

CORRECTED MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
CHARLOTTE HARBOR
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Thursday, August 27, 2009 – 10:00 a.m.
County Administration Building – Room 119
18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte, FL 33948

Members Present

James Herston, *Chairman*
Grace Amodeo, *Secretary*
Nathaniel Cooley
Evelyn Loeffler
David Schmidt

Staff Present

Commissioner Richard Loftus
Derek Rooney, Assistant County Attorney
Debrah Forester, Redevelopment Manager
Jeff Ruggieri, Growth Management Director
Seann Smith, Planner II
Kathy M. Knee, Recorder

Members Absent

Michael Haymans, *Vice Chairman*
Charlotte Ventola

Guests

Dennis Murphy, Punta Gorda Growth Management
Cheryl Wynn, Property Owner
Harry Thomas, Property Owner

I. Call to Order

Chairman Herston called the August 27, 2009 meeting of the Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee to order at 10:03 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 – None.

V. Approval of Minutes

Grace Amodeo requested that Item VI be revised to indicate that comments made by Jenny Miller include mention that Ms. Miller specified that one of the reasons she closed her business was because she was unable to serve refreshments, which would have helped bring more people into her shop. Ms. Amodeo stated that the Committee is trying to create an artist's community, which Ms. Miller was promoting, but because the land owner has not hooked up to sewer, the tenant left. Ms. Amodeo questioned why the Committee is fighting for NBR if the land owners are not willing to hook up to sewer. Some discussion followed concerning hook up to the sewer.

Ms. Amodeo noted that the Committee requested that the Architectural Design Guidelines Standards Resolution be revised and this item is not on the Agenda. Debrah Forester mentioned that the Committee did request to change the resolution to remove the square footage requirement and it was mistakenly omitted from the Agenda. Ms. Forester added that she had a copy of the document if the Committee would like to discuss it and give direction later in the meeting. Mr. Herston asked that Debrah have copies of the resolution distributed and this item could then be discussed at today's meeting under Old Business.

Ms. Amodeo noted that Ms. Forester was to schedule a meeting with FPL regarding Charlotte Harbor being a green community. Ms. Forester advised that she met with FPL regarding the energy grant and will give an update at the Staff Comments portion of this meeting.

A motion was presented by Grace Amodeo and seconded by David Schmidt to approve the Minutes of the July 23, 2009 Regular Meeting of the Charlotte Harbor

Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee as corrected to include lack of sewer hook up as an additional reason for Ms. Miller closing her business. Motion carried unanimously.

VI. Commissioner Comments - Commissioner Loftus had no comments at this time.

VII. Public Comments – Cheryl Wynn, owner of the Pineapple Room, advised that there was more than sewer hookup involved to get the internet café and specialty shop permitted; the Health Department gets involved and has various requirements. Ms. Wynn advised that both she and Ms. Miller discussed the requirements that needed to be met and Ms. Miller decided to go ahead with only the specialty shop and provide bottled drinks and packaged snacks. If it would have made a difference, Ms. Wynn said she would have hooked up to sewer but she owns several properties and it was a prudent business decision to wait until end of year. Ms. Wynn added that she not only put money into the property to help with the start up of Ms. Miller's business, she also allowed free rent credits for a few months.

VIII. Development Review Report

Chairman Herston mentioned a new apartment complex going up on Lister Street and CVS has received its CO for the store on Harborview and 41.

IX. Old Business

NBR District Subcommittee Report – Debrah Forester mentioned that the subcommittee has met twice and before they move forward they wanted to bring their recommendations to the Committee. A summary and a map with the subcommittee's recommendations were distributed to the Committee. If these changes are agreeable, the subcommittee will review the zoning code to make appropriate changes.

Grace Amodeo stated that it was her understanding that the subcommittee was suppose to change the designation of the NBR because it was too broad; the designation should only allow for businesses that fit into the artist community concept. David Schmidt noted that the designation matter was a part of the subcommittee's discussion along with straightening up the Seneca Avenue area.

Debrah Forester suggested that the map be reviewed with the understanding that the 80% rule was an issue which no one has been enforcing or tracking. The subcommittee was looking at this designation as an incentive based category to encourage owners to redevelop the area into a mixed-use sites with small commercial neighborhood type uses. The subcommittee was not looking to change the uses but instead thought to limit the size or the amount of commercial per site. The subcommittee squared off the NBR area as shown on the map. Grace Amodeo objected to the inclusion of Mike Haymans' property.

Chairman Herston noted that the report follows everything that the Committee has been discussing the last few months. (Nat Cooley arrived at 10:30.) Grace Amodeo again mentioned that the concept for the area was that it be an artist community, not a commercial area. Ms. Amodeo added that the current NBR zoning allows more uses than needed for the artist community; the CRA will turn into another US41. Seann Smith advised that the Committee can review all uses and delete those they do not wish to have included in the CRA; a definition of what is wanted and a proposal should be submitted to Growth Management. Debrah Forester read from the NBR definition currently in place and it is on target to make the CRA a live/work community.

Nat Cooley stated the goal of the subcommittee was to give people the ability to do something with their property because nothing is being done with current NBR properties. Mr. Cooley said the subcommittee was trying to clean up/square up the areas that needed it, they tried to address the 80/20 rule and discussed what the allowable uses would be and how to control the allowable uses. Ms. Forester noted that the description of NBR in the comprehensive plan, which sets the vision of the area, could be strengthened to encourage live/work opportunities or artist's community. When the subcommittee goes through the

details of the zoning code and takes a look at commercial uses, they will encourage those uses to be small and compatible with the existing community.

Seann Smith mentioned and Nat Cooley agreed, that although the subcommittee began discussing specific allowable issues, they wanted to bring what they had back to the Committee to get input to and be sure their approach was on track (some of these ideas are noted under "Other areas of consideration:" on the summary).

Chairman Herston mentioned that considerable discussion has taken place, the subcommittee has heard the Committees comments and he asked if the Committee was ready to move forward. **A motion was presented by Evelyn Loeffler and seconded by Jim Herston to give the subcommittee the encouragement to go forward and continue with their investigation regarding the NBR designation and to bring back their suggestions for Committee approval; David Schmidt asked to make an amendment to the motion and requested the Committee to accept the NBR area east of Seneca, as straightened out and shown on the hand marked future land use map; the balance of the property changes can go back to the Committee for discussion. Jim Herston seconded the amendment motion. 4-1 vote; motion passed. Grace Amodeo was the exception.**

Residential Rehabilitation Grant Program – A draft copy of the Residential Rehabilitation Grant Program Policy Guidelines, labeled Attachment A, was distributed. Debrah Forester revised the terms per last month's discussion: applicant must be connected to sewer system; first come, first served program as long as funds (\$45,000) are available; front yard improvements changes: chain link fence not eligible; fences must be no higher than 4 feet; front doors or windows of the house should not be blocked; and pervious materials used for driveway and pavers. Jim Herston suggested the front doors and windows of the house language should be changed from "should not be blocked" to "must not be blocked". Debrah Forester confirmed that the program limit is \$2,000 per applicant and the program can be used for rentals. Pavers were discussed. Grace Amodeo noted there was a typo at #IV – "must have not" should be changed to "must not have".

A motion was presented by Nat Cooley and seconded by Evelyn Loeffler to approve the Policy Guidelines for the Residential Rehabilitation Program with requested changes: windows and doors "must" not be block; at #1V "must not have", and leaving in pavers as a possible use. Motion carried unanimously.

Debrah Forester advised that the next step will be for the County Attorney's Office to review the Guidelines and then it will go before the BCC for approval. Ms. Forester noted that this is an outright grant and asked if the Committee wanted to allocate the funds with a forgivable process like the utility connections - amortized over 5 year period in case the owner sold the property. Discussion followed and although repayment was considered. Evelyn Loeffler pointed out the tracking and collecting of repayments would be tedious, time consuming and somewhat of an overkill for only \$2,000, especially in light of the fact that the improvements were done on the house prior to payment. Debrah Forester noted that if a lien is not going to be required Paragraph VI.3 should be deleted.

A motion was presented by Nat Cooley and seconded by Grace Amodeo to revise the Policy Guidelines for the Residential Rehabilitation Program to delete lien notice requirement at VI.3. Motion carried unanimously.

Parks and Recreation Part-time Staff Person – Debrah Forester met with John Jackson, Director Parks & Rec and Kelly Shoemaker, Administration, regarding the use of a Parks employee to spend half their time each week as event planner for the CRA - the CRA would pay half of that employees salary. Advantages to using a Parks employee include they would be required to attend meetings and would have access to park info and equipment. Ms. Forester noted that the Committee could critique the employee's performance after each event. Both Mr. Jackson and Ms. Shoemaker would like to partner with the CRA. Ms.

Forester added that the Committee could also choose to use a contracted employee, which may be less costly. Discussion followed regarding: additional expenses that may need to be added if a contracted employee was used (use of Parks employees/equipment for events; payroll expenses); process to hire a contracted employee or business; terms to be included in contract (must attend meetings; will additional funding be expected for each event). Dennis Murphy, City of Punta Gorda Growth Management, advised that the City works with its staff, using Parks & Grounds Department for activities and Police Department for safety. Mr. Murphy added that the County can help with its own public relations by using staff and its television station. The Committee requested that staff determine what Parks services are provided free of charge and what the costs would be for a contracted employee to use, prepare a job description, and get clear confirmation of the procedure required for a contracted employee and RFP process if a business was interested in event planning.

TIGER Grant Letter of Support – Debrah Forester requested the Committee to have the Chair sign a letter of support for the Charlotte Harbor CRA Harbor Walk TIGER grant application, which was discussed last month. Letters of support have been received from Zoomers and the Charlotte County and Punta Gorda Chambers; requests for support are going before the Punta Gorda Council and the BCC in September. **A motion was presented by David Schmidt and seconded by Nat Cooley to approve a letter be prepared and signed by the Chair supporting the Charlotte Harbor CRA Harbor Walk TIGER grant application. Motion carried unanimously.**

Updated CIP Sheets –The updated CIP Sheets, labeled Attachment B, were distributed for informational purposes. Debrah Forester noted that due to a reduction in tax increment dollars, a reduction has been made in construction dollars for the Gateway CIP.

Work Plan Update – The updated Work Plan status report, labeled Attachment C, was distributed. The 41 Mega Sidewalk Project is having final walk thru next week.

Resolution 2002-119 Architectural Design Guidelines Standards – a copy was distributed to Committee members. Chairman Herston noted that this issue was brought up last month with regard to shed size. Mr. Herston explained that the Zoning Department suggested to a property owner that in order to avoid meeting design standards as required if the structure is greater than 100 square foot, the owner could erect two 99 square foot structures. Mr. Herston recommended that a specific square footage be eliminated from the Resolution and require all outbuilding be to meet design standards. Discussion followed regarding “complementary” in regard to compliance by residential property owners. Mr. Herston noted this has not been an issue to date and complementary could be met by having the color of the outbuilding match the house. **A motion was presented by Grace Amodeo and seconded by David Schmidt to revise Resolution 2002-119 at Gazebos, Sheds and Other Outbuildings to remove the words “greater than 100 square feet in area”. Motion carried unanimously.** Staff will put in a legal request to process change.

X. New Business

Vagrants in Bayshore Park/Open Container Option – Debrah Forester received an e-mail from Candace Wehbe regarding open containers in Bayshore Live Oak Park, which said the Sheriff’s Office supported a change to eliminate open containers in County parks. Ms. Forester asked the Committee if they would like to invite the Sheriff Office to a meeting to discuss this issue. Nat Cooley noted that he did not think this issue was within the purview of the Committee to regulate. Evelyn Loeffler mentioned that the Sheriff’s department is not in the position to ask but indicated it would help if the County had a no vagrancy camping ordinance and an open container ordinance. Chairman Herston advised that this topic is above the Committee’s constitutional abilities.

XI. Correspondence/Communications – The following correspondence/communications were distributed:

- Minutes from Punta Gorda CRA meetings of August 5 and August 19, 2009.

- Newspaper Clipping: July 15, 2009 Punta Gorda Herald, A new manner of banner is needed by Ron Thomas. Debrah Forester mentioned that she has not had any further discussion with the group who requested to advertise on the banners. Ms. Forester had called to give them the FDOT contact information but could not get through. Ms. Forester will continue to follow up with them. Nat Cooley mentioned that while visiting Denison, TX he saw banner supporting businesses. There was a town logo on the top of the banner and a design created by the business with its name. It was very tastefully done. Ms. Forester mentioned this concept at the FDOT transport meeting and she has a contact person who could provide legal information to the group regarding advertising.
- E-mail from Carol Westmoreland dated July 27 re: Twitter and Facebook. Debrah Forester noted that if the Committee was interested in Twitter or Facebook it may be something the part-time event person could do.

XII. Public Comments – Harry Thomas applied and received a rehab grant; he noted the recommended contractors did a great job and the coordination of the program was very professional. Mr. Thomas also mentioned that Punta Gorda seems to be more progressive and didn't think Port Charlotte/Charlotte Harbor is user friendly. Mr. Thomas added that during the last two hours many comments included "I", "I don't like", and "no". Eventually people who want to do something will turn away because of all the negative vibes; if you don't do something things will become stagnant or go backwards. To be vibrant things must move ahead. Mr. Thomas applauded the time Mr. Haymans, Mr. Cooley and Mr. Schmidt spent at the subcommittee meetings.

XIII. Staff Comments – Debrah Forester reported on the following items:

- She met with FP&L regarding solar panels. FP&L said the draft plan would generate far more energy than would be needed at the Harbor Walk and advised staff to scale-back the solar equipment. Debrah Forester suggested that the TIGER grant would show only a solar tree, a covered area over the parking lot for hybrids to recharge and solar lights.
- The CDBG commercial rehab program is winding down. The last few applicants were able to have all work completed within specified timeframe. Pictures should be available next month.
- At the MPO meeting on August 12, it was decided that Charlotte Harbor Walk as the #1 regional priority for ~~re~~-transportation improvement funds. Sarasota County has agreed to support this regional project. In 2012 we should be eligible for \$1.2M for the Harbor Walk. Any outside funding we receive would free up tax increments money for other projects.
- Mark your calendar. The Hands Across the Harbor Event will be held on January 30, 2010. This year the bike/run/walk event will start in Gilchrist Park, Punta Gorda, continue over the bridge to Bayshore and return to Gilchrist. The host park will alternate each year, 2011 the event will return to Bayshore Park. The committee will begin to contact potential sponsors: \$250 corporate level; \$50 individual will get your name on the t-shirt.
- Charlotte Harbor business telephone survey is being finalized. Ms. Forester noted that the interns tried to contact 359 businesses; 74 businesses provided information which is about a 20% response. Many of those responding indicated a need for loans for expansion. As money is allocated for business program, followed up with the businesses will be made.

Nat Cooley noted that he was called and he hung up twice; but when the caller identified themselves as Charlotte County, he requested a fax, which he never received. Mr. Cooley suggested that the low response rate may have been because businesses get phone calls all day long and don't have time for surveys or sales calls. Staff will fax Mr. Cooley the survey.

- Invite to Homeless Coalition Fund Raiser was extended to all Committee members. Ms. Forester met with the new director, who offered to speak to the Advisory Committee if they were interested.

- Energy Expo flyers was distributed to Committee members and Ms. Forester encouraged their participation in the event which will be held on November 1 and 2.

Seann Smith mentioned that the YMCA applied for a dock permit. Mr. Smith also noted he is keeping updated on the Southwest Florida Water District's storm water program.

XIV. Attorney Comments - None.

Member Comments

Evelyn Loeffler suggested that FPL may be discouraging the solar powered ideas because they are producers of electric power. Ms. Loeffler also mentioned that there were several newspaper articles which showed Charlotte Harbor in a positive light: an article by Ron Thomas addressed the health benefits of walking the bridge and included pictures of the park; another article highlighted Banana Bay and recent renovations, new pool and extended dock; and another mentioned an upcoming Charlotte Harbor sailboat regatta.

XVI. Next Meeting Date

The next regular meeting of the Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee will be held on **Thursday, September 24, 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 12:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy M. Knee, Recorder

/kmk

Approved: 09/24/09