

**COMMISSION CONFERENCE MEETING AGENDA****MAY 2, 2006**

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**COMMISSION CONFERENCE MEETING      1:30 P.M.      MAY 2, 2006**

Present: Mayor Naugle  
Vice Mayor Hutchinson, Commissioners Rodstrom, and Teel  
Commissioner Moore joined the meeting at approximately 2:04 p.m.

Absent: None

Also Present: City Manager – George Gretsas  
City Attorney - Harry A. Stewart  
City Clerk - Jonda K. Joseph  
Sergeant At Arms – Sergeant Rod McGowan

**I-A – Consolidated Downtown Master Plan Revisions**

The City Manager said there is a saying that goes, a journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step. Today is the first step in a process to address changes in this Master Plan. They would like to frame out a process where the City can include other groups such as the Downtown Development Authority in the future.

Marc LaFerrier, Planning and Zoning Director, said that Exhibit A in the back-up material are the actual amendments that would be inserted into the Master Plan; it is not the complete Master Plan. Some guidelines are complicated and need to be viewed with respect to specific properties and how they relate to the downtown as a whole. They are guidelines, not zoning regulations and meant to be flexible while attempting to produce a desired outcome, such as streetscape, building massing, and uses. Other solutions that are better than a guideline may be considered which still meet the intent of the Plan, or there may be compelling reasons why a development project cannot adhere to some of these guidelines.

Mr. LaFerrier reviewed the presentation slide materials, which are attached to these minutes and available in the City Clerk's Office.

Mr. LaFerrier said the Master Plan adopted two years ago was a watershed of understanding on urban planning and design for the City. It follows very proven design principles used throughout the world in building cities over many generations. The modifications today are a refinement. The first two items address activating the street and creating the urban environment, and the second item is building massing and how they relate to one another, their size, and so forth. Other items on the list are areas they felt are missing in the old master plan.

With reference to activating the street, Mr. LaFerrier said this has been one of the precipices of the Downtown Master Plan, and they want to continue this. There are additional guidelines and ideas. He mentioned the urban streetscape and noted some examples for commercial and residential areas. Walk-ups were cited. Retail space should be properly designed to encourage pedestrian activity.

Mayor Naugle asked how the floor level could be equal to the sidewalk due to flood regulations. Mr. LaFerrier said that issue needs to be addressed further with the various agencies. The interior of the building will not have to be raised in all cases. The

desired approach is to have a storefront flush or equal to the interior of the retail space as far as the ground floor plan is concerned. Also, they addressed the size of the retail space so it would be meaningful.

With respect to building mass, Mr. LaFerrier noted the same principles are followed that were discussed for a downtown to have different characterized geographic areas. The downtown core should have the most intense uses. The transition was accomplished by changing some of the building mass regulations. For example, in the downtown core, if a building was to exceed 30 stories, there would be a special review. The floor plate size would become more slender as the building gets taller in order to provide more light and air onto the street, and more dimension to the building itself relative to other buildings. This helps to create a more dramatic skyline and provides more opportunity for a variety of building forms. Shoulder height refers to the street wall. There should be a consistent street wall according to the character type. In the downtown core, it would be four to nine floor. Otherwise it appears too imposing on the street. Each character area was noted.

In regard to massing of buildings in the downtown and as they begin to touch against the perimeter, Mr. LaFerrier referred to the transition zones for the RAC-CC. Currently for the first 100' horizontally, the height can be 150' and then the building should be stepped one foot up, and one foot back to 250'. They are proposing adding to the transition zones as shown in the presentation materials. With respect to neighborhoods directly adjacent to the downtown, a transition zone of 200' is proposed. Within the 200', there would be a lower building height. Two hundred feet is about mid-block of a city block. The building would not be taller than two times the maximum height allowed in the adjacent residential neighborhood which it faces. As the building faces the downtown interior and is more than 200' away, it could be as high as other buildings in that character area.

Commissioner Moore arrived at approximately 1:53 p.m.

Mr. LaFerrier said another important item is the separation between towers. When building height goes above the shoulder height, typically 2-9 stories, there needs to be a dimension of vertical open space between two buildings either on its own property or on adjacent property. Approximately 30' from the property line, each facing building would have to step back to create vertical open space of about 60'. This requirement could be met for projects approved in the last 18 months, and could be accomplished on less than one-half acre.

Mr. LaFerrier said that good retail streets are not created by placing retail everywhere because a critical mass never develops. They want to identify the most appropriate areas for retail. Certain areas such as Las Olas, the riverfront and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street should have continuous retail. Andrews Avenue should be reactivated as a retail street, as well as Sistrunk Boulevard. In other areas it would be sporadic, such as 6<sup>th</sup> Street south of the river which would consist of primarily governmental buildings, and Third Avenue.

Mr. LaFerrier said that storefront designs are important, including a variety and use of durable materials and proper use of glass. Lighting is also something that could be a dramatic addition to the area, accentuating architectural features. He mentioned encouragement of two-story retail areas.

Wayne Jessup, Planning and Zoning, addressed architecture.

Wayne Jessup said one of the interesting things discovered in the last couple years is that over a period of time as the design and development community became more comfortable with the Master Plan, the quality of projects greatly improved. It is important that they understand the Master Plan. They decided to create some objective standards to encourage projects to be designed to meet the intent of the Master Plan. They addressed primarily elements viewed by the public such as facades, and style. Colored buildings create a unique skyline that is identifiable and becomes a landmark in itself. One way to do this is to look at the tops of the buildings which should be integrated into the overall design. Pier 66 has a dominant top, relates to the building itself and is one of the City's landmarks. They want to ask people to think about this when designing their buildings.

With respect to buildings over 30 feet in height, Mr. Jessup said that they need to think about the tops and how they relate to the ground. Such a building should have an equally prominent space on the ground. A public gathering place could be created as part of a project and make a special place along the street. Especially on the first two floors, building materials should be more creative and dramatic creating a feel for pedestrians. The materials should be stone, concrete. Another way to activate buildings is through forms including balconies, overhangs, and capturing sunlight to create interesting shadows, for example, designing a building sympathetic to this environment and identifying with this region of the country. They are suggesting that historic buildings be respected as to their form and mass. Taller buildings provide roofscapes which should be as attractive as the elevations of the buildings.

Mr. LaFerrier said there are a series of updates in the Master Plan which recognize public planning and development initiatives occurring in the downtown. Principles should be defined for each planning study. Whether it be the City or another agency undergoing a public initiative in the downtown, planning and design principles would be available. The updated Master Plan would address the Arts and Entertainment District, Government Campus, Flagler Art and Technology Village, Judicial Campus and River Plan. He gave examples and particularly emphasized the river. He reviewed the presentation materials relating to the river. For the retail areas, the 60 foot setback required for all buildings is sometimes under-utilized. A dining area by the river is one suggested use, similar to Lincoln Road in Miami Beach.

Mr. LaFerrier drew attention to the presentation materials relating to accessing Riverwalk. This would mean building shoulder heights would be lowered and then stepped back at ground level for a wider sidewalk, and stepping back the tower as well to open a view corridor. For buildings parallel to the river, shoulder heights would be a little lower, the building would be stepped back and oriented perpendicular to the river. This would prevent a canyon effect.

Mr. LaFerrier noted in the RACC-C zoning area there are no parking regulations at this time, which would present some significant issues. A study should be done and recommendations provided. They also want to allow for tandem, mechanical parking for EVAs in the downtown.

Mr. LaFerrier noted the presentation material for building over streets or alleys. In downtowns, the street is part of the public space, where people interact. It is important to retain a good street pattern.

Mr. LaFerrier said they are attempting to ensure that light would not spill over and become a problem, and therefore, several new guidelines will be proposed to minimize glare. The same applies to noise pollution. Burying power lines will also improve aesthetics.

Commissioner Teel was concerned that people are sometimes searching for shade. She felt canvas awnings are attractive. She questioned if the guidelines are leaning toward solid materials. Mr. LaFerrier agreed that shading for pedestrians is crucial and canvas awnings have been used very successfully, but they can also be problematic in regard to maintenance. The goal is to make the awnings durable while still being light and airy and fit into the architecture.

Commissioner Teel said that tinted windows are being discouraged and questioned this with the sunlight and fading. Mr. Jessup said that technology exists today whereby windows can be created that reject the heat and are insulated, but still clear. Commissioner Teel asked about the cost for such windows. Mr. Jessup said there is a cost difference, but if it is pro-rated, considering a storefront and a 30-story building, it is not all that much and it creates more interaction with the street. That material would not have to be used for the entire building. Activation of the street is important.

Commissioner Teel referred to the river; sometimes the large boats block the view. She asked if they considered restrictive docking or some remedy. Mr. LaFerrier agreed, they want to create a river plan that would manage such issues. It was not done with this Master Plan Update.

Vice Mayor Hutchinson said the Downtown Development Authority requested they be provided one hour perhaps at the next conference meeting for a one-on-one discussion.

Mayor Naugle asked what is the next step on this matter. Mr. LaFerrier said they want to hold public workshops, and then it would come back before the Commission before going to the Planning and Zoning Board.

Mayor Naugle agreed there should be a joint meeting with the DDA at a 12:30 p.m. timeframe.

The City Manager said whatever the Commission decides regarding the length of process for this matter, this is tied into the 3,000 units. The Commission would need to decide if they want these changes to apply to the 3,000 units, time would be extended until this process is completed.

Commissioner Moore asked about the public input process. Mr. LaFerrier said they want to make a presentation to the DDA, and then a general workshop. This is an update to the Master Plan that was done three years ago. Three workshops were held. Commissioner Moore felt this should require a great deal of input, and he was not certain that one workshop would be sufficient.

Mayor Naugle said there would be four meetings if they followed the proposed course. There would be a joint meeting with the DDA, a public workshop, a public hearing by the

Planning and Zoning Board, and then a public hearing by the City Commission for formal adoption.

Commissioner Moore referred to the riverfront, and noted the development community would have to be induced to follow these guidelines. The public would also have to buy into these changes. He did not think that could be achieved at the Planning and Zoning Board meeting or a 12:30 p.m. meeting. If the downtown is the City's economic engine, then they need to find a way to emphasize to the people the City's mission.

Commissioner Hutchinson pointed out there would be public workshop in addition to the DDA meeting.

Commissioner Hutchinson said if the City wants the 3,000 units online, then they need to decide upon this process.

Commissioner Moore emphasized the need for the community to understand what is taking place. There should be more public input.

Mayor Naugle was comfortable with the four meetings outlined earlier, if the public workshop could be held on a Saturday at the Performing Arts Center, which he thought was how it was done when the Master Plan was originally considered.

Mr. LaFerrier outlined there would be a direct meeting with the DDA, a Commission joint meeting with the DDA, a public workshop, Commission meeting which would be public, Planning and Zoning Board meeting and Commission meeting for final adoption. Commissioner Moore concurred.

**Action:** A joint workshop with the Downtown Development Authority at 12:30 pm prior to a future conference meeting was requested. (consensus) There will be one general workshop. The matter will return to the Commission before being presented to the Planning & Zoning Board and then back to the Commission for final adoption.

### **I-B – Utilization of Optional Sales Tax Revenue – South Florida Regional Transportation Authority Initiative**

Commissioner Moore said he met with Mr. Cummings in reference to this matter. He referred to a recent presentation to the Commission. In that presentation, it was stated that there is the optional penny that could be used for transportation. At the time, he had raised concern that there were no elected officials on the committee. Mr. Cummings indicated that some municipal entities signed a resolution of support, those being Miramar and Pembroke Pines. Commissioner Moore questioned if the City should consider it and should it only be for transportation.

Mayor Naugle said he had a similar meeting and asked about the priorities for spending the money because he did not want to endorse an extra penny sales tax until he knew where the money was going to go. Commissioner Moore agreed with that position.

Commissioner Moore said the City might want to direct how the money should be spent. He thought some of the money should go toward attainable housing and open green space, along with transportation. He posed the idea of ½ cent toward transportation. He wanted the City Manager to investigate this.

Mayor Naugle said he discussed this with other mayors. The proposal would have 10% of the funds go to cities for transportation. The existing penny sales tax split is 36% to the cities and 64% to the counties. There is a developing consensus that the cities should receive 36% and the County receive 64%. The argument could be that transit dependent housing or housing along the transit line would relieve traffic and be considered a transportation expenditure.

Commissioner Moore said that by allowing only one option, one is not utilizing the opportunities presented by this additional regressive tax. There should be other things given to the public because of its regressiveness. He agreed with the mayors that there should be another option from what is being offered. The City should be able to review options. Perhaps they should then go to the League of Cities. Transportation is important. Mass transit is a void in this county and should be addressed, but there are other issues such as attainable housing, green space and historic renovations that could be addressed with these monies. Fort Lauderdale has three representatives on the League of Cities. The City may be able to move this forward.

Commissioner Teel said that at the last Metropolitan Planning Organization meeting, April 13<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Hart was present on this matter. The question of how these monies should be spent arose, and Mr. Hart said that within ten days, additional information would be forthcoming to the cities. Also, one County Commissioner at the meeting said they are not sure this should be placed on the ballot since they want a new government campus. Mayor Naugle added there is also the judicial complex which is half a billion dollars. Commissioner Teel said it seems the conclusion about transportation is light rail. The dollar amount is staggering. She was not sure about taking away from the penny. There might be an opportunity to target money for buildings along the rail line which could serve as the beginning of affordable housing. From attending the MPO meetings, she said there is definitely a serious need. There is some confusion surrounding the penny proposal. She thought Commissioner Moore's idea might add to the confusion.

Mayor Naugle said to accomplish what Commissioner Moore is suggesting there would have to be a separate municipal tax imposed, not a County tax, rather than to link it with this one.

Commissioner Moore wanted to deal with facts. One-half a cent forever could accomplish anything. He noted the bonding capabilities of a one-half cent, which offers a great deal of opportunity. They need to evaluate if the penny could be split in half and the benefits if it is done.

Mayor Naugle concluded one-half cent would go to the cities for whatever purpose. Commissioner Moore concurred.

Discussion ensued about comments made amongst governments about the funding and its potential.

Mayor Naugle asked if the Commission should invite the group promoting this tax to a meeting and request back-up information to be provided.

Commissioner Moore said he wanted to first obtain the information so staff could evaluate the impact of a half-cent, and then the Commission discuss the issue and decide if the group should be invited.

Mayor Naugle asked in the meantime if the transportation tax should proceed forward, a larger percentage be given to the cities. Commissioner Moore said at this time he did not feel anyone should speak in the positive about this penny until more information is provided.

The City Manager said the study would be to look at the potential revenue of the half-cent, and then the Commission could decide on the categories for the money to be spent.

Mayor Naugle said the Sales Tax Division should have figures as to what funds would be collected in Fort Lauderdale in comparison to other cities. They are talking about distribution to the cities based on population, but he suspected Fort Lauderdale's collection would be much more than that. Commissioner Moore concurred.

**EXECUTIVE CLOSED DOOR SESSION AT 2:41 P.M.**

**MEETING RECONVENED AT 2: 58 P.M.**

**II-A—March 2006 Monthly Financial Report**

Mayor Naugle said that overtime has increased but much of that is due to storm related clean-up (hurricane aftermath).

**Action:** Approved as presented.

Commissioner Moore left the meeting at approximately 3:02 p.m.

**III – B – Advisory Board and Committee Vacancies**

Audit Committee

**Action:** Deferred.

Board of Adjustment

**Action:** Deferred

Cemeteries Advisory Board

Commissioner Moore recommended Richard Kurtz for appointment to the Cemeteries Advisory Board.

**Action:** Formal Action To Be Taken At Regular Meeting.

Charter Revision Board



Vice Mayor Hutchinson recommended Dr. Ronald Bright for appointment to the Charter Revision Board.

Mayor Naugle recommended Chris Fertig for reappointment to the Charter Revision Board.

**Action:** Formal Action To Be Taken At Regular Meeting.

Community Appearance Advisory Board

**Action:** Deferred.

Community Services Board

**Action:** Deferred.

Education Advisory Board

Mayor Naugle recommended Dr. Leola McCoy for appointment to the Education Advisory Board.

**Action:** Formal Action To Be Taken At Regular Meeting.

Fire-Rescue Facilities Bond Issue Blue Ribbon

**Action:** Deferred

Board of Commissioners, City of Fort Lauderdale Housing Authority

Mayor Naugle recommended Tam English for appointment to the Board of Commissioners, City of Fort Lauderdale Housing Authority.

**Action:** Formal Action To Be Taken At Regular Meeting.

Historic Preservation Advisory Board

**Action:** Deferred.

Marine Advisory Board

Commissioner Rodstrom recommended Ryan Campbell and Alec Anderson for appointment to the Marine Advisory Board.

**Action:** Formal Action To Be Taken At Regular Meeting.

Northwest-Progresso-Flagler Heights Redevelopment Board

Commissioner Teel recommended Brad Hubert for appointment to the Northwest-Progresso-Flagler Heights Redevelopment Board.

**Action:** Formal Action To Be Taken At Regular Meeting.

Planning and Zoning Board

Commissioner Rodstrom recommended Steve Glassman for reappointment to the Planning and Zoning Board.

**Action:** Formal Action To Be Taken At Regular Meeting.

**IV - Commission Reports**Federal Highway U.S. 1 Master Plan

Commissioner Teel said that on Saturday, May 13, 2006 at 9:00 a.m., there will be the kick-off of the Federal Highway U.S. 1 Master Plan at Imperial Point Hospital Auditorium. She said there will be two segments: Sunrise Boulevard to Oakland Park Boulevard, and then Oakland Park to the city limits of Pompano Beach.

WaterWorks 2011 in Sunrise Intracoastal & Air & Sea Show

Commissioner Teel said there is a lot of equipment from the WaterWorks 2011 project at Sunrise Intracoastal at the Middle River gate. She was concerned that the equipment would be left in the area where residents would be entering and exiting due to the Air and Sea Show. Police Chief Roberts agreed to make sure the right thing is done.

Fire Hydrants

Commissioner Teel said there will be new fire hydrants due to the WaterWorks 2011 Project.

Trash; Northwest area (South Middle River and Northwest Progresso)

Commissioner Rodstrom said one of the areas in the northwest has a huge problem with dumping which is leading to Code violations. The South Middle River area from January to April had 500 Code violations. The Northwest-Progresso area has given a list of 100 potential Code violations. She referred to the close of the transfer station and reduced number of bulk trash pick-up times. She asked what the remedy is since the services have been lessened.

Commissioner Moore returned to the meeting at approximately 3:06 p.m.

Commissioner Hutchinson commented about bulk trash. Because there was a pickup every two weeks, people just left their trash on the street. By the time they were cited, the truck would pick it up. There was no opportunity for people to understand the rules.

Commissioner Rodstrom suggested for perhaps a three-month period an increase in bulk-trash pick-up for certain areas before hurricane season begins.

Vice Mayor Teel noted that there is some dumping onto private property.

Mayor Naugle said that closing of the trash transfer station increased dumping throughout the City. Commissioner Rodstrom asked where materials could be taken. Vice Mayor Hutchinson said there is a County facility.

Commissioner Moore said they discussed increasing the tipping fee for the trash transfer station, and it was noted that the rate was same as for the private sector. Therefore, the City was not offering anything to entice a person to utilize the trash transfer station. To increase the fee would cause additional dumping anyway, therefore it was decided to get rid of that location. It was always recommended that there be another location offered on State Road 84, but nothing was implemented.

Commissioner Rodstrom asked if the problem could be remedied possibly with an extra bulk trash day for about three months in certain areas.

Mayor Naugle suggested publicizing the available stations. He supported re-opening the trash transfer station because it was a way to cut down on dumping, but the majority of the Commission was not in favor of doing so.

Commissioner Moore said the problem is the City does not enforce their own laws, and once recommendations are made nothing happens.

Commissioner Rodstrom wanted to provide the service so people do not have to be caught.

Commissioner Moore felt an example should be set by placing names of individuals in newspapers who have violated the law. This would show that the City is taking this seriously.

Commissioner Rodstrom said she will continue to pursue this matter until changes are made to resolve the situation.

Commissioner Moore referred to 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the trash along it. It does not appear they are all working together in order to address this problem.

In response to Commissioner Rodstrom, Commissioner Teel noted that an individual can call, pay a fee and have items picked up.

Commissioner Moore believed education on the matter will help. Commissioner Rodstrom agreed. Commissioner Moore felt the education should include details about the process. The City should utilize policing of sites where a number of dumping is occurring.

Commissioner Teel asked about neighbors reporting when the dumping happens. Commissioner Moore explained there are a lot of absentee landlords, the broken window syndrome.

Commissioner Teel indicated that people are concerned about flying debris in a storm.

Vice Mayor Hutchinson said that trash is a problem in District IV. It does not appear to be getting any better. It has to be a team effort. Police officers should go through the areas and cite individuals who are violating the law.

Commissioner Moore thought that it does not appear other cities have this problem and they do not have a transfer station.

Mayor Naugle felt one reason is a high percentage of rentals and absentee landlords are part of the problem.

Commissioner Moore felt that obviously the City's rules are not working. Commissioner Rodstrom said the City should be more pro-active regarding this issue and start with something.

Commissioner Moore asked if an extra bulk pick-up could be scheduled prior to the hurricane season, and asked staff to provide information regarding the cost impact. Commissioner Rodstrom said that could then be advertised throughout the neighborhoods. She did not think it would be necessary citywide. Commissioner Moore felt it would have to be offered citywide.

Vice Mayor Hutchinson was concerned that by offering a service without enforcement at the same time will not help solve the issue. There must be an enforcement package to accompany the special pick-up.

The City Manager said the NEAT Program works well. This is an enforcement package that is time tested. Problem areas have been identified. The City Attorney's recommendation is to address another area before returning to the same area. The issue is corrected through a teamwork approach. It is not just police or code, but also public relations and all of the things that were done. The vast majority of the properties involved absentee landlords who are exploiting their tenants at the expense of the City and the neighborhood.

Commissioner Rodstrom said she is not a big supporter of the NEAT Program. She preferred to take a more humanistic approach. She believed more in maintenance and service from the City.

Commissioner Teel said that is true in regard to the long-term, but something needs to be done before the hurricane season and there is no time to be sensitive. If one thinks there will be a sweep and all of the trash will be cleaned up, she said it will come back. Plus the trash is not neatly piled; it is all over the lot. She pointed out that the absentee landlord is not throwing the trash on the ground.

Mayor Naugle and Commissioner Teel did not think the extra pickup is the way to go.

Commissioner Moore thought it would only address the issue of hurricane season. The landlords are evicting tenants and throwing furniture onto the street. Once that occurs, everyone else throws other debris adjacent to it. The results from the NEAT Program were astounding, and it showed that absentee landlords are the culprits. When people were educated, they came into compliance. He believed that information provided in a different language for the 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue area would be helpful. People need to be educated and that would help remedy the problem. In addition, something has to be done when they do something wrong.

Commissioner Rodstrom agreed about offering another language.

The City Manager offered to assist.

### Sistrunk Boulevard Streetscape Enhancement Project

Commissioner Moore did not want the Sistrunk Boulevard matter placed on tonight's agenda. The County promised an opportunity would be provided for public input, and that has not yet occurred. It is not fair that the matter be addressed without first receiving public input. He asked that this be removed from tonight's agenda, and that City staff meet with the County, and that a public workshop be held at the African-American Research Library. Both plans should be presented. In the meantime additional research can be done. They are about to lose \$7.5 million in federal funds. He wanted facts regarding these funds. If the funding is going to be lost and the County insists that they will not do what the community requested, then they show the methodology as to how those funds would be replaced.

Mayor Naugle thought the federal portion of \$2.5 million. Commissioner Moore indicated the first portion if \$2 million, but there is another \$7 million in the next funding cycle.

Commissioner Moore did not want the City to take a position on the matter without first receiving sufficient information.

Mayor Naugle said at the meeting in front of the County Commission, he promised the County Mayor that this item would be discussed tonight.

Commissioner Moore said the County also promised that public input would be provided, and that has not happened. He thought the County is asking the City to take a position tonight.

Commissioner Rodstrom believed it is for discussion only.

Vice Mayor Hutchinson pointed out that there is no backup in the agenda package.

Commissioner Moore suggested the Mayor write the County and say that the public input has not happened.

Mayor Naugle did not remember that promise.

Commissioner Moore wanted the County to provide a presentation to the public first before they come to the City.

Mayor Naugle said they tried to designate Commissioner Moore to meet with County Commissioner Rodstrom and see what issues they could agree upon and that would be presented to the Commission tonight and possibly a decision could be made.

Commissioner Moore said he has not met with the Commissioner and a plan has not yet been presented to him. He said this is a public project.

Commissioner Rodstrom remembered that staff was going to meet. Commissioner Moore said staff did meet, but he was not given an invitation to meet with them. Commissioner Rodstrom indicated she was notified that staff was meeting.

Commissioner Teel thought a presentation should be made this evening since it already is on the agenda. The Commission is not obligated to vote on anything. It would be upsetting to the public for it to be canceled. At that point, the City could reinforce that the public has to have this opportunity which can then be addressed. She was not ready to vote on anything.

Commissioner Moore asked that the Commission agree now that there will be a public meeting on this where presentations will be made by the County and the City.

Mayor Naugle did not want to agree to anything until he hears what is being presented this evening.

#### Fire Houses at 700 and 712 SW 2 Court

Vice Mayor Hutchinson said a fire occurred at 700 SW 2 Court, and also the house at 712 SW 2 Court is falling down and becoming an eyesore for the community. She asked the Building Official to move forward in having the houses demolished.

The City Attorney said that arson is suspected. Homeless individuals have lived in these buildings. Fines on these properties total over \$500,000. The City foreclosed on the property and summary judgment was granted. Three hearings have been held for a motion to reconsider the foreclosure. The judge granted it since allegations were made of improper notice. Another hearing will be held with proper notice. However, the Building Official has the authority, if these are unsafe structures, to have them demolished and a lien placed on the property.

#### Release of bond; Westside School building; Artspace, Inc.

Vice Mayor Hutchinson wanted to do a walk-on regarding Artspace. They want their bond released, and in lieu of that bond, they would pay the City \$221,000 in cash.

The City Attorney said the City has a bond. Lennar damaged an historic building they were to preserve, and it has been estimated that \$221,811.66 would be needed to repair the structure. The bond still exists and the property is to be given to Artspace as part of the Artspace project. Artspace will provide a cash bond to replace this surety bond. The City is not willing to lessen its position.

Commissioner Moore asked if this pertains to construction costs three years ago. The City Attorney confirmed that is correct. Vice Mayor Hutchinson said they are doing the work; not the City.

Mayor Naugle said they have to make sure the City is protected and guaranteed that the building will be restored.

The City Attorney said the restoration work being done goes far beyond the damaged portion. The bond was not to rehab the whole building. The City would be accepting a better deal than what they have now. Instead of the bond, the City would receive cash. When they are in the position to substitute a payment and performance bond, then the City would return the cash in exchange for another similar bond of \$221,000.

Citizen Volunteer Corps (CVC) Project

Vice Mayor Hutchinson announced a CVC project this Saturday at the Fort Lauderdale Women's Club. Interior painting will be done, beginning at 8:00 a.m.

Trolleys

Commissioner Teel announced that on May 11, 2006 at noon the new trolleys would be placed in front of the library. The web site [www.suntrolle.com](http://www.suntrolle.com) provides a lot of information.

Construction Permitting Back-Log

Mayor Naugle said there is a backlog of permitting in the Building Department. He asked the City Manager for a report.

The City Manager said there is a walk-on item at tonight's meeting regarding inspection services, and the expedited review approved by the Commission.

Valerie Bohlander, Building Director, said the expedited process will kick-off on May 22, 2006. She said the walk-on item will allow the City to begin utilizing contracted inspectors.

Mayor Naugle asked if extra revenue is available due to increased permitting activities to pay for this. Ms. Bohlander said she would not call it extra revenue, but they are concentrating on permits needed by individuals to secure their homes before the next hurricane season begins; that being roofs. There were 2,500 roofing permits issued in the last quarter in comparison to 511 last year during the same quarter. They are not able to get to the big ticket permits. The expedited program will assist in getting the department back on track, and the inspection services contract is more critical for day-to-day operations. She provided some historical overview to emphasize the overload. The department is now accepting photographs of roofs and other things that make sense and are lawful and will keep people moving through the process. People are working long hours.

Mayor Naugle asked if it would help alleviate the problem if the department was open on Sundays or Saturdays and operate by extra individuals. Ms. Bohlander said the clerking aspect of issuing a permit is very detailed. A temporary individual cannot do the because it involves a 6-8-12 month learning process. They have brought in temporary help to work behind the scenes and they do other things. Knowledgeable and experienced individuals are kept on the front line to keep things moving.

Mayor Naugle asked if possibly retirees could assist. Ms. Bohlander said this is being done and they are valuable, but their time is limited.

Commissioner Rodstrom asked what is the time frame for the proposed contract services. Kirk Buffington, Director of Procurement Services, said it is a one-year contract with four one-year options. Ms. Bohlander indicated it is on an as-needed basis.

Commissioner Moore was concerned that the City is having difficulty in finding inspectors. Ms. Bohlander said they are having a hard time with the Board of Rules and Appeals. Broward County has an administrative code attached to the Florida statute which is very restrictive. She is pursuing with other building officials the idea of meeting with the Board of Rules and Appeals to see if some emergency measures could be allowed.

Commissioner Moore asked what kind of guarantees are being put in place with respect to potential challenges in the future with respect to inspections and what about adequate number of individuals to be called to work. Mr. Buffington said the contract requires that the inspectors will be appropriately licensed and permitted. The City does not have a firm handle on the amount of work. Staff is recommending a dual award. They have both promised that they will bring to the table what is needed to meet the needs of the City. Retired inspectors from all over the southeast are being hired by these contractors. There is no minimum requirement in terms of staff. The City does not know what the need will be. The City has the ability to terminate for convenience or if the contractors are not responding in accordance to the RFP requirements, there can be a termination for default. He was confident with the two contractors being recommended.

#### Changing May 16, 2006 Commission Meetings

Mayor Naugle asked the Commission to consider changing the Commission meeting of May 16, 2006 to May 23, 2006 because he has been invited to the Whitehouse to meet the Prime Minister of Australia.

Commissioner Moore said the items of affordable housing and the Las Olas Lofts appeal should be placed on the agenda for a regularly scheduled meeting date because they are so important. Vice Mayor Hutchinson asked if those two items could be placed on the agenda for the Commission's first meeting in June. The City Attorney indicating that the housing item could be moved, and he will check on the Las Olas appeal.

The City Attorney said a resolution would be presented tonight.

#### **V – City Manager's Report**

None given.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:52 p.m.