

**MINUTES
CITY OF LAKE WORTH
JOINT CITY COMMISSION
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
WORKSHOP MEETING
APRIL 22, 2009**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Clemens on the above date at 5:02 PM in the Compass Community Center, located at 201 North Dixie Highway, Lake Worth, Florida.

I. ROLL CALL:

City Commission:

Present were Mayor Jeff Clemens, Vice Mayor Jo-Ann Golden, and Commissioners Cara Jennings and Suzanne Mulvehill. Commissioner Retha Lowe was absent. Also present were Assistant City Manager Laura Hannah and City Clerk Pamela Lopez.

Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA):

Present were Chairperson Mark Rickards, Vice Chairperson Brendan Lynch, Wes Blackman, Edward Grimm, Shanon Materio (arrived 5:45 PM), Donna Ross, and Wayne Marcinkoski. Also present were Executive Director Joan Oliva and Attorney David Tolce.

II. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Rank priorities

Vice Chairperson Lynch advised that the CRA members had already ranked their priorities and submitted them to Ms. Oliva.

Commissioner Jennings left the meeting at 5:04 PM.

Vice Mayor Golden said there were long and short term priorities along with on-going issues. She said the CRA was already working on the Downtown/Gateway Maintenance goal; therefore, she did not rank it.

Mayor Clemens advised that the County Commission was resistant to the City expanding the Park of Commerce into a CRA district.

Mr. Blackman advised that bringing in revenue generators was ranked high.

Ms. Ross said a downtown grocery store would be opening on April 23, 2009; announced the Grateful Garden business had moved; the Presidente

Supermarket would be opening soon; and the Tropical Market was a great store, but needed outside rehabilitation.

Commissioner Jennings returned to the meeting at 5:10 PM.

Ms. Ross announced that the park on 8th Street was moving forward.

Chairperson Rickards announced the CRA members' top three priorities were: Cultural Redevelopment Program as #1, Downtown/Grocery Store/Retail Attraction as #2, and Transportation Enhancements as #3.

Mayor Clemens asked the Commission to submit their ranking to Ms. Oliva for tabulation.

Commissioner Mulvehill said Lake Worth was one of five cities that had a small downtown designation. She announced grant money was available for a Florida Main Street program due on May 15, 2009. There would be a pre-application program workshop in Tallahassee.

Vice Mayor Golden asked if lights being installed on 10th Avenue North were LED lights.

Chairperson Rickards answered, "no" the lights were not LED. There was a presentation by the Palm Beach Sheriff's Office regarding LED for the Cultural Plaza. Installation of LED lights could be done in phases. He said the downtown area had a better need for LED lighting.

Commissioner Jennings asked if LED lighting could be installed on one side of 10th Avenue North.

Chairperson Rickards answered that it would cost more, but the CRA could look into the light fixtures on 10th Avenue North.

Mayor Clemens said the downtown area would have greater visibility for LED lighting. He asked for an update on the 10th Avenue North project.

Chairperson Rickards provided an update on the 10th Avenue project. He said he did not know when the project would be completed; however, it was on schedule. He offered to provide the Commission with a synopsis on where the project was.

Commissioner Jennings asked about the use of pavers versus stamped concrete issue that was removed from the Commission's agenda. She asked when the issue would be rescheduled.

Ms. Oliva answered that the CRA was still waiting for information from the Department of Transportation (DOT).

Commissioner Jennings said a contract to pay for maintenance of pavers was coming before the Commission.

Ms. Oliva advised that the cost of pavers versus stamped concrete would go before the CRA. The Commission would need a maintenance agreement with the DOT.

Commissioner Jennings recommended using the least expensive method because the City had to reduce its maintenance costs. Stamped concrete should be less expensive.

Ms. Oliva announced the results of the combined CRA and Commission's ranking as follow:

1. Cultural Redevelopment Program
2. Downtown Grocery Store/Retail Attraction
3. Transportation Enhancements
4. Entrepreneurial Development/Job Creation
5. Transportation Oriented Development Implementation (TCRPC Plan)
6. Parks/Gardens
7. Corridor improvements (TCRPC Plan)
8. West Downtown Design Plan (TCRPC Plan)
9. Image/Marketing/Communications
10. Expanding the CRA boundaries.

Vice Mayor Golden said she did not rank ongoing projects such as Downtown/Gateway Maintenance.

Mark Marone, CRA staff, said he would work with the CRA and banks to get critical mass properties. He would be looking at properties owned by other entities, private investors, and banks to find critical mass. He said, in order to make a difference in the community, 30% of the properties were needed. He advised that there were many ways to acquire properties.

Commissioner Mulvehill asked if critical mass was used as the Cultural Redevelopment Program.

Mr. Marone answered that there was a need to acquire critical mass properties in a way that worked. He said he needed to gather more facts before he could move forward with critical mass properties.

Mayor Clemens suggested the CRA provide quarterly updates to the

Commission.

Mr. Grimm asked the Commission to look into expanding the CRA boundaries. He asked who was responsible for the expansion of the CRA's boundaries because there was a problem with the lines.

Chairperson Rickard explained that the CRA had an issue on 10th Avenue North west of "A" Street being in the CRA district. He said it was hard to determine where the boundaries were in some areas. It may behoove the City to get a cleaner survey of the CRA area. Maybe some neighborhoods should not be in the CRA, while the Park of Commerce could benefit from the CRA. He asked for the following: 1) that the existing description of the CRA area be cleaned up; 2) have Commissioners discuss what they wanted accomplished in the Park of Commerce; and 3) there were some "strangeness" with neighborhood and parks left out of the CRA district.

Commissioner Mulvehill said she did not rank Entrepreneurial Development/Job Creation high because there were other agencies that could work on the issues. She said she wanted to correlate the Cultural Redevelopment Program with an Art Incubator so not to lose the momentum to have an infrastructure or training center. She advised that the County used to fund incubators, but they were now typically funded by local and county agencies.

Commissioner Jennings said she ranked Entrepreneurial Development/Job Creation as #10 because it was important and could fight blight, which was a top priority for her. She wanted to focus on creating green jobs and working with the Palm Beach Community College or Resource Center. There was a need to attract solar jobs and encourage residents to install solar panels. She said she was doing research on attracting solar industry and would have someone speak about the issue on the May 5, 2009, Commission meeting.

Mayor Clemens said he was not a fan of expanding the CRA borders or removing areas from the CRA district. It was the Commissioner's responsibility to deal with the borders, but they would look for advice from the CRA. He asked for an explanation on the process to change the CRA's district.

Shanon Materio arrived at 5:45 PM.

Vice Mayor Golden said neighborhoods would love to receive residential rehabilitation grants. The burden was on the CRA to help communities.

Commissioner Mulvehill said the City needed to find a way to purchase a trolley since Transportation Enhancements ranked #3. An appropriate fee needed to be charged to make the trolley self sufficient.

Mayor Clemens replied that he would push the Metropolitan Planning Organization to get a trolley. The County's lobbyist was trying to help the City get a trolley.

Mr. Marcinkoski said expanding the CRA district was important because Bryant Park was outside their district. He said Ft. Lauderdale was not having their annual Sea and Air show this year. Getting that event to Lake Worth's beach would have been a great opportunity; however, the beach area was outside the CRA's district. The CRA could not promote events at Bryant Park because it was not in their district.

Vice Chairperson Lynch said the CRA's district needed to be expanded, based on areas that could bring in revenue. Afterwards, the district could be expanded to include parks. It was frustrating not being able to develop the Park of Commerce because there was no money for infrastructure to attract businesses.

Ms. Materio said she understood the reason to expand the CRA district. The CRA could employ a person to work through the Greater Lake Worth Chamber of Commerce to promote events.

Chairperson Rickards said he was surprised that Parks/Gardens ranked #6 because it did not generate revenue.

Vice Mayor Golden supported more parks in the CRA district because it had a long term benefit.

Commissioner Jennings said the Community Services Department was working on accessing vacant lots. There were lots that did not meet the requirement for development as tot lots. If the golf course was eliminated from the Comprehensive Plan's Open Space calculation, the City may not meet the open space requirements based on population.

Mr. Blackman asked about internal improvements in the Building Department and with plan review. Many contractors did not want to work in Lake Worth because of the process. He asked if there was anything the CRA could do to improve service.

Mayor Clemens said he hoped the Building Department would be looked at when the new City Manager started. The Commission needed to address the Building Department in order to attract new businesses because it hurt the City's image. The issue may need to be discussed at a workshop meeting.

Vice Chairperson Lynch replied that residents were forced into adverse

selections because contractors would not work in Lake Worth. Building Departments in cities within driving distance had a formula that worked. He said he did not understand why the City could not use their formula. The City needed other cities' models to discuss during a workshop meeting.

Chairperson Rickards said many of the CRA's terms were expiring soon, which may cause a disconnect because their terms were expiring at the same time.

Ms. Materio asked Attorney Tolce to look into why the terms were not staggered. She asked why she had a limited amount of time to serve. She said she was selected to serve for an unexpired term, but did not know why she was not appointed for four years.

Mr. Marcinkoski said there was nothing to prevent the CRA members from being reappointed.

Mayor Clemens said it was incumbent on staff to find an answer to why the CRA members' terms were not staggered. If six of the seven seats were expiring at the same time, then the issue needed to be looked into.

Attorney Tolce said Florida Statutes Chapter 163 governed the appointment of members, which were staggered positions. He would discuss with the City Clerk research needed to recreate the history of the members' terms to find a reasonable conclusion on why their terms were no longer staggered. He offered to work with the City Clerk in order to continue staggered terms as intended by the Florida Statutes.

Mr. Marcinkoski said the point of non-staggered terms was prior to six years ago.

Mr. Blackman said the members had a good working relationship. He encouraged the Commission to reappoint as many members as possible.

Commissioner Mulvehill suggested scheduling a workshop meeting in June to discuss the Building Department. She suggested an agenda item be prepared on what the Commission wanted to discuss at the workshop meeting so that staff would be prepared.

Vice Chairperson Lynch said the Delray Beach Building Department offered to help Lake Worth.

Chairperson Rickards replied that one of the goals at the workshop meeting could be reliability and knowing that permits would be processed within a reasonable amount of time.

Mr. Grimms said he hoped people would consider Lake Worth because of its transportation program. He hoped the Commission would approve the Transportation Oriented Development at their next meeting.

Commissioner Jennings said she thought the Downtown Grocery Store/Retail Attraction goal meant Dixie Highway. She preferred Dixie Highway Retail Attraction over the development of a grocery store. There were a lot of vacancies on Dixie Highway that needed to be focused on. She asked about a bike plan because she provided Ms. Oliva with a lot of feedback. There was a need for more bike path connectivity on the east/west route.

Chairperson Rickards replied that the CRA had a lot of discussion regarding the draft bike plan. A lot of their comments would be presented to the Commission. He said there was a need to make sure the bike paths connected to 10th Avenue North. He commented that no one was interested in development on Dixie Highway and there was discussion about what could be done on there. He said a grocery store on Dixie Highway could start the thrust needed to get more retail back on the highway.

Ms. Materio said the grocery store was an important component to making Dixie Highway work. She said there were vacant businesses on Dixie Highway for 16 years. She announced a pocket park south of 10th Avenue North would be developed soon. The CRA wanted to do many little projects. The Building Department's permit process was slow and difficult.

Ms. Ross said she wanted to turn the north side of the golf course into a bike course and the south side into a nature area.

Commissioner Jennings asked the CRA to concentrate on an area abutting Dixie Highway because there were many thriving businesses.

Mr. Grimm said he would be pleased to have the bike path plan because of its accessibility. The east/west corridor from Palm Beach Community College east to the beach was his second priority after 10th Avenue North.

Mr. Blackman advised that the CRA discussed "branding" Lake Worth to make it unique. The area was a "beach town," and the City should have special signage on A-1-A.

Mayor Clemens announced it was time for public comment.

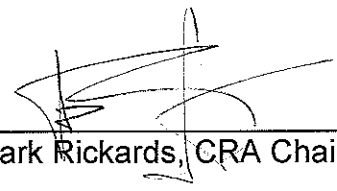
Annabeth Karson thanked the Commission for providing microphones for the meeting. She suggested using foreclosure and Code Compliance funds to create a community land trust for affordable housing. She suggested foreclosed properties be put into the land trust and offered as low income

housing. She also suggested using residential rehabilitation grant money for low income housing. The CRA could apply for the Main Street grant program to fund rehabilitation. She said the deadline for submitting a grant application was July 31, 2009.

Mayor Clemens thanked the CRA members, on behalf of the Commission, for their hard work.

III. ADJOURNMENT:

Consensus: To adjourn the meeting at 6:30 PM.



Mark Rickards, CRA Chair

ATTEST:


Emilia Theodossakos

Minutes Approved: June 16, 2009 by City Commission

A digital audio recording of this meeting will be available in the Office of the City Clerk.