

APPROVED
MEETING MINUTES
BEACH REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
8TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA
MONDAY, JULY 21, 2008 – 2:30 P.M.

BRAB MEMBERS	ATTENDANCE	CUMULATIVE	
		PRESENT	ABSENT
Ina Lee, Chair	P	5	0
Shirley Smith	P	5	0
Miranda Lopez	P	5	0
Carlos Molinet	P	4	2
Judy Scher	P	3	3
Amaury Piedra	A	3	1
Aiton Yaari	P	4	1
Ramola Motwani (arr. 2:48)	P	5	0
Jordana L. Jarjura	P	4	0
Melissa Milroy	P	2	0

Staff

Donald Morris, Beach CRA Director
Earl Prizlee, Engineering Design Manager, CRA
Karen Reese, Economic Development Representative
Silver Lee Hodge, Beach CRA
Mario Sotolongo, Code Compliance Officer
Hilda Testa, Recording Clerk, Prototype, Inc.

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m. and a quorum was present.

II. Approval of Minutes: June 11, 2008

Motion made by Vice Chair Molinet, seconded by Ms. Lopez, to approve the June 11, 2008, meeting minutes. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

III. Discussion of BRAB Budget

Chair Lee ceded the floor to Vice Chair Molinet, who had worked with Mr. Morris and Mr. Prizlee in putting together the preliminary budget. Vice Chair Molinet

clarified that fiscal year 2007-08 ends on September 30, 2008, and fiscal year 2008-09 begins on October 1, 2008. These would be the two years in discussion today, he stated.

The current budget is as follows:

- Capital Improvement Plan (CIP): \$1.3 million carried forward from fiscal 2006-07
- Tax Incremental Financing (TIF): \$5,485,000, with earned interest of \$400,000 on income
- City Parking Fund/Oceanside Bond: Vice Chair Molinet noted that this is an accounting function, in which funds are added to the budget but then subtracted from it, resulting in no net gain

This gives a total income from sources of \$7.8 million, Vice Chair Molinet advised.

The Board's operating budget is detailed as follows:

- Personnel expenditures: \$369,000
- Other operating expenses: \$155,000
- Capital outlay: \$12,000

This comes to an expenditure total of \$536,000.

Budgeted projects are as follows:

- Fort Lauderdale Aquatics Center: \$1 million
- Beach Streetscape, Phase 1-B: \$1.473 million
- Beach Improvements, including turtle lighting, trash receptacles, pavers, signage, and coconut trees: \$3.1 million
- Total: \$5.575 million

Vice Chair Molinet added that one figure not reflected in the budget total includes beach restrooms, which left a balance of \$796,890. Another figure not included was the cost of the A1A medians, at \$1.3 million. These expenses are shown on the City's website, he noted.

When expenditures are subtracted from income, Vice Chair Molinet concluded, the total uses equal \$6.651 million. The amount to carry over for next year's projects is \$1,644,141.

Next year, he continued, TIF money from St. Regis and the Las Olas Beach Club will be included in the budget through 2009-10 and 2010-11. (TIF revenue from Courtyard by Marriot, as well as a future Bahia Mar project, will be determined in fiscal 2009-10.)

Earned interest decreases slightly for 2008-09 due to the timing of bank transfers, Vice Chair Molinet said.

Expenditures for personnel will increase by 8% in 2008-09, totaling \$399,000. Operating expenses will increase by \$100,000, and there will be no capital outlay for next year. The operating expense total will be \$655,000.

In terms of projects for next year, the monies are considered aggregate expenses, Vice Chair Molinet explained – a certain amount is budgeted in every fiscal year to be set aside for each project, but the money will not actually be taken out until a later date. The Beach Streetscape project, Phase 1-B, is consistent with the Master Plan, he added. The ongoing projects included in Beach Improvements are not all currently underway, but those not currently operating are scheduled to begin this year.

The South Beach Lot Improvement project will draw \$1.3 million from the BRAB in 2008-09, as well as some money from FDOT as well. Mr. Morris clarified that previously, “old money” was set aside for this project before the expense was approved by the City Commission; the Board will request that this be added to the “new money” in next year’s budget to fund the project.

Also from 2007-08, the \$1 million allocated to the Aquatics Center went toward the conceptual drawings only. As these drawings did not use the entire \$1 million, the remainder was moved to a “placeholder” account, collecting interest until the funds are used on this project.

In addition, the hotels to be added in fiscal 2009-10 – Trump Las Olas, Courtyard by Marriott, and the future Bahia Mar hotel – are considered To Be Determined (TBD) in costs, estimated at \$6 million. The earned interest for these projects will have a “placeholder” figure of \$200,000. While this figure might be higher, the money being spent on the project could similarly lower it. At the end of 2008-09, there will be a projected \$2.6 million associated with these projects that can be carried forward into 2009-10, Vice Chair Molinet advised.

He continued that whenever money is carried forward, if there is a project the BRAB feels viable, it can be brought before the City Commission for approval. Mr. Morris described this as a “blanket account,” which contains CIP money left

over from operating or non-encumbered expenses. This account grows annually with unspent, non-appropriated funds, and is available in the event the CRA identifies further necessary projects throughout the year.

Chair Lee requested clarification that the only added revenue during the year will come from the Courtyard by Marriott, as the other projects of this nature were still in earlier stages of development. Mr. Morris agreed that this was the case. He also pointed out that he was "very conservative" in his budget figures, in the interest of not guaranteeing more funds than would be available.

Vice Chair Molinet turned the budget presentation over to Mr. Morris for further particulars.

Mr. Morris referred to the information packet from this year's CIP given to the Board members, noting figures that particularly applied to the CRA. Fiscal 2008-09, he noted, showed a 17.4% difference in revenue; he specifically pointed out that fiscal 2007-08 had brought in \$647 million, while 2008-09 was expected to bring in \$760.2 million, and drew the Board's attention to their higher percentage of income as compared to the Northwest's CRA.

The CRA's monies are all incorporated into the City's overall CIP, he explained, and identified specific expenses as follows:

- Beach CRA: \$500,000;
- Aquatics Center: \$3 million;
- Streetscape Project: \$700,000, with possibility of adding funds once the City Commission has approved the budget;
- CIP: \$1.3 million

The total for these expenses is \$5 million.

Regarding the turtle lighting replacement plan, Mr. Morris noted that \$3 million will come from an FDOT grant, and permanent fixtures may be approved for this plan by the end of July 2008. The Parking division has appropriated \$822,000 for ADA-compatible upgrades to the South Beach lot.

He advised the Board that figures with asterisks denote that these numbers need to be revised due to omissions discovered after the budget had been compiled. These should be corrected and may be ready for presentation by the Board's next meeting.

A double asterisk on page 80, referring to the A1A/Sea Breeze turtle lighting replacement plan, denotes an FDOT grant received for this project. Mr. Morris explained that all FDOT money could be used toward City-owned lights, and the Department had included an additional \$250,000 toward this purpose, totaling \$3.25 million to be used as part of the turtle lighting endeavor. While this will not cover the entire expense, he noted, it should take care of the City-owned portion.

A \$12,250,000 expense listed as Beach Improvements, Mr. Morris continued, applies to beach improvements outside the CRA. The streetscapes and other changes shown in presentations of the Master Plan are currently unfunded or have questionable funding sources, he advised, and the City will need to develop a plan to cover the cost of these improvements as well.

Finally, Parking and Fleet Services has had \$661,000 added to the South Beach parking lot, which increases their contribution to in excess of \$1 million.

Motion made by Ms. Scher, seconded by Ms. Milroy, to approve the recommended budget as presented. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Motwani joined the meeting at this time (2:48 p.m.).

Chair Lee thanked Vice Chair Molinet, Mr. Morris, and Mr. Prizlee for their work in putting together the budget and presenting it to the Board.

Mr. Morris clarified that the CRA did not actually have its own account for funds, but the money was administered through the City's Finance Department. The procedure for requesting funds, he explained, is to first request the Board's and CRA's approval, then follow the City's purchasing guidelines. He described this as "a very controlled process."

IV. Old/New Business

- **Old Business**

Chair Lee asked that Mr. Morris give the Board an overview of the various Capital Improvement Projects.

Mr. Morris began with the Fort Lauderdale Aquatics Center, of which, he reiterated, only the conceptual plan had been funded thus far. Some questions had followed regarding the economics of the plan, he stated, so the City was

going to have a second look at these to be sure the proposed uses would actually be workable.

The next step, he advised, would put the Board in a better position to decide how to move forward with the project, beginning with ways to fund it. He noted that a recent court case had ruled that a referendum must occur whenever TIF bonds are proposed. It was not yet clear whether this meant the referendum must take place in only the TIF area, or whether it would be City- or County-wide. This would affect how funding was planned, Mr. Morris said, as any difficulty in bonding would severely limit the options open to the Board. He expected that the economic plan should be underway by the end of the year, and the City would be in a better position to move forward on the project in 2009.

The Streetscape Phase 1-B of the Master Plan, Mr. Morris reminded the Board, will go before the City Commission again this fall. Chair Lee noted this was expected to be in September, and the Board might need to reschedule its regular meeting so the Master Plan might be presented here again before it goes public at the City Commission meeting.

Once this is completed and the Master Plan is approved, Mr. Morris continued, the CRA could decide which parts of the Plan it wanted to undertake. He noted that funding was particularly limited in light of the current economic environment.

Regarding the Beach Improvements – turtle lights, trash receptacles, pavers, signage, and coconut trees – Mr. Morris said there may be an approved turtle lighting design by the end of the week (July 25, 2008). The City could move forward on this project as soon as this step was completed. If the proposed design was not approved, the City would need to decide how best to move forward. Trash receptacles, he said, also had a design up for review. A comprehensive sign package was being developed for the entire barrier island, but as this went outside the CRA, the CRA was unable to fund this project. The Parking Division, he said, would handle funding for the signage, and an RFP was written for it; once this was done, the City could develop an appropriate sign package.

Chair Lee pointed out that the police signs in effect during the past spring break season were often perceived as more negative than welcoming. She felt it was critical that this information be passed on to the Police Department, the Public Information Office, or any other entities involved in the decision, in order to give visitors the correct impression of the City.

Mr. Morris assured Chair Lee that this would be passed on, and noted that the sign package to be developed would be of a more permanent nature than those associated with the spring break holidays. He added that they would be designed with the intent of establishing the beach area's particular identity.

Ms. Motwani asked which department would work on developing the signs, as she was concerned that the Board discussed the issue but did not actually participate in the project's development.

Mr. Morris said the RFP was being handled through the Parking Division, as they were funding it; however, Public Information, Planning & Zoning, and others would be involved in the selection process. He reminded the Board that "way-finding" signs were to be included in this package, such as street and parking signs that were intended to be user-friendly. He stated that any signs of the nature Chair Lee had mentioned would need to be taken up with the appropriate departments, such as the Police Department. He added that he would speak to these departments and possibly ask that they meet with the Board so a consensus might be reached.

Chair Lee suggested that such a meeting be done in more of an "official capacity," and recommended to Ms. Milroy that the Beach Council, of which Ms. Milroy is the incoming Chair, might send such a request to the City Manager in writing. Mr. Morris reiterated that he would follow up on the matter as well.

The cost of the South Beach parking lot improvements, Mr. Morris continued, had come in at a slightly higher figure than expected. He hoped that the plan could move forward through the CRA Board in September. The larger issue with South Beach, he advised, was that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements that needed to be completed first, as a deadline had been set for this project.

Mr. Prizlee added that a temporary measure could be achieved for these improvements, and noted again that the turtle lighting fixture, a key component of this project, still needed its design approved.

Mr. Yaari asked if it had been assured that the remodeling of the parking lot would not interrupt the turtles' season. Mr. Morris said the schedule had not yet been set, as neither the design nor the funding were approved. Once this was done, he said, the matter would need further study, although he speculated that construction might be done in phases in order to best allow the lot to remain open. It was confirmed that meters had been installed.

The “Wave Wall’s” light sources are being replaced as they malfunction, Mr. Morris said, although no permanent solution to this problem has been settled on as yet. It is believed that the light-changing mechanism is malfunctioning, and an alternate design without this function might need to be considered. LEDs are thought to be a potential solution, as these can change colors without moving parts. Chair Lee noted that the lights are affected both in- and outside the CRA, which might necessitate finding non-CRA funds.

Beach restrooms, Mr. Morris said, would most likely be reconsidered as part of the Master Plan’s public amenities project, including their location.

The A1A medians have been completed, he said, and a WOW! Award plaque was given to the CRA by the Community Appearance Board in recognition of the work done on this project. In response to a question regarding electrical power in the medians for holiday lighting displays, he noted that this was found to be too difficult and costly to install, and the resulting use would not be considered sufficient to justify the expense. The State had declined to fund the project due to its own budget cuts, which created a funding gap that precluded improvements to landscapes or “soft scapes.”

With no further updates to come, Chair Lee opened the meeting to questions and discussion by the Board.

Ms. Lopez said she hoped the primary uses of the Aquatics Center would be swimming and diving, and felt the Center would provide a healthful community environment.

Mr. Morris stated that first and foremost the Center would be a place to host international events and establish a public swimming pool. Other uses would be considered with regard to how they would work with these primary uses, as well as how they might assist in funding the project.

Ms. Scher expressed concern that outside funding would not mean further development of the Las Olas Circle area.

Mr. Morris clarified that he meant on-site uses of the Aquatics Center would be expected to assist in funding.

Ms. Smith felt the plan for a five-storey museum and underground parking as part of the Aquatics Center might be too big, and was unsure that this could be afforded.

Chair Lee referred to the review of the Center's economics, and felt until this due diligence was complete, the Board's concerns might be premature. She suggested the parking lot and turtle lighting renovations were of more immediate concern, as these were happening "sooner rather than later."

Mr. Yaari felt keeping the Beach area clean would attract the families and visitors the Board hoped to bring to the area as opposed to a potentially criminal element.

- **New Business**

Chair Lee introduced Jim and Michael Boucher of Boucher Brothers Management, LLC, who were awarded a contract by the City Commission to provide amenities for the Beach area.

Jim Boucher provided the Board members with a fact sheet of the services they were able to provide. He stated they were hoping to purchase new equipment for the Beach, including umbrellas, cabanas, and larger beach beds. He noted that they were involved in a joint venture with the Perry Brothers for this contract, and had spoken with them regarding their plans for managing the Beach.

Mr. Boucher continued that the management company was hoping for a "complete paradigm shift" in the provision of Beach services. He noted that they had seen the transition of South Beach 20 years ago from a "dead" area to a vibrant one, and were very enthusiastic about the business opportunity to effect positive change in Fort Lauderdale's Beach area as well.

Mr. Boucher continued that the Board, and the public, could hope to see new equipment on the Beach shortly, as some had already been purchased. He also hoped to discuss what the hoteliers hoped to see in terms of amenities and services, and wished for a "seamless" transition from the hotel areas to the Beach. He pointed out that the management group was able to procure the water sports contract as well.

The Boucher brothers' company was based at the Alhambra, he said, which they had managed for five years without incident.

Mr. Boucher estimated that roughly 700-800 chaise lounges would be available between the Sunrise and Clipper areas of the Beach, depending on the need. Michael Boucher added that they did not want the Beach overcrowded with equipment, and that their preference was to remove items from the Beach for

cleaning as necessary. Removal also gave the equipment a longer life, he explained.

Within the parameters of the contract, Jim Boucher noted, they did not expect to be able to expand North of the Sunrise. Michael Boucher added that in conjunction with the Perry brothers, they hoped to upgrade the services offered on the Beach, with greeters and perhaps improved signage as well. It was noted that their staff was trained extensively in hospitality services and would be very different than the staff currently operating on the Beach. Employees would be easily identifiable by uniform and would have an extensive presence in the area.

They would also negotiate with hotels who wanted to provide more amenities for an extra charge, with the City sharing in the profits of that amenity charge, Michael Boucher added.

In certain sections of the Beach, towels would be provided with chairs, some lounge chairs would be extra-wide, and actual two-person beds might be provided near some hotels, Mr. Boucher continued. They also plan to be very sensitive to the environment. In a protected area, in which they are allowed 50% usage of the Beach, they plan to use no more than 30%.

Chair Lee welcomed the Boucher brothers and thanked them for their commitment to a new standard of excellence along the Beach.

Mr. Morris introduced Mario Sotolongo, Code Enforcement Officer, who addressed the turtle lighting situation discussed earlier. He advised that Code Enforcement was attempting to be "more aggressive" in addressing lighting compliance issues this year. They had had very positive responses from business and property owners, as well as various City Departments, he continued.

Chair Lee noted that the main reason for the Board to meet in August would be to continue discussing the Master Plan. She felt the option to meet if a pressing issue arose was appropriate, rather than a scheduled meeting.

Motion made by Vice Chair Molinet, seconded by Ms. Scher, to forgo the August meeting of the BRAB. The next meeting was scheduled for September 15, 2008, subject to change as necessary to discuss the Master Plan before its next public forum.

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Ms. Lopez asked for information regarding the status of the South Beach sidewalk repairs. Mr. Prizlee stated this was included in the South Beach project, although City staff were considering the possibility of temporary repairs.

V. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]