

APPROVED
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD (EDAB)
MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
8TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2009 – 3:45-5:15 P.M.

1/09 – 12/09

Board Members	Attendance	Present	Absent
Ralph Riehl, Chair	P	12	0
Mark Krom, Vice Chair	A	10	2
Mark Budwig	P	9	3
Patricia DuMont	P	10	2
Sean de Vosjoli	P	9	3
Christopher Denison	P	6	1
Miya Burt-Stewart	P	7	1
Sheryl Dickey (arr. 3:52)	P	5	3
Dev Motwani	P	6	1
Christopher Pollock	P	2	2
Adam Sanders (arr. 3:52)	P	2	2

At this time, there are 11 appointed members to the Board, which means 6 would constitute a quorum.

Staff

Stephen Scott, Economic Development Director
Karen Reese, Economic Development Representative
Hal Barnes, Engineering Design Manager
Randall Robinson, Planner II
Sheri Roberts, Administrative Assistant I, Engineering
Patricia Smith, Secretary III, Economic Development
Jennifer Picinich, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communications to City Commission

None at this time.

I. Call to Order & Introductions

Chair Riehl called the meeting to order at 3:51 p.m. and the Board members, Staff, and guests introduced themselves.

II. Approval of November 11, 2009 Minutes

Motion made by Mr. Motwani, seconded by Mr. Denison, to approve the minutes of the November 11, 2009 meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** carried unanimously.

Ms. Dickey and Mr. Sanders joined the meeting at this time (3:52 p.m.). Chair Riehl recognized and thanked Ms. Dickey for her work toward the new Commerce Center on Sistrunk Boulevard.

III. Business Capital Improvement

Chair Riehl introduced Hal Barnes, Engineering Design Manager, who was in attendance to present the Business Capital Improvement Program (BCIP) applicants. This year there were three applicants, each requesting \$22,500. He explained that each applicant will give a brief overview of their requests and why their projects are important to the community.

Gina Ellis and Renee Quinn, representing the Riverwalk Trust, made the first presentation. Ms. Ellis explained that wayfinding in Fort Lauderdale is “not an easy task;” their application would “put wayfinding back on the Riverwalk.”

She noted that historically, there has been some branding of the Riverwalk area; they are hoping to coordinate with the beach, as Parking and Fleet Services are attempting some branding in this area with regard to wayfinding. Additionally, the Downtown Civic Association is requesting funds for wayfinding under the Neighborhood Capital Improvement Program (NCIP); they would work from Broward Boulevard toward the river.

Ms. Quinn added that the Riverwalk Trust works to support the community through events and programming. Part of the money they raise goes toward programs such as the wayfinding project, and they have raised funds to match the grant and more. She concluded that the Riverwalk Trust aims to “brand better” in this area and bring residents to Downtown Fort Lauderdale.

Ms. Dickey asked if connectivity from south to north, in a “round robin” fashion, was the project’s goal. Ms. Quinn confirmed this, and stressed that another part of the goal is to brand the Riverwalk area.

Ms. DuMont noted that the photographs included in the application packet showed different kinds of signage, and asked if there is a plan for the overall look. Ms. Ellis explained the photographs represent “a family of signs,” and color-coordinated subsets of signs are planned; these will correspond to the signs planned by the Downtown Civic Association.

Ms. DuMont asked if the signage is intended to be international. Ms. Ellis advised that the colors were selected according to an international color scheme, so tourists will recognize the signs' intent more easily.

Mr. Denison asked if the Riverwalk Trust has a layout of where the signs will be placed. Ms. Ellis replied this has not yet been completed, and it will be part of the design and installation process.

Mr. Pollock asked how much of the grant funding would go toward the planning phase of the project, and how much would go toward the signage itself. Ms. Ellis stated 100% of the funds would go toward construction. The planning phase is already complete.

Mr. de Vosjoli asked if any renovation is intended for existing signs. Ms. Ellis replied that these will most likely be removed and replaced to avoid confusion.

Ms. DuMont asked what start date is planned to begin installation, and when it is anticipated that the project will be complete. Ms. Ellis explained that the grants are usually awarded in March, after which the grant recipients send out RFPs; this would mean installation would most likely be in early summer. It will be coordinated with the Downtown Civic Association in a single RFP, should each application be successful, and all installation will be completed at once.

Mr. Barnes added that the two projects would also coordinate with the Planning Department and Parking and Fleet Services.

Mr. Motwani asked if the plan incorporates lighting for night visibility. Ms. Ellis stated that under a 2008 grant, the Downtown Civic Association and the Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations are putting in new lights on the Riverwalk. This RFP will go out in January 2010, with installation planned for late spring or early summer. Placement of the signage would coordinate with lighting placement.

Mr. Scott asked why the applications would not go before the City Commission until March 2010. Mr. Barnes explained the BCIP and NCIP applications are "packaged" after the holidays; the projects are then subject to the review process, which goes through various Departments to the City Manager. When this process is complete, they are scheduled for presentation to the City Commission. He noted that this has traditionally occurred in late February or early March.

The next applicant was Sister Cities International, represented by Nuccia McCormick and Kim Naimoli. Ms. Naimoli explained their grant request would create a pictorial display representing each of Fort Lauderdale's 17 sister cities, with additional room left for expansion. The project, currently in the conceptual

stage, would be interactive, with appeal to both children and adults. Ms. McCormick added that a bronze sculpture would be placed in Esplanade Park as a symbol of world unity.

Ms. Naimoli explained that the grant would go toward creating a pictorial display for each of Fort Lauderdale's sister cities. The bronze sculpture would be included in Phase II of the project.

Mr. Barnes clarified that the renaming of the park is not intended to be part of the BCIP application, as this request would have to go through different channels. The application is for "monuments for the various sister cities." The grant indicates that Sister Cities International would need to work with the Planning and Parks & Recreation Departments. As the project is presently in its conceptual stage, the Board is being asked to recommend the concept and funding so the application may move forward and involve the necessary Departments before it is implemented.

Ms. Dickey requested clarification regarding the use of funds. Ms. Naimoli noted that the design itself is still in a conceptual stage, and Sister Cities International would need to partner with various Departments to move it forward. They plan to have an interactive display.

Mr. Barnes clarified that the BCIP funds are intended for the installation of the project; the Board is asked to approve the concept and the funding, and should the project receive all the necessary approvals from City Departments and the public realm, the display would then be installed. He added that Sister Cities International has partnered with an architectural firm, which is doing in-kind design services, as part of their matching funds.

Mr. Scott pointed out that a decision such as adding a monument to Esplanade Park is "extremely significant," and would need the City Commission's approval.

Mr. Motwani asked if Sister Cities International is coordinating their application with the existing 2nd Street business organization. Mr. Barnes advised there would be "a lot of coordination:" for example, the Planning Department has open discussions "on the public realm." Each Department or organization would participate in the "team concept" to finalize the look of the project.

Mr. Motwani explained that his question had been due to his understanding that the grants must be awarded to nonprofit organizations or business associations. He noted that he would like to see the project coordinated through the 2nd Street group.

Mr. Barnes stated the Sister Cities International project would not be "as simple as approve...design...install," due to the level of coordination that would be

required. He did not feel installation would take place “any time...next year;” instead, the funding would be set aside so once the design is complete, monies are available to complete the project.

Chair Riehl agreed that Mr. Motwani’s point was well taken, as the spirit of the BCIP’s Ordinance states that a business organization is awarded the funds. Ms. McCormick responded that Sister Cities International is a nonprofit organization promoting art, culture, and economic development. Ms. DuMont added that the group has 501C3 status. Mr. Barnes pointed out that the organization is comprised of “leaders in the business community,” and while they do not have a clear geographic boundary, Staff had reviewed the organization and had welcomed them into the program.

Ms. Burt-Stewart recalled that per the program’s documents, the group would not meet its specific criteria. Mr. Barnes explained that when the details of the program are reviewed, “they meet all the requirements,” as they are a nonprofit organization and are considered a business entity. Ms. Burt-Stewart pointed out that they are considered a business entity due to their leadership, rather than because the organization is a defined business association.

Ms. Dickey advised that many local businesses belong to Sister Cities International. Ms. Naimoli stated there are corporate, family, student, and individual memberships to the organization.

Ms. DuMont asked where the budget would come from for fabrication of the project if BCIP funds are for installation only, and how long the BCIP funds would be held if the project does not start within a specific time. Mr. Barnes stated the money is “for fabrication and installation,” and it is design funding that is being kept separate from the grant. With regard to holding funds, he noted that there are “no established guidelines” for a term in which the money must be spent: there are occasional issues that delay a project’s beginning, and funds are escrowed into an account for the project when this occurs.

Mr. Scott recalled that at one time an applicant had taken additional time to raise their matching funds. Mr. Barnes noted that grants have been terminated in the past, more often for the NCIP rather than the BCIP program; when this occurs, the money is released back into the reserve funds.

Ms. Naimoli advised that one reason the project is still in its conceptual phase is it has “got to fit in with that public realm project.” Chair Riehl recalled that Wayne Jessup, Deputy Director of Planning and Zoning, had made a presentation to the Board regarding this project earlier in the year.

The third application was from the Fort Lauderdale Beach Village Merchants Association, Inc., formerly the North Beach Square Association. The Association was represented by Tim Schiavone.

Mr. Schiavone explained that the Association had begun work on the North Beach Square Streetscape Improvements 15 years ago; it had started as a "million-dollar project," but had been scaled back due to the recession. He advised they had "a great foundation," and was requesting the funds to continue to improve the neighborhood. The Association has raised roughly \$130,000 thus far.

Mr. Barnes added that "contracts have just been signed," and the Association has been building up funds for several years. They are also bringing approximately \$80,000 in in-kind services to the project, including design and construction management. They hope to get "shovels in the ground" as early as the following week.

He continued that the intent of the grant is not to supplement this contract, but to add "accents to this project."

Mr. Schiavone indicated that the first phase is "all of Sunrise Lane" down 9th Street. It will include landscaping and pavers, and the Association is seeking an additional \$150,000 for lighting. Mr. Barnes noted the conduit will be put in place for future lighting so the project will not be disturbed later on, and the roadway will be repaved and restriped as part of the City's normal maintenance.

Mr. Schiavone explained the area had become "close to being blighted" over the years, and the project would improve it tremendously. He felt the project would be a catalyst for future improvement. In addition, he is working with City Commissioner Rodstrom to obtain a parking reduction for rental properties, and a parking garage may be re-opened in the future.

Mr. Barnes informed the Board that Staff has recommended all three applications proceed to the City Commission, and reiterated that there is sufficient funding for each project to receive \$22,500.

Motion made by Mr. Pollock, seconded by Ms. Dickey, to approve all three applications presented.

Ms. DuMont stated she would like the Board to vote on each project individually. She expressed concern with Sister Cities International's application, which "doesn't totally 100% meet what the BCIP is intended to do." She also pointed out that she is a past member of this organization and has additional concerns regarding how it is run. She concluded that she would be opposed to funding this project.

The **motion** and **second** were withdrawn by Mr. Pollock and Ms. Dickey. Mr. Motwani suggested the Board vote on the remaining two projects on an individual basis before proceeding with discussion of the Sister Cities International application.

Motion made by Mr. Pollock, seconded by Mr. Motwani, to approve the Riverwalk Trust application. In a voice vote, the **motion** carried unanimously.

Motion made by Mr. Pollock, seconded by Ms. Dickey, to approve the Fort Lauderdale Beach Village Merchants Association, Inc. application. In a voice vote, the **motion** carried unanimously.

Mr. de Vosjoli stated he did not understand what the display proposed by Sister Cities International would accomplish; in addition, he felt Esplanade Park is already “visually extremely cluttered.” He asked if the other Board members could clarify the project further for him.

Mr. Budwig advised that the applicants are not in competition with one another, and felt if the Staff has recommended the three projects, he would stand behind this recommendation.

Ms. Dickey requested clarification from Mr. Barnes regarding the organization’s eligibility under the Ordinance as it is written. Mr. Barnes replied that Staff does not feel they are ineligible, as their membership consists of the business community and they are a nonprofit organization. They had concluded the application does not violate the BCIP.

He added that Staff feels the project can proceed; however, the recommendation is strictly up to the Board, and their recommendation will be taken to the City Commission for further discussion. Funding the project will not make any other applicant ineligible.

Ms. DuMont explained that Sister Cities International is a 501C3 organization, and asked if the Board is “going to open the door” to other nonprofit groups who would like to apply. She felt a recommendation would set a precedent for this, and it should not be done if that is not the intended use for the funds; she felt NCIP is “another way to go” for nonprofit organizations, and BCIP is not appropriate.

Ms. Burt-Stewart cautioned that the City must be consistent in its decisions, and cannot make a decision in the future to disallow another program’s application once a precedent has been set.

Chair Riehl agreed that Ms. DuMont’s point was valid, as business associations are organized as 501C6 groups and approving the Sister Cities International

application would open the program up to 501C3 organizations, or nonprofit groups. He asked if the 2nd Street merchants' association is a member of Sister Cities International. Ms. McCormick confirmed they are not.

Mr. Denison asked if each nation in which Fort Lauderdale has a sister city might contribute toward its own pedestal in the display. It was clarified that plaques are atop the pedestals; the pedestals cost \$600 apiece, and the plaques would be an additional cost.

Mr. Barnes stated the organization is requesting \$22,500, and would bring \$12,500 in cash to the project, as well as \$10,000 in in-kind services. Should the project cost more than originally planned, BCIP would still only contribute \$22,500 to its total cost.

Chair Riehl expressed concern with the application, and asked Mr. Scott if the City's legal counsel had been consulted. Mr. Barnes advised if the grant moves through the review process, it would go to the City Attorney's Office before going to the City Commission.

Chair Riehl asked if the program has ever funded a 501C3 organization. Mr. Barnes stated Riverwalk Trust has been funded in the past, and is also a "business association made up of business leaders in the community."

Ms. Burt-Stewart asked if an organization must itself be a business association, or if it may have businesses as members. Mr. Barnes replied the association should be "structured as a working association." In addition, these associations have traditionally been "geographically defined." He noted that the geographic boundary for Sister Cities International would be the City of Fort Lauderdale, which is what the organization is trying to improve.

Ms. Burt-Stewart felt the bottom line is whether or not the organization meets the program's criteria.

Mr. Scott proposed if there is "consensus concern," it might be possible to ask the City Attorney if Sister Cities International is eligible for a BCIP grant and bring this response back to the next meeting. Mr. Barnes agreed this is possible.

Mr. Motwani recalled previous Board discussions of "who the right recipients should be," and added he felt the application is "a stretch," although he liked the concept. He pointed out that grants are set aside for a specific reason, and this could set a precedent with which the Board might have concern. He stated he would be more comfortable if the 2nd Street merchants' association was a co-applicant, as this would negate any "gray area."

Ms. DuMont noted that in past years, the Board has discussed creating greater interest in the northwest area of the City; some groups had come before the Board, but because their business associations did not have the appropriate documentation, they had not received funding.

Ms. Dickey asked if Sister Cities International could approach the 2nd Street merchants' association and arrange a partnership. Mr. Barnes pointed out, however, that grant funding opens and closes within a specific cycle, and if that cycle is reopened, any association may apply.

Chair Riehl asked if it is possible to table the application until the City Attorney has been consulted. Mr. Barnes agreed he could bring back the decision at the Board's January 2010 meeting.

Motion made by Mr. Pollock, seconded by Mr. Budwig, to delay the application until there has been a legal evaluation from the City Attorney, and that it be brought back to the Board for discussion at the January 2010 meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** carried unanimously.

Ms. Naimoli asked if it would be helpful if the 2nd street organization were a member of Sister Cities International. Chair Riehl advised it "wouldn't hurt;" Ms. Naimoli stated she would approach them regarding membership.

Mr. Barnes advised the Board it is not too early to begin considering the 2011 grant cycle, which opens in June 2010. He recalled that the Board had made recommendations for improvements to the program, noting the difficulty some communities and/or associations have in obtaining matching funds; Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds are now available for business associations to use toward this match. He emphasized that this federal grant money must be available at the time of the grant funding cycle.

In addition, the Citizens' Volunteer Corps (CVC) has monthly volunteer programs, coordinated through the Commission office, to which a merchants' or business association may send a representative. When an individual signs in his or her name and the name of the association, they may earn up to 500 points for attending the event, which translate to 500 matching points. Theoretically, by attending eight functions per year, an association may earn up to 4000 points total.

He concluded that the BCIP is now a "more practical program" thanks to the Board's input.

Mr. Motwani recalled there had also been discussion of outreach at previous meetings, and asked if it would be possible to present the program at a Chamber of Commerce meeting in order to increase the applicant pool. Mr. Barnes stated

members could discuss the program, or Staff members could make a presentation. He added that he hoped they would reach out to communities that “haven’t come to the table” to apply for the program.

Ms. DuMont asked how much “give and leeway” lies in the program’s rules in case another group, perhaps from an underserved area, applies in the future. Mr. Barnes noted that when a group doesn’t meet the guidelines “to the letter,” attempts are made to partner that applicant with an association that does qualify. Any funds not dedicated through the program are returned to the BCIP Reserve Fund; however, monies not allocated through BCIP have also gone back into the General Fund.

Mr. Scott suggested that a future Agenda Item might be ways to discuss how to market the BCIP program into the community.

The Board thanked Mr. Barnes and Ms. Roberts for their work with the program

IV. Chair Report

Chair Riehl invited Mr. Motwani to report on the Business First program.

Mr. Motwani advised there was a “great response” from the surveys, and the data is presently being compiled. He added he is very impressed with how the group is being administered and presented to the community.

The group is currently scheduling 50 “face-to-face” appointments with a diverse group of businesses in the community. The Chamber of Commerce is a partner in this effort, and some of the businesses were recommended by Chamber members, as well as the City Commissioners and the Mayor.

Mr. Scott explained that Phase I of Business First was the survey; Phase II consists of site visits. The two phases are occurring simultaneously, he noted, although the site visits are “going slowly” due to scheduling. He expected these to increase in January 2010.

Chair Riehl advised he had met with Police Chief Frank Adderley, and the City now has 494 sworn officers on duty. The City is authorized to have 510 sworn officers.

He continued that the water slide program discussed the previous month is “moving along,” and its package was accepted by the DRC. The sidewalk cafés have hired almost 25 individuals.

Chair Riehl informed the Board that the Beach Barrier Island Town Hall Meeting will be held Thursday, December 10, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. at the Swimming Hall of

Fame and Aquatics Center. Mr. Scott advised that he will be speaking about Super Bowl-related events.

Mr. Scott noted that a Marine Workshop will be held in the City Commission chambers on Thursday, December 16, 2009. The workshop will feature "presentations from several different angles" related to the marine industry. He urged the Board members to attend.

He added that the Boat Parade will take place on Saturday, December 12, and the City's New Year's Eve Party will take place on 2nd Street on December 31, 2009. Roughly 10,000 people are expected.

There will be a core group stakeholder meeting for the Riverwalk District Public Realm Plan on Monday, December 14. Mr. Scott advised that this is not a public meeting, but for area stakeholders in particular.

Mr. Scott is now a member of the Board of Governors of the Downtown Council, which the Board members recognized with a round of applause.

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 5:21 p.m.

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