

**NORTHWEST-PROGRESSO-FLAGLER HEIGHTS
REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
8TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
SEPTEMBER 26, 2007 AT 3:30 P.M.**

<u>Board Members</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	Cumulative 1/1/07-12/31/07	
		<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Ella Phillips, Chair	P	4	2
Michael Ferber, Vice Chair	P	6	0
Phyllis Berry	A	4	2
James Brady	P	5	1
Jerry Carter	P	6	0
Ron Centamore	P	5	1
Alan L. Gabriel	P	4	0
Jerry Heniser	P	4	0
Mickey Hinton	P	2	4
Bradley Hubert	P	6	0
Brice Lambrix	P	4	2
Laura Mutti	P	6	0
Doug Sterner	P	6	0
Clare Vickery	P	4	2

Staff

Alfred Battle, CRA Director
Joan Oliva, Planning and Design Manager, CRA Staff
Mina Samadi, Engineer, CRA Staff
Thomasina Turner-Diggs, Project Coordinator, CRA Staff
Angela Wilson, EZ Zone Program Coordinator
Bob Wojcik, Planner III, CRA Staff

Guests

Angela Dawson, Angela Dawson, P.A.
Peter Feldman, DDA
Alan Hooper, Foundry Mill Lofts
Elizabeth Rivera, Recording Clerk, Prototype Inc.

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Chair Phillips at 3:40; a quorum was present.

II. Approval of Minutes from July 18, 2007

Motion made by Mr. Ferber, seconded by Mr. Brady, to approve the minutes of the July 18, 2007 meeting. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEM**III. Angela Dawson, P.A. Building Renovation Project**

Mr. Battle introduced this matter indicating that Ms. Dawson had purchased property located at 2221 Sistrunk Boulevard with plans for renovation. The property was bought in 2006 to be utilized as a law office. The parcel is 10,000 sf, zoned CB; the building itself is 640 sf, currently vacant, and deteriorated. Discussions have been ongoing since Ms. Dawson's purchase regarding due diligence for proposed architectural designs and improvement costs. Mr. Battle feels they are now ready, based on the City's recommendations, to invest in this project covering approximately \$55,000 of an anticipated \$110,000 total project cost. The funds would come from the Midtown Assistance Program, as well as the Façade Program, some of which would be reimbursed. The goal is to assist with financing, getting the property capitalized, and allowing Ms. Dawson to hire a contractor and get the construction started.

Mr. Battle asked that the Board support participation in this project, as it will significantly improve that corridor of Sistrunk Boulevard. Site locations maps were provided, as well as architectural plans and elevations. Ms. Dawson also hopes to expand in the future, bringing in businesses as tenants leasing additional office space if the building can be added onto and the footprint increased.

Ms. Dawson addressed the Board stating this has been one of her dreams, it is a positive move, and she is committed to the project. She added she has already employed someone from the community to work in the office.

Mr. Brady questioned Ms. Dawson regarding the various locations of her law practice. He also asked regarding the criteria to apply to "essentially give away money." Mr. Battle indicated there is standard criteria for the Façade Program, i.e., the property must be located along Sistrunk Boulevard in the Northwest area, and provided the City agrees with the concept plan in terms of improvements to exterior of the building including building, parking lot, and landscaping. For Midtown Assistance, there is a formula to determine "free"

dollars from the CRA, based on two factors: 1) investment in the CRA by the business into a particular property, and 2) equating those monies into expected TIF revenue as a return to the City's coffers over a 15 year period. Mr. Brady estimated in this instance they would receive \$2,000 per year on an \$110,000 investment. Property value of \$260,000 would also be included in the TIF valuation.

Mr. Battle confirmed that in "looking at simple math," they are probably "upside-down"; however, it is believed the investment will be a valid one; the alternative is the property sits vacant.

Mr. Carter pointed out, in addition to the opportunity of generating the TIF, this is an opportunity to stimulate the attraction of added developments in the area. In reply to Mr. Carter's inquiry, Ms. Dawson confirmed that she had hired a GC to forecast the overall construction cost. He added he sees this "as a positive and as a challenge," and will give lending institutions the opinion that the area is beginning to improve, which hopefully will have a rippling effect.

Ms. Dawson stated the existing structure consists of three rooms, which will have to be gutted and entirely rebuilt. The original footprint of the building will remain the same at this time.

Ms. Vickery felt this was a great idea, hoping that Ms. Dawson will show-by-example to those who may be inclined to improve their properties also.

In response to Mr. Brady's question regarding the proposed construction cost in creating a useable improved building, Mr. Battle indicated he would be comfortable with the estimated costs.

Chair Phillips said she was excited about the project also as they want to bring more investors into the Sistrunk corridor. Mr. Hinton agreed, stating he "feels good that changes are coming" and thanking Ms. Dawson for her efforts.

Mr. Heniser inquired regarding financing aspects and the procedure for the allocations. Mr. Battle explained that the Façade money is applied last; no money is given until the improvement is made. He indicated they might have to be "a little bit more aggressive" on releasing funds during the construction process as construction draws, retaining some of the monies until the project is completed.

Motion made by Mr. Brady, seconded by Mr. Hubert, to approve the staff recommendation. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

IV. Dorsey Riverbend Neighborhood Enhancement Project Update

Mr. Battle stated a meeting had been held with the community on September 17, 2007 to look at preliminary designs proposed for general neighborhood enhancements. This project is closely tied to the pending Sistrunk improvements in order to mitigate the potential traffic impact of those plans.

Ms. Samadi reported they had applied for a transportation enhancement grant several years ago for neighborhood improvement, i.e., entry signs, sidewalk construction, entryways, landscaping, and decorative lights. As there had been discussion regarding rerouting of Sistrunk traffic through Dorsey Riverbend, the projects were combined. A consultant has been working on the project since March in collecting data on additional traffic counts, etc.

The project boundary is Sistrunk to the north, Broward to the south, and I-95 to the west, and NW 9 Avenue to the east. Within this area, there will be neighborhood entryways at strategic locations and traffic calming devices.

Ms. Samadi showed preliminary design, lighting, and landscape concepts, which had been presented during the neighborhood meeting. Intersection modification concepts such as roundabouts were also discussed. It is anticipated the designs will be completed in early January 2008 and going out to bid in March. Cost estimates are not yet available and will be provided at the time the final designs are submitted; however, most of the improvements are being paid by the grant. The City will probably have to participate in funding for the construction, as Ms. Samadi was unsure if the grant monies would be sufficient. The project may have to be phased due to financial constraints.

Ms. Samadi said the neighborhood had been interested in speed humps and, if implemented, would be a second phase project, as she would like to give the roundabouts and other traffic calming measures a chance to work.

Mr. Brady asked if there was empirical evidence that the roundabouts actually slow down traffic and was advised by Ms. Samadi that it depends upon the location, as well as spacing between roundabouts on the roadway. Discussion continued regarding the mechanics of roundabouts and their affect on traffic versus speed humps.

Grant monies are being supplied via a grant from the Florida Department of Transportation.

Pavers will not be used in the roadway; it will probably be stamped asphalt due to the high maintenance required for pavers.

Ms. Samadi reported she had no drawings; she has received partial plans for the Progresso road closure, although there are issues, which will need to be addressed. She reviewed the location of the road closures, pointing out that several original plans had been modified.

- 1st and 4th Avenues will no longer be closed; they will be converted to one way out
- Landscaping is being designed
- Concrete curbing will remain consistent within the City
- 5' sidewalk expansions are being considered and will be concrete
- Ballards will remain consistent throughout the City
- Conduits will be provided for electrical and irrigation

Mr. Battle explained that the plans were for an infrastructure request given to the CRA by the City Commission directly at the request of the neighborhood to make the road closures permanent.

Mr. Sterner asked regarding traffic flow configurations of one-way versus one lane, and neighborhood accessibility.

Mr. Samadi pointed out the locations have changed due to proposed development with the closure now being situated to the south.

Mr. Sterner suggested staff review the plans to ensure there would be no deterrent to future development in the area.

Mr. Brady inquired regarding following up on formulating plans to improve proposed projects and if they are working toward "getting more done in an affirmative way" or letting it "be what it is," as he does not see anything happening in the neighborhood other than a few improvements. Mr. Battle noted that the market has deteriorated discouraging forward progress. It was also suggested that active Code Enforcement focusing on certain kinds of problems would be key to encouraging development.

Mr. Centamore reported that a junkyard and two warehouses on Sistrunk on the west side of the railroad tracks were purchased three years ago to be development and the project had been delayed in the planning department until now when the market is bad and financing cannot be obtained.

V. *Strand vs. Escambia County* (Tax Increment Fund Financing Case with Florida Supreme Court)

Information was provided by Mr. Battle regarding the Supreme Court decision regarding use of CRA monies, and bonding of revenues for the purpose of raising funds to be used for redevelopment efforts. Tax increment funds borrowed past 12 months will have to be used or a decision made based upon a

referendum approach. Mr. Battle felt any such referendum would have to be countywide. A request has been made on behalf of a number of CRA entities for the Attorney General's Office to provide clarification to this recent court decision. A request for rehearing has been granted, although the matter has not yet been reheard.

Mr. Brady pointed out that the question on the referendum issue is if the city or entity to which the CRA power has to be delegated is under 50,000 population, the determination would have to be made by the population of the delegating body. If a city or entity has its own rights, as with Fort Lauderdale and Hollywood, then the citizens of the city would make that determination rather than the county. He voiced two concerns: 1) what happens with those bonds already issued, and 2) the significance to school funding. An interpretation had been made by the City Attorney that the ruling is meant to deal with all actions going forward and the current bonds are "safe for right now." Selling bonds versus using the TIF rebate approach remains intact. Mr. Ferber felt that "still building the increment and having that money available every year, there may be other ways in lieu of bonds to achieve the work needing to be done."

It was suggested by Mr. Battle that he and "a committee of one" explore options to be further discussed at the next meeting.

Discussion continued regarding what Mr. Brady termed a "pledge to budget and appropriate" in order to get around the referendum issue established by the Constitution, with the key being appropriating from non-ad valorem taxes.

Updates on this issue will be provided to the Board.

DISCUSSION ITEM

VI. Developer's Roundtable Discussion – Follow-Up

A memo was provided summarizing the Roundtable.

Mr. Hooper stated that some of the discussion had circled around not only residential development, but also retail opportunities in the CRA. He felt time and money would be better spent on Sistrunk, Andrews Avenue, and Third Avenue and it is not as much an issue of "dumping a ton of money as it is zoning changes," i.e., parking reductions, and attracting retailers and restaurants due to low square footage costs. He suggested the focus should be on giving people "a reason to stop and participate," rather than building more residential unit and making Andrews Avenue and Sistrunk "a place" people want to go.

[Mr. Lambrix left the meeting at 5:10 p.m.]

Ms. Vickery mentioned the proposed offsite parking program which Mr. Hooper stated would be a “burden and an excessive cost.” Debate continued regarding rental of parking spaces, available parking, and City requirements. Mr. Hooper suggested the market would dictate the circumstances and solutions. Ms. Vickery countered that the City Commission may be open to proposal of a plan for a parking solution.

Mr. Hooper asked permission to do a presentation to the Board on the City of Delray Beach’s successful resolution to their parking problems. Ms. Berry agreed that Delray Beach has a good program, and stated she is “more than willing to take this on” as it is a viable dilemma.

Mr. Ferber supported having Mr. Hooper gather information on how the program emerged and presenting it to the Board at the next meeting.

VII. Old Business

Mr. Battle provided a document to the Board stating he and Mr. Hubert had, based on the Board’s minutes, prepared a working list of items to monitor, i.e., issues, opportunities, and general comments.

- Infrastructure improvements
- Police assistance/crime prevent strategies
- Lack of amenities and services
- Vacant properties and development impediments
- Length of development process
- Regulation development
- TIF financing
- Exit interview development prospects
- Marketing campaign
- CRA funding opportunities
- New Development

Mr. Brady felt a PR program should be formed to tell the City Commission and CRA what it should be working to accomplish, as well as being “super aggressive” in getting the private sector involved in fashioning the message to the City Commission. He also pointed out issues with bureaucracy and delays.

Mr. Battle said when the City Commission reviews meeting minutes; they focus on the actions taken by the advisory boards via their motions and resolutions.

Chair Phillips agreed that advisory board members should be more visible, showing up and ensuring their plans and goals are not “lost in staff.”

Ms. Vickery also offered to conduct research regarding the offsite parking program.

It was suggested by Mr. Hubert that their ideas are put down on paper to look over, expand on, prioritize, and prepare implementation plans.

[Ms. Vickery left the meeting at 5:15 p.m.]

Mr. Ferber concurred stating, "A month turns into three, turns into six, turns into another year," emphasizing that if they as an advisory board do not hold staff's and the City Commission's "feet to the fire," their projects do not come to fruition. Mr. Centamore echoed those sentiments adding, "it seems we're just stuck in the mud" and they need to "sell themselves to the "City Commission...and be on the same wavelength here."

Mr. Brady was interested in seeing Mr. Hooper's presentation, although he stated he would be working with Mr. Hooper irrespective of a formal motion in that respect. He proposed fashioning a specific resolution with all the "bells and whistles" after the presentation.

Ms. Berry felt a motion should be formulated specific to the action they want done. She also asked that the minutes reflect that their efforts are geared toward helping stimulate small businesses and economic revitalization of the area.

Motion made by Ms. Berry, seconded by Mr. Gabriel, that Mr. Brady work with Mr. Hooper to address small business concerns, e.g., parking, inter-area transportation systems, and means and methods of timely implementation for Andrews Avenue, Third Avenue, Seventh Avenue, and Sistrunk. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

VIII. New Business

The Broward County Mayor will be having a Transit Summit on October 16, 2007 from 1:00-4:30 p.m. at the Broward County Convention Center, to discuss a series of meetings throughout the County for the next 18 to 24 months to develop a public transit plan for Broward County.

IX. Director's Report

None.

X. Adjournment

With no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.