

**NORTHWEST-PROGRESSO-FLAGLER HEIGHTS
REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
CITY HALL
April 26, 2006 – 3:30 P.M.
100 North Andrews Avenue
8th Floor Conference Room
Fort Lauderdale, Florida**

Board Members	Present	Cumulative from 01/01/06	
	Absent	(P)	(A)
Phyllis Berry	P	P-2	A-0
James Brady	P	P-4	A-0
Stan Brown, Chairman	P	P-4	A-0
Jim Carras	P	P-3	A-1
Jerry Carter	P	P-3	A-1
Albert Fils	A	P-3	A-1
Michael Ferber	P	P-4	A-0
Tim Hernandez	P	P-4	A-0
Mickey Hinton	P	P-1	A-0
Brice Lambrix	A	P-3	A-1
Laura Mutti	P	P-4	A-0
Ella Phillips, Vice Chair	P	P-4	A-0
Rosalind Osgood, Ph.D.	A	P-1	A-3
Marcia Barry Smith	A	P-1	A-3
Clare Vickery	P	P-4	A-0

Staff

Alfred Battle, Director CRA
Mina Samadi, Engineer, CRA Staff
Joan Oliva, Planning and Design Manager, CRA Staff
Bob Wojcik, Planner, CRA Staff

Visitors

Peter Feldman
Courtney Case
Jacqueline Tufts

I. Call to order/Roll call.

Chairman Brown called the meeting to order at 3:45 P.M. and welcomed Mickey Hinton to the board.

II. Approval of Minutes – March 22, 2006 regular meeting

Ms. Berry made a motion to approve the March 22, 2006 minutes. Ms. Phillips seconded the motion.

Chairman Brown asked for discussion on the motion.

Mr. Berry noted that on page 4, Item V, 4th paragraph, she is quoted as opining that there was no transit on these streets. Ms. Berry objects to the term opine as she made the statement after the fact.

Mr. Battle addressed the Board about the status of the November 17, 2005 meeting minutes, explaining why staff produced only the motions and not a full set of minutes. He advised that the full set cannot be retrieved from the staff's system and that he had spoken yesterday to Ms. Lebel, the court reporter, and ordered another set of minutes be prepared.

Ms. Mutti questioned whether items that have not been approved, items for which minutes have not been approved, should be discussed. Chairman Brown pointed out that the meeting occurred and that the Board has personal recollections of the business conducted. He added that the record keeping process is necessary, but the work of the Board needs to continue on. He advised that should the minutes show the Board acted differently or adversely to an issue, that issue will be discussed and the actions corrected at a future time.

Chairman Brown called for a vote. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

III. Evaluation committee Results for the Proposals for the Development of the 2130-2140 Northwest 6th Street Project Site

Mr. Battle advised that the evaluation committee meeting was held for this site, and that only one proposer came forth for this RFP; New Visions CDC. He advised that the city acquired the adjacent site and the sites may be combined to accommodate Phase two; a town home project. A 30-day notice was published for that site, and New Visions was the only interested party. The committee met and reviewed the material, asked questions, and made comments before voting. At that time the committee recommended it be brought forward to the CRA Advisory Board. Mr.

Battle advised that at that meeting the evaluation committee consisted of three members of city staff and two Advisory Board members. Jackie Tufts was present at today's meeting to answer any questions. Jim Carras and Laura Mutti, who were members of the evaluation committee, addressed the Board. Ms. Mutti commented that the proposal was not a complex project, and that the process of approval through the city would take care of any small items that still needed to be addressed. Mr. Carras agreed, and added that overall everyone was supportive.

Ms. Berry voiced a desire to hear what the questions were at that evaluation meeting. Mr. Battle informed her that the questions were included in the backup material.

Ms. Tufts addressed the Board. She advised that Bank of America has withdrawn its support, but that New Visions CDC will commit to the building of 14 townhouses on the property given by the CRA.

Ms. Berry inquired about the selling price of the units. She was advised that the prices were listed in the backup material.

Mr. Brady inquired if the financing had been in place when the committee was reviewing the proposal. Ms. Tufts answered, yes, that partner was in place with a firm commitment. Mr. Brady further commented that if the committee looked at a joint venture with two financial entities when they evaluated the project, what happens when, after the recommendation has been made, one financial partner withdraws. Chairman Brown answered that the RFP submitted included the fact that Bank of America was no longer involved.

A motion was made by Ms. Berry and seconded by Mr. Carter to accept the recommendation of the committee and forward it to the CRA Board.

Chairman Brown asked for further discussion. Hearing none, a vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Hernandez inquired where the figures were derived for the price caps. Ms. Tufts answered that those figures came from the city of Fort Lauderdale and they are based on the area median income, and also on HUD median income. She further advised that their grid was used for very low, low and moderate-income levels.

IV. Approval of Façade Program

Mr. Battle addressed the Board explaining that an application has come before this Board from Courtney Case requesting a waiver, raising the façade funding from the normal \$10k to \$20K, which is normally the criteria when businesses are

located along Sistrunk Boulevard. Mr. Case's business is located at 1005 West Broward Boulevard. He desires to bring the building located in the front of that property up to standard with the building located in the rear of the property, which he has already done. Staff supports his request and recommends the amount of \$20K be granted. The Advisory Board has to approve this item, as it is a waiver from the guidelines.

Mr. Case addressed the Board explaining his plans in more detail. His desire is to revamp the front building, but the shape and roofline will remain the same. He has \$29K worth of improvements planned. All of the improvements are cosmetic as the use stays the same: a coin laundry facility. Chairman Brown noted that waivers of \$20K had to be reviewed before the Board but added that today's presentation was not meant to be an in-depth review but rather in the nature of a request.

Mr. Battle agreed, adding that this waiver would not usurp any document agreements, just how the money is spent. He noted that this Board has final approval. He added that the normal guideline cap is \$10K but that staff is recommending the \$20K amount because of the location, volume of improvement, and type of building on this request.

Mr. Hernandez commented that as we have scarce public funds to use, he would prefer to get the most "bang for the buck" and has a difficult time giving one business owner more than 50% of the cost of improvement.

Mr. Carter commented that this program was designed to encourage businesses to enhance the aesthetics, and thereby the economics, of the Sistrunk area. He lamented that no one in the past had taken advantage of the program, and that for the most part we did not have the kind of participation we anticipated. He feels this is a project that is worthy, even though it is not on Sistrunk Boulevard.

Mr. Hernandez added that most grant programs have an if/but clause. If not for this grant, would the improvements still be made? He feels there is some inequity in saying we'll give someone 20K for a 29K project. What if someone wants to make a 70K improvement? Mr. Case noted that he has spent \$675K to improve this overall site, and he anticipates this façade improvement will cost much more before he is finished. Mr. Battle added that the but/for test is not relevant to this type of project. The goal is to make as many improvements as possible with the least amount of money possible.

Ms. Vickery noted that people that most need this type of funding should receive it because otherwise they will never be able to make the improvements. Chairman Brown noted that this project fits the criteria that this Board set up. Mr. Battle added that Mr. Case also has to satisfy the terms of the agreement. For instance, if Mr. Case sold the building in a certain number of years he would have to pay back the city's investment.

Mr. Ferber commented that in the abstract, and about façade programs in general, the Ruby Williams building is now vacant whereby on two occasions funds were advanced. He noted that if money were being given out, any good businessman would apply for it, and that if this program did not exist, this gentleman would make the renovations anyway. Mr. Case commented that had the city not given him a grant to build the building on Sunrise in the first place, it would not exist today.

The question was asked; with the resources that are available and the leverage we get, does it further the big picture or not? Chairman Brown noted that that money was put there to invite people in that corridor to respond.

Mr. Carter added that should the guidelines need tweaking in the future, that is something this Board may want to look into, but at the moment the program stands as offered. He conceded that this business is not located on Sistrunk but the entire CRA needs improvement. He suggested considering expanding the boundaries as it pertains to the façade program in the future.

Mr. Hernandez conceded that Mr. Case has invested a significant amount of money into his property, but he maintains that there should be some leverage to make the city dollars go farther.

Mr. Carter noted that at one time he had participated in the façade project on a business that was not on Sistrunk, and the most he could apply for was \$7500. He added that he spent much more, \$140K.

Mr. Hernandez commented that we should desire to do something that has a lasting effect and cautioned pouring money into a business that is marginal. Chairman Brown noted that staff is the gatekeeper of this program and that staff has made the recommendation.

Mr. Brady noted that he was persuaded by Mr. Carter's comments. Mr. Carras added that he is supportive, given the current grant structure, and feels the exception can be made at this point. He did suggest the Board examine the program again and perhaps label it a recoverable grant.

Ms. Berry made a motion to approve staff's recommendation for a waiver allowing \$20K to be disbursed for the façade program to the property located at 1005 West Broward Boulevard. Mr. Brady seconded the motion. Chairman Brown called for further discussion. Hearing none, a vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

V. Old/New Business

Director's report

Mr. Battle gave the Board an update on the Afro-centric designed facades for Sistrunk Boulevard. He advised that no construction is presently occurring because of the approval process in terms of who needs to sign off on the permits. He reminded the Board that Sistrunk is a county right-of-way and approval is needed by Broward County engineering department. At this time the permits submitted are going through the process, and should be approved shortly. Justice For All, JAB, Burrows Electric, the Bob Young building, and Walker Grocery are in the right-of-way and require a county permit. Assembled in 1967, some of the buildings are actually sitting on the right-of-way, some by inches. Because of this, the Building Department was concerned. Chairman Brown inquired if there was a remedy in the works for a building in that situation. Mr. Battle stated no, and that it is a reoccurring problem.

Mr. Brady advised that when he lived in Washington DC, a survey showed that a major part of his house was in the right-of-way, and had been for 150 years, so this situation will probably end well.

Mr. Battle noted that of the buildings originally in the program a few have decided to withdraw their intended participation, such as the Chamber of Commerce, Ron Frazier Architects, and the Cone Building. Mr. Battle surmised that the Cone Building probably withdrew as a result of the passing of Mr. Cone. All of these buildings are located in the Midtown Business District and are approximately three blocks apart.

Ms. Vickery commented that the new façade might have an influence in slowing down traffic. Mr. Carter added that this was an opportunity to encourage the businesses to participate in the façade program, but the program never really got off the ground. He added that it is not always easy to persuade businesses to participate, but that their participation encourages new business attraction in the neighborhood and also enhances the entire area.

Mr. Battle noted that there are still four businesses interested at this point and a few others that are not at this location. He ventured to guess that this could become reality within 5-6 months.

Mr. Hinton noted that he was on the Board when the façade program originated, and remembered two or three people taking advantage but recalls the program getting bogged down. Mr. Brady suggested a promotional program utilizing video and print material to promote the program.

On another matter, Mr. Battle advised that several meetings ago a discussion was held about the hope of trying to acquire a parcel of land at 3rd Avenue and 6th street, the church, to assemble land for the Flagler Village Park site. Mr. Battle announced that 60 days ago the seller approached the city and said the property was now available for purchase. Acquisition discussions, price point negotiations, and other legal details are being hammered out. As of yesterday, the City informed the seller that they could agree on a price, and put together a contract to

tie it up so it can be presented to the CRA Board. Both sides are reviewing the contract at this time. Mr. Battle noted that funding issues would need to be solved.

Ms. Vickery noted that the Parks Department was doing impact fees. Mr. Battle added that that is part of the overall process. The way the contract is progressing, the closing will be a long way off, and will give us time to gather sufficient funding. It is his hope that the ordinance for impact fees may be passed before the summer is out, therefore guaranteeing a monetary source. In addition, the state has been approached for funding.

On another matter, Mr. Battle advised that at the beginning of April the City Commission held a public meeting whereby information was given in the form of 4-lane proposal for Sistrunk Boulevard. As a result of public testimony and Commission discussion, two options were proposed: 2-lanes or 4-lanes. The Commission did not support either option. Staff was put in the position to put this matter back on track. A meeting was held last week and a 3-lane alternative option with off-peak parking was discussed. The Commission voted to send all alternatives back and vowed to work with the county to get a satisfactory result. On May 2nd the City Commission will meet to further discuss this item, and the County Commission will meet May 9th. Both meetings will encourage public input.

VI. Adjournment

As there was no more business to be brought before the CRA Advisory Board, a motion was made by Mr. Carter and seconded by Ms. Phillips to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor.

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Brown at 4:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Jody E. Lebel, Court Reporter
Notary Public