

**MINUTES**  
REGULAR MEETING  
CHARLOTTE HARBOR  
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
**Thursday, May 28, 2009 – 10:00 a.m.**  
County Administration Building – Room 119  
18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte, FL 33948

*(These minutes are not official until they have been approved by the Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee.)*

**Members Present**

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

**Staff Present**

Commissioner Richard Loftus  
Debrah Forester, Redevelopment Manager  
Seann Smith, Planner II  
Kathy M. Knee, Recorder  
Joanne Vernon, Public Works  
Frank Desquin, Property Appraiser  
Joanne Larson, Parks & Recreation

**Members Absent**

**Guests**

Peter VanBuskirk, Kimley Horn; Jerry Dupper;  
Cassandra Wooden; Cheryl Wynn

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**I. Call to Order**

Chairman Herston called the May 28, 2009 meeting of the Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee to order at 10:00 a.m. in Room 119 of the Charlotte County Administration Building.

**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**

Jim Herston noted there were two handouts with revisions: 1) Special Meeting Minutes of May 8; first page updated to remove Derek Rooney's name from Staff Present listing because he was not at the meeting; and 2) CIP Page 2 of Attachment 4 was updated.

**V. Approval of Minutes**

**A motion was presented by Grace Amodeo and seconded by Nat Cooley to approve the Minutes of the April 23, 2009 Regular Meeting of the Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee as written. Motion carried unanimously.**

Evelyn Loeffler noted a typo in the Minutes of the May 8 Special Meeting - at Page 2, next to the last paragraph, next to the last sentence should read: Debrah's position not Debrah's petition. **A motion was presented by Grace Amodeo and seconded by David Schmidt to approve the Minutes of the May 8, 2009 Special Meeting of the Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee as revised and corrected. Motion carried unanimously.**

**VI. Commissioner Comments - Commissioner Loftus had no comments.**

**VII. Public Comments – None.**

**VIII. Development Review Report**

Chairman Herston mentioned there were several ongoing projects: CVS, a vet clinic and doctors office.

## **IX. Old Business**

Charlotte Harbor CRA Watershed Management Program Update – Joanne Vernon, Charlotte County Stormwater, advised there have been some recent developments in the water management plan for the Charlotte Harbor CRA. Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) has revised their requirements and the County's consultant will need to revise their model to meet the new requirements. Staff will present an Agreement to the BCC for the approval of a one year extension to implement the BMPs and a request for additional funding for the design and construction of the recommended BMPs. The County had applied for a grant for the design and construction of the BMPs and if this extension is not put in the form of an Agreement the grant funding may be lost. Ms. Vernon confirmed there would be no additional cost to County or the Charlotte Harbor CRA.

Charlotte Ventola asked for an explanation of the difference between the CIP sheet and the CRA Work Plan. Debrah Forester noted that monies funded in previous years are not shown on the Work Plan. Ms. Forest will update the Work Plan to include all funding since 2004.

Property Appraiser, Frank Desquin was invited to speak about what triggers an increase in property values. Mr. Desquin explained the property appraising process and how evaluation is determined when maintenance is done; his comments included:

- General repairs and painting do not usually increase property values.
- Major remodeling, i.e. a kitchen or bath, or the rewiring of electric, increase assessed value.
- Structural changes, i.e. adding windows, doors or changing the style of roof, could change the class rating.
- Real estate appraising takes into consideration Actual Age and Effective Age. Actual Age refers back to the year structure was built; Effective Age reflects the age/condition due to improvements/renovations.
- If building code requires additional improvements, such as a firewall, it could add to the appraised value.

Evelyn Loeffler noted that last month the Committee talked about offering incentives to CRA property owners who paint and landscape their property in an effort to tidy up the neighborhood. Ms. Loeffler further explained that this discussion led to questions about whether these types of improvements would increase the taxable values of the properties. Mr. Desquin responded that everything else being equal painting, landscaping and putting up a picket fence would not increase the value. However once the whole neighborhood looks good, it becomes a more desirable area; this may trigger supply and demand and the market could increase price.

Mr. Desquin explained the Property Appraiser's evaluation model starts with the cost approach, which is to value the land as if vacant, and then add the replacement cost new, less depreciation of all the structures on the parcel. This estimated value by cost approach is then compared to sales in the neighborhood which tells you if the cost approach is doing a good job of valuing or if adjustments are necessary to bring it to market value.

When asked if special consideration could be given to blighted areas such as Charlotte Harbor, Mr. Desquin answered no, the Appraiser's Office must go by market values but added that the CRA has the power to pay a portion of property taxes as an incentive to property owners who meet criteria the CRA sets.

Mr. Desquin mentioned the stages of a neighborhood are new, stabilized, run-down and renovated. Taxes are driven by the millage rate. When values go up it's possible that taxes can go down and when value goes down it's possible that taxes can go up. If your property has both your residence and business you are able to claim homestead on the residence portion.

Jim Herston thanked Mr. Desquin for answering the Committee's questions. Mr. Herston had to leave the meeting and turned the gavel over to Vice Chair, Michael Haymans.

CRA Disaster Resistance Planning and Recovery Program Grant Follow-up - Mr. Utlely did not come to the meeting today because after working with a few other CRAs it became apparent that tax increment dollars could not be used to match grant funds that would benefit areas outside the CRA. If the County as a whole supports this program, the Committee will be asked for a letter of support at that time. Although the project, hardening structures for disaster resistance, would be done on a county basis, it would still benefit the CRA.

Gateway Project Harbor Walk Conceptual Plan & Community Workshop Input - Peter VanBuskirk, Kimley Horn, talked about the input received at the Community Meeting. Public participation was very good. Suggestions included: swap fishing dock and water taxi dock; public docking; restroom facilities needed; old Florida look should be incorporated.

Mr. VanBuskirk asked for the Committee's input regarding what they thought should be included in Phase 1 so the project could move from 30% of design to 60%. Charlotte Ventola questioned whether there is enough money to support the project and asked if permits were discussed with FDOT. Mr. VanBuskirk, Michael Haymans and Debrah Forester confirmed that meetings have been held with FDOT regarding permitting.

Discussion followed regarding Phase 1 and included:

- Sail vs. metal roof – 4 members prefer a combination of materials; 2 prefer metal.
- Old Florida theme – 4 members prefer a mixed design; 2 prefer Old Florida theme.
- Fishing Pier/Water Taxi – all members support the flip flop of the fishing pier and water taxi.
- Restrooms – all members support restroom being positioned nearer the southern end of the landing as opposed to near the Melbourne area.

Consensus for Phase 1 components in order of importance:

- Basic Promenade with the reconstruction of seawall.
- Sidewalk and parking (do less parking if running out of money).
- Restroom.
- Water Taxi/Boat landing.
- If restroom and water taxi/boat landing cannot both be done, the Committee needs to be readdressed.
- Deck.
- Covered areas.

Debrah Forester summarized: Kimley Horn will make revisions to the concept plan and bring it back to the Committee for final approval. The plan will then go before the BCC for approval to move forward with plan.

Bayshore Live Oak Park Events – A copy of the revised Programming Draft Budget, labeled Attachment 1, was distributed to the Committee. Debrah Forester asked the Committee if they recommend funding for events held at Bayshore Park and said the budget approval would not commit but would allow the Committee to fund projects such as the Holiday Fest, movies, summer concert series and something on July 4, 2010, such as entertainment, stage or floating dock for boater access. Coordinator will bring her ideas and request for funds prior to issuance of funds. Joanne Larson will book Bayshore Park for July 4, 2010 for activities not to compete with Punta Gorda but to have available alternatives for community enjoyment. Discussion followed.

**A motion was presented by Nat Cooley and seconded by Grace Amodeo to approve the programming budget with a revision to reduce 4<sup>th</sup> of July funding from \$2,500 to \$500. Motion carried unanimously.**

Gateway Phase I Annual Maintenance – Debrah Forester reported that as required by terms of FDOT grant \$50,000 was set aside for maintenance. The landscaping warranty is up and Public Works, after RFP process, has contracted for annual landscaping services, \$14,516. Additional expenses will include \$6,000 for water and about \$1,200 for electrical costs. New lights installed on welcome sign at no additional cost. Budget for maintenance is estimated to be \$22,516 which will carry thru to May, 2011. Michael Haymans explained that trimming is harmful to sable palms and recommended that Public Works be asked to request a maintenance bid next year which would not include sable palm trimming.

Lock, Hide, Take Signage for Parks - A copy of the sign, labeled Attachment 2, was distributed to the Committee. After a brief discussion, the consensus of the Committee was the signs are not necessary. Michael Haymans mentioned the no trespassing signs and sidewalk work being done by the old gas station site and suggested that this property should be obtained.

Neighborhood Business District – As a follow-up to May 8 meeting, Debrah Forester did a visual survey of properties on north side of Seneca and noted that if zoning change were considered the impact to the south side must be considered. Discussion followed regarding NBR zoning on one side of the road vs. both sides. Committee would like a map showing zoning lines more clearly.

2009 Work Plan Status Report - A copy of the Status Report, labeled Attachment 3, was distributed to the Committee. Debrah Forester will update report to include 2004-2009 for an overall view of all projects.

**X. New Business**

CIP Project Updates – A copy of the CIP Project Updates, labeled Attachment 4, was distributed to the Committee. Debrah Forester stated that in order to get stimulus money, the design stage of a project must be completed. Ms. Forester asked for direction on creating a new CIP project for a reuse line down Melbourne which CCU estimates would cost \$1.2M; funding can be requested by grant or loan thru DEP. Ms. Forester also reported on a discussion she had with Budget staff and asked if and how much the Committee would you like to add to Gateway project; she suggested \$200,000 for 2010. After a brief discussion the Committee requested a special meeting be scheduled to discuss CIP projects in early June.

FDOT Enhancement Grant Priority List – A copy of the MPO correspondence, labeled Attachment 5, was distributed to the Committee. Debrah Forester reported her attendance at the Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting and noted that committee has made a recommendation that the U.S. pedestrian underpass project be ranked as number one for a regional project making it eligible for \$1.2M from FDOT in 2014-115. Once in FDOT's work plan, the funds can be advanced from tax increment dollars and reimbursed in 2014-15. Ms. Forester asked that the Chairman attend the August MPO meeting and give support to this MPO recommendation. A good PR campaign is needed for both community support and that of Sarasota and Manatee counties. \$600,000 matched dollars would be available at least every other year. FDOT typically supports landscaping and sidewalk projects. Vice Chair Haymans asked if the Committee supports this MPO effort and received total agreement. Mr. Haymans requested staff to check with Mr. Herston on his availability to attend the MPO meeting. If Mr. Herston is unavailable, Mr. Haymans might be able to go.

Design Services/Paint Your Heart Out – This item tabled until the CIP special meeting.

Utility Connection Grant Program - This item was tabled until the CIP special meeting.

**XI. Correspondence/Communications** - The following items were distributed for informational purposes:

- a. Charlotte Harbor CRA Pedestrian Promenade Progress Meeting #2 – April 9, 2009
- b. Bayshore Live Oak Park Monthly Project Update April 23, 2009
- c. Minutes from Punta Gorda CRA meetings of May 6, 2009 – It was agreed that hard copies of status report will no longer be forwarded to those receiving packets by mail.
- d. Letter from Valerie Rose dated May 4, 2009
- e. E-mail from Gene Pawlowski dated May 14, 2009

**XII. Public Comments**

Jerry Dupper commented that funds currently available only to NBR zoned properties should also be available to more multi-family and commercial business property owners who are not in NBR zoning to assist in fixing up properties. Mr. Dupper noted a breakwater or floating dock may be needed to safely permit ferry boat access during winter months when winds blow hard out of northeast. A brief discussion followed; Mr. Haymans suggested Mr. Dupper share his concerns with Peter VanBuskirk. Mr. Dupper expressed his support of the development of vacant lots by improving the outside of existing residences; he is more concerned about the decline in the value of his property than in a tax increase.

Cassandra Wooden read and presented the petition which has been circulating around the Seneca to Bayshore area of Charlotte Harbor to the Committee. The petition supports leaving the current plan in tack without modification. Ms. Wooden also gave her support for the sail roof at the promenade.

Cheryl Wynn pointed out that although property used as residential does not qualify for grant funds, NBR zoned property owners are not eligible for sewerage connection fees and residential property owners are.

**XIII. Staff Comments** – Debrah Forester reported that with the use of CDBG funds from the Housing Department staff worked with a property owner of an abandoned structure on Ganyard Street to get a house demolished. Once the property is sold the property owner will reimburse the monies for demolition.

**XIV. Member Comments**

Evelyn Loeffler requested that when letters are received, they should be addressed so people know they were received and read. Ms. Loeffler noted that an e-mail was received from Valerie Rose who had concerns about changing zoning from Residential to Commercial Tourist; creating retention ponds may attract alligators; overflow parking not a good use of waterfront property and some homes in Charlotte Harbor have too many occupants. Ms. Rose was in the audience and Ms. Loeffler suggested she write or call Code Compliance regarding homes with too many people.

David Schmidt stated that some of the sidewalks being construction along US 41 are very close to the street. Ms. Forester noted that the \$95,000 the CRA is putting toward the sidewalk project will allow the sidewalks in Charlotte Harbor to meander and keep them away from the roadway. There are a few areas in Charlotte Harbor where the right-of-way restricts the meandering a bit. Mr. Schmidt also asked if the Committee could use the computers now located at their seats on the dais; staff will look into it. Mr. Schmidt will not be at the next meeting of the Committee.

Evelyn Loeffler thanked Commissioner Loftus for voting to keep the pool at the Port Charlotte Beach complex.

Debrah Forester mentioned that the Redevelopment Management position will again be discussed at the budget hearing tomorrow.

**XVI. Next Meeting Date**

The next regular meeting of the Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee will be held on **Thursday, June 25, 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 1:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy M. Knee, Recorder

/kmk

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_