

DRAFT MINUTES OF CRA MEETING HELD ON 11/10/15

A duly noticed meeting of the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) Advisory Board was held on November 10, 2015, in the Commission Chambers at City Hall, 204 Ash Street, Fernandina Beach, FL 32034. Present were the Chair, Arlene Filkoff; Members Andrew Curtin, Lou Goldman, Marla McDaniels, Anne Thomas, and Lynn Williams; City Commission Liaison Robin Lenz; and Community Development Department Senior Planner Kelly Gibson. Absent was CRA Member Daniel McCranie.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m,

The minutes of the October meeting were deferred to the December meeting.

The first item of business was a discussion regarding flood mitigation. Planning Board member Len Krieger circulated a diagram to illustrate potential flooding in downtown Fernandina Beach, talked about the dire consequences of a combination of high tides and winds, and stated that the City must do whatever needs to be done to avert the costly risk of flooding. He mentioned a shoreline survey that had been done every 30 feet along the St. John's River. Community Development Director Adrienne Burke mentioned a Washington, D.C. Potomac River study on flood mitigation measures and she recommended that the CRA Plan be revised to address flood mitigation measures. There was some discussion regarding the fact that the City had done a stormwater study five years ago, but that the study was vague did not include a stormwater survey. Although City employees, John Mandrik and Rex Lester, have plotted where runoff exists on a large scale map and there is anecdotal knowledge as to the location of stormwater conduits, the City needs to find out what kinds of pipes it has and where they are located. There was general agreement that a stormwater survey is needed.

[Some discussion about C-13 -- I have no ideq what this is -- and \$2 million for what?]

There followed a discussion about how, in the short-term, anyone looking to develop in the downtown area can simply follow FEMA guidelines, but that more is needed for the long term; for example, west of Front Street, it may be necessary to construct bulkheads. Arlene Filkoff asked whether the City should put tax credits on the table, since the cost of constructing in a floodplain is significantly higher because of all the FEMA requirements that have to be met. Adrienne Burke said that the cost of constructing in the floodplain has not arisen as an issue.

There was some discussion about the lack of check-valves on the City's stormwater pipes. Gil [last name? title?] said that stormwater is often confused with tidewater and that check-valves don't help with tidewater. He then did a presentation on tidewater. He said there is a tide station in back of Bretts that reports every half hour what the tide level is via satellite and showed a number of slides, including a diagrammatical sketch of how the mean high waterline is calculated, a picture of a bulkhead in the Amelia River, and a slide with white stakes in the marsh at David Cook's property delineating where the mean high water line is located. There were also pictures of the flooding caused by a recent high tide event along the Southeast Atlantic coast, including one showing the Amelia River flooding considerably to the west of the white stakes at the Cook property.

The conclusion of the slide presentation was that bulkheads need to be constructed north of Bretts. Adrienne Burke said that the problem with bulkheads is that they cause erosion at the ends. She said the City needs to do an engineering study to determine how to mitigate the erosion problem. When Planning Board Member Mark Bennet asked whether it would be

possible to build on pilings, her response was that one can build on pilings for a water-dependent use, but typically have to prove that there was a pre-existing structure in the particular location. Arlene Filkoff inquired whether there exists any document laying out what an owner can and cannot do with submerged property. There followed a discussion of riparian rights, including rights of access to the center of the river channel and sightline rights. There was a consensus that if the City acquires title to the Ventura property, the City must ensure that title includes all riparian rights. Lou Gold commented that, for a commercial property like a marina on the Ventura property, the City will also need to lease the submerged land from the State.

The railroad was on the agenda, but discussion was deferred except to the extent of reiterating that one knows for sure whether CSX owns any part of Front Street and, if it does, no one knows what would be the ramifications of that ownership. There was a consensus that the City needs to partner with the railroad.

A discussion of design guidelines ensued. The CRA design guidelines have been incorporated into the Land Development Code and some were of the opinion that perhaps this should be undone. It was noted that the Historic Commission guidelines are not incorporated in the Land Development Code.

It was decided to recommend to the City Commission: (1) that a flood mitigation study, including a stormwater survey, be initiated by the City; and (2) that a partnership be developed among the City, the railroad, the OHPA, and the mills.

In the Staff Report, Kelly Gibson told the Board that Main Streets had hired an Executive Director and that 20% of their budget would be devoted to the CRA.

It was agreed that the December meeting would cover items on the November agenda that had not been addressed at the November meeting.

It was then moved, seconded, and voted to adjourn the meeting.