

## CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP MEETING

June 7, 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

Brian Williams, Vice Mayor, Commissioner, Ward 3

Sheldon Jones, Commissioner-at-Large 1

Harold Smith, Commissioner, Ward 1

Tambra Varnadore, Commissioner, Ward 2 (Entered meeting at 4:38 p.m.)

Tamara Cornwell, Commissioner-at-Large 2

### **STAFF PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:**

Mark Barnebey, City Attorney (Entered meeting at 4:31 p.m.)

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

Mayor Bryant opened the meeting at 4:30 pm.

#### **1. RIVERSIDE PARK WEST BUILDING (J. Burton)**

Mr. Burton, CRA Director, changed the order of the items to discuss. Riverside Park West Building was presented first, and Downtown Alternative Redevelopment followed.

Mr. Burton gave a brief summary on the history and purchase of the property. He stated that the City has the option to develop the property for public use or work with the private sector. He acknowledged that the property has a restriction for public use. And, to remove the restriction, the \$150,000 grant money according to the agreement will have to be repaid. This action will remove the State and Federal governments' restrictions on the property, so it can be redeveloped. Mr. Burton recommended that the City maintain ownership of the property. He informed the Board that if they choose to remove the restriction, the CRA can pay for it, but will need a lease from the City for the \$150,000. Next, Mr. Burton welcomed comments and questions from the Board.

## **City Commission Workshop Meeting**

**June 7, 2021**

**Page 2 of 3**

### RIVERSIDE PARK DISCUSSION

Commissioner Jones agreed with Mr. Burton that the City maintain the ownership of the property and favored the private sector use.

Commissioner Cornwell asked where the City's property begins and ends by the old Green Bridge. Mr. Burton presented photographs of the property and identified the City's property lines.

Commissioner Smith inquired if the Riverside Park West Building property was discussed before, and why nothing was initiated. Mr. Burton responded that it was presented about 3 years ago, but there was no action. And, the proposed Plan is still available and can be reviewed by the Board.

Commissioner Williams referenced Exhibit A and asked if additional boat ramp parking was built somewhere else could it go toward the \$150,000 grant. Mr. Burton replied yes. Then, Commissioner Williams addressed the private sector use and also agreed that the City keep ownership of the property. Mr. Burton spoke about the current taxes pertaining to the property and stated that currently there is zero paid. And, if the City decides to lease the property to the private sector, it will be taxed. 5 percent will go to the County and City, and the rest to the CRA.

Commissioner Varnadore inquired about the floating docks installation and locations. Mr. Burton responded that floating docks are being considered, and plans will be presented to the Board to review. Next, Commissioner Varnadore asked about food court vendor possibilities and commended Commissioner Williams' comment about getting the State's assistance with the additional boat ramp parking somewhere else and apply the grant money. Mr. Burton emphasized that there are many options that can be considered and will be reviewed.

Commissioner Cornwell declared that she wants the project to move forward and commented that valet parking should be considered too. She mentioned Saint Petersburg and Tampa parking arrangements and stated that it is quite creative. Commissioner Williams agreed with Commissioner Cornwell on Saint Petersburg and Tampa's parking arrangements. Mr. Burton communicated that a proposal will be presented to the Board.

Commissioner Smith expressed that the restrooms need to be replaced with better ones.

Commissioners Jones, Cornwell, Varnadore, Williams, and Smith favored the City keeping ownership of the property.

## City Commission Workshop Meeting

June 7, 2021

Page 3 of 3

### 2. DOWNTOWN ALTERNATIVE REDEVELOPMENT (J. Burton)

Mr. Burton made a presentation to the Board on the proposed Downtown Alternative Redevelopment, and it is a part of the minutes. The presentation identified possible strategies to accomplish the task, and a flow chart outlining the steps to attain it. He addressed significant issues such as the funding, approval arrangement, and timeline. In regards to what the City may be looking for regarding residential and parking, he mentioned 3 separate projects, Manatee Rural Health, Riverside Drive, and the City's property by Riverside Drive and 10th Avenue West. Also, Mr. Burton informed the Board that Manatee Rural and Developers expressed that the City should have the Housing Authority work on the project, and he acknowledged that there are multiple ways to fund the project. Next, he stated that the Board needs to speak with the property owners about selling or trading their properties for redevelopment because this step is also vital in making this redevelopment happen.

Commissioner Williams stated that he loves the ideas. However, he has concerns regarding traffic control and the CRA's life span. Mr. Burton replied that there will be some parking regulations and gave his opinion on the congestion problem. Then, he addressed the post normal CRA life span.

Commissioner Smith agreed with Commission Williams that the Plan is good and wants it to happen without delays.

Commissioner Cornwell addressed the Housing Authority topic and stated that the agency is not accountable to the voters, and she is not in favor of hiring an employee to oversee the Housing Authority. She added that she loves the Plan and requested timelines be given and not to extend them. She expressed that the redevelopments should entice people to come into the City, particularly, the millennials.

Commissioner Jones stated that he likes the project and was glad that Mr. Burton mentioned the Housing Authority. Mayor Bryant responded that she is planning to meet with Sarasota's Housing Authority and bring the information back to the Board. Commissioner Jones pointed out that the Housing Authority must have their own Board, or it won't work. Mr. Burton suggested to have someone come in that can answer the Board's questions regarding the Housing Authority.

Mayor Bryant adjourned the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED: JULY 19, 2021

*JAMES R. FREEMAN*

JAMES R. FREEMAN

CITY CLERK