

**APPROVED**  
**MINUTES**  
**NORTHWEST PROGRESSO – FLAGLER HEIGHTS**  
**REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD**  
**FORT LAUDERDALE**  
**100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE**  
**8<sup>th</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM**  
**OCTOBER 24, 2012 – 3:30 P.M.**

**Cumulative Attendance**

<u>Members Present</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>May 2012 - April 2013</u>	
		<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Steve Lucas, Chair	P	5	0
Ella Phillips, Vice Chair	P	5	0
Jessie Adderley	A	3	2
Sonya Burrows	P	5	0
Ron Centamore	P	5	0
Nate Ernest-Jones	P	5	0
Alan Gabriel	A	2	3
Mickey Hinton	P	4	1
Brice Lambrix (dep. 4:44)	P	2	3
Richard D. Powers	A	4	1
Yvonne Sanandres	A	3	2
Scott Strawbridge	A	4	1
John Wilkes (arr. 3:52)	P	4	1
Samuel Williams (dep. 4:47)	P	3	2

Currently there are 14 appointed members to the Board, which means 8 would constitute a quorum.

It was noted that a quorum was present at the meeting.

**Staff**

Alfred Battle, Director, CRA  
Sandra Doughlin, Clerk III, CRA  
Bob Wojcik, CRA  
Lisa Edmondson, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

**Communications to City Commission**

None.

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

Chair Lucas called the meeting to order at 3:36 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

## **II. Approval of Minutes from September 11, 2012 Special Meeting and September 26, 2012 Regular Meeting**

**Motion** made by Mr. Williams, seconded by Ms. Burrows, to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2012 meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

**Motion** made by Mr. Lambrix, seconded by Vice Chair Phillips, to approve the minutes of the September 26, 2012 meeting [as amended].

Chair Lucas noted a correction on p.3: the individual who had attended a homeowners' association meeting was the pastor, not a project representative. No plans from the project had been shared with the homeowners' association at that time.

In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Chair Lucas advised that Vanessa Santiago has resigned from the Board. A request for this position to be filled would be sent to the City Commission.

### **Discussion Items**

## **III. Proposed Update and Amendment to CRA Plan**

Mr. Battle explained that in 2001, the City amended the Community Redevelopment Agency Plan in order to identify spending priorities and specific projects to be undertaken during the lifetime of the CRA. This Plan is the legal document by which the Board operates. He observed that this is a very general document, advising how CRA funds may be used in accordance with State statutes. It also identifies some of the projects intended for the CRA, but notes that the CRA is not limited to these activities: other projects may be undertaken as well if they are consistent with spending guidelines and may stimulate redevelopment throughout the CRA.

He advised that the specific projects are identified because the CRA will bond money; identifying these projects ahead of time allows them to be included in bond documents. In other cases, general bond funds may be used for capital improvements without the inclusion of specific improvement details.

The 2001 Amended Plan focuses on two projects: the Sistrunk Boulevard improvement project, and the Northwest Commercial project at the intersection of Sistrunk Boulevard and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue. There are additional large projects included in the Plan, some of which involve partners of the CRA. The CRA's small

business efforts, including the provision of incentives, are also noted in the Amended Plan. He concluded that whenever a project appears before the Board to request funding, it is addressed as a nonspecific project that is consistent with the CRA's funding guidelines.

Mr. Battle explained that he would like to hear from the Board regarding what projects they would like to identify as priorities. Staff will then arrive at estimates of what might be spent on these initiatives, through bond or other revenues. A spending strategy should also be developed for implementation of the redevelopment plan throughout the entire Northwest CRA.

He advised that there are recommended amendments for four different areas. One such area is capital projects, including streetscape enhancements and other public improvements in neighborhoods; these could be implemented on NW 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, NW 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and Andrews Avenue, among others. Some of these streetscape improvements will involve collaboration between the CRA and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA). Most of these streets have either heavy pedestrian activity or the potential for this activity.

Mr. Wilkes arrived at 3:52 p.m.

Mr. Battle advised that in some cases, the condition of the streets may determine whether or not improvements can be accomplished without great expense, or whether the entire street or part of it may be improved. This information can be presented to the Board in order to aid in these decisions.

It was asked if a bond may be pursued that exceeds the remaining life of the CRA. Mr. Battle said this was unlikely, particularly from the City Commission's point of view. He noted, however, that the City and County may agree to extend the CRA's term, although such an extension has not been requested at this time. In addition, he was not certain that an extension would be granted if it was requested.

Mr. Williams asked if the current bonds could be "wrapped around" to take advantage of interest rates. Mr. Battle replied that the CRA has until June 2013 to retire the debt currently on the books; however, there is no guarantee the present rates will remain on the books until that time.

He continued the list of capital projects, moving on to public facilities. Mr. Battle explained that this may be an appropriate time to discuss mass transit on Sistrunk Boulevard, and use of vacant properties to develop a park-and-ride hub. He recalled that the City has also recently passed an urban farming ordinance, which could lead to the development of a farmers' market pavilion, as well as

using vacant lots in the area for urban farms and partnering with Save-a-Lot and other businesses to promote local healthy initiatives.

Mr. Williams commented that the City is presently overparked compared to many cities, and expressed concern that the addition of more surface parking might contrast with what the City's Department of Transportation and Mobility is working to achieve. Mr. Battle explained that what is necessary is the development of a placement strategy for parking. He noted that the existing blacktop lots along Sistrunk are a temporary solution, and concluded that it may be possible to address parking issues within the CRA in non-traditional ways.

He continued that the third initiative is community policing. This would be part of the Plan amendment because Statutes are very specific in requiring the identification of a particular area in which CRA funds may be spent for this purpose. If such an area is not identified, funds cannot be spent on this initiative. He advised that community policing includes several different initiatives, from textual design of buildings to how the CRA would deal with specific issues.

One part of this initiative would be the provision of public wi-fi, as this infrastructure could be used to transmit a wireless signal along the corridor. Other crime deterrent infrastructure would include wireless camera technology. He noted that almost all businesses considering investing in the CRA ask questions about crime and security in the area; if a camera system is installed along the roadway and connected to a Police Department server, this could be very helpful in bringing businesses to the corridor.

Finally, zoning amendments will be necessary in the Northwest CRA and the entire Downtown Regional Activity Center (RAC), including a parking reduction for Flagler Village and the possibility of parallel parking on Andrews Avenue and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street during off-peak hours.

The final community initiative recommended for inclusion in an amended Plan would include economic development initiatives and affordable housing strategies. Mr. Battle advised that the affordable housing study currently underway by a consultant is likely to be complete by the time these initiatives are presented as amendments to the CRA Plan. It is estimated that the study will be complete by the end of the first quarter of 2013.

Other strategies for economic development include a downtown retail recruitment strategy and a City-wide economic development strategy. Staff has prepared an RFP that asks prospective consultants to consider how the strategy for the Northwest CRA fits into the City's overall economic development strategy and retail recruitment strategy.

He explained that the City Commission develops a priority list each year before the annual budget is passed. This year's list includes the completion of the affordable housing strategy and a downtown retail recruitment strategy. Staff has asked for information on primary and secondary areas within the downtown area, including the Northwest CRA, the Middle River CRA, and others.

The City-wide economic development strategy will establish economic development goals for the next five years. Mr. Battle advised that he will ensure the Northwest CRA is included in this plan, as well as a means to keep the Board involved in the development of a strategy for the CRA.

He continued that other initiatives include taking advantage of the state's Brownfield program, which has been done by other cities and CRAs throughout the state. This program may be used to provide an additional layer of incentives to the CRA programs within the enterprise zone. Current incentive programs must also be updated and revised, and the small business incubator program is nearing completion and will be presented to the Board.

Mr. Williams asked if the enterprise zones and Brownfield program have contributed to real successes in recent years. Mr. Battle said the residential housing boom provided a great deal of activity under the enterprise zone program; small businesses are now taking advantage of this program as well. He noted that a nine to ten square mile area within Fort Lauderdale is the largest area covered by the enterprise zone program. Residential developers may no longer take advantage of this program.

Chair Lucas asked if there are any Brownfield designations within the City. Mr. Battle said there are not. He hoped the CRA could use this program to help marketing incentives; however, there may be concerns regarding declaring a single site as a Brownfield.

He continued that these proposals will be presented to the Board once more at the November meeting; he will also discuss these proposals with the civic associations located within the CRA, and bring their feedback to the Board. Finally, the proposals will be presented to the CRA Board for approval. The CRA Board must pass a resolution confirming that they are in favor of amending the Plan. Mr. Battle estimated that the time frame for approval is by the first quarter of 2013.

He noted that many of the issues presented to the Board are not new: while they have been previously discussed, they have not been the subject of focus, as they were not identified in the current plan or prioritized.

Chair Lucas commented that the CRA will sunset in 2025, and asserted that the Board will work toward the approval of the Plan amendments with Mr. Battle so work can begin on these priorities. Mr. Battle asked what the Board felt the CRA's next priority should be, noting that if a priority is not on the proposed list, it is not likely to be the subject of a great deal of attention.

Alan Hooper, private citizen, recalled that the Flagler Village Civic Association had at one point presented the Board with plans for parking improvements. He felt these changes, such as off-peak parallel parking, could be accomplished with relative ease, although he noted that no progress has been made on this project. He pointed out that businesses are leaving the CRA due to a lack of parking. He asserted that it might be best to allow the neighborhoods to champion various improvement efforts and accompany the Board when these plans are presented to the City Commission.

Mr. Wilkes observed that the CRA is tasked with making investments in the community that would in turn spur private investment. He noted that funds should be spent on CRA projects sooner rather than later, due to interest rates. He agreed with Mr. Hooper that the most important factor in their success will be community involvement and support.

Mr. Battle advised that there may be additional funding sources to supplement what cannot be paid for with the bond: for example, matching funds, or the City's allocation of HUD funds, which are approximately \$2 million annually and must be used to rehabilitate housing. This could have a tremendous impact in areas within the Northwest CRA.

Mr. Wilkes continued that when The WAVE streetcar is implemented, a park-and-ride facility will need to be developed to encourage riders to board this service. It will promote activity, parking on the street, and fewer automobiles used within the City. He felt this is a great opportunity the CRA may access.

Mr. Williams stated he would like to commend CRA Staff for bringing these options to the Board for consideration. He felt the most important step would be bringing more small businesses to the CRA, which would in turn drive capital.

Mr. Ernest-Jones pointed out that the city of Delray focused a good deal of capital on streetscapes, façades, and similar improvements because it can be difficult to accomplish these projects without CRA involvement.

Mr. Battle said his list was intended to inform the Board of the concerns he has heard from both Board members and the community at large. He noted that bond funds and continuing revenue could be used to achieve these projects once they are prioritized. He stated he would advise the Board on how much money can be

raised, the prices of previous plans, and the cost of each of the proposed initiatives. Some projects may be able to be accomplished in full, while only pieces of other projects may be financially feasible within the CRA's life. If the CRA is extended past 2025, it may be possible to achieve all the suggested projects.

He concluded that the list, as well as any further suggestions, will be on the November Agenda, after which time Mr. Battle will reach out to neighborhood associations within the CRA.

#### **IV. Director's Report**

Mr. Battle stated that although he had expected the proposed zoning Code revisions regarding the liquor and convenience store moratorium to come before the Planning and Zoning Board in October, this has been delayed. Ideas are also underway regarding some residential Code issues in the area, including a minimum standard for housing.

He continued that a transportation workshop will be held by the City at four different locations from now through the first week of November. These workshops are related to the efforts of the Department of Transportation and Mobility. FDOT is also holding transit-oriented development (TOD) workshops throughout the County, including a meeting in Fort Lauderdale on November 2.

The Better Meetings Academy will be held November 26 at City Hall.

Mr. Battle advised that the City's internal TV channel will begin running content videos, two of which are specifically related to the CRA. He showed the Board these videos, which highlight events within the CRA, including Midtown Summerfest. He recalled that this year's budget has been increased by \$45,000 in order to support more of these events.

#### **V. Communication to CRA Board**

None.

#### **VI. Old / New Business**

Mr. Wilkes asked if a grand opening date has been set for businesses on Sistrunk Boulevard. Mr. Battle estimated this would be held prior to November 20, 2012.

With regard to leasing on 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Sistrunk Boulevard, Mr. Battle advised that the businesses are in the permitting phase and the leases have been executed. Roughly 5000 sq. ft. of space remain for an additional tenant.

Mr. Wilkes asked if work is being done to finalize the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue-7<sup>th</sup> Avenue connection as a street improvement. Mr. Battle said this project has been moved lower on MPO's priority list, as their ranking system has a focus on mass transit.

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 4:57 p.m.

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