

Palmetto City Commission
March 3, 2008
4:00 P.M.

Elected Officials Present:

Larry Bustle, Mayor
Tambra Varnadore, Vice Mayor
Tamara Cornwell, Commissioner (4:12 p.m.)
Mary Lancaster, Commissioner
Brian Williams, Commissioner

Elected Official Absent:

Eric Ball, Commissioner

Staff and Others Present:

James R. Freeman, City Clerk
Chris Lukowiak, Public Works Director
Chief Garry Lowe
Tanya Lukowiak, CRA Executive Director
Michele Hall, City Attorney
Bob Schmitt, Planning Supervisor/Zoning Administrator
Deanna Roberts, Administrative Assistant

Mayor Bustle called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. A moment of silence was observed for our military men and women serving around the world, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. AGENDA APPROVAL

MOTION: Commissioner Lancaster moved, Commissioner Varnadore seconded, and motion passed 3-0 to approve the March 3, 2008, 4:00 p.m. agenda.

At the Mayor's request, Item #4 on the agenda was moved up to Item #1 as there were persons in the audience wishing to speak to the issue.

2. SUNNYDALE PROPERTIES ANNEXATION REQUEST

Stephen Thompson, attorney with Porges, Hamlin, addressed Commission. He is representing Mr. Bob Spencer/ Sunnydale Properties, owners of the property located on Bayshore Road in unincorporated Manatee County. He said the subject property is located immediately adjacent to the City of Palmetto, and the owners are requesting annexation. The property is used for rental housing and is served by septic. In order to upgrade the property, annexation is being requested in order to connect to the City's sewer. Mr. Thompson informed Commission that the Planning and Zoning Board approved the request with one contingency, that the structures on the property must pass a building inspection. Upon inspection, the buildings did meet the City's minimum requirements. Additionally, Mr. Lukowiak and Code Enforcement Director Bill Strollo inspected the property.

Mr. Thompson remarked that the benefits to the City would be the ongoing fees collected for the utilities, plus the property would be added to the City's tax roll. He said his client is seeking Commission's authorization to proceed with the annexation process.

Mr. Lukowiak said the City is currently serving the area with water. The applicant has agreed to pay for the costs of connection to the utilities. Code Enforcement does not have any major concern with the property. An original punch list given to the owners has already been addressed.

Mr. Spencer promised to work and cooperate with the City. He does not want the property to be a burden to the City in any way.

Commissioner Williams asked about drainage. Mr. Lukowiak said an open ditch system in the area collects storm water. He said all the questions posed will be answered in a public hearing. The purpose of the Workshop was to get a feel for how Commission viewed the request for annexation.

City Planner Bob Schmitt told Commission he wanted to come to Commission and let them know what Planning and Zoning Board's wishes were, and that was the reason for the Workshop. The concept of annexing a potentially burdensome property was a legitimate concern, and based on all the inspections they now have a comfort level with the request. Mr. Schmitt said the property is zoned RM-6 - multi-family.

Commissioner Williams said the last building on the property would not meet the set backs. Mr. Schmitt agreed that the last building would be non-conforming.

Mr. Thompson said again that they are at the Workshop not to seek approval, just an okay to continue.

Mr. Lukowiak asked that Commission refer questions to the Planning and Zoning Board. Any stipulations Commission has would be addressed before the First Reading which will be on March 17, 2008.

3. ORDINANCE REGARDING PARKING OF BOATS & RECREATIONAL VEHICLES

Staff was seeking Commission input on direction for this proposed ordinance to limit the location of parking for boats as well as for other recreational vehicles.

After lengthy discussion, it was decided that staff would rework the ordinance and keep it on the Suspense Log as a low priority.

4. DISCUSSION: WARD 1, PHASE II PROJECT

CRA Executive Director, Tanya Lukowiak, discussed proceeding with the engineering study for the project, or alternatively, the much needed street repair in the area. Regarding funding for project completion, the bond counsel for the City said the City Commission could take a loan and enter into an agreement with the CRA to reimburse the City. Also, it is likely that within the next few months, the School Board will be buying back the property the CRA had purchased for them.

Commissioner Cornwell inquired what infrastructure is being referred to in the project. Mrs. Lukowiak said it will include water, sewer lines (new or repaired, as required), storm water addressed as the engineering study warrants and reclaimed water and sidewalks everywhere.

Chris Lukowiak said the engineering study will determine what needs to be addressed.

Mrs. Lukowiak said the \$400,000 is available for the engineering phase of the project. That has been delayed pending identifying funding for the construction phase of the project.

Commissioner Cornwell expressed concern over the potholes in this area. Mr. Lukowiak said he has scheduled the potholes for repair.

Commissioner Lancaster said she would like to see the project completed. Even though it is in the CRA district it is still a part of the City, and the City is spending funds in other parts of the City. If the CRA can't fund it, the City should.

Commissioner Varnadore expressed concern over borrowing funds to finance CIP projects. She said the City can't continually borrow money. With the expected budget shortfall, the City can't continue to do these large projects.

Commissioner Williams was in favor of moving forward with the engineering study, because the funds are there now. Because this area is in the CRA, there's a far greater possibility that funds may become available in the near future. Other areas in the City can't take advantage of the CRA money.

Mr. Lukowiak expects a balance of over \$400,000 after the US 301 expansion project. Those funds could be used to finance smaller projects like this one.

Mr. Freeman asked the estimated cost of construction. Mrs. Lukowiak said she has no good guess right now.

Mrs. Varnadore asked how long an engineering study is good for. Mr. Lukowiak said forever.

Mr. Williams and Ms. Cornwell agreed that they also were not in favor of borrowing money to complete the project. Mr. Williams suggested using money from other projects.

Mrs. Lancaster asked for clarification. It was her understanding that the CRA will proceed with the engineering study and look for funding to complete the project. Commission agreed.

5. US 301 UTILITY EXPANSION LEG 4

Mr. Lukowiak directed Commission's attention to the spreadsheet. The budget for the four legs of the project and the engineering is \$4, 082, 000.00; the actual cost is \$3.6 million, for a savings of \$484,000. That money can be carried forward to other projects in the CIP next year, or for use this year if something comes up. He is looking for approval to enter into a contract for Leg 4 of this project and to approve the additional engineering by ZNS. Leg 4 is an approved CIP project with funds in the CIP.

There will be a developer contribution by Spacebox of \$150,000 for Leg 4.

In answer to Mr. Williams's question, Mr. Lukowiak said all the property owners are in the city limits. There will be revenue to the City from these properties, and Mr. Lukowiak will email a list of the expected revenue and benefits to all Commissioners. The City will be bringing in more money than the debt service on all four legs of this project.

To clarify for Commission, Mr. Lukowiak said that Leg 4 is new, 1 and 3 are basically complete and Phase II has been started.

Commissioner Varnadore said she still feels the City should have waited on this project and done more in the interior of the City. She still is not sold on this project.

This item is on the 7:00 p.m. agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

Minutes approved: March 17, 2008

James R. Freeman, City Clerk