

**APPROVED
 BEACH REDEVELOPMENT BOARD
 100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
 8TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
 FORT LAUDERDALE, FL 33301
 WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2012 – 2:30 P.M.**

MEMBERS	ATTENDANCE	CUMULATIVE	
		PRESENT	ABSENT
Bradley Deckelbaum, Chair	P	11	0
Mel Rubinstein, Vice Chair	P	8	3
Anthony Abbate	P	1	0
Jordana L. Jarjura	A	8	3
Ina Lee	P	2	0
Dan Matchette	P	10	1
Melissa Milroy	P	10	1
Judith Scher	A	9	2
Tim Schiavone	A	8	3
Aiton Yaari (l. at 3:38 p.m.)	P	5	0

Staff

Don Morris, Beach CRA Director
 Earl Prizlee, Beach CRA
 Eileen Furedi, Economic Development Representative
 Barbara Hartmann, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communications to City Commission

None.

Quorum Requirement

As of this date there were 10 appointed members to the Board, which means 6 would constitute a quorum. It was noted there was a quorum at the commencement of the meeting.

I. Call to Order/Roll Call – Bradley Deckelbaum, Chairperson

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m. by Chair Deckelbaum.

Roll was called by Ms. Hartmann.

Mr. Abbate introduced himself, noting he has been a practicing architect in Fort Lauderdale since 1985, and is the Associate Provost and CEO for the Broward campuses of Florida Atlantic University.

II. Approval of Minutes, December 14, 2011 - Bradley Deckelbaum Chairperson

Motion by Mr. Rubenstein, seconded by Mr. Matchette, to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2011, minutes. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

III. Discussion of Creating a Commercial Façade Program – Donald Morris, Beach CRA Director

Mr. Morris introduced the idea of starting a commercial façade program on the beach to leverage what they want to do with the Streetscapes projects. The Northwest CRA area has a program already, on which he wants feedback from this Board. Mr. Morris said they have \$50K in this year's budget to possibly establish a program such as this.

Mr. Morris provided an overview of the Northwest CRA façade program, including what items are eligible, grants provided, and requirements. Although the Northwest CRA program has design guidelines, Mr. Morris stated that the Beach does not, except to identify important elements to encourage pedestrian interaction.

Areas that might be prime for this project are

- Southeast 5th Street - with the redevelopment of the Aquatics Complex and the Ron Jon facility, the north side would have a need to redevelop.
- The area along the west side of A1A, north of Southeast 5th Street, could benefit from some improvements. He noted it is not a very inviting pedestrian area.
- The Beach Boys Plaza property
- Elbow Room
- North side of Las Olas Boulevard
- North on A1A

Mr. Yaari said the Elbow Room is better than it was, and he has renovations/facelifts planned for several buildings on his block. He offered to bring a rendering to the next meeting. He doubted that the areas behind the Elbow Room would benefit from minor projects (\$10K-\$20K), when much more is needed.

Ms. Lee spoke in favor of a cohesive project where all the buildings tie together, not a piecemeal approach. She said the corner of A1A and Las Olas is an "eyesore."

Mr. Abbate commented that since the area fronts the beach, materials will be more expensive and specs will be higher. He wondered if the budget would be large enough. Mr. Abbate also suggested offering incentives up to a maximum amount and focusing only on one component such as lighting.

Chair Deckelbaum did not think it would be feasible to put together a “master plan” for the area due to the existing buildings. He also liked the idea of focusing on one element. Chair Deckelbaum remarked part of the next major step is master streetscape plans, and wondered if they wanted to incorporate guideposts into that as an elective out of the capital improvement budget, instead of making a separate program out of it.

Mr. Morris said there is a major focus on the streetscapes on the west side of A1A and pedestrian ways along the Intracoastal. He thought the problem with offering incentives as part of the funding for the public improvement portion is that the CIP is for capital improvement. However, they could set aside operating funds to do the façade program. Chair Deckelbaum explained that his concern had more to do with the consistency of the facades with the streetscapes.

Mr. Yaari said his project from Spazio through Miniaci would be done by the end of 2012. Regarding the Elbow Room, they just repainted. He also mentioned several other renovated properties. Mr. Yaari felt the efforts should be concentrated in the area behind the Elbow Room (properties on Las Olas) because that is the entrance to the beach and would get the “biggest bang for the buck.”

Mr. Rubenstein spoke in favor of the project, noting it is not meant to address major renovations, but to spruce up the exterior – he said it is “seed money.” He also wanted to maintain the beach ambience of individualized façades.

Chair Deckelbaum noted they would have to agree on what constitutes a façade, and wondered what types of standards (such as colors, lighting) they might want and how to set those standards.

Mr. Abbate said that more often than not, when there are budget constraints, the design budget will be cut. He suggested having the grant be for design, with the developer paying for construction costs. In a similar program, the County had a pool of approved designers that the owners could choose from.

Mr. Matchette and Chair Deckelbaum both expressed interest in that concept.

There was a brief discussion on the impact a small amount of money could make in the beach area.

Mr. Morris expressed concern in the event that \$15K-\$20K was spent on design and the project did not happen. Ms. Milroy said there would have to be some type of commitment from the owner.

Ms. Lee suggested reviewing best practices for this type of project, and also suggested having a “Town Meeting” with all of the business owners. Another possibility she suggested was bringing in design groups to have a competition.

Mr. Yaari said that being a business and property owner for 22 years on Fort Lauderdale Beach, the problem is that the businesses are “the orphans on the beach.” He felt the City Commissioners for the area do not care about them and do not reach out to them. He hoped the City Commission would assist the beach.

Mr. Matchette mentioned a similar case made by Galt Ocean Mile, which did not get anywhere with the City, due to lack of funds to dress up the street behind U.S. 1. They ended up forming a special tax district for themselves, borrowing the money from the City and taxed themselves to pay it back. He felt private enterprise “doing for” private enterprise was successful.

Mr. Abbate said the notion of the arts design grant is to work within a budget. Federal money is also available from the National Endowment for the Arts, and the design arts grant program is focused on building “complete cities” or “complete streets,” enhancing pedestrian environments. The Director of the NEA will be at FAU and Nova Southeastern Museum of Art to talk about the grant program on January 26, and he suggested applying for the grant. Mr. Abbate offered to attend and collect information.

Mr. Rubenstein wondered how BID fit into the scheme of things. Ms. Lee said the BID is the businesses on A1A who are taxing themselves above whatever else they do to put money into projects which enhance their businesses at the beach. Ms. Lee gave a history of the BID.

Mr. Morris added that typically the BID uses their money for clean-up and marketing activities. He did not know whether they can use their money for incentive programs for façades. Mr. Morris commented the tax began as a voluntary tax but is now mandatory.

Mr. Rubenstein wondered if the design specialist would come up with a plan for an entire block of stores, and Mr. Abbate replied it would be individual projects, with budgets determined by the owner. Mr. Abbate used South Beach as a successful example.

Mr. Abbate elaborated that the design would be funded by a grant from the CRA to individual businesses (a line item within a business proposal). Chair Deckelbaum explained that Mr. Morris suggested that the funding would go toward the actual work, and Mr. Abbate proposed that the money would go for enhanced design. Mr. Abbate added that the work would have to be done, or the money would be reimbursed.

Chair Deckelbaum wondered what keeps the businesses in the area from doing projects.

Mr. Yaari emphasized he was not criticizing the Mayor or the City Commission. He thought maybe the business owners did not have the ideas or know-how to improve

their properties. Chair Deckelbaum asked Mr. Yaari if he felt the businesses are ready to reinvest capital, and Mr. Yaari thought they were ready now after going through the rough economy and acquiring a different clientele (more family oriented).

Ms. Milroy wondered if they could raise the dollar figure for a certain area, and Chair Deckelbaum thought that would be possible. He would want to target Almond Avenue. Mr. Yaari said that street has infrastructure issues, such as sewer and electric.

Ms. Lee commented on the quality of merchandise (tee-shirts) sold in that area, and Mr. Yaari said the upgrading is slowly taking place. Chair Deckelbaum said this program would help owners who want to change, but they cannot force people who do not want to change.

Chair Deckelbaum brought up another option: offer to cover permitting fees for façade improvement alone or as part of a bigger project. Mr. Yaari advocated making it easier for people to get through the permitting process so they are not “scared away” from making improvements.

Mr. Morris said they will put some general guidelines together for further discussion at the next meeting. Chair Deckelbaum suggested incorporating an incentive program into the Streetscape project, where businesses would get help with the permitting process and/or fees along with the design grant.

Mr. Lee discussed the importance of lighting design being consistent with new guidelines for turtle lighting. Mr. Abbate commented that for an area that would be a multi-pronged approach, with the lighting design fee and permit process.

Chair Deckelbaum wondered if it would be more effective to get people to spend a little bit of money for redoing the façade, or making it easier for them to do whole scale business improvements. Mr. Abbate suggested having a menu of items, so businesses could either do small or large projects, and everyone could do something. Mr. Rubenstein said that would also motivate people to keep up with their neighbors.

Mr. Morris pointed out that the Streetscape project is just for public property.

Chair Deckelbaum asked for an update and timeframe on overall design programs. Mr. Morris said they could provide a “small update” at this meeting and a larger one at the next meeting.

Mr. Prizlee reported he is in negotiations with all the top-ranked consultants. He said they have gone through the actual scope of the work, and now are into hours and rates. Under the feasibility studies, the most that can be spent under the CCNAs is \$200K. He said the Intracoastal lot is massive, and they are working with different ways to accomplish the surveys and hope to discover all potential issues and costs in advance. Once the feasibility studies are done, they have to move forward as quickly

as they can. Mr. Prizlee said they will put it on the City Commission agenda for February 21, 2012. They are putting together strict timelines, and all teams will know the deadlines.

Mr. Yaari asked about underground utilities for Almond Avenue, and Mr. Prizlee responded that Almond Avenue could range from major construction to a fresh streetscape with underground utilities, sidewalks and curbs.

IV. Communications to the City Commission (not addressed)

V. Old/New Business

Ms. Lee noted that the '100' sign is coming down in March and wondered what is going to happen there. Mr. Prizlee said that was a specific project tied to the Oceanside lot. The consultant who has the Oceanside lot also has the '100' sign site. Mr. Prizlee said the consultants will be looking at some type of iconic structure. He added that the Board will be seeing conceptual renderings of all the projects.

Mr. Morris said they do not have a specific plan for anything temporary at the '100' site. Ms. Lee advocated for an interim point of interest there that would not be too costly. Mr. Morris said their budget is very tight, and they hesitate to commit to something at this point.

Mr. Abbate suggested extending the '100' sign, adding a sign underneath relating to the visioning project.

Ms. Lee also asked about fiber optic lighting. Mr. Prizlee said they will be exploring LED strips and new LED drivers driving the fiber optics.

[Mr. Yaari left at 3:38 pm.]

Mr. Prizlee said there might be CIP money left in the Beach Improvement portion for areas outside of the CRA.

VI. Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Chair Deckelbaum adjourned the meeting at 3:46 p.m.

[Minutes prepared by J. Rubin, Prototype, Inc.]