

SEP 3, 2014 CRA-2
PROVIDED BY TONY ABBATE, CHAIR
BEACH REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD

First I would like to remain within the context of the charge to the Beach Redevelopment Board:

- 1) review the revitalization plan and recommend changes or revisions to the plan
- 2) propose actions to be taken to implement the revitalization plan
- 3) cause to be prepared a community redevelopment plan
- 4) proposed amendments to the plan
- 5) make recommendations regarding [actions to be taken by] the exercise of the City Commission's powers as a CRA in order to implement the plan
- 6) receive input from the public and report such information to the City Commission

This project as you know represents over half our entire budget (\$32m) for improvements to the central beach. Given that, the board is focused on three of the main points of the Beach Redevelopment Master Plan:

- to promote pedestrian activity;
 - revitalize business; and
 - create a "world-class" (Ordinance C-88-56) atmosphere for residents and visitors.
- ✦ It is commonly understood, in my reading of a number of documents, that the aquatic center facility, as it relates to the plan, is to be state of the art – or world class –and it would be so designed to avoid obsolescence.

At one time, the project came in at a cost that exceeded the entire budget, and the scope has changed considerably since then and the current program had been approved in March of 2012.

We understand that the design fees are split between the aquatic center component (\$1.56m) and the parking facility component (\$978k). The Developer is not entitled to additional compensation, beyond the design fee, in the event of termination by the City prior to the approval to proceed with construction (Section B.3.4., pg. 16).

The BRB's concerns are related to the expectations of performance for the design phase.

But before I go there, again, our understanding is:

- that we are still roughly at 30% of the design development. As we approach the completion of Construction Documents, specifically at 90% completion,

the City will get an independent cost estimate to verify the final guaranteed maximum price (1st amendment to the agreement, May 7, 2013).

after your approval of the 90% changes to the scope or systems in the design may not change. If you do not approve the final construction documents and price, you have the right to terminate the agreement.

- finally, the contract states construction would take less than 1 year from commencement to completion (Exhibit B. Paragraph II, p.79).

It is very clearly stated in the Scope of Design Services (Exhibit D, paragraph 2) that project elements may be added or deleted prior to the establishment of the GMP and the schedule at final design and permitting, and there have been a number of changes already.

The scope ~~also~~ requires review of the Central Beach Master Plan (of November 2009) and either design in accordance with those requirements, or submit a written request for a variance (Sec. 2, paragraph 2.1. p. 104). ~~That~~ document contains the following:

The Master Plan

-Establish vital pedestrian activity and connections to the beach and the Central Beach area with improved crossings at Seabreeze;

None presented in the scheme.

-Establish pedestrian continuity with a green edge at the intracoastal;

Partially met. No details or design scheme for this presented.

-Improve the pedestrian walk between the site and Las Olas Boulevard

None presented in the scheme, and traffic conflicts with pedestrian connectivity in all directions.

-Public gathering space at the west end of the site;

No details or design scheme for this presented.

-Encourage buildings to create a streetwall on Seabreeze with an active face;

Not met. In fact the ~~streetwall~~ *existing* structure, designed by the internationally acclaimed firm, Arquitectonica, is to be demolished. The area appears to be designated as a grassy lawn.

-Minimize visual impact of structured parking;

Not met. The four story parking structure has no façade treatments, no screening, no green-screen, and is standard type with a heavier structural system to support the weight of swimming pools at the top deck. The garage as designed will have a very negative impact on the peninsula fronting the intracoastal.

-Unlined parking structures are discouraged along waterways and pedestrian zones;

The parking structure is unlined except for the east side, facing an existing swimming pool. 75% of the structure is unlined, and the entire frontage on the waterway is unlined.

-Encourage visual and physical access to the intracoastal;

Due to the design of the parking structure, the lack of active uses on the ground level, and the conflicts with vehicular circulation patterns, both visual and physical access to the intracoastal is not encouraged, it appears to be by design discouraged.

was received input

The BRB ~~heard~~ from the public, and has asked for the following:

-A comparative analysis of the proposed facility with other aquatic facilities to ensure that the facility meet or exceed amenities and criteria such as physical characteristics. *on this subject.*

X -Verification that the design complies with international competition certifications. The scope of the contract requires certification for competition as established by USA Swimming and USA Diving.

has been presented
So far only one letter *^* from USA Diving which states a concern about the design of the diving boards having to do with the distance between them and the need for a usage plan to limit their use. Other concerns are addressed in the letter, including problems with circulation of spectators and competitors and access to the bleachers. The letter also requests dimensional information for the platforms and the dry training facility plans for approval. As far as the BRB is concerned, that letter is not a letter of endorsement or approval of the design.

today We just received a letter from USA Swimming, which raises ~~several~~ *about the distance between warm up pool + competition pool.* concerns ~~among them~~. The only way for a competitive swimmer, say Michael Phelps, to get from the warm up pool to the competition pool is to either:

- a) climb a single run four story staircase while wet – having emerged from the warm up pool; or
- b) go into an air-conditioned lobby and take an elevator, not designed for moisture, to the rooftop level.

The Beach Club, Bd.

Neither condition seems state of the art or world class to ~~me~~, and I am not an expert in swimming. As an architect, both conditions present safety risks and maintenance risks, with the chemical effects of swimming pool water in the elevators, and the slippery conditions of navigating a four story staircase.

The other items the BRB requested include:

- Results of an independent wind study.
- A copy of the marketing and business development plan, including revenue and budget projections, staffing.
- A maintenance plan.
- Information about how the design should provide for anticipated link to DC Alexander park.
- Copy of a study that presents the anticipated utilization of the parking, day and night.

Other questions raised by the public, which we are obligated to communicate to you:

-Are there any outstanding issues, such as deed restrictions on the proposed use of this property?

-Meeting/event hall with catering capacity is important – was this not this part of original scope? Why is this now coming back as an add-on?

-Has the BRB been provided the due diligence on the financial aspects of this scheme?

-Has the BRB been provided the updated drawings for the proposed changes?

-How does this facility compare with Greensboro SC facility, Omaha's Olympic training facility, or Windsor, for example?

expansion project
19.9m (2012)

The BRB is recommending that you withhold further approvals until these concerns are adequately addressed.

Further, ~~As~~ as the chair of the BRB, I recommend that you convene a group representing the users, the city, design experts, and the developer and his design team to resolve any outstanding issues and concerns. This would seem the most prudent next step.

and USA Swimming

This is not an issue of "if we build it they will come." As you can see from the letter from USA Swimming, if we don't adjust course at this early stage, they may not come.



ANTHONY J. ABBATE
NCARB, AIA
President 2014-2015
Rotary Club of Fort Lauderdale 4444

T +1-954-236-1285
C +1-954-328-0973
F +1-954-236-1283
aabbate@fau.edu

Post Office Box 266495
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33326
USA
www.rotaryfortlauderdale.org