

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
CHARLOTTE HARBOR
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Thursday, March 26, 2009 – 1:00 p.m.
Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center – Myakka Room A
75 Taylor Street, Punta Gorda, FL 33950

Members Present

James Herston, *Chairman*
Michael Haymans, *Vice Chairman*
Grace Amodeo, *Secretary*
Nathaniel Cooley
Evelyn Loeffler
David Schmidt
Charlotte Ventola

Members Absent

Staff Present

Commissioner Richard Loftus
Debrah Forester, Redevelopment Manager
Seann Smith, Planner II
Kathy M. Knee, Recorder

Guests

Peter Van Buskirk, Kimley-Horn
Ashley Miele, Kimley-Horn
Tanya Fitch, Parks & Recreation
Candace Wehbe
Jenny Miller

I. Call to Order

Chairman Herston called the March 26, 2009 meeting of the Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee to order at 1:03 p.m. The meeting was held in Myakka Room A of the Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center, 75 Taylor Street, Punta Gorda.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Herston led the members and the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Roll Call/Determination of Quorum

Roll call was taken; Secretary Grace Amodeo confirmed a quorum was present.

IV. Additions/Deletions to Agenda - None.

V. Approval of Minutes

Grace Amodeo mentioned that the January 22, 2009 Minutes should be corrected at Page 2, Bullet 5 to read – Nathaniel Cooley asked FDOT representative “if”... **A motion was presented by Grace Amodeo and seconded by Michael Haymans to approve the Minutes of the January 22, 2009 Regular Meeting as corrected. Motion carried unanimously.**

Evelyn Loeffler mentioned that the February 23, 2009 Minutes should be corrected at Page 1, the last guest’s name should be shown as: Jennifer Bettécourt. **A motion was presented by Michael Haymans and seconded by Grace Amodeo to approve the Minutes of the February 23, 2009 Special Meeting as corrected. Motion carried unanimously.**

VI. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Loftus had no comments at this time.

VII. Public Comments – None.

VIII. Development Review Report

Chairman Herston noted that there is a lot going on in Charlotte Harbor: construction is underway at the CVS, the YMCA, and the building owned by Dr. Hernandez. Mr. Herston also mentioned that the old Fireworks building has been rented.

IX. Old Business

Charlotte Harbor Pedestrian Promenade Project Update - Peter VanBuskirk of Kimley Horn, reported that since the contract was approved the project has been progressing. The surveyor has collected data, presented his drawings and jurisdictional areas have been flagged. Mr. VanBuskirk mentioned there were a few changes made to the existing concepts. One challenge is under-the-bridge clearance – the promenade must be at least 4.5 feet above mean sea level to remain out of the water during storm events, except hurricane conditions. A nautical theme was suggested using the tip of the land east of the northbound US41 lane as a boat deck with an observation area, a water taxi dock, fishing pier and walkways to small beach areas. The promenade will have a halfway point for easy access. Melbourne has a few minor obstacles for walkway connection but nothing that cannot be overcome.

Mr. VanBuskirk asked the Committee to confirm by consensus that Kimley Horn is moving in the right direction with design layout and theme. Debrah Forester reminded the Committee that on April 23 there will be Community Meeting for citizen input.

Discussion followed which included the following points:

- Width of walkway - with handrails on both sides could be a minimum 8' but optimally 12' for 2 way traffic; there would be observation stations for educational opportunities.
- Walkway material – several materials could be used but a recycled plastic product is suggested.
- Aquatic Preserve boundaries should be determined as this could create problematic permitting issues. Pre-application meetings are being set up by Kimley Horn.
- Water taxi a great idea but power lines may be too close for proposed location. Consider switching location of water taxi with fishing pier.
- Crosswalk at car access point should be signed and well lighted.
- ADA Accessibility. Sand walkway under the bridge option may be a problem with ADA standards as well as for walkers dressed up for dinner.
- Benches along promenade.
- Restroom facilities – Phase 2.
- Use of Oriental or xeriscape landscaping to keep maintenance costs low.
- Requirement for right turn lane for parking lot. Kimley Horn has not yet met with FDOT but it may not be required.
- Linear retention system.
- Low pressure system at gas station.
- Parking spaces – between every 15 parking spaces a 10 foot spacer is needed.
- Security under the bridge.

A motion was presented by Michael Haymans and seconded by Nat Cooley to advise Kimley Horn that they are moving in the right direction with regard to their current promenade concept with nautical theme, boat taxi, fishing pier, parking and connectivity to mega sidewalk with the following conditions: determine aquatic preserve boundaries; consider restrooms, quality of cement work and linear storm water management area. Motion carried unanimously. Kimley Horn will update their conceptual drawings for the Community Meeting on April 23.

Headley Property – In Nicole Dozier's absence, Seann Smith reported that Ms. Dozier sent a letter to Warren Ross, Mr. Headley's attorney, stating that an administrative appeal was not available because a use cannot be given back once it is gone but the applicant could try to have the property rezoned to allow use. Mr. Smith mentioned that Ms. Dozier will speak to the Committee should they wish to hear her thoughts. Michael Haymans stated he thinks Ms. Dozier is misinterpreting the code and Headley should appeal. Mr. Haymans added the both he and Assistant County Attorney Derek Rooney agreed the zoning officials have the ability to address this issue and the appeal was justified. Chairman Herston stated that an article in the Terra Firm Newsletter, which was a part of the meeting packet, confirms the need for jobs and commercial and industrial development. Michael Haymans reminded staff that the BCC's goal is to be business friendly.

Target Area Land Use Review - Debrah Forester confirmed that a Special Workshop to discuss the target area as defined by the map with existing comprehensive plan and zoning regulations will be held on April 16, 2009 at 10:30 a.m. at the Pineapple Room, 4385 Guard Street, Charlotte Harbor. The Committee will discuss neighborhood land use and characteristics as well as take a tour of the neighborhood. This meeting will be for discussion and viewing purposes only; no action will be taken. Ms. Forester will try to obtain an aerial image of the area and arrange the transportation for the neighborhood tour.

Bayshore Park Activities - Debrah Forester noted that the purchase of popcorn supplies and security for the Movies Under Stars is \$150, much less than originally expected. Tanya Fitch reported on Bayshore Park reservations and upcoming events. Ms. Fitch mentioned she has heard several complaints about the lack of parking around the park and a few suggestions for more shops/restaurants within walking distance of the park.

Discussion followed regarding Bayshore Park. Comments included:

- This may be the right time to purchase property across from the park for additional parking. The budget should be reviewed and grants researched.
- Stormwater management can be addressed when parking areas are reviewed.
- Seann Smith cautioned that parking close to water could subject it to auto emitting oils and gas. Mr. Smith mentioned a new report stating area waters have an elevated bacteria level.
- New restrooms need to be constructed to meet ADA requirements.
- 4th of July pavilion rentals vs. open the whole park to the public.

Upcoming Events:

- May 7, 8 and 9 - Frontier Days Historic Society event at Bayshore Park.
- May 9 - Steve Fest (Steve Blackwell): 2nd Annual Folk Fest, well-known Florida musicians.
- June 6, 10 a.m. – Noon: Wading Series/Nature Talks with Dave Mathison.
- June 27 - Harbor Jam, music in the park and Veterans car club exhibit. This event will be held on the 4th Saturday of each month.
- July 4, 9 a.m. Freedom Swim.
- September 19, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Bayshore Arts & Crafts Festival juried event, some food vendors.
- December 5, Holiday Fest. Christmas, Hanukka and Kwanzaa will all be included in the event.

Ms. Fitch asked for seed money to help with some of the events. Consensus of the Committee was that the CRA should not be the sole source of funding; the community needs to participate. Sponsorship opportunities should be offered. Ms. Fitch mentioned that at Christmas time wreaths will be available for sponsors to decorate and display on the light posts.

X. New Business

2009 Work Plan Implementation- Status Report – A copy of the 2009 Work Plan Status Report was distributed with the meeting packet. Debrah Forester reviewed the report and mentioned she has added an update column to show status of each item. Ms. Forester advised that the bridge banners would be coming down tonight.

David Schmidt reported the welcome sign lights are still not right. Mr. Schmidt suggested that new lights be placed at the base of sign to shine on the words. Right now the spotlight is on the pillars.

Ms. Forester noted that the website is being revamped by the Public Information Office. She will talk with the County Administrator to obtain permission to update the logo. It was suggested that a link be included on the webpage for Bayshore Park Events.

Michael Haymans asked Debrah Forester to prepare a budget for seed money using a portion of the programming dollars. Mr. Haymans would like parameters set for specific items, i.e. movies, sound system, etc.

Development of Work Plan for 2010-2015 – Debrah Forester noted that staff is trying to get a handle on tax increments for next year by working with the reduction in tax values and the addition of new construction. Ms. Forester explained that it is time to look at a long range work plan and budgeting. If tax increment information is received, this item will be on the Agenda for May's regular meeting.

2008 DRAFT Annual Report – A draft copy of the 2008 Annual Report was included in the meeting packet. Debrah Forester asked if there were any suggested changes; there was not. Ms. Forester advised that the 2008 Annual Report will be available for public review on March 31 as required by statute. It will also be posted online.

XI. Correspondence/Communications

- E-mail from Candace Wehbe – Subject: Developers Input Charlotte Harbor – this e-mail was inadvertently omitted from the meeting packets that were e-mailed to Committee members; staff will resend. Ms Wehbe reviewed her message for the Committee. Discussion followed.
- Charlotte Harbor CRA Watershed Management Program (L486) Work Order #3 Constituent Sources and WQ by Tributary. Jim Herston noted that there are several projects not included and will contact Mr. Fries to update. Project is scheduled to be complete in April. Debrah Forester will extend an invitation to the May meeting.
- Terra Firma Newsletter – February 2009 central garden program / master gardener program free education program to benefit community.
- Minutes from Promenade Kick-off Meeting of February 18, 2009. Debrah Forester will meet with Kimley Horn once a month and will distribute Minutes of each meeting to the Committee
- Minutes from Punta Gorda CRA meetings of February 18, February 4, and March 4, 2009.

XII. Public Comments

Jenny Miller asked about the pavilion fees. Ms. Miller was disappointed that she could not address Ms. Fitch directly (Tanya Fitch left meeting after her presentation) but she suggested that Ms. Fitch review schedules for other area events so the events at Bayshore Park could piggy back with them; unique events are also needed. Ms. Miller encouraged the Committee to make the 4th of July a community event and invite local restaurants to participate.

Candace Wehbe recommended a stronger programming approach and asked the Committee to consider having Ms. Fitch report to Debrah Forester for a more direct link. (Ms. Fitch's salary is divided equally between the CRA and Parks and Recreation.) Ms. Wehbe mentioned that she would be out of town for the April 23 meeting but wanted to commend the Sheriff's Department for the creation of the community patrol on bicycles; a fantastic service making a huge difference.

XIII. Staff Comments

Debrah Forester reported on the following:

- David Milligan has advised the light was ordered for Chester Roberts Park and the cost is still under budgeted amount of \$4,500.
- Pier lights have been received. The Parks and Recreation Department staff will be able to do the necessary painting and mounting in house, keeping this expense well below the budgeted amount. Installation will be complete by the June 1/July 1 deadlines.
- The Bayshore Park Kiosk has been installed and is operational. Tanya Finch posts flyers for upcoming events.
- A sign will be posted at Bayshore Park advertising the Community Meeting scheduled for April 23, 2009. Although there will be a mailing to property owners, a sign in the park will get the word out to park users.
- Final estimate from Public Works for the Hands Across the Harbor Event was about \$3500. With contributions from both the Charlotte Harbor CRA and the Punta Gorda CRA of \$2,000 each, the event broke even.

Seann Smith reported the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council is part of a national movement addressing climate change, environmental issues and promoting job growth. Punta Gorda has been designated an area of interest.

XIV. Attorney Comments - Attorney Derek Rooney was not present.

Member Comments

Nat Cooley reported that black batting is starting to come up in a sandy area near the water and rocks at Bayshore Park. Debrah Forester will contact David Milligan of the Parks and Recreation Department.

XVI. Next Meeting Date

The next regular meeting of the Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee will be held on **Thursday, April 23, 2009 at 10 a.m. in Room 119 of the Charlotte County Administration Center.**

XVII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting **ADJOURNED** at 4:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy M. Knee, Recorder

/kmk

Approved: _____ 04/23/09