

**APPROVED**

**BEACH REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD  
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE  
8<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM  
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2009 – 2:30 P.M.**

<b>BRAB MEMBERS</b>	<b>ATTENDANCE</b>	<b>CUMULATIVE</b>	
		<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Ina Lee, Chair	P	1	0
Shirley Smith	P	1	0
Miranda Lopez	P	1	0
Carlos Molinet	A	0	1
Amaury Piedra	A	0	1
Aiton Yaari, Vice Chair	A	0	1
Ramola Motwani	P	1	0
Jordana L. Jarjura	A	0	1
Melissa Milroy	A	0	1

**Staff**

Donald Morris, Beach CRA Director  
Earl Prizlee, Engineering Design Manager, CRA  
Stephen Scott, Economic Development Director  
Eileen Furedi, Economic Development Representative  
Gate McCaffrey, Business Enterprise Director  
Lindwell Bradley, Community Inspections Supervisor  
Mario Sotolongo, Code Enforcement Officer  
Captain Victor London, Fort Lauderdale Police Department  
Freddy Zelaya, Jr., Emergency Management Coordinator, Fire & Rescue  
Amy Aiken, City Emergency Manager  
Breck Ballou, Ocean Rescue Chief  
Corey Collier, Park Foreman, Parks and Recreation Department  
Greg Slagle, Public Works Department  
Hilda Testa, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

**I. Call to Order/Roll Call**

Chair Lee called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. Roll was called and it was determined a quorum was not present.

Chair Lee thanked the members of City Staff in attendance at today's meeting.

## **II. Approval of Minutes**

As there was no quorum, the minutes of the January 20, 2009 meeting could not be approved at this time.

## **III. Condominium Preparedness Initiative**

Chair Lee introduced Amy Aiken, Emergency Manager for the City of Fort Lauderdale. She noted that she would address not only condominium preparedness, but hotel preparedness as well.

The Condominium Preparedness Initiative was begun in April 2007, she advised, and is a template for general managers, security personnel, facilities and engineering staff, and other members of condominium management to locate items in and around the building, such as gas shutoff valves, electrical panels, and other items of concern in the event of an emergency. These items are then included in a template that was developed with the Fire and Rescue Department.

The template serves two purposes, Ms. Aiken advised: in any emergency, whether it is City-wide or in that building only, should the general or facilities manager be absent, these items could be easily found by staff. This would make for a more efficient response by both building staff and Public Safety. In the event of a City-wide emergency, moreover, City resources will be "stretched very thin," and the existence of a template would add to overall efficiency.

She noted that the template is available for download online by accessing [www.fortlauderdale.gov](http://www.fortlauderdale.gov) and clicking on "Fire/Rescue." Ms. Aiken also provided copies of the template at the meeting.

She also advised taking pictures of the valves, pipes, and other items that would be searched out in an emergency, as this could also cut down on response time if an unfamiliar individual is searching them out. In the event of an electrical failure, a hard copy would prevent the need to access the template on a computer, she added.

She encouraged any interested condominium representatives to fill out the template and return a copy to the City, where it could be shared with Fire and Rescue personnel in the appropriate area. This would enable any responders to know exactly where to go in a building to perform specific functions in the event of an emergency.

Chair Lee thanked Ms. Aiken for her presentation, recalling that she herself had been instrumental in implementing the plan. Several presentations had been made to different condominium associations in the Beach area, although she was unsure of how many had completed the template process.

Freddy Zelaya, Jr., representing Fire and Rescue, stated that he had followed up with over 100 Beach-area condominiums, reminding them that the Department could assist them in completing the plan if necessary. There had been, however, only five or so completed templates returned to the Department.

Chair Lee felt this was an example of the dilemma facing the Board and the City as well: while Emergency Management had done a superlative job in establishing the template program, encouraging participation has been a challenge. She added that despite the Department's best efforts, the plan was not widely known throughout the City.

She noted as well that while the Board had begun the project, it had eventually been turned over to the Central Beach Alliance (CBA), as most condominiums are represented by that organization.

Chair Lee stated she hoped to develop a plan in conjunction with Emergency Management to attract residents' attention to the need for emergency preparation.

Ms. Aiken agreed with this assessment, pointing out as well that Fort Lauderdale is "an all-hazard city" – while most people tend to think primarily in terms of hurricanes and hurricane season, the City should take steps toward emergency preparedness year-round. She reiterated that even if an event is restricted to one condominium rather than being City-wide, that effect alone is significant. If a contingency plan is already in place, she pointed out, preparing for hurricane season would be more a matter of double-checking the plan than attempting to put one together on short notice.

Ms. Smith commented that her building has such an emergency plan, including a list of those residents who might need help during an emergency. She requested a copy of the template to pass along to her building manager as well.

Chair Lee suggested that perhaps Ms. Aiken could address the CBA as well, as that is a very active group.

Lindwell Bradley, Community Inspections Supervisor, noted that his Staff would be making door-to-door calls shortly regarding sea turtles, and could use that opportunity to hand out template packets.

#### **IV. Hurricane Evacuation (Hotels)**

Mr. Morris stated that in 2008, application packets had been hand-delivered to over 75 different hotels in the Beach area, from which approximately 60-65 hotels applied for placards. Applications will be mailed out to these hotels again within

the next two weeks, and placards are in the process of being printed. Any hotel that participated the previous year will receive a new application.

He advised that the Beach CRA is working with Ms. Aiken to hold meetings similar to those of 2008, at which applications will also be available.

Mr. Morris agreed that, unfortunately, only when a hurricane is imminent does the City seem to take emergency preparedness seriously. He recalled that in 2008, when a storm had been forecast for the area, roughly 50% of all placard applications had been received during a single week. He hoped that the ability to fax or email an application might encourage a more timely response.

Chair Lee pointed out that there has been a good deal of change in management and staff at many local hotels, so it cannot be assumed that the evacuation placard project is a familiar one. She recommended scheduling the meeting as soon as possible to increase awareness.

She recalled that when the condominium templates had been designed, there had been discussion of creating a similar template for hotels. Chair Lee felt this was the next logical step in emergency preparedness, and suggested asking one of the established hotels if it would be a "guinea pig" for creating an emergency template. If this was done early, all the hotels would have had an opportunity to participate before hurricane season begins in June.

Mr. Morris recommended distributing the placards initially and then moving forward with Chair Lee's proposal.

Chair Lee also advocated use of the two-way radio systems to ensure that they work properly, suggesting a "test run" similar to the one done in 2008.

She emphasized developing a "mechanism" to assist in rebuilding as many of the Beach hotels and other businesses as quickly as possible, should a major hurricane strike the City. Chair Lee referred to research conducted by Paul Costanza, which compares Florida counties that have such quick recovery programs with those counties that do not.

#### **V. 2009 Spring Break Update**

Mr. Morris introduced Captain Victor London of the Fort Lauderdale Police Department and asked him to describe the Department's initiatives for this time of year.

Captain London advised that the Department began spring break operations earlier the same day, holding a briefing attended by City Staff and others. He

noted that today seemed to be an “average day,” with no visible influx of students yet.

He advised that this year’s electronic signs will feature a “kinder” message to spring break tourists and other visitors, this year reading only “Welcome” and “The beach is an alcohol-free area.” These are the only two messages planned for the season. Captain London added that these signs will be “employed strategically” and will not necessarily remain in place for the entirety of spring break, which encompasses seven weeks.

Chair Lee recalled that the previous year, she had been under the impression that the signs were only used in the event of a problem. She also remembered the language as potentially being conducive to misunderstandings.

Captain London assured the Board and Chair Lee that he was open to discuss any possible changes in verbiage. He pointed out that the signs will most likely be deployed during the first week of spring break, although they may or may not need to remain in place for the duration of the period. Currently the only functioning sign is on the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge.

In advance of the **Police Update** slated for later on the agenda, Captain London announced that there were no crime trends on the Beach at this time.

Breck Ballou, Ocean Rescue Chief, advised that lifeguards planned to assist the Police and other Departments in any way possible, including keeping an eye out for safety hazards such as overflowing trash cans or broken glass.

Beginning on March 8, 2009, which is the onset of Daylight Savings Time, he informed the Board that an after-hours crew would be on the beach “in patrols” from 5:00-7:00 p.m. He noted that patrols had been found to be useful during the 2008 season. The Department would retain a high level of staffing during the month of March, which tends to be the busiest season for spring break.

Beginning today, he added that Fire and Rescue will meet with the police daily at 11:00 a.m. If Chief Ballou cannot attend in person, he will send a representative.

Corey Collier, representing the Parks and Recreation Department, stated that that Department had begun anticipating spring break the previous Friday, and plans to carry out a cleaning schedule very similar to 2008’s, with a contracted crew cleaning overnight from 8:00 p.m.-5:00 a.m., and a City crew from 12:00-5:00. Boxes will not be placed out in advance of trash buildup, he noted.

Large Dumpsters are in place and have not yet been filled, Mr. Collier continued, with service occurring every other day until April 13, 2009. He added that the

Department has received a cleaning permit extension, with greater parameters within which to use cleaning equipment during the turtle season.

Ms. Motwani asked how frequently trash will be picked up on the Beach. Mr. Collier advised that this will be a constant process, between contracted and City Staff.

Mr. Morris added that this process should not only ensure that trash cans were regularly emptied, but sand and sidewalks would have trash pickup as well.

He continued that the City has had discussions regarding more liberal cleaning of the Beach with mechanical equipment on a year-round basis, but the parameters of the plan have not yet been settled upon. He did not have further details available at this time.

Mr. Collier clarified that cleaning could normally be done as far as the high-water line; with the extension, Staff is allowed to clean as far up as the debris line, with the condition that they work around turtle nests.

Guest Ralph Riehl, Chair of the Economic Development Advisory Board, advised that he had seen full trash cans earlier in the day, close to 9:00 a.m., and had reported these to the Sanitation Department's line. He expressed concern that there were visitors and tourists walking the Beach area who could see the overflowing cans.

Greg Slagle, representing Public Works/Sanitation, stated that he was unaware of a problem in this area, but would look into the issue.

He continued that his Department had begun their spring break increase in service the previous night, with a truck running each evening, seven days a week. He noted that the truck begins service at 5:00 a.m.

Community Inspections Supervisor Bradley introduced Officer Mario Sotolongo, Code Officer for the Beach area. He explained that code enforcement officers will be stepping up their services as well, with a noise team in place for the weekend, who will also keep an eye on trash and ensure that shop owners are helping keep sidewalks clean. The Community Inspections Department will ask sidewalk cafés to maintain at least five feet of clearance so pedestrians are not forced into the street, particularly at night.

Regarding the noise check, he allowed that it would be "a job" to ensure that visitors to the City have a good time while making sure business owners did not violate the noise ordinance. This year, the Department will be able to write citations, which will provide somewhat more leverage in enforcing the ordinance;

he assured the Board, however, that the Department will do “everything they can” to encourage owners to work with them on this issue.

Mr. Bradley presented his **Code Compliance Update** at this time as well, informing the Board that turtle lighting inspections will be underway within the coming weeks. Officer Sotolongo and two other officers will help ensure this ordinance is followed in a way that satisfies State requirements. Mr. Bradley stated that the Department will work with every home- and business owner on the Beach, as changes are often made during the months in which turtle lighting is not a consideration.

Addressing a question by Ms. Smith regarding some of the t-shirts in shops, Mr. Bradley advised that the Department does receive calls stating that some of the slogans are in questionable taste. He explained that Officer Sotolongo asks shop owners to move shirts with potentially objectionable designs or language to the inside or back of the shop; the issue, however, is a difficult one, as freedom of speech is a consideration as well.

Ms. Smith did not feel that owners were complying with the requests to move shirts of this nature to a less visible part of the store. Officer Sotolongo noted that there is no language contained in the Code that addresses the issue of objectionable t-shirts.

Chair Lee inquired if the shop owners were presenting a difficulty by failing to comply with Code officers’ requests. Officer Sotolongo responded that owners felt some of the “shocking” slogans were conducive to bringing in business, and it became a marketing issue.

Mr. Bradley reiterated that officers are doing everything they can to work with shop owners; however, there is no recourse as part of Code, unless the City adopts or changes an ordinance. He added that he could speak with City Attorneys for further advice.

Chair Lee felt that “peer pressure” by other business owners might be a simpler option, and asked if Mr. Bradley could let Mr. Morris or Mr. Scott know which owners might be recalcitrant on the issue. She proposed that she or other Board members might speak to these owners directly, as peers.

Mr. Morris stated that the CRA Staff would begin dispersing flyers, as they had done in 2008, beginning the next morning. He explained that two flyers had been posted in windows the previous year: one discussing the need to keep the beaches clean and another encouraging compliance with the alcohol policy “in a friendly way.” He suggested that during this distribution, CRA Staff might address some of the shop owners regarding t-shirts as well.

## **VI. Beach Aquatics Plan Update**

Cate McCaffrey, Business Enterprise Director, stated that she would speak about the Aquatics Center's action plan. The Center has a "conceptual master plan" for the redevelopment of the Aquatics Center Complex site, which includes some features not currently present, such as a water park, an aquarium, a restaurant, and a parking structure.

She explained that the City had sent out an RFP for an action plan on how to proceed with this redevelopment. Aquatics Center Staff had asked that this plan have "an understanding of what will work there," as well as a sense of retaining the City's stature as a venue for world-class swimming, whether in competitions or in public/visitor use.

Bids on this RFP opened in December 2008, she continued, and six responses were received. The Selection Committee met in January 2009 to rank these proposals; the next step is for Staff to bring the highest-ranked proposal before the City Commission for award of the bid. She did not have a specific date for when this would happen.

Chair Lee asked if Ms. McCaffrey could give her a timeline on when work would be done. Ms. McCaffrey advised that "strict" timelines were included as part of the RFP, but she did not recall the exact amount of time and informed Chair Lee that she would get back to her with this estimate.

Chair Lee noted that some BRAB dollars are allocated toward the Complex's plan, explaining that this is why she sought regular updates on the project. She asked if the Board funds in question are actually going toward the project.

Mr. Morris stated that the Board is funding the action plan RFP, which is considered an important part of Beach redevelopment. He felt everyone was aware that, from a CRA standpoint, the Aquatics Complex is a major project.

Chair Lee agreed with the importance of the project; she expressed concern, however, that the Board did not know how much of their funds are dedicated toward the planning stage. She reiterated that they should "stay more informed."

Ms. McCaffrey pointed out that no monies go toward this phase of the project until it is approved by the City Commission. She estimated that the top-ranked proposal for the RFP was "around \$300,000."

Mr. Morris stated that money is put into CIP funds for projects of this nature, and noted that some funds must go toward planning and design rather than actual construction. He promised to make these issues clearer for the Board in the future.



Mr. Scott agreed that the Board would receive regular reports, going forward, on projects for which their funds were spent.

Ms. Motwani requested clarification on what part of the project was involved in the RFP. Ms. McCaffrey informed the Board that the conceptual plan includes replacing one of the pools with a water park, and construction of an aquarium on the westernmost end of the peninsula. The museum near the front of the complex would come down to make room for the water park, but museum space would be retained near the aquarium.

Mr. Morris emphasized that the project would probably not be funded entirely by the CRA, although some CRA funds are dedicated toward the redevelopment project. Funding could take the form of a public/private partnership or other models, he stated, although CRA funds would be involved to an extent in the project.

Ms. McCaffrey noted that the action plan itself involves searching for suggestions and alternatives of types of funding, as there are so many different components of the overall plan: for example, she offered, the aquarium might be funded differently from the parking structure.

Chair Lee requested that in the future, when Board funds will be used, a Board member be placed on the Selection Committee for any related RFPs.

Ms. Smith agreed that the front of the Complex would be “perfect” for a water park; however, caution should be taken not to make the Complex “too big,” as she felt the area is crowded already.

Ms. Lopez asked if the City planned to move forward with the design proposed in 2008. Ms. McCaffrey clarified that the City wishes to redevelop the site “with that concept in mind,” including the proposed water park and aquarium; however, another aspect of the action plan is to clarify if this design is feasible for the site. She stated that the action plan in question is not for actual construction, but to give the City a plan for how to build and finance the most sensible, financially viable Aquatics Complex possible.

## **VII. Beach Chair Vendor Contract Update**

Ms. McCaffrey explained that when the City had put this RFP out for bid, it was of great importance that they give quality service on the Beach, such as providing beach chairs and umbrellas for visitors. Five distinct Beach areas were specified in the RFP, including setup of a “Welcome Station” with a uniformed attendant. Failure to provide this service is a violation of the RFP, she stated.

In addition, a certain number of chairs and pads must be available where these stations were established, as well as children's toys and luxury items.

Ms. McCaffrey advised that there has been "some trouble" in ensuring the vendor meets these needs according to City specifications, and Staff met with the vendor the previous week to list specific items that are not seen on the beach. She described the meeting as "very positive," and an inspection that followed within two days showed great improvement on the vendor's part.

The vendor, however, also made very good points, such as noting that the required nametags should come in a different form. These are specifications the City is willing to change. Ms. McCaffrey concluded that a number of Departments will work together to continue inspections and ensure compliance.

Chair Lee thanked Ms. McCaffrey, noting that a particular criticism of the vendor had been the communication aspect between the vendor and the Beach hotels. From the hoteliers' perspective, this had not taken place in the manner they had expected. Ms. McCaffrey noted that the City had not been aware of this situation, but would be willing to follow up on it, particularly if specific persons to contact could be provided.

Chair Lee felt there should be a clearer understanding of the process by which the hoteliers and the vendor would work together.

Ms. Motwani asked if there was a time frame in which the vendors' compliance was to be achieved. Ms. McCaffrey advised that they should be in compliance right now, with the five welcome stations with chairs and pads in operation on the beach.

The five stations were located between Sunrise and South Beach, she continued, adding that the "Welcome" umbrella with logo should be easily visible from the street.

Chair Lee requested that Ms. McCaffrey address the next Beach Business Improvement District Committee (BID) meeting, providing another update on this issue, as many hoteliers are involved in that organization and the issue had been discussed there as well.

It was noted that **Item VIII, Police Update**, and **Item IX, Code Compliance Update**, had been discussed previously by Captain London and Mr. Bradley.

#### **X. Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

As a quorum was not present, this order of business could not be conducted.

**XI. Old/New Business**

Chair Lee noted that a white fence has been erected around the Trump Las Olas property, which is an improvement over the previous fence, but unfortunately has attracted graffiti. She felt it would be an excellent opportunity for the Board to partner with the property's owner, as well as with the Art Institute, and help sponsor a mural competition for the New Fort Lauderdale Beach. She felt this could "make a statement" about the Beach area and create excitement.

Mr. Scott agreed they should explore the idea of doing something creative in this area.

Ms. Lopez suggested that the City might rent or use this or other sites that have been approved for development but work is not scheduled for the immediate future and, working with the developer, as a park.

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 3:36 p.m.

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