

CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP MEETING

May 3, 2021

4:30 pm

This Commission 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.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:

Shirley Groover Bryant, Mayor (Not Present)
Brian Williams, Vice Mayor, Commissioner, Ward 3
Sheldon Jones, Commissioner-at-Large 1
Harold Smith, Commissioner, Ward 1
Tambra Varnadore, Commissioner, Ward 2 (Not Present)
Tamara Cornwell, Commissioner-at-Large 2

STAFF PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:

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

STAFF PRESENT ELECTRONICALLY:

Todd Williams, Information Technology (IT) Consultant

Vice Mayor Williams opened the meeting at 4:32 pm

1. RIVERSIDE BOAT RAMP (J. Burton)

Mr. Burton, CRA Director, made a presentation to the Commission on the City owned property adjacent to the Riverside Boat Ramp. The presentation included a narration of the boat ramp development, a version of what the project could potentially become, and a strategy for a long term investment for the City. The presentation is a part of the minutes. Next, Mr. Burton took comments and questions from the Board.

Discussion ensued: Commissioner Cornwell inquired about the number of parking spaces available on the site and nearby. Mr. Burton pointed out the Slick's property and two other options and replied about 150 parking spaces are accessible, and Commissioner Williams declared about 160. Commissioner Cornwell pointed out that there is no factual data on available parking spaces and no surveys have been done.

Commissioner Jones referenced the Regatta' partnership parking arrangement with the City, and inquired about the construction going on near the Regatta, and suggested getting boat trailers to accommodate more parking spaces. Mr. Burton answered that Public Works is doing maintenance on the parking lot and advised that a boat trailer is twice as long as a boat ramp parking space and cost more. Attorney Barnebey confirmed Regatta's parking arrangement and as outlined in new sublease agreement.

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Commissioner Smith mentioned a developer, from a previous meeting that stated his company would develop parking on the Riverside property. Mr. Burton confirmed the statement and expressed that any developer will discuss parking accessibility and cost. Then, he confirmed that the parking spaces at the boat ramp are secured. And, the property across the street was purchased and remediated for redevelopment in accordance with the CRA Plan. Commissioner Smith stated that he and another Commissioner were not members of the Board when the CRA Plan was implemented and asked what the Plan involves. Mr. Burton proceeded to summarize the overall goals as well as identifying the types of projects in the CRA Plan, and the County's funding connection. Commissioner Williams added that currently 2.5 million has been invested into the property.

Commissioner Cornwell briefly recited Mr. Burton's statements regarding the boat ramp and asked if it is possible for Palmetto to offer public properties between the City, the County, and others that will ultimately produce some parking spaces. Mr. Burton replied yes, and commented that the County will look at the boat ramps and the best cost per space. Commissioner Williams declared that the time frame to replace the boat ramp spaces is important, and asked for specific questions to present at the Council of Governments Meeting tomorrow, May 4th.

Commissioner Jones proposed putting floating docks near the parking on the east side of the bridge similar to Bradenton fishing pier. And, Commissioner Williams agreed and stated it would add parking spaces.

Mr. Burton pointed out that getting countless trailers in the area is an issue, and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is going to change 10th Avenue to a complete street that enable safe use and support mobility for all users. He addressed some potential ideas regarding parking for travelers coming to the area to use the boat ramp.

Commissioner Cornwell made the following suggestions; acquire what funding is available through the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), obtain the boat ramp parking capabilities, and keep pedestrian traffic safe. She stressed that the City needs the County's assistance in how to make this work for everyone. Commissioner Williams communicated that when the City sells the property, we will have to put at least 50 parking spaces within walking distance back in, and we have to get the County involved.

Commissioner Williams asked the Board if they would like to have the public to speak. The Board agreed to hear public comments from those who will not be able to attend the Commission Meeting tonight at 7:00 p.m.

Public Comment

Mr. Gullett, commercial fisherman, spoke about a boat ramp parking incident that occurred over the weekend, and the limited parking spaces at the boat ramp.

Commissioner Williams reiterated that the boat ramp will remain and addressed the revenue that will generate from selling the property.

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Vice Mayor Williams adjourned the meeting at 5:46 pm

MINUTES APPROVED: JUNE 7, 2021

JAMES R. FREEMAN

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CITY CLERK