

**APPROVED**  
**MINUTES**  
**NORTHWEST PROGRESSO – FLAGLER HEIGHTS**  
**REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD**  
**FORT LAUDERDALE**  
**100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE**  
**8<sup>th</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM**  
**OCTOBER 28, 2015 – 3:30 P.M.**

**Cumulative Attendance**  
**May 2015 - April 2016**

<b><u>Members Present</u></b>	<b><u>Attendance</u></b>	<b><u>Present</u></b>	<b><u>Absent</u></b>
Steve Lucas, Chair	P	6	0
Ella Phillips, Vice Chair (ar. 3:39)	P	6	0
Jessie Adderley (arr. 3:44)	P	5	1
Leann Barber	P	5	0
Sonya Burrows	P	6	0
Ron Centamore	P	5	1
Alan Gabriel (dep. 5:30)	P	4	2
Mickey Hinton	A	2	3
John Hooper	P	4	2
Dylan Lagi (arr. 3:32)	P	5	1
Dev Motwani	P	1	0
Jacqueline Reed	P	3	0
Scott Strawbridge	P	6	0
John Wilkes (arr. 3:37)	P	6	0

Currently there are 14 appointed members to the Board, which means 8 would constitute a quorum.

It was noted that a quorum was present at the meeting.

**Staff**

Bob Wojcik, Planner III  
Sandra Doughlin, DSD/ECR  
Thomasina Turner-Diggs, Project Coordinator  
Antoinette Butler, Project Engineer  
Jenni Morejon, Director, Department of Sustainable Development  
Kevin Walford, Department of Transportation and Mobility  
Lisa Edmondson, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

**Communications to City Commission**

None.

**I. Call to Order / Roll Call**

Chair Lucas called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

New member Dev Motwani introduced himself to the Board. Mr. Motwani is the president of Merrimac Ventures, a local real estate company with projects throughout Broward County and one property within the CRA. He has previously served on the City's Economic Development Advisory Board.

## **II. Approval of Minutes from September 23, 2015 Regular Meeting**

**Motion** made by Mr. Gabriel, seconded by Mr. Centamore, to approve. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

## **III. Draft Amended Community Redevelopment Plan**

Chair Lucas advised that the amended Community Redevelopment Plan was drafted following last month's Board meeting, which identified several changes necessary to this document to bring it into compliance with CRA activities. Kim Briesmeister of Redevelopment Management Associates (RMA) will present the draft document to the Board at today's meeting. Once the document has been finalized, it will be presented to the CRA Board on November 17, 2015 and to the City Commission in December. Once it has been approved by the City Commission, the Board may discuss spending of CRA funds for the initiatives and programs included in the amended Plan.

Ms. Briesmeister recalled that when a CRA is formed as an entity, it produces a CRA Plan that will serve as its governing document. This document determines what can be accomplished by the CRA during its term. If a CRA's advisory body wishes to work toward a goal not included in the Plan, the Plan may be updated or amended. She pointed out that most CRA Plans are generic in nature in order to provide flexibility.

The Northwest CRA Plan was most recently updated in 2001. Ms. Briesmeister stated that RMA reviewed all the CRA's documents between 2001 and the present, including incentive programs and strategic plans, to ensure that they were reflected in the CRA Plan. If they were not, RMA ensured that the Plan was updated with generic language to include these plans. The intent is to ensure that the CRA is in compliance. She emphasized that the Plan may be amended again if necessary.

Mr. Lagi requested clarification of funding changes listed for the CRA's Façade Grant program. Ms. Briesmeister recommended that grant programs in the CRA Plan not include actual budget figures, nor should it specify policy that would bring grant requests over a certain amount before the Board or City Commission for approval. These details may remain in the grant program guidelines themselves.

Mr. Strawbridge asked how the new programs could be reconciled considering the use of 1990 census data, which applied when the CRA began. Ms. Briesmeister replied that programs are not necessarily tied to this data, but are instead tied to activities that are either currently underway or planned. She emphasized that the CRA Plan gives the agency statutory authority to spend money on these programs.

Mr. Strawbridge explained that his concern was for how the CRA can eliminate slum and blight using 25-year-old census data, as demographics, income, and other data may have changed significantly since the beginning of the CRA. Ms. Briesmeister clarified that amending the CRA Plan is not the same as retroactively approving programs: the use of data is not necessarily tied to any specific program. The Plan provides flexibility to allocate based on current programs and marketing conditions.

Chair Lucas observed that updated demographics, which will provide the Board with direction on how to proceed, will be applied to the Plan in Phase 2. Ms. Briesmeister added that demographic information is included in the current plan to serve as a socioeconomic indicator. Using this data to create programs is a different exercise from updating the CRA Plan. She emphasized the importance of the Strategic Finance Plan in determining the budget.

Jenni Morejon, Director of the Department of Sustainable Development, advised that because City Staff and resources are limited, they often seek to contract with professional consultants to undertake demographic data collection. She advised that Staff's time is better spent working on incentive programs or redevelopment efforts than on Phase 2 of the CRA Plan update.

Ms. Briesmeister continued that once the draft Amended CRA Plan is approved, the CRA will be fully in compliance and may proceed with any efforts that are already underway. She strongly recommended that the Board annually review its Strategic Finance Plan and budget to ensure that CRA programming is effective.

Mr. Strawbridge concluded that he found the Amended CRA Plan to be challenging to understand in its current form. He expressed concern that residents and stakeholders in the CRA would also have difficulty understanding the Plan as a working document, as it did not include data to reinforce the decisions made by the Board.

Chair Lucas stated that he felt it would be helpful for Staff to present the Amended CRA Plan to the CRA Board and City Commission accompanied by a motion of support from the Board.

**Motion** made by Mr. Gabriel, seconded by Ms. Barber, to approve the recommended amendment as proposed. In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed 12-1 (Mr. Strawbridge dissenting).

The following Item was taken out of order on the Agenda.

#### **VI. Sun Trolley – Discussion -- TMA**

Chair Lucas introduced Robyn Chiarelli, Executive Director of the Downtown Fort Lauderdale Transportation Management Association (TMA), and Kevin Walford, representing the City's Department of Transportation and Mobility. The Chair explained that this Item was first presented earlier in 2015 as a funding request; however, today's presentation is intended to be an informational Item. He added that the two funding requests on today's Agenda relate to items already included in the CRA Plan.

Ms. Chiarelli stated that while she was aware the Board was not currently in a position to approve funding requests related to transportation, she hoped to show how the TMA's Sun Trolley serves the Fort Lauderdale community. The TMA and the City have partnered to hire a Mobility Manager, who will be charged with reviewing all routes and conducting outreach to determine whether or not the existing routes meet the community's needs.

Routes within the CRA include the Neighborhood Link, which provides riders with access to Broward County Transit (BCT), food programs, and Plantation General Hospital. This route serves approximately 35,000 passengers per year. Ms. Chiarelli advised that the TMA leases an additional bus from BCT to alleviate overcrowding on this route and double the amount of service.

The Northwest Community Link also operates in portions of the CRA and serves riders in the Lauderdale Manors community, as well as providing access to the 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Health Center, the African American Research Library, and BCT. This route also has strong ridership, with over 110,000 riders per year and 21.7 passengers per hour.

The Downtown Link also crosses CRA boundaries and serves riders from Flagler Village to Broward General Hospital. It also accesses the South Andrews Avenue Business District. Ms. Chiarelli emphasized the importance of all three routes in providing riders with access to employment and employment opportunities. The previous year reflected ridership of over 90,000 for this route, with 15.1 passengers per hour.

Ms. Chiarelli continued that the TMA has requested additional funding for the next year to help fund the Downtown Link, as the federal funding that once supported this route is no longer available. The three routes described are free of charge, so there is no supporting farebox revenue.

She recalled that in the past, the Board has asked why the TMA does not offer service on Sistrunk Boulevard. BCT has expressed willingness to consider this change, as they no longer feel this access would mean the TMA is competing with them for service. The

Mobility Manager will work with the City, the TMA, BCT, and the Redevelopment Advisory Board to address this issue, which is important to the Board.

Ms. Chiarelli continued that the increase in this year's request would cover the funding gap currently existing for the Downtown Link. She added that while the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) contributes annually to the TMA, their contribution is not equitable in terms of route alignment. She plans to approach the DDA to determine whether or not they may be able to increase their contribution toward the Downtown Link.

The Board discussed the presentation, with Ms. Barber asking if it is reasonable to operate an additional bus system within Broward County when BCT service already exists. Ms. Chiarelli explained that community bus service provides connections that BCT is not able to provide for various reasons. It is also difficult for buses to maintain reasonable headways while serving several communities.

Mr. Walford added that while BCT has contracted with roughly 19 cities within Broward County to provide community bus service, it is difficult for some of its larger buses to operate within smaller neighborhoods. In addition, many community bus routes are free of charge. The intent of these routes is to connect riders to main BCT routes rather than providing duplicate service. BCT is currently reconsidering its stance on service to Sistrunk Boulevard because they provide no funding for the Northwest Community Link.

Mr. Walford continued that the Downtown Link operates in a loop on Andrews Avenue and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue; however, BCT vehicles operate on either Andrews Avenue or 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, but not on both. Ms. Chiarelli also noted that BCT provides \$15/hour to fund the Neighborhood Link. She again emphasized the need for greater community outreach to allow residents to more clearly communicate their transportation needs.

Mr. Strawbridge noted that the most recent proposal requests \$25,000 for the Downtown Link from the DDA and \$70,000 from the CRA, although only 21% of this route lies within the CRA. Ms. Chiarelli explained that most of the Downtown Link is funded by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). She reiterated that the TMA plans to make an additional funding request of the DDA to address any inequity.

Mr. Strawbridge also addressed the formula by which funding requests are calculated, requesting clarification. Ms. Chiarelli replied that this formula would be reviewed further before a final funding request is made.

#### **IV. Moody Insurance – Funding Request: 725 Progresso Drive**

Mr. Wojcik explained that this funding request from Moody Insurance was for \$135,000 in CRA incentives as follows:

- \$100,000 for renovation of the building through the Business Investment Program
- \$15,000 from the Façade Program
- \$20,000 for related streetscape improvements

The business is relocating from the city of Hollywood and will bring some employees with them, with the possibility of hiring new employees as well. The location was previously used for automotive-related uses for many years and is now home to multiple retail and office uses. Staff recommends approval of the request.

**Motion** made by Mr. Gabriel, seconded by Mr. Hooper, to approve.

Chair Lucas asked if contamination exists on the site. Mr. Wojcik advised that this site was the previous location of a dry cleaning business. There is no obligation to clean the site at this time.

Mr. Centamore stated that the request was also presented to the Progresso Village Homeowners' Association, which gave the project its unanimous support.

In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

#### **V. Fairfield at Flagler Village – Streetscape Funding Request – 673 NE 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue**

Mr. Wojcik stated that this project occupies approximately three-quarters of a city block and includes right-of-way improvements along NE 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, and NE 7<sup>th</sup> Street. The request is consistent with other requests the Board has funded in the past for similar projects. The Applicant requests reimbursement for 50% of the cost of streetscape improvements, which comes to \$368,919. The project will also include a small plaza or park, which will be open to the public. Staff recommends approval of the request.

The Board discussed the presentation, with Mr. Lagi stating that retail uses on the project's first floor would be more appropriate than residential or flexible units. Nectaria Chakas, representing the Applicant, advised that there are no retail uses planned for the building; however, several amenities are located on the ground floor of the project. Mr. Lagi asserted that he could not support the project if it lacked these retail uses.

Ms. Barber observed that the Board is still in the process of determining the CRA's priorities, and was not certain that the requested expense would help address the issues on the Sistrunk Corridor. Mr. Wojcik advised that projects such as this bring a great deal of TIF revenue into the CRA, which is likely to return the CRA's contribution within its first year.

Ms. Chakas reviewed the project's site plan, noting that the project has three frontages on 7<sup>th</sup> Street, NE 7<sup>th</sup> Street, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. There will be 15 on-street parking spaces, pavers, landscaping, irrigation, and DDA-approved lighting in order to promote a comfortable and safe pedestrian environment. The site will also include a pocket park, which was previously intended to be internal to the site but has been relocated to a corner of the property for public access.

Ms. Chakas continued that the CRA's contribution would assist with the cost of all streetscape improvements located within the public right-of-way. The funding request does not apply to the pocket park, as it is on private property. Improvements include parking spaces, sidewalks, trees, irrigation, and other features along the perimeter of the property. The total cost to the developer is approximately \$737,000. The project is six stories high and is consistent with the Downtown Master Plan's design guidelines.

Mr. Strawbridge stated he was not certain that public assistance should be necessary for the project. Ms. Chakas replied that there has been a pattern of incentivized development within the Flagler Village area, and throughout the Northwest CRA. She added that the CRA benefits from projects such as this through TIF revenue, citing the tax assessments of similar properties.

Mr. Strawbridge added that he also had philosophical issues with the creation of high-end housing opportunities rather than affordable housing for low- and middle-income families, which is included in the CRA charter.

Mr. Wojcik stated that the streetscape program sends a positive signal to the development community that the CRA wants to encourage and assist developments in this area. He reiterated that the requested amount would be repaid in TIF revenue within one year, and is less expensive than a streetscape program initiated and fully funded by the CRA. Ms. Barber expressed concern that a great deal of CRA money is being spent in the Flagler Village area, while there may be a greater need in other areas.

Mr. Motwani advised that while he had previously been involved with this project, he no longer has an economic interest in the development entity. The City Attorney's Office has confirmed that he may discuss and vote upon this Item.

Ms. Reed stated that she shared Ms. Barber's concern, as the CRA should distribute its funds in various neighborhoods where it is needed, such as the northwest corridor, where there has been little development. Mr. Wojcik noted that although the TIF revenue generated by the project will be generated within Flagler Village, it will be spent throughout the CRA.

Ms. Burrows commented that although the developer may have felt it was challenging to place ground floor retail uses in the project, she felt this was why incentives are offered.

She observed that it would be appropriate for the CRA to ask that the project feature retail uses in exchange for the requested funds.

Mr. Gabriel asked if the project is doing more than what is required under its zoning with regard to streetscape improvements. Ms. Morejon advised that the Downtown Regional Activity Center and Northwest Regional Activity Center (RAC) require streetscape standards that dictate the dimension of sidewalks and the placement of street trees and furniture. Specific features, such as the type of paver or fixture, are not dictated by these standards. Ms. Morejon added that Staff encourages developers to include extra enhancements, such as additional street trees or pocket parks, for developments within the CRA.

Mr. Gabriel commented that while the CRA may add conditions to grant requests, he did not feel it was appropriate to do so after the project has already begun. He pointed out that streetscape improvements are unrelated to retail, and that many properties within the CRA already have retail space that is not being used. Mr. Wilkes stated that if the Board decided to fund a project that does not demonstrate an actual need for money, he felt they should be able to ask for additional elements to be added to the project. Mr. Centamore asserted that he agreed with Mr. Lagi regarding the need for retail on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue in order to create a more walkable city.

Vice Chair Phillips advised that she would like the CRA to focus more closely on the Sistrunk Corridor, as this area continues to present a challenge. She emphasized the need for improvement within the CRA to benefit all its communities.

Mr. Wilkes requested additional information about the project's landscaping. Ms. Chakas explained that landscaping is both against the building and alongside the parallel parking spaces. Sidewalks along NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and NE 7<sup>th</sup> Street will be 8 ft. wide, with 9.5 ft. sidewalks along 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. Overhead utilities will be moved underground in order to allow the placement of shade trees within the streetscape. Mr. Wilkes noted, however, that features such as trees, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-accessible parking, and bus stops will narrow these planned sidewalks. He reiterated that the CRA should be able to ask a developer to go beyond Code requirements if they will be funding these improvements.

Mr. Gabriel asked if the Application could be brought back at the next meeting after addressing some of the Board's concerns. Ms. Chakas noted that the project's streetscape plans are currently in accordance with the Downtown Master Plan, which meant she could not predict how many modifications could be made. Ms. Morejon added that the adjacent roadway is a State road, which presents additional challenges when planning streetscapes, including limited ability for expansion.

It was suggested that the CRA contribute 25% of the projected streetscape costs rather than 50%.

Charles King, member of the public, recalled that at one time, the subject property was intended to be used for low-income housing. He did not feel a lack of retail would affect the project or the area, asserting that density is more important than retail.

Ms. Morejon advised that the CRA should consider changes to policy decisions and program standards in a comprehensive manner rather than on a project-by-project basis. She felt it would send a mixed message to developers if the CRA begins adding requirements to the standards and guidelines of a program for individual projects.

**Motion** made by Mr. Gabriel, seconded by Mr. Hooper, to approve the recommendation as presented.

The Board discussed the motion, noting that there did not seem to be consensus among members to approve the project at this time. Chair Lucas proposed allowing the Applicant to review the project, determine whether or not modifications may be made, and present the Item again at a subsequent meeting.

Mr. Gabriel **withdrew** his **motion**.

**Motion** made by Mr. Wilkes, seconded by Mr. Gabriel, to table the Item.

Mr. Wilkes advised that the Applicant also provide information on the benefits delivered by the proposed improvements, such as undergrounding of utilities. It was noted that the CRA contribution toward streetscape improvements is not an automatic 50%, but can be up to 50%.

[The Item was tabled by unanimous consensus of the Board.]

#### **VII. NW 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Project Update – Engineering Services**

Chair Lucas advised that this Item was deferred to the next meeting.

Mr. Gabriel left the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

#### **VIII. Progresso Neighborhood Improvements Update – Engineering Services**

Antoinette Butler, Project Engineer, reported that the lowest bid submitted was for \$1.85 million. The lighting portion of the project comes to \$870,000 and is included in the total. The contract will be awarded on November 17, 2015.

Ms. Butler continued that a memorandum to the City Commission has been drafted, which would require approval by the CRA Board. This proposed amendment would transfer additional funds to the project from both the CRA and Community Development

Block Grant (CDBG) programs. These funds would be \$571,000 from the CDBG program and \$524,000 from the CRA. The transfer of CRA funds would require a budget amendment. Mr. Wojcik noted that \$300,000 was provided through a grant from FDOT, which will be lost if it is not extended or the funds are not used by the March 30, 2016 deadline.

**Motion** made by Mr. Lagi, seconded by Ms. Adderley, to approve. In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

#### **IX. Communication to CRA Board**

None.

#### **X. Old / New Business**

Chair Lucas noted that one vacancy remains on the Board at this time. He continued that due to the next meeting's proximity to the Thanksgiving holiday, the Board has reserved time for Tuesday, November 24.

**Motion** made by Mr. Wilkes, seconded by Mr. Hooper, to approve. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Mr. Wilkes requested an update on the proposal for a company called Retail Recruitment Strategists to conduct a study within the CRA. Ms. Morejon advised that this Item has been deferred twice by the CRA Board; in addition, there was discussion by the Commissioners as to whether or not the selection of this consultant would result in a conflict of interest, as this contract would be "piggybacking" off an existing contract with Lake Worth, as well as other concerns. The consultant is expected to be present at the next CRA Board meeting for further discussion of this proposed contract.

Ms. Morejon continued that a presentation by Mosaic is also on the November 2 City Commission Agenda. This presentation will include an update on deliverables under the marketing and branding contract.

Chair Lucas observed that he had believed Mosaic was charged with soliciting and recruiting retailers to the CRA. Ms. Morejon explained that Mosaic's contract does not focus on retail recruitment, while Retail Recruitment Strategists are intended to target the retail industry.

#### **XI. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

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Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]