a voice vote, the **motion** passed 11-2 (Chair Lucas and Mr. Wilkes dissenting).

Presentation

III. Flagler Village Housing – The Spear Group

Chair Lucas stated that as part of the Development Review Committee (DRC) process, any new projects within the CRA would come before the Board for review; the Board members’ comments would be passed on to the DRC and acted upon accordingly. He noted that there was no request for funding in the materials presented to the Board, which meant if the project requires CRA funding in the future, it would need to come before the Board again.

Jeff Spear, representing the Spear Group, is a residential developer in Broward County. The proposed Flagler Village project would be six stories in height, with 112 apartments. The first two levels would serve as a parking garage, except on 4th Avenue. Ten two-storey town home apartments would front onto 4th Avenue.

Each apartment would have a private entrance to create a residential entry. The main entrance to the development would be in the center of 4th Avenue; this entrance would lead to a small lobby with a maintenance office and elevators.

The living areas begin on the third floor, with all units surrounding a central landscaped atrium. One unique aspect of the design is that all units have through ventilation and windows on at least two sides. Roughly one-third of all units are one-bedroom. The majority of the remaining units are two-bedroom, with two three-bedroom units.

Mr. Spear said he had met with the Flagler Civic Association, which supported the project. Members of the Spear Group met with the DRC on April 24, where it was noted that some technical aspects required additional work. He concluded that the project was on the right track. While the development does not have to go before the Planning and Zoning Board, it will be required to go before the City Commission for the unit allocation.

Mr. Strawbridge asked if parking would be to Code. Mr. Spear confirmed this, noting that on-street parking counts toward this requirement; there will also be extra tandem spaces. The development is a market-rate project. The Spear Group would manage the property.

Mr. Ernest-Jones asked if Mr. Spear anticipated coming back to the Board to request CRA dollars at a later time. Mr. Spear said he hoped to do so, suggesting that this might be appropriate for lighting and other improvements, as the CRA has helped other projects with these in the past.

Mr. Wilkes asked if density had been a concern for the DRC. Mr. Spear said it had not been an issue. He added that the building would be located in a regional activity center (RAC), which allows up to 15 stories; however, only six stories or less were recommended for the specific location of the building.

Mr. Wilkes commented that there was little street landscaping, with more landscaping on the interior. He asserted that green space is needed, and it would be better to have fewer units and more room for landscaping.

He (Mr. Wilkes) continued that while the design is not inconsistent with the location, many of the residents will not have vehicles. He stated if the development is intended to be an attractive building, it must be designed appropriately, with sufficient landscaping and other considerations. However, he concluded that it is outside the Board's purview to make determinations that are not related to the project's consistency with the CRA plan.

Mr. Spear thanked Mr. Wilkes for his comments, noting that the project follows the preferred design elements of the CRA Master Plan. He added that it is architecturally compatible with the Bamboo project, which is located across the street, and mirrors the streetscape found in other areas of the CRA.

Discussion Items

V. Director's Report

Mr. Battle reported that the Sistrunk project is approximately 90% complete, with work being done on sections 2 and 3. While there were some issues with the quality of trees on the south side of the road, these issues are being resolved.

The main issue for construction completion is the work with Florida Power & Light (FPL) in section 4 of the project. While the undergrounding of the system is complete, utility poles must still be removed before the streets may be reopened. Mr. Battle observed that this area has presented difficulties since the beginning of the project.

He continued that when the project is complete, a grand opening event will be held to open the road. The focus of the event will be promoting healthy living in the area by having members of the community walk, bike, and jog along the corridor. The event will extend from the African-American Research Library and go east to Feldman Park, where a community barbecue will be held.

Mr. Battle advised that signs installed by the contractor east of Andrews Avenue identify this street as Sistrunk Boulevard rather than NE 6th Street. Shortly after the beginning of the project, the Board recommended that the City Commission enact a name change to Sistrunk Boulevard throughout the roadway; however, he noted that no ordinance or name change has followed this recommendation, and the signs in this area are being corrected to NE 6th Street. He stated that if the Board wished, they could send their recommendation as a communication to the City Commission once more.

Motion made by Mr. Wilkes, seconded by Mr. Sterner, that the Board renew their request to rename the street from Federal Highway all the way to the City limits to be Sistrunk Boulevard. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed 12-1 (Mr. Lambrix dissenting).

Mr. Strawbridge commented that he felt it constituted a disservice to the community to "hide" this entry into the neighborhood, as it would not serve to stimulate economic development.

Mr. Battle said the Carter Park Social Center will hold its final education seminar on May 9, 2012. The topic will be legal benefits and other issues related to incorporation. Average attendance for each session has been roughly 75 individuals.

Mr. Gabriel arrived at 4:29 p.m.

Mr. Battle concluded that the City's Transportation and Mobility Department has provided an update on the proposed improvements to Andrews and 3rd Avenues: while the City has discussed integrating the proposal with the County's Complete Streets program, the conversations did not seem to be productive. The Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has now become involved, and plans to have parts of the initiative, including the structural design of the improvements, completed by October 2012. The City is working closely with the MPO on this issue.

Mr. Strawbridge explained that the MPO and Smart Growth Partnership have undertaken the Complete Streets project with some assistance from the Broward Health Planning Council. A number of local municipalities have begun to adopt smart growth principles into their ordinances, which will be part of the Complete Streets program. He noted that Northwest Gardens has recently received a smart growth award.

Chair Lucas suggested that the Board could schedule an update on the proposed streetscape improvements and off-peak parallel parking in the next few months. Mr. Gabriel added that the MPO could also give a presentation on the Complete Streets program.

Mr. Centamore commented that he had recently attended a seminar on walkability, which focused on what makes pedestrians feel safe in walking the streets. Mr. Sterner said he had also attended the seminar, and noted that the walkability study is currently planned to end at 4th Street. He pointed out that with the construction project underway on Sistrunk Boulevard, there is an effort to encourage more street life in this area, and suggested that the study area could be extended two blocks to the north. Mr. Battle said he had spoken with this presenter, and confirmed that they may look outside the boundary of 4th Street for the study.

VI. Communication to CRA Board

It was noted that the communication regarding the name change of part of 4th Street to Sistrunk Boulevard would be sent as a communication to the City Commission.

VII. Old / New Business

Mr. Wilkes recalled that the Board had discussed the need for a strategy regarding the expenditure of \$1.5 million in bond funds. He asked if the requested update on the property list within the CRA, specifically identifying Housing and Urban Development (HUD)-owned properties, had been prepared, and also asked if the Board should request input from the nearby civic associations regarding prospective purchases.

He explained that some of these sites of less than 5000 sq. ft. may be viable for use as community gardens, as there is an upcoming first reading of a proposed ordinance on this topic. Mr. Battle replied that a list of small properties has recently been provided to the Planning Department with respect to the proposed ordinance.

Mr. Strawbridge expressed concern regarding the trees on Sistrunk Boulevard that are part of the CRA's streetscape project. He asserted that roughly 50% of these trees are dead.

Mr. Williams asked what percentage of projects on which the CRA spends money in a given year will be TIF-generating or non-TIF-generating projects. Mr. Battle replied that most of the projects that come before the Board will be revenue-generating projects; when a project that would not generate TIF revenue, such as a housing project, comes before the Board, he typically makes the Board aware of this fact.

Mr. Ernest-Jones requested that representatives of B Cycle be invited to make a presentation to the Board, with particular attention to the cost of installing a bike sharing station. He did not feel the DRC took an aggressive approach to ensuring there are adequate bicycle facilities in commercial and residential areas, and suggested that stations could be encouraged to set up near high-density residential projects, perhaps with the CRA funding the cost of installation. Mr. Battle said he had reached out to B Cycle to invite them to present to the Board, although they have not yet been scheduled.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 4:54 p.m.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]