



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

APPROVED
RESCHEDULED REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
CENTRAL CITY REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2023 – 3:30 PM
CRA OFFICE - 2nd FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
914 SISTRUNK BOULEVARD
FORT LAUDERDALE, FL 33311

Board Members	Present/Absent	Cumulative Attendance	
		September 2023-August 2024	
		Present	Absent
Ray Thrower, Chair	P	3	0
Edward Catalano	P	3	0
Linda Fleischman	P	3	0
Justin Greenbaum [arrived 3:35]	P	3	0
Jason Hoffman	A	1	2
Christina Robinson, Vice Chair	P	3	0
Carlton Smith	P	2	0
Nikola Stan	P	3	0

Staff:

Clarance Woods, CRA Manager
Cija Omengebar, CRA Planner/Liaison
Anthony Fajardo, Assistant City Manager
Tania Bailey-Watson, CRA Senior Administrative Assistant
Vanessa Martin, CRA Business Manager
Carla Blair, Prototype Inc. Recording Secretary

Others:

Troy Liggett, President, Middle River Terrace Neighborhood Association
Randall Klett
Guy Kempe, H.O.M.E.S. Inc.

Communication to the City Commission:

None

I. Pledge of Allegiance

Board members recited the pledge of allegiance.

II. Call to Order & Determination of Quorum

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

III. Introduction of Board Members and Staff

Board members and staff introduced themselves.

IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Regular Meeting: October 9, 2023

Chair Thrower requested a change to the staff in attendance.

Motion by Mr. Catalano, seconded by Ms. Fleischman to approve the minutes of the October 9, 2023 meeting as amended. In a voice vote, motion passed unanimously.

V. Discussion of Façade and Landscape Program

Mr. Woods said three homes had applied. He noted the extensive advertising they had done and said the best advertisement was a yard sign in the yard of a completed property. He recalled they had discussed concentrating the investment in a specific neighborhood to provide a visible change there. He anticipated the project would catch on in the area and requested patience, but if it did not, then they could consider alternative locations. The current area was NW 4th Avenue between 13th Street and 11th Street.

Mr. Stan felt it would be more fair to open the program to a wide area. Mr. Woods reiterated that they had selected an area that could benefit most from the improvement and where it would have the most visual impact. Ms. Omengebar and Ms. Robinson explained to Mr. Stan how they had selected the focus area to start the program. Mr. Woods stated they were taking a “strategic approach” instead of a “shotgun approach.”

Ms. Robinson noted the lead time for applications and thought she and Ms. Omengebar could start distributing door hangers on another street. Ms. Omengebar noted the limited funding for the project.

Chair Thrower stated the Board had voted to implement the project on NW 4th Avenue and NW 5th Avenue and the City resolution did not specify a location. Ms. Omengebar said originally limiting the program to 30 properties was based on the amount of funding.

Mr. Smith wanted to allow anyone to apply and Mr. Woods noted that any property in the Central City CRA was already welcome to apply. They would still employ the process they decided on for marketing the program to get the most impact. Mr. Stan wished to make it clearer that anyone could apply and Ms. Omengebar noted that if anyone could apply, it would defeat the purpose of the pilot program. The Board had voted regarding the specific streets to begin with.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, seconded by Mr. Catalano to expand the current program to NW 3rd Avenue, to keep NW 5th Avenue and 4th Avenue as it is and that the initiatives for the original program be expanded to NW 3rd Avenue. In a roll call vote, motion passed 5-2 with Mr. Smith and Mr. Stan opposed.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, seconded by Mr. Smith, that in the Board’s communication to the Central City neighborhood, they let everyone know that anyone could apply for the Façade and Landscaping program. In a voice vote, motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Omengebar explained the approval process for the applications and specified that they did not go before the Board or the City Commission for approval.

**VI. Discussion of Potential Work Programs: Anticipated Fund balance
\$2,296,431**

Mr. Woods said the Board had expressed a desire for a streetscape program and for creating design standards and guidelines. He said after December, when the budget cleanup was accomplished, they would have \$900,000 available. They had earmarked \$1.3 million for capital improvements and \$850,000 would be available for incentives.

Mr. Woods said a Streetscape Improvement project would include street milling and resurfacing, street furniture, lighting, and crosswalks. He said someone from Public Works was checking to see if the City had a streetscape consultant already on the list of approved consultants.

Chair Thrower recalled the NE 13th Avenue project, which Ms. Omengebar said cost \$1.5 million and was funded by a grant.

Mr. Woods stated Public Works had put funds in their work program for improvements to NE 12th Street. He was unsure why NE 12th Street had been blocked off.

Ms. Fleischman asked if streetscape would include road closures and Mr. Woods said they could put everything up for discussion and determine what would/could be done.

Troy Liggett, President, Middle River Terrace Neighborhood Association, said the Central City CRA would generate \$1.1 million this year and had \$2.3 million in leftover revenue from prior years. He said the Board was responsible to make recommendations for how that money was spent, so the Board should consider how much they wanted to allocate to capital projects, the incentive programs and new programs. He thought Mr. Woods had already decided how the funds would be distributed. Mr. Woods said this was not true; Mr. Liggett's figures did not account for all the CRA expenditures and projects to which they had already committed. Chair Thrower explained how they had outstanding commitments from prior years that needed funding.

Mr. Liggett asked who determined that \$1.3 million would be used for capital projects. Mr. Fajardo confirmed that funds had already been allocated for projects. Mr. Woods said Agenda Item V listed the five programs and projects the Board had committed to. They were adding the capital improvement Streetscape Project.

Randall Klett noted that for the last 10 years, the CRA had been working in a particular direction and "just because there's a couple of new people on the Board doesn't mean that we have to stop and throw away those ten years of work...and do something altogether different and totally re-aim the ship." He noted that new people were important because they brought new ideas but they had to respect the work that had been done already and recognize they might not understand the history.

Mr. Catalano stated the homeowners' associations wanted to ensure that their ideas were incorporated into the projects to make sure everybody was properly recognized in how the money was spent.

Mr. Woods said the goal of the CRA was to eliminate slums and blight and invest in real estate development to increase property taxes so they could reinvest in the CRA. All these programs were meant to set the stage for real, physical development. He stated the rezoning would add value to the area and bring more tax revenue that would allow them to incentivize development. Mr. Woods said they concentrated on the low-hanging fruit that would help beautify the neighborhood and create value on their way to getting to the bigger things, like the rezoning.

Mr. Fajardo said the CRA incentive programs resulted in large-scale loans for significant projects.

Chair Thrower asked the Board to remember that their focus was on the entire Central City CRA, which comprised five homeowners' associations.

VII. Program and Project Status Updates

1) Commercial Incentives Program

Ms. Omengabar said there were no new applications.

2) Façade and Landscape Program

No update.

3) NE 4th Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project

Ms. Omengabar said they were working on the northbound lane. Once that was complete in November, they would start on the southbound lane.

4) Rezoning Project

Mr. Fajardo said he had spoken with Mr. Liggett about some of the items he brought up during his presentation as well as the public input from the presentation and staff's input afterward. He stated they would meet with the consultant in a week or so with the new input.

5) Road Closure Lights Installation Project

Ms. Omengabar stated they had set aside \$12,000 last year but they needed \$28,000. Once they recovered the funds after the budget cleanup, they would have enough. Ms. Omengabar told Mr. Fajardo that they did not have approval from the City yet for the additional costs for electricity for the lights and Mr. Fajardo stated this should not be a problem. He asked Ms. Omengabar to send him a memo and he would take care of it.

VIII. Communication to City Commission

Ms. Omengabar informed the Board that their last communication, regarding a possible zoning-in-progress, would go to the City Commission on November 7.

IX. Old/New Business

- Miscellaneous

None

- December Agenda Suggestions
 1. Presentation: 1001 NE 13 Street and 1400 Progresso Drive

- Public Comments

Mr. Klett said Mr. Woods was very eloquent when he spoke about the long-term goal of redevelopment but the other piece of the CRA plan was employment for people living in the area.

Mr. Stan thought the Board needed to be more focused on answering questions and wanted the agenda to concentrate on more impactful items. Once they accomplished the rezoning, he wanted to hold a workshop.

Mr. Smith asked about additional meetings and/or a workshop. Mr. Klett stated the Board had met on Saturdays years ago.

X. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on December 6, 2023.