

Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)
Meeting Minutes January 10, 2023
(APPROVED)

1/10/2023 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

CRA Members Present: Chair Robin Gibson, Terrye Howell, Mayor Hilligoss, Danny Krueger

CRA Members Absent: Daniel Williams

Staff Members Present: James Slaton, Executive Director; Jennifer Nanek, City Clerk; Albert C Galloway, Jr., City Attorney

2. COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

3. Minutes - December 13 & 20, 2022

Commissioner Howell made a motion to approve the minutes of December 13 and December 20, 2022. Mayor Hilligoss seconded the motion.

By voice vote:

ALL "YES"

Motion approved 4-0.

4. Sale Of CRA Properties Sold To Whaddawing.

[Begin Agenda Center]

SYNOPSIS: The purpose of this request is to consider extending the development agreement of the property sold to Whaddawing by the CRA.

RECOMMENDATION It is recommended the CRA Board consider the following action(s)

1. Authorize the Executive Director of the CRA to enter into a revised development agreement and at a minimum include a reverter clause and a one-time extension for the site development within twelve (12) months and begin building permitting within twenty-four (24) months.

BACKGROUND On February 2, 2022, the CRA advertised a Request for Proposal (RFP 22-505) for the property at 39 Lincoln Avenue. The intent of the RFP is to offer the property for sale to promote redevelopment. The redevelopment of the property was intended to provide a restaurant establishment on Lincoln Avenue.

The Ranking Committee reviewed the proposal, one proposal was received from Whaddawings. Staff made a recommendation to the CRA Board to accept Whaddawing's bid. This is based on the company's plan for redeveloping the property by building a restaurant on Lincoln Avenue.

Whadda Wing, LLC submitted conceptual plans to build an 1800 sq. ft. restaurant that will serve as an economic catalyst for business on Lincoln Avenue.

President/Manager of Whaddawing, Stephanie Mosley will be present at the January 10th CRA Board to

explain why the extension is needed.

LAKE WALES CONNECTED PLAN ACTION STEPS

Action # Description

11 Construct missing sidewalks in the Northwest Neighborhood: include a sidewalk on at least one side of each street; key connectors should have sidewalks on both sides.

46 Implement Lincoln Avenue improvements (shade trees and plantings)

65 Continue to construct missing sidewalks in the Northwest Neighborhood 66 Continue to implement a connected trails system in Lake Wales

FISCAL IMPACT CRA received \$8000 from Whaddawing for the property at 39 Lincoln Ave

OTHER OPTIONS Not accept CRA staff recommendation.

[End Agenda Memo]

James Slaton, Executive Director, reviewed this item.

Chair Robin Gibson asked to hear from the owner as to why the extension is needed.

Stephanie Mosely, owner of Whaddawing, said that securing a loan has taken a long time. This should be approved soon. They hope to be finished in a year.

Chair Gibson asked about the staff recommendation. James Slaton, Executive Director, said staff recommends approval. Its not hurting anything to let them do their due diligence.

Commissioner Krueger asked when they might be approval. Ms. Mosely said she doesn't know for sure..

Commissioner Krueger made a motion to approve the extension of the agreement. Commissioner Howell seconded the motion.

by voice vote:

Commissioner Krueger "YES"

Commissioner Howell "YES"

Mayor Hilligoss "YES"

Chair Gibson "YES"

Motion approved 4-0.

5. Presentation By S&ME On The Finding Of Necessity Study

[Begin Agenda Memo]

SYNOPSIS: At the August 9, 2022 meeting, the CRA Board authorized S&ME to determine the feasibility of expanding the community redevelopment area, called a Finding of Necessity (FON) study. Laura Canary from S&ME will provide a presentation to outline the FON process, findings, and next steps.

RECOMMENDATION A recommendation to accept the FON Report and ask the City Commission to accept, approve and adopt the FON Report.

BACKGROUND Florida Statute requires a process to complete a FON study and S&ME was hired to examine the specified area for qualification and consideration to be included within the Lake Wales Community Redevelopment Area.

FISCAL IMPACT None at this time. Depending on action of the City Commission, future impacts could affect ad valorem revenues and certain expenses to incorporate the FON into the Community Redevelopment Plan.

[End Agenda Memo]

Laura Canary, Inspire Placemaking Collective (S&ME), gave a presentation on the Study to possibly expand the CRA. Ms. Canary reviewed edits to the document from the version in the agenda.

Chair Gibson asked if there has been work with the county to expand the CRA. Ms. Canary said that is the next step to discuss with the County. We should have discussions sooner. We are modifying CRA boundaries. Some shared goals with the county can go a long way to approval.

Chair Gibson asked about experience of a CRA taking on a shopping center. Ms. Canary said the CRA will work with owners on things like infrastructure improvements. If the CRA took over ownership then they would have more control over what to see there. Some examples and strategies were discussed.

James Slaton, Executive Director, said as we move forward with the Envisioning plan we can look at the mall as an area of focus and draft a strategy for addressing it. Chair Gibson said DoverKohl has experience with malls. The CRA might help facilitate change.

Ms. Canary said expanding the CRA will give the board a tool to address this. It will be up to the board on when to engage.

Chair Gibson said the status quo is unacceptable. This is a step in the right direction.

Ms. Canary reviewed the area under study. The Mall is the main property in the area. She reviewed some of the structural problems and unsafe conditions at the mall and other areas. They meet the statutory requirements to proceed with this and next steps. The resolution will be taken to City Commission for adoption. Then there might be discussions with the county. Maybe they will look at this as an investment.

Chair Gibson said this is an opportunity we cannot pass up.

Commissioner Howell asked about the sign for apartments near Green Gables. This is their property? Mr. Slaton said its private and will be incorporated into the CRA and the owner can avail themselves of any programs the CRA offers.

Commissioner Krueger asked about risk to the City. Mr. Slaton there's risk that we will lose money in the general fund. We can always remove property from the CRA. Its always an option.

Chair Gibson said that something has to be done but we must be careful.

6. Contract Renewal With Lake Wales Main Street

[Begin Agenda Memo]

SYNOPSIS To support the continuing revitalization of Downtown Lake Wales, the Community Redevelopment Agency ("CRA") will renew a contract with Main Street Lake Wales, Inc. to provide staff

support and funding for promotion for one year.

RECOMMENDATION Staff recommends that the CRA Board approve the proposed one-year contract renewal to support the work of Main Street Lake Wales.

BACKGROUND In 2020 the CRA approved a 3 year contract with Main Street to provide funding for staff support and promotion. This contract expires in January of 2023. The attached contract will continue the same funding support for one more year while a new contract is renegotiated. The renewed contract will expire in January of 2024.

OTHER OPTIONS The CRA could not provide funding for Lake Wales Main Street

FISCAL IMPACT The current fiscal year CRA budget contains a One Hundred Thousand Dollar (\$100,000.00) appropriation for the purpose of funding the staff position and providing the matching funds to Lake Wales Main Street.

[End Agenda Memo]

James Slaton, Executive Director, reviewed this item.

Chair Gibson asked how well the current contract has worked. Mr. Slaton said that will be under review and discussion.

Commissioner Howell confirmed that we are giving \$100,000? Mr. Slaton said we will pay match to Main Street of \$50,000. All the elements will be discussed. Chair Gibson said there is more activity in the CRA. Mr. Slaton agreed that things have changed, more is going on.

Commissioner Krueger made a motion to extend the Contract. Mayor Hilligoss seconded the motion.

by voice vote:

Commissioner Krueger "YES"

Mayor Hilligoss "YES"

Commissioner Howell "YES"

Chair Robin Gibson "YES"

Motion Approved 4-0.

7. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

James Slaton., Executive Director, said the Park Avenue Groundbreaking is on the 12th at 5:30p.m.

Mr. Slaton gave an update on the CDBG housing grant. The contractor will begin work soon.

Mr. Slaton announced a grant effort and program to build a community garden. More details are coming.

Mr. Slaton said there will be a wrap-up ceremony of the Legacy Housing program soon.

Mr. Slaton said he would like to schedule a bus tour of the Northwest area of current projects in the future.

Mr. Slaton said there is a tour scheduled at the end of the month with representatives of six banks to see the progress of the downtown and northwest area and what is going on with Lake Wales Connected Plan.

8. ADJOURN

Meeting was adjourned at 2:46 p.m.

Chair/Vice-Chair

ATTEST:

City Clerk/Deputy City Clerk