

# City of Fort Lauderdale

*City Hall*  
100 North Andrews Avenue  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301  
[www.fortlauderdale.gov](http://www.fortlauderdale.gov)



## Meeting Minutes - DRAFT

Monday, November 10, 2014

5:30 PM

Joint Workshop with Beach Redevelopment Advisory Board - CRA  
Beach Projects  
Beach Community Center - 3351 N.E. 33rd Avenue

## CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP

*FORT LAUDERDALE CITY COMMISSION*

*JOHN P. "JACK" SEILER Mayor - Commissioner*  
*ROMNEY ROGERS Vice Mayor - Commissioner - District IV*  
*BRUCE G. ROBERTS Commissioner - District I*  
*DEAN J. TRANTALIS Commissioner - District II*  
*BOBBY B. DuBOSE Commissioner - District III*

*LEE R. FELDMAN, City Manager*  
*JOHN HERBST, City Auditor*  
*JONDA K. JOSEPH, City Clerk*  
*CYNTHIA A. EVERETT, City Attorney*

Mayor Seiler called the meeting to order at 5:53 p.m.

## CENTRAL BEACH MASTER PLAN PROJECT

### ATTENDANCE ROLL CALL

**Present:** 5 - Mayor John P. "Jack" Seiler, Vice-Mayor Romney Rogers, Commissioner Bruce G. Roberts, Commissioner Dean J. Trantalis and Commissioner Robert L. McKinzie

**Also Present:** City Manager Lee R. Feldman, City Auditor John Herbst, Assistant City Clerk Jeffrey A. Modarelli and City Attorney Cynthia A. Everett

**Beach Redevelopment Advisory Board:** Chairman Anthony Abbatte, Board Members Daniel S. Matchette (arrived at approximately 6:05 p.m.), Melissa Milroy, Marvin Andrew Mitchell Jr., Judith Scher, Tim Schiavone, Shirley G. Smith and A.J. Yaari

### OVERVIEW BY EDSA, INC., CITY'S CONSULTANTS

Tom Green of EDSA made brief introductory remarks, noting this is a continuation from October 27. The design is now at the 15 percent conceptual juncture.

Paul Kissinger of EDSA noted the projects examined by EDSA. He showed aerials of two options. One has two parking garages, a festival open space with a drop-off area, improvements to Las Olas and a major water feature. A second has one parking garage, a festival open space with a drop-off area and improvements to Las Olas. Option A with two garages has a price of \$66 million; Option B with one garage has a price of \$56 million. He highlighted their recommendations, including entry signage on the west side of Las Olas; one garage; Las Olas corridor remaining four lanes without a median; major public open space of Oceanside Plaza; improvements to Almond Avenue but not undergrounding the utilities; sidewalk improvements to Poinsettia and Banyan streets; modifications to Sebastian Street with its configuration not being changed; and streetscape improvements to A1A. Once the 15 percent conceptual is approved, they will move to site plan approval drawings which is the 30 percent juncture.

### CONTINUED DISCUSSION AND PUBLIC INPUT ON PROPOSED BEACH IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS INCLUDING:

- a. Las Olas Boulevard Corridor
- b. Fort Lauderdale Beach Streetscape Improvements
- c. D.C. Alexander Park Preliminary Conceptual Designs

Mayor Seiler opened the floor for public comment.

Bruce Qualey, 3070 NE 43 Street, chair of the Parks, Recreation and Beaches Advisory Board, said he is in favor of open space and greenspace. He supported Plan B with one parking garage. He wanted the parking garage moved to the northern end of Las Olas Boulevard for a better view. He supported expansion of the marina. This is an opportunity for Fort Lauderdale to be the best.

Bill Smart, 3850 Galt Ocean Drive, felt a three-dimensional visual tool would be helpful. There should be space between buildings. He supported a rooftop use on the parking garage. He wanted utility lines to be

put underground.

Lester Zalewski, 545 South Fort Lauderdale Beach Boulevard, was opposed to building on public land. He suggested not building either parking garage. The proposed site is already functional parking. Property on Alhambra and Sebastian could be better utilized. He also discussed landscaping on State Road A1A and Seabreeze.

Fred Carlson, representing Central Beach Alliance, said the CBA represents not only residents but also businesses. The majority do not like the idea of parking garages when one travels over the Las Olas Bridge. It sends a message that the area is crowded. Parking garages are not cheap and are under-utilized three or four days of the week. They are not easily accessible to the beach. The majority also supports expanding the marina. Open space sends a message that the area is an upscale, elegant place.

Jeff Sagent, 1729 NE 16 Terrace, commented on the changes since the 1970s including reductions in parking. He was concerned about access to the beach being jeopardized. Lights are turned down at night for the sea turtles which prevents people from walking on the beach at night. He did not think turtles are more important than people. He supported portable restroom on the beach.

Russ Ballew, 109 South Victoria Park Road, supported emphasizing the importance of bicycle and pedestrian traffic. He did not think Fort Lauderdale is conducive to the water feature concept. He wanted to see the cost amortized over 30 years on providing water and electricity for these features. In 30 years, fresh water could cost more than gasoline. He was concerned about the cost to underground utility lines and higher maintenance costs.

Art Seitz, 1905 North Atlantic Boulevard, said he serves on the Broward County Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board. He felt that the public is getting locked out of their beach. Parking is limited. He supported a six- or seven-story parking garage. The rooftop should be put to use. He has visited 17 of 20 of the world's greatest beachfronts. He agreed with Ballew's comments. The lighting is bad at night. There is no money put into parking even though there is money available. He criticized the City for not getting funding allocations for parking from the Broward County Metropolitan Planning Organization. The mayor of Miami Beach recently commented that he wants to connect South Point to Fort Lauderdale. In 2012, surveying conducted by the City showed that 50 percent of residents own bicycles and used them regularly. The number increased to 59 percent in 2013. About \$450,000 is going toward the A1A greenway and more than 50 times as much on an aquatic center that no one cares about. He supported the Beach Redevelopment Advisory Board's independence. Rooftops and high vista points are important for the view and should be showcased in any design. He felt that restaurants on the beach including one at the Aquatic Complex would be beneficial.

Kevin Tarr, 1100 NE 12 Avenue, suggested that State Road A1A should be two lanes at all times. He felt the restroom design at Sebastian should be likened to a wave. He discussed a convenient location for the trolley stop.

There was no one else wishing to speak.

Members of the audience were provided voting devices provided answers to 10 questions. Results are attached to these minutes.

Mayor Seiler asked for the Board's feedback on the surveying results for each question.

In reference to Question No. 7, Chairman Abbate said the shade structure has the potential to be a signature component. It is a unique concept for the beach. It was presented with a valet component, but

he did not think that would be necessary. Board member Andy Mitchell felt that there is a theme related to arriving at the beach. He felt that when going over the bridge, it would be important to have a design that encourages motorists to slow down, park, get out of their cars and walk around. He supported anything that could be done architecturally to encourage this. Commissioner Roberts felt that the neutrality may be because people do not know what it will really look like. Mayor Seiler liked the concept of a shade structure but was concerned about trying to do too much with it. He did not think valet is necessary. Board Member A.J. Yaari agreed that less is more. Board Member Daniel Matchette said the scale of the porte cochere does not have to be as grand as it looks in the drawing but it should be able to accommodate a trolley service. Board Member Melissa Milroy supported the shade structure.

In reference to Question No. 9, there was consensus agreement on the Wave pattern design.

In reference to No. 9, Mayor Seiler was uncertain this item as well as Channelside are necessary at this stage. Board Member A.J. Yaari said Almond Avenue is the most decrepit street in the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA). It is a busy street. The wooden electric poles cannot support the heavy transformers. There are problems with the sewers or storm drainage. Board Member Matchette also advocated for the Almond Avenue proposed improvements to be made. Board member Tim Schiavone pointed out that Almond Avenue will look worse when everything around it is upgraded. Clearly, the improvements should be made. Board Member Judith Scherer felt it is basically about cleaning up a back street and nothing more. The electric poles are a negative. The type of retail is a factor. Mitchell pointed out when one travels on Las Olas over the bridge, there is a vista to a beautiful area that has been improved, but directly across the street is Almond Avenue. When everything is modernized, it will spur development. The developers will do the heavy lifting. Chairman Abbate wanted to see more about what type of development is projected for the areas surrounding Almond Avenue. Something has to be done but perhaps not as elaborate as has been presented. Seabreeze may be more of a priority because it is heavily utilized and there is a lot of public frontage that is not developed. Board Member Yaari said that he owns a large percentage of property on Almond Avenue. It is true the City could wait for development but the same is true for the entire beach and no one knows when that will happen. He did not think there will be development along Almond Avenue in the next 10 years because it is a complicated assemblage.

## FORT LAUDERDALE AQUATIC CENTER DESIGN ALTERNATIVE

Jim Blosser, representing Recreational Design & Construction (RDC), reviewed the project's history and community outreach, emphasizing it is a City project which originated in a 2009 RFP wherein RDC was selected. Tourism experts have said the facility will result in thousands of hotel room nights. The YMCA representative who oversees swim meets says a typical event will result in 5,000 to 6,000 people.

Architect Bernard Zyscovich presented slides related to this matter. A copy of the slides is attached to these minutes. The potential for high-dive, cliff-drive training that does not currently exist anywhere else in the world was pointed out.

Chairman Abbate said he first saw the revised drawings this summer and reviewed them against the Central Beach Master Plan which the Board is charged with protecting. The contract states that the drawings should be prepared in accordance with the Master Plan. If not, a variance must be requested. The Plan is clear about no visible parking surface or structured parking without architectural screening is advised or permitted on the Intracoastal Waterway. He was surprised that it went as far as the Development Review Committee without any presentation on this point to the Board. Additionally he was concerned about the large lawn on the west side proposed as a public gathering space. However, there are two drainage facilities in the area and it appears the region has been designed for stormwater retention. He questioned how it would function as a place for public gathering. The screening could cost an additional \$1 million to \$2 million.

Board Member Matchette congratulated the design team on its work. He was disappointed that the budget was not available for the first designs. He pointed out that the parking contemplated will replace three other parking lots being eliminated. This is really a parking lot with a training competition pool and exhibition space for the boat show. It appears to be going forward in hopes of simply attracting hotel guests. It is not a profit generator. He wanted to see the projected revenue stream and the cost in order to determine the projected deficit. The taxpayers are basically paying for an opportunity to fill hotel beds. The City Manager advised that the City should answer those questions, not the architect. Cost cannot be determined until the design is known. Municipal pools are not money-makers. The parking revenue will subsidize some of the cost. Fort Lauderdale swimming and diving teams are active and it will serve a purpose as a public facility. The tournament aspect will be a draw but specific events have not been identified and therefore staff cannot project associated revenues. Board Member Matchette found it odd that the City would build a \$30 million facility without knowing how much it will cost to operate. The City Manager explained that staff is aware of staffing costs and does not anticipate a need to increase staff. Once the design is in-place, the City will commission a third party to conduct such an analysis. The revenue can be increased simply by raising rates but that does not guarantee how many people will come. The rates need to be market supported. Board Member Matchette asked if the analysis would be completed before a building permit is sought. The City Manager explained that is ultimately a policy decision. There currently is a dilapidated facility that the City would like to renovate to world class or first class. This is the direction being taken. No one has said that the pool needs to be a profit center. This operation loses about \$1 million per year. He does not anticipate that the City will lose more in the future than is currently being lost. Pools are publicly subsidized. It is the Commission's decision whether they want public pools on the beach.

Board Member Matchette questioned whether the commercial component could be increased on the ground floor through a public-private partnership and help reduce the subsidy. The City Manager advised that there was a concern impacting the surrounding neighborhoods, too much activity and using up the trip allocation. They determined it was necessary to scale back and recognize the trips would be better used for other parts of the beach slated for commercial and retail development.

Board Member Matchette noted that divers commonly lose their swimsuits, consequently there has been concern expressed about windows into the pool. The City Manager added that the divers also indicated horn honking from Seabreeze would be more distracting when considering the diving component layout. He met with Red Bull consultants recently. They did not have a specific preference as to location of the diving platform.

Board Member Yaari said this has always been a swimming facility and always will be. He agreed with the City Manager that not everything is about business and dollar bills. It will make Fort Lauderdale a better place, being all about water and having fun. The CRA is about to sunset; it is time to proceed. Board Member Milroy agreed with Yaari that this should proceed. She liked the banquet facility being enlarged. She supported a restaurant or catering area with a freight elevator. She does not like the look of the building; it looks like a concrete block. It could have more pizzazz. It does not appear to have a lot of windows. She was uncertain about plans for the perimeter. She supported the building skin but did not know how the additional \$1 million to \$2 million would be funded. There have been clear concerns on the part of the divers with respect to the windows and the high dive on State Road A1A would also be a distraction.

Board Member Shirley Smith thought 540 parking spaces is too many. She noted a doctor who spoke at the Board's meeting was concerned about the level of exhaust being generated from the parking garage from a health standpoint.

Board Member Judith Scherer said she is concerned about the little extras of \$1 million here and there.

The building needs a skin, but this is a new issue. The banquet facility came up at the last meeting and there was discussion that there would be no kitchen. These are issues that need to be resolved. There is no more money in the CRA so something must be eliminated.

Board Member Mitchell believed that this property has always been a swimming facility, and he felt it is the best use of the property. His big concern is with the number of vehicles on the beach and encouraging people to get out of their vehicles. Without accommodating the parking, the density and intensity shrinks dramatically. It opens a pedestrian feel; perhaps a restaurant. Many people who stayed at Ireland's Inn arrived by bus. Screening is important, but the project needs to move forward. He questioned whether there is too much parking and too much intensity.

Board Member Schiavone pointed out the objective is finding a formula for public use that will lead to success for the businesses on the beach. Plans should be ready to make addition in the future. He wanted to ensure the facility meets national and international requirements for every competition around the world.

Zyscovich advised that Counsilman-Hunsaker consultants are the best in the field with respect to Board Member Shrivone's concern. There have been numerous meetings with USA Swimming and USA Diving and both have assured him that the facility meets all criteria. The banquet facility will have a freight elevator and banquet kitchen, adequate for large events, but it is not a chef's kitchen. In other words, food will come in already prepared. It would be fairly simple to adapt it to other food service uses. As to parking, buses will drop off guests inside the garage and circulate out. The ground floor cannot be eliminated. The pool occupies the volume of the third floor parking. There is not a lot of parking. The only efficient parking deck is the second deck. If parking is removed, the associated revenue and the parking bonds would be lost.

In response to Board Member Mitchell's question about removing the second level, Joe Cerrone of RDC indicated accommodation was made for Red Bull (cliff-diving) events, the depth would have to be increased to 20 feet and a good portion of the ground floor would be lost. Zyscovich indicated probably 16 to 20 parking spaces would be lost. In response to Commissioner Roberts, the City Manager said if the second-level and the parking spaces therein were removed, there would be a negative financial impact. Commissioner Roberts believed the science of the building seems to require the parking be maintained. Commissioner Trantalis pointed out there is an assumption that the parking spaces would be occupied but there is no guarantee. This is the problem with not having a business plan prior to this stage of the project. In response to Commissioner Roberts, the City Manager explained that a parking demand analysis is required for the financing based on general parking conditions on the beach. Not every parking space will be filled all the time but there will be sufficient occupancy within the facility especially during peak times to generate enough revenue to support bonding. An independent parking consultant has been retained for this analysis. When the City issues bonds, it has to demonstrate to potential bondholders that the facility will generate sufficient revenue to support the bonds. Commissioner Trantalis pointed out there are conflicting reports about the demand for parking on the beach. This parking garage was not intended solely for the Aquatic Center but also to absorb demand for special events. The City should not assume it can fund the parking component and pool structure based on fulltime use of the parking garage. Mayor Seiler preferred having a parking garage with sufficient parking slightly removed from the bridge; reduce the size of the bridge garage and then look at the marina expansion. It would disburse the concentration. Commissioner Trantalis did not think that the people who would use Las Olas parking would necessarily be the same ones using the Aquatic Center garage.

Commissioner Roberts wanted to provide a 20-foot dive well now to accommodate a Red Bull (cliff-diving) event or other events of that nature. Zyscovich clarified that it could be accomplished without losing any parking. Commissioner Roberts supported a skin for the parking garage. He liked the wave design but would like to see more about how it would look. He would like to find a funding source other

than the CRA and not diminish the other projects. He would not object to a restaurant; perhaps it could be added in the future. He would like to see a therapeutic pool. It is a revenue chance and it is an added use. He would like to know about the cost for a therapeutic pool. He agreed with Chairman Abbate that the master plan must be followed, but believed that would be accomplished by adding the skin.

Board Member Yaari emphasized that traffic flow and congestion should be kept in mind. When people find out that there is not too much traffic and the beach is accessible and the price is right, the parking spaces will fill up. Board Member Smith pointed out that pricing is important.

Vice-Mayor Rogers raised the point of having the warm-up pool on the first floor and providing an escalator. The City Manager advised that USA Swimming objected to an escalator for safety reasons due to the propensity of people without shoes. Zyscovich expanded on their conversations with USA Swimming and USA Diving, indicating that the dive pool would be adequate for warm-ups. Vice-Mayor Rogers thought the cliff-diving component should be included. Mayor Seiler asked about increased wind speed at the height used by cliff divers. The City Manager advised in his on-site meeting, Red Bull representatives did not express concern about wind.

Vice-Mayor Rogers supported adding a skin, but preferred the \$1 million cost. Zyscovich explained the difference between the two products and the installation. Board Member Yaari suggested the more expensive form could be used on the Seabreeze side. Vice-Mayor Rogers felt that there is really no other use for this property. He noted that the City's estimates on the CRA tax increment financing (TIF) are fairly conservative. He asked that the estimates be revisited. The City Manager agreed to do so.

Commissioner Trantalis understood there were four goals with rehabilitating the Aquatic Center. The first goal was to create a world-class facility which is a completely nebulous concept. The City Manager then said it should rather be state of the art. He did not know the difference between the two. With making that difference, it suggests the facility will be just state of the art and not world class. Perhaps the cliff diving component could elevate the facility to world class. The Aquatic Center has been hemorrhaging some \$1 million per year and there still is not even a rudimentary business plan to stop the losses. He would be opposed to spending \$3 million per year of taxpayer money on this facility. He did not think the community supports this. It is not just about the design, but also the upkeep. Another goal was to keep the International Swimming Hall of Fame (ISHOF). This opportunity has been lost partly due to the cost. An analysis could have been made as to the benefit of retaining ISHOF. The reduced cost rendering was a little plain. He was concerned that the Commission has not achieved these goals. Zyscovich noted that the maintenance costs will be significantly less than what the City is currently spending. The same shell exists so ISHOF could be put back into the configuration. Commissioner Trantalis noted that the City asked RDC to build it for \$25 million, but never asked anyone else. However, this discussion is not on the table this evening. These are the types of questions people continue to ask about. Zyscovich went on to say that it is important to define what is meant by "world class." In terms of the facility's functionality and equipment, there is no question it is world class. He has heard that the building is plain. They came up with the idea of saving the 50-meter pool and providing an efficient building supporting the pool. With this, the facility could be world class. If a skin can be added and the front façade is adapted, he believed it would be closer to where Commissioner Trantalis would like to be. The building was conceptually a machine for swimming and diving. There are many elements that will make the building look fabulous. Because the building is more of a sculpture than a box, a skin was never included. He agreed that if the City can afford it, the skin should be added.

Commissioner Trantalis felt the front piece of the high diving well with stairs that serve as bleachers, just shown tonight brings some pizzazz. Unfortunately it will cost a lot more. He questioned why it was not part of the original design. Zyscovich said the basis was to save the pool. A level of parking was removed to bring it closer to the ground and the dive pool was elevated. It was further clarified that the original concept was based on saving the existing 50-meter pool. In order to move the dive well to the front,

another deeper dive well needs to be built and the second 50-meter pool needs to be replaced. All of the pools would be new which equates to a big cost. Board Member Mitchell suggested moving the diving well to the front, with no impact to the parking. Zyscovich believed the cost would be less than \$6 million. Mitchell pointed out that people could watch the high dive from DC Alexander Park. The skin could be added to the parking garage.

Chairman Abbate understood according to the contract when the consultant reaches 90 percent phase, there will be an independent review of the costs. The cost comparison will verify the design developer number and determine whether the project is on target, above or below. Therefore all discussions about budget are speculative at this point. He wished to steer the conversation back to the master plan. Transparency and visual access to the Intracoastal is mentioned twice in the master plan. No visible parking structure without screening on the Intracoastal or on Seabreeze is mentioned five times in the South Beach Marina District Character Area Guidelines. The aggregation of site plan open space for pedestrian use is mentioned twice. Visual access to the swimming facility to passersby is also mentioned. He reiterated that the Board is charged with ensuring projects conform to the plan. The developer could submit a letter stating that it does meet the plan and prove it or request a variance. Commissioner Roberts pointed out there are some nuances to those issues. Placing one pool front and center could be interpreted as addressing the visibility issue. Abbate pointed out that they have not yet seen the design from the ground level to determine if it has spirit, in terms of transparency and lightness. He would like to see it from ground level. Vice-Mayor Rogers also questioned how transparency and screening fit into those statements in the master plan. Mayor Seiler believed the dive well should be in the front and the swimming on the top and in the back. It will create a wow factor. One cannot see the swimmers at ground level.

The meeting recessed from 8:36 p.m. to 8:44 p.m.

Mayor Seiler opened the floor for public comment.

Bruce Quailey, 3070 NE 43 Street, said people throughout the world identify Fort Lauderdale with water, beaches and boating. However, there is nothing with which people can identify now. This will be the City's new flagship around the world. If the Red Bull high dive comes to Fort Lauderdale, it will be the new flagship internationally. The current design is not iconic. He wanted to spend a little money to make it look special, more than a neighborhood pool.

In response to Commissioner Trantalis, the City Manager advised that staff has had preliminary conversations with Red Bull representatives. They have looked at the facility and believe it is extremely viable. They do not intend to put any money toward it but they are available to help with the design. They have not participated in this design. They would prefer to have a separate tower from the 10-meter on the opposite end of the pool. Women use a different height so two platforms are needed. They would prefer that there be a platform that transitions between the men's and women's. There is no ballpark cost estimate yet. The diving well can be 16 feet; 18 is preferred and 20 would be more than adequate.

Mary Fertig, representing Idlewyld Improvement Association, noted the Association's requests in the past for more open space and walkways. She recalled previous discussions about parking. She suggested it may be time to look more holistically. Perhaps this project will satisfy the requirements. There could be parking at City Hall or the Convention Center on weekends with transportation to the beach. There are parts of the project they support. She did not think a single building will define Fort Lauderdale. She advocated for open space, beach, waterways and public access. Fort Lauderdale already has a worldwide reputation for these very things.

Art Seitz, 1905 North Atlantic Boulevard, felt the project is a debacle. The financier for RDC is bankrupt. The project went from iconic to just a concrete box. There is little interest in swimming and diving. There



has to be more than swimming and diving. He mentioned a previous idea of locating a pool at Holiday Park. This is a site of 5.5 acres of very valuable property. He was concerned about lack of focus on the views and restaurants. He criticized the process. There was no due diligence. He wanted to let Chairman Abbate and a blue-ribbon committee start over and sort out this out. There is no business plan because there is no clientele other than the YMCA. There is no demand for this facility.

Charles King, 105 North Victoria Park Road, was concerned about the facility continuing to lose money. He thought the plan was to stop the loses. He did not think the City could compete with mountainous areas with respect to cliff diving. He criticized the process. He did not think swimming is a big money sport. He drew attention to the Schlitterbahn water park. He felt this seems like a giant waste of money.

Lester Zalewski, 545 South Fort Lauderdale Beach Boulevard, suggested that if the Commission goes forward with this proposal, the diving well should be in the front. The concept will bring branding to Fort Lauderdale. The annual loss of \$1 million could be written off to advertising. Because the events will not be frequent, he felt there is no need for concern about safety on A1A or traffic flow. This is probably the best concept.

There was no one else wishing to speak.

Mayor Seiler requested answers to Chairman Abbate's points by the Board's next meeting. Commissioner Trantalis felt the operational cost issue is also more important.

Mayor Seiler said he was told during the break that USA Diving does not want the pool in the front. Chairman Abbate believed they were concerned about the breeze with DC Alexander Park and the openness. If the pool was put on the Intracoastal side, the buildings would offer some protection. Mayor Seiler pointed out that would not offer any attraction. Zyscovich concurred. He added that there also is a conflict because Red Bull would like the tower to face south. USA Diving wants it to face north. This means potentially two towers. Ideally to solve all of the problems and have the Red Bull branding, there should be something with a wow factor in front with the diving tower on the podium as part of the swimming pool. The budget is driving what they can do.

The City Manager and City Auditor agreed to look at the budget. Vice-Mayor Rogers pointed out that operational costs will be less than the current ones. The City Manager said a financial analysis can be done with a business plan if there is a sense of what the general design will be. Vice-Mayor Rogers added that one of the original ingredients of having a revenue stream was that it could be used for cruise ship diving teams to practice. There are Red Bull, cruise ship and cliff diving opportunities. He also felt the youngsters could become interested in the sport of diving and it could result in another avenue for the City.

Mayor Seiler questioned whether USA Diving is adamant that the dive well cannot go in front. The City Manager agreed to inquire again. Mayor Seiler pointed out that it has already been reconfigured because they did not want diving on the roof. Dave Burgering, Fort Lauderdale Dive Team Director and Head Coach advised that Steve Foley of USA Diving has indicated a preference for the dive well to be in the back but is not opposed to it being in front. He was concerned about traffic but he presumed traffic could be rerouted for major events. Mayor Seiler thought it would defeat the purpose to place it in the back. Burgering indicated closest to ground level is the preference. Board Member Yaari pointed out that evening events eight months of the year will not be possible because of turtle lighting restrictions. Some discussion followed on changes to accommodate the diving interests including the concept of a temporary platform at a cost of \$100,000 and a partnership with Red Bull. Mayor Seiler felt the current proposal is the most attractive design.

The City Manager clarified that all divers prefer to dive facing north, including those affiliated with Red

Bull. There is a concern from USA Diving and Red Bull that a tower on top of the 10-meter diving platform would detract from the 10-meter diving events that will be more frequent. The likelihood of having numerous high-platform diving events is not great; there may be one or two per year. The practicality of an additional tower is that there are no training facilities for this sport in the U.S. A permanent platform would be a practicing attraction around the world. As to interest in the sport, there will be a diving demonstration at the 2020 Olympics with a possible permanent event in 2024. The more people who see it, the more interest it will generate. Commissioner Trantalis suggested the City accommodate for a temporary platform. A tower could be added if it becomes more popular. The City Manager felt that is a good point. He went on to say that a tower would not be a multi-million-dollar expense. Zyscovich indicated that repurposing would not be inexpensive. Board Member Matchette suggested approaching Red Bull about building the tower in exchange for naming rights. The City Manager advised Red Bull has not expressed such an interest.

Commissioner Roberts understood that the panel of windows would be removed from the design and Mayor Seiler also wanted to remove the second tower at least temporarily. Zyscovich noted the additional tower could be demountable and stored. Discussion ensued about whether swimming events could be viewed at the ground level. Vice-Mayor Rogers preferred not to remove the windows in place and cover them for high diving. Mayor Seiler questioned the expense of windows. Zyscovich emphasized the cost would be between \$33 million and \$40 million. Commissioner McKinzie said there does not appear to be anything concrete at this point. It is difficult to offer input on something speculative. He was concerned about costs and operations. He would be interested in a host of things such as local impact in terms of creating jobs and diversity. Zyscovich clarified that from the architect's standpoint, this is the last stage of drawings. The Commission requested alternatives be presented. Information is available. A third party could review the costs now. He is looking for direction. Mayor Seiler thought that was fair. A decision needs to be reached very soon. He asked the City Auditor to work with the City Manager on the numbers. His sense at this time is one pool with the diving tower up front and flexible enough to add a cliff diving tower. He preferred the current proposal over the former one. Commissioner Roberts suggested looking into costs for the second tower for future consideration. Mayor Seiler was not opposed to securing that cost if it does not mean spending tens of thousands of dollars on cost estimates.

## OTHER POTENTIAL CRA-FUNDED PROJECTS

### a. Las Olas Marina Expansion

Mayor Seiler indicated that he would like to have the flexibility to expand the marina.

Mayor Seiler opened the floor for public comment.

Art Seitz, 1905 North Atlantic Boulevard, supported the idea of a parking garage at six or seven stories that could be expanded. There should be glass and balconies facing the Intracoastal Waterway. There should be an activity deck. It is time for Fort Lauderdale to take advantage of its Intracoastal views and vistas. Any walkway or promenade at ground level will be looking at the side of large ships. A promenade should be wider than 20 feet.

Marine Advisory Board Member Frank Herhold said Fort Lauderdale is defined by the marine industry. It is the yachting capital of the world, not the swimming capital of the world. He wished that all the funding and consideration had gone into redeveloping the marina rather than the aquatic facility. Fort Lauderdale is the hub of America's marine industry, specifically servicing and docking. It should be nurtured. The infrastructure is aging and should be improved and expanded. Marinas are what Fort Lauderdale is about.

Marine Advisory Board Member Jack Newton said \$1.1 million annual parking revenue would disappear if the Oceanside Parking Lot is eliminated. If the city is to be the yachting capital of the world, money needs to be put into the marina expansion. He was annoyed that \$7.8 million is budgeted for a promenade and nothing for the marina. He was happy with the direction the City is going and whatever improvements are made to the Aquatic Center.

Mary Fertig, 511 Poinciana Drive, agreed with Herhold's comments concerning the Las Olas Marina expansion. She emphasized a holistic look at parking, including off-site with transportation and relocating the proposed garage. The marina is the city's future. More energy should be put into the marinas. She wanted to see alternative renderings for consideration.

There was no one else wishing to speak.

Commissioner Trantalis noted that an expansion would cost \$27 million and the income would not justify the expense. He has not heard anything further from staff. The City Manager advised that staff was asked to re-crunch the numbers. The City Auditor then reviewed staff's work. It was reported to the Commission via memorandum. He has recommended that if the Commission wants to pursue this, a request for proposals (RFP) be issued for a public-private partnership. Based on the market study by Tom Murray, the only professional study he has seen, the numbers do not support the debt. Commissioner Trantalis asked that the information be provided to him along with the date when it was sent originally in that he does not recall receiving it. Mayor Seiler thought it was discussed at two conference meetings. The City Auditor explained that his opinion was that the estimates being provided did not seem reasonable. He then reviewed staff's estimate, which he believed to be reasonable. There is a wide disparity in the estimated lineal rate per foot based on the mix of vessels at any given time. Staff has indicated that it is difficult to draw a conclusion on operating revenue because the marina size and upland use have not been decided. Also staff was unsure what the loss would be for the period of time the marina is closed for dredging and whether it is even possible with respect to seagrass mitigation. Staff concluded that they did not have a basis for making a reasonable estimate of the potential revenue. The City Manager noted that the Marine Advisory Board brought forward Tom Murray. His report was originally based on 5,025 lineal feet of dockage would support a bond for \$3.5 million against \$25 million of construction. Commissioner Trantalis said there seems to be a disconnect between the Murray Report, what the City Manager is saying and what the marine industry is saying. They are saying there is a pent-up demand for dockage. The City Manager explained he cannot go to the bond market based on speculation. No one has provided any definitive information to expand on the Murray Report. It was reanalyzed based upon 6,000 lineal feet that would allow for \$6.5 million of bond capacity. His recommendation continues to be that if there is a belief that this is a viable project, the City should seek a private sector partner who will assume the risk via RFP. Mayor Seiler said the Marine Advisory Board has good intentions but it is not their money. Unlike an aquatic facility, a marina would generate revenue and it sends a message that the City wants to grow and develop the marine industry. Vice-Mayor Rogers supported the private partnership concept. Commissioner Trantalis pointed out the private sector would not touch anything with these numbers. Mayor Seiler said the Marine Advisory Board has identified interested private sector. One has already come forward. Board Member Yaari pointed out that the private sector will always be more aggressive than the public sector. Commissioner Roberts pointed out the public/private difference in responsibilities. There are apparently private sector entities that think it can be done. Vice-Mayor Rogers felt it will be a mixed-use project. He wanted to determine what the City can do to expand the marina and what makes the most economic sense. Commissioner Roberts pointed out \$8.8 billion in revenue from the boat show in Broward County only was reported in the media. Vice-Mayor Rogers noted that the Marine Advisory Board has recommended it but the City believes there is too much risk. Commissioner Trantalis felt situating a parking garage at the Las Olas Bridge will ruin the beach entrance. Vice-Mayor Rogers did not disagree however there are options such as a joint-use garage. In further response to Commissioner Trantalis, the City Manager advised he could prepare an RFP in 90 days and on the market for 90 ninety days. Board Member Mitchell pointed out that the marine

industry has evolved. It was in trouble three or four years ago. The timing is right now. The marine and hospitality industries are powerful engines for Fort Lauderdale. He mentioned the Almond Avenue topic and said the City should do things to help businesses survive. He noted how well traffic was managed during the last boat show.

Mayor Seiler suggested this be added to the conference agenda in order to provide direction.

Yaari added that if the private sector builds on the parking property, there will be millions of CRA dollars that can be used on other projects.

#### a. Sebastian Parking Lot Expansion

Commissioner Trantalis indicated a letter was received this week from a developer proposing a real estate swap. He felt the City Manager should first flesh out that proposal. Mayor Seiler agreed this item should be deferred. He was interested in a swap. Vice-Mayor Rogers thought it is viable. It disperses the parking.

Mayor Seiler opened the floor for public comment.

Lester Zalewski, 545 South Fort Lauderdale Beach Boulevard, said the Sebastian parking lot is the last piece of public land on the beach. Once that land is gone it cannot be acquired for the next 100 years. He hoped that if it is swapped, it is traded for other valuable land.

There was no one else wishing to speak.

The City Manager clarified that the proposal will preserve the same amount of public parking being contemplated for Sebastian and provides an additional parking area on the north side of the central beach. Board Member Yaari pointed out that it would be outside of the CRA. Mayor Seiler noted that it is not beneficial to create a parking and traffic issue wherein everyone uses Las Olas and gridlock is created. Parking and traffic should be dispersed. Arriving via Sunrise Boulevard would still mean people could enjoy the beach in the CRA. The proposal will be evaluated. Miami Beach has been successful with development but they have created gridlock. Board Member Yaari agreed that expanding north toward Sunrise Boulevard is valid.

There being no other matters to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 9:58 p.m.