

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD (EDAB)**

**Meeting Minutes**

**January 9, 2008 - 4:00 p.m.**

**City of Fort Lauderdale**

**100 North Andrews Avenue,  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room**

<b>Board Members</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Cumulative Attendance 1/2008 – 12/2008</b>	
		<b>P</b>	<b>A</b>
Mark Budwig, Chair	P	1	0
Gwen Watson, Vice Chair	P	1	0
Cort Neimark	P	1	0
Patricia DuMont	A	0	1
Tim Schiavone	P	1	0
Kristina Hebert	P	1	0
Ralph Riehl	P	1	0
Adam Sanders	A	0	1
Dev Ramesh Motwani	P	1	0
Mark Krom	P	1	0
Rosalind Osgood	A	0	1

**Staff**

Jeff Modarelli, Economic Development Director  
Karen Reese, Economic Development Staff  
Hal Barnes, Fort Lauderdale Neighborhood Services  
Jeri Pryor, Fort Lauderdale, Neighborhood Services  
Patricia Smith, Economic Development Staff  
Hilda Testa, Recording Clerk, ProtoType Inc.

**Guests**

Fred Carlson, South Florida Tourism Council  
Garfield Mitchell, Resident  
Chadwick Blue, Downtown Development Authority  
Ricky Lewis, Midtown Business Association  
Scott Strawbridge, President, Bonner House  
Sonya Burrows, Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce  
Carolyn Michaels, Vice President, Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce  
Lawrence Black, Galt Merchants Association

### **I. Call to Order & Introductions**

Chair Budwig called the meeting to order at 4:09 p.m. and the members in attendance introduced themselves for the record.

### **II. Approval of November 14, 2007 Minutes**

**Motion** made by Mr. Schiavone, seconded by Ms. Watson, to approve the minutes of the Board's November 2007 meeting. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

### **III. Election of Officers**

Chair Budwig stated that Ms. Watson has been serving as Vice Chair and advised the Board of her interest to step up to the position of Chair. Ms. Hebert then nominated Ms. Watson for the position of Chair.

Chair Budwig asked the Board if there were any volunteers to take the position of Vice Chair. Ms. Watson nominated Mr. Riehl for Vice Chair. Chair Budwig commented Mr. Riehl had been present for the last twelve meeting. Mr. Schiavone nominated Mr. Motwani for Vice Chair also. Chair Budwig asked each nominee to briefly give some background as to his or her qualifications.

Mr. Riehl stated he had been on the Board for one year and was appointed by Commissioner Cindi Hutchinson. Mr. Riehl went on to say he is the President of the South Florida Tourism Council and has been a resident of Fort Lauderdale since 1979. He actively and enthusiastically supports the economic development of the City of Fort Lauderdale.

Mr. Motwani stated he grew up in Fort Lauderdale since the mid 1980's and runs the family hotel business of Merrimac Ventures primarily in the beach area. Mr. Motwani has been serving on the Board since May or June of 2007 and was appointed to the Board by Commissioner Charlotte Rodstrom.

The Board discussed the proper procedure for voting since there was more than one nominee and then decided to move this item to the end of the meeting for the benefit of the guests in attendance.

### **IV. Approval of 2008 Meeting Schedule**

**Motion** made by Ms. Watson, seconded by Mr. Neimark to approve the meeting schedule for 2008. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

## **V. 2007 Business Capital Improvement Grant Update**

Ms. Jeri Pryor advised the Board she had moved to a new division within the City of Fort Lauderdale and introduced Mr. Hal Barnes and advised he would be giving the presentation regarding the 2007 Business Capital Improvement Grant.

Mr. Barnes stated there were five applicants that had applied for the grant of \$25,000 each of a total \$100,000. Mr. Barnes advised the Board there is a ranking sheet and criteria in the package previously given to rank the businesses to effectively recommend which businesses to receive the grant.

### **Golden Square Group Beach Association**

The first applicant was Mr. Fred Carlson from the Breakers Avenue Building Association. This project is supported by the hotel and motel owners on both sides of Breakers Avenue and is called the Golden Square Group Beach Association. Mr. Carlson provided photographs of Breakers Avenue showing the surrounding structures at the back of the Bonnet House Park.

The proposal is to dress up the rest of Breakers Avenue and not have the back of the hotels be a forgotten street but a people street with pavers, boutiques, restaurants and other amenities for the hotel customers. The one block area of Breakers Avenue had been deeded back to the owners of the property on the east and west side; however, two utility easements and one pedestrian easement exists on the street and is controlled by the City. Development of this economic system of the beach demands inclusion of the back streets off the beach to ensure a complete Fort Lauderdale experience for the tourists.

Unfortunately, this project was late in its inception. In the interim, the merchants of the Golden Square Association have been working on specifics for the requirements of the grant. Due to the time constraints, Mr. Carlson withdrew this project as an applicant for the grant money but would like the Board to pass a resolution in favor of this project to convey to the City and Mr. Barnes, support is available for this project.

Mr. Strawbridge, who currently sits on the Board of the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation and is President of the Bonnet House, commented this project coincides with the long-range plan of the Florida Trust and Bonnet House. As critical mass is reached on the beach, this project becomes a viable investment proposition.

After a five-year effort, Bonnet House was accredited by the American Association of Museums. There are slightly over 800 museum institutions in all of the United States that are fully accredited, of those, only around 10% are house museums. In the State of Florida, there were only two and Bonnet House now makes three. Mr. Strawbridge also pointed out that historic preservation is a \$4.5 billion industry in the State of Florida and draws what is known as cultural heritage tourism. These type of tourist stay in Florida

on average, 1.5 days longer than the average tourist generating obvious capital for the merchants in the area.

The Bonnet House has been moving forward with regard to the improvements discussed. EDSA Planners and Landscape Architects have agreed to do the design work for this project and Bonnet House is ready to contribute in this capacity. Mr. Carlson stated it would be beneficial if the City cleaned up the street and resolved some of the problems with the easements and ownership. Mr. Barnes suggested an additional meeting with some of the planning staff to discuss these issues would be scheduled.

Mr. Barnes recommended Mr. Carlson withdraw the application and re-apply in April or May for the 2009 grants and use the additional time to obtain matching grants from the community and to pin point the improvements Bonnet House would contribute.

### **Sistrunk Corridor**

Ms. Watson requested the record to reflect that she would recuse herself from the ranking of the applicants and voting on this issue since she was giving the presentation on the Sistrunk Corridor Lighting Project.

This project is a combined effort with the Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce and the Fort Lauderdale Negro Chamber of Commerce. This grant application is for lighting during the holidays, which will grow into a continual event through out the years. Ms. Watson stated the partners involved with this project is Florida Power and Light and the City of Fort Lauderdale. The goal is to light up both sides of the street during the holiday period from Andrews Avenue to the end of the city line at 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This would be a historical event for the City as this would be the first time in the City since 1949 that the entire street would be lit up.

The matching dollars have been obtained from their partners and twice as much in sweat equity and in-kind services. This project would impact a neighborhood that had not previously ever been approved for this type of grant.

Mr. Schiavone asked Mr. Barnes if the sweat equity is the efforts of project organizers and professional services. Mr. Barnes answered on the professional services could be considered sweat equity. Mr. Schiavone also asked about the contingency fee and Mr. Barnes explained that expense is to cover any unforeseen expenses during the implementation of the project. Mr. Schiavone stated he endorsed this project and believes it is long overdue for the residents of the Sistrunk area.

Mr. Barnes advised the Board that 6<sup>th</sup> Street is scheduled for major renovations. Due to these renovations, the Sistrunk Corridor project is working closely with the CRA to ensure efforts to enhance the Boulevard are not undone by the implementation of the renovations by Florida Power and Light and the City of Fort Lauderdale. Mr. Barnes

advised the grants dollars would be put in trust until the renovations have been completed by FPL, and then the Sistrunk Corridor Lighting project can take place.

Mr. Strawbridge stated that he works for the Housing Authority as a project manager for the City of Fort Lauderdale and will be breaking ground on Dixie Court next week. In addition, he has secured \$3,500 to contribute to the Crime Walk programs and looks forward to taking back that neighborhood and make it as fine as any neighborhood in Fort Lauderdale.

### **Galt Ocean Mile Shop Improvements Association**

Mr. Black from the Galt Merchants Association advised this area is in need of funds for lighting and signage. As vehicular traffic travels north and south on A1A, identification of this neighborhood is difficult. The application for grant is part of the continuing effort to augment the improvements needed to fulfill the on going master plan which has been in effect for several years.

Mr. Black stated the project is under design at the current time. There is \$100,000 allocated to construct entry walls, lighting and landscaping. The funds already secured are in trust and today's application is for supplemental funds to complete the project.

### **Fort Lauderdale DDA**

Mr. Blue advised the funds they are seeking would be used to improve Tunnel Park. Previously, along with Rio Vista Neighborhood Association, the DDA contributed \$498,000 for the construction and completion of this park. The City was looking for an anchor point for the southern end of Riverwalk to facilitate a transition between the residential and downtown areas.

Chair Budwig asked about the time frame for this project. Ms. Pryor advised the project is under design at the current time and in the packet is a conceptual design of the park located on the south side of the river. The total budget is \$1.5 million and the budget sources of funding are the City of Fort Lauderdale, the DDA and private funding.

### **North Beach**

Mr. Schiavone requested the record to reflect that he would recuse himself from the ranking of the applicants and voting on this issue since he was giving the presentation on the North Beach Project.

Mr. Schiavone presented the project for the North Beach Square. When the design for the wave wall was implemented and the CRA was created, the project was halted just south of the Bonnet House. The funding from the grant would help to improve the area and attract merchants other than pizza shops and tattoo parlors.

The improvements for this area are currently in design and additional funds have been secured from other sources to complete the project with a budget of approximately \$800,000 for the neighborhood behind Sunrise Boulevard and A1A.

Mr. Barnes summarized the process for approval of the grants on the table for consideration. First time applicants would receive additional points over the other projects only because they have not received funding in the past. Since there were four projects seeking funding of \$25,000 each and a total amount of \$100,000 available, the Board agreed each project should receive a grant of \$25,000.

**Motion** made by Mr. Riehl, seconded by Mr. Krom to recommend approval for all four applicants to receive the grant dollars being offered. Ms. Watson and Mr. Schiavone recused themselves from the vote due to a conflict of interest. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Barnes advised this recommendation will go to the Commission for approval and the funds would be put into a trust for the implementation of the projects.

Mr. Carlson asked if the Board would make a resolution to support the Breakers Avenue improvement project. Mr. Modarelli advised the Board was not able to make a resolution; however, a recommendation could be made to support the project for the upcoming year. Mr. Motwani advised he is the Vice President of the Golden Square Beach Association and would not be voting on the recommendation.

Mr. Schiavone advised the Board cannot make a motion for a recommendation on a future grant but the Board wanted to be on record that they approve of this type of project for the Breakers Avenue area and look forward to the presentation at next year's grant application process.

## **VI. Director's Report Development**

Mr. Modarelli deferred his comments due to time constraints.

Ms. Hebert advised the Fort Lauderdale Billfish Tournament is scheduled for March 27-29, 2008. In cooperation with the Cit of Fort Lauderdale and with the help of Mr. Modarelli, the event will include a seafood festival, live entertainment with family events and a kids' area. There will also be an XM Café with wine and gourmet food.

Entry fees for the event is \$15,000 with approximately 6,000 attendees expected at the Las Olas Marina encompassing the north and south side of the bridge. The City is helping with parking and allowances for set up. In addition, there will be a city beautification program in the area with mobile plants to dress up the event and alleviate some of the budgeted expenses for decorations and visual enhancements. The entire festival dates and details will be e-mailed to the Board Members

### **Election of Officers**

Mr. Motwani respectfully withdrew his acceptance of nomination and voiced his desire and commitment to accept any nominations during the upcoming year.

**Motion** made by Mr. Schiavone and seconded by Mr. Neimark to approve Ms. Watson for Chair and Mr. Riehl for Vice Chair for the year 2008. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Congratulations to Ms. Watson and Mr. Riehl!

### **VII. Old/New Business**

Mr. Riehl advised the South Florida Tourism Council in cooperation with the hotels in the area started a Fort Lauderdale Trolley Tour. With the help of guest services at the participating hotels, many guests had taken part of the trolley tour.

This tour is a narrated two hour tour running four times a day, seven days a week showcasing the City of Fort Lauderdale, specifically the Bonnet House, Stranahan House, the antique car museum, Museum of Art, Discovery and Performing Arts Center and many other attractions.

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

[Minutes prepared by Hilda Testa, Prototype, Inc.]