

**CRA BOARD MEETING**  
**November 1, 2021**  
**7:00 PM**

This CRA Board Meeting was conducted utilizing Communications Media Technology. Some Staff members were present in the Commission Chambers while others were present via the Zoom application to respect the social distancing guidelines.

**CRA BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:**

Shirley Groover Bryant, Presiding Officer  
Harold Smith, Chair  
Tambra Varnadore, Vice Chair  
Tamara Cornwell  
Sheldon Jones  
Brian Williams (Not Present)

**STAFF PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:**

Mark Barnebey, City Attorney  
Jim Freeman, City Clerk  
Jeff Burton, CRA Director  
Xavier Colon, Assistant CRA Director  
Mohammed Rayan, Public Works Director  
Kera Hill, Planning Analyst  
Scott Tyler, Chief of Police  
Penny Johnston, Executive Assistant  
Vanessa Cochran, Assistant City Clerk

**STAFF PRESENT ELECTRONICALLY:**

Todd Williams, Information Technology (IT) Consultant

1. Presiding Officer Bryant called the meeting to order at 7:25 p.m.
2. CRA BOARD AGENDA APPROVAL

**Motion: Mrs. Varnadore moved, Mrs. Cornwell seconded, and the motion carried 4-0 to approve the November 1, 2021 CRA Board Agenda.**

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Minutes: August 23rd and September 13th
- b. Legal Bills
- c. Resolution 2021-03 Budget Amendment

**Motion: Mrs. Cornwell moved, Mr. Smith seconded, and the motion carried 4-0 to approve the November 1, 2021 Consent Agenda as presented by staff with the removal of 4.B Legal Bills for discussion.**

**4B. LEGAL BILLS DISCUSSION**

Mr. Smith inquired about the fee charge for the First Baptist Church draft document. Attorney Barnebey stated that the charge is for revisions to the development agreement between the City and the church.

**Motion: Mrs. Cornwell moved, Mr. Smith seconded, and the motion carried 4-0 to approve Consent Agenda Item 4.B Legal Bills as presented by staff.**

DOWNTOWN BOAT PARKING ALTERNATIVES (J. Burton)

Mr. Burton CRA Director, stated that this item is a continuation of the today's Workshop. Three boat parking alternatives were addressed that included the complications of pulling in and backing out of the boat parking spaces, and the coastal high hazard areas on the property that are below the elevation of the category 1 storm surge. Next, Mr. Burton requested the Board's approval to move forward with the project.

Before the Board made a recommendation, Presiding Officer Bryant accepted public comments pertaining to the downtown boat parking alternatives.

Public Comments

The public speakers listed gave their opinions on the downtown boat parking alternatives.

Stephanie Seger  
Julie Brown  
James Bradin  
Phill Baker

Regina Bradin  
Lynn Meier  
Elaine Johnson (via telephone into Zoom Meeting)

**Motion: Mrs. Cornwell moved, Mr. Smith seconded with discussion to allow staff to develop appropriate plan documents for the construction of approximately 18 boat parking spaces with pedestrian amenities, prepare and enact a Request for Qualifications, with the results returned to the CRA Board for final approval and signature.**

Mr. Smith voiced that the residents should have the right to say what should be developed on this site and mentioned projects in Ward 1 that were voted on but nothing happened. Mrs. Cornwell called for the question, and the previous question was adopted by a vote of 3-1.

**Motion: Mrs. Cornwell moved, Mr. Smith seconded, and the motion carried 3-1 to allow staff to develop appropriate plan documents for the construction of approximately 18 boat parking spaces with pedestrian amenities, prepare and enact a Request for Qualifications, with the results returned to the CRA Board for final approval and signature. Mr. Smith voted nay and Mr. Williams was not present.**

5. CONNOR PARK UPDATE (R. Gause)

Based on the today's Workshop discussion, Mr. Gause stated that he needs the Commission to give direction on how to proceed with regards to Ms. Coleman. He discussed the following options and requested the Board to make a selection.

- Option A – Have the City Attorney start eminent domain proceedings and give Ms. Coleman a fair compensation. Build project as previously approved.
- Option B – The contractor will bring the boardwalk to the observation platform that is elevated 14 to 15 feet, provide the ADA ramp, and run the steps down to connect the rubber walkway.
- Option C – The contractor will take the walkway and run it around the west side of the stormwater pond, link it into 6th Avenue, and extend a 6 foot sidewalk down the west right-of-way, to avoid the reserve area. The boardwalk would be removed from the design.

Mrs. Varnadore requested clarification on Ms. Coleman's dock area location. Mr. Gause affirmed that Ms. Coleman's dock area is not near the project area and gave a narrative of the location. Mrs. Varnadore selected Option C.

Mr. Smith requested the cost differentiation between Options B and C. Mr. Gause answered that Option B will save about 300,000 and Option C will save about \$800,000. Mrs. Varnadore asked about the funding sources for the Connor Park Project, and Mr. Burton gave the following information:

- \$700,000 Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD)
- \$50,000 Tampa Bay Estuary lost due to missed deadlines.
- \$500,000 to \$600,000 Brownfield Remediation Grant
- \$2 million dollars from CRA

Presiding Officer Bryant asked Mr. Burton to summarize the purpose for the Connor Park Project. He explained that the intent was to cleanse the stormwater and remediate the Brownfield site.

The Board discussed the matter in detail and favored Option A, and if Ms. Coleman does not agree with the City proceed with Option C. Attorney Barnebey recapped the Board's recommendation and stated if Ms. Coleman agrees with the City, we will go with Option A. If she doesn't agree with the City, the City will proceed with Option C with the removal of the boardwalk. In case Option C is selected, Mr. Gause suggested to have the contractor start pricing the project now because the process is lengthy.

**Motion: Mrs. Cornwell moved, Mr. Jones seconded, and the motion carried 4-0 to approve Option A unless the property owner disagrees in which case the City will proceed with Option C by the next meeting on December 6th.**

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6. CRA DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Mr. Burton gave updates on various CRA projects.

7. CRA PRESIDING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

Presiding Officer Bryant asked Attorney Barnebey to share information on an award that was recently given. Attorney Barnebey expressed that the Mark and Marianne Barnebey Planning & Development Lab at Florida State University was awarded the Florida Community Redevelopment Association President's Award for "North Star Legacy Communities: A Florida Treasure helps increase tourism while sharing Black History and stories that could have been lost to time".

8. CRA BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Mrs. Cornwell asked if any CRA projects that were previously discussed will be presented to the Board soon. Mr. Burton responded that the CRA Agreement for Redevelopment Incentives will be presented to the Board at the December 6th meeting.

Mr. Jones spoke on attending the Florida Redevelopment Association Conference and stated that it is beneficial for Board members to attend.

Presiding Officer Bryant adjourned the meeting at 8:49 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED: JANUARY 3, 2022

***JAMES R. FREEMAN***

JAMES R. FREEMAN

CITY CLERK