

**Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)  
Meeting Minutes January 11, 2022  
(APPROVED)**

1/11/2022 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

**CRA Members Present:** Robin Gibson - Chair, Jack Hilligoss, Mayor Eugene Fultz, Terrye Howell,

**CRA Members Absent:** Daniel Williams

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

Chair Robin Gibson called the meeting to order at approximately 3:00 p.m.

2. COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

3. Minutes - December 14, 2021 And December 21, 2021

Mayor Fultz made a motion to approve the minutes of December 14 and December 21. Commissioner Howell seconded the motion.

by voice vote:

ALL "YES"

Motion passed 5-0.

4. PRESENTATION: Brownfields 101 - Miles Ballogg

Darrell Starling, CRA Coordinator, introduced Miles Baillogg with Cardno now Stantec Director of Brownfields & Economic Development to give the CRA Board a 101 on brownfields. Their goal is to get junkyard out of backyard. They want to transform properties. They look for projects that are related to climate change and sustainable.

Mr. Baillogg reviewed what a brownfield area is and a brownfield site. Underground storage tank removal is a common project. He is in support of healthcare facilities for these sites. Redevelopment that benefits the community is encouraged. The grants can be used for buildings with lead or asbestos. He shared an example of the cigar factory in Bartow that used these loans to clean up the building. He shared various examples for uses of brownfield sites. Our grant will be a 3 year grant that may be awarded in the spring. It will be \$500,000 for environmental assessment. He reviewed some of the uses for the money. There is a lot of red tape with these grants that his firm can help with. He reviewed the first steps. This grant will help with completing 12 Phase ones and 6 phase twos. If sites need cleanup we can apply for money to help with cleanup. There are multipurpose grants to look at and he explained how those work. He explained about the state brownfield program. He shared examples of brownfield projects with good outcomes. He said the chances of the City getting awarded are

high. They will help us develop a work plan and identify other grants to move these projects forward.

Chair Gibson said we have lots of good community support. He supports the involvement of the CRA. We are on the move. He asked about the fertilizer plant on Scenic Highway. Scenic HWY is a gateway for Lake Wales. He asked if he has experience with this type of project. Mr. Ballogg said yes and it depends on what the community wants to see there. He shared similar projects.

Commissioner Howell asked about the number of sites in Lake Wales. Mr. Ballogg said the proposed amount is a good number to get a grant and allows for flexibility. Commissioner Howell asked what the City share was. Mr. Ballogg said none. Commissioner Howell asked about the cleanup. Mr. Ballogg said that would be a future grant. The assessment allows for future planning. The CRA would have to own the property. Chair Gibson asked about the status of the property.

Albert Galloway, Jr., City Attorney, said the CRA or City owns it already. Mr. Slaton said that staff is working with Cardno on that site.

Chair Gibson asked about asbestos at the Seminole Hotel. Mr. Galloway said that a survey was done. Mr. Ballogg said a cleanup grant can be used to address asbestos.

Mayor Fultz said he is glad to see forward movement on that property.

Mr. Slaton asked if there are incentives for cleanup. Mr. Ballogg said yes there are incentives in the form of tax credits if a company cleans up a property. There are many other local incentives too. These were discussed.

Commissioner Hilligoss asked what economic development projects are allowed. Mr. Ballogg said anything that creates jobs like a grocery store where there isn't one.

Mr. Ballogg said he looks forward to working with us. We want to make a visible statement. Plans can bring people together.

#### 5. Purchase Of Property On A Street For \$30,000.

[Begin Agenda Memo]

**SYNOPSIS:** The purpose of this request is to consider the purchase of property owned by Mr. Edward Anthony at 0 A Street, parcel number 27-29-35-879000-001020.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended the CRA Board approve the following actions:

1. Authorize the purchase of the property at 0 A Street for \$30,000. This property is identified by parcel number 27-29-35-879000-001020.
2. Authorize the Executive Director of the CRA to sign a vacant land contract with the property owner.

## **BACKGROUND**

In an effort to encourage housing redevelopment on A Street, staff is seeking to purchase the property at 0 A Street, identified by parcel number 27-29-35-879000-001020. With this key piece of property, the CRA has the opportunity to construct the pedestrian trail on the Westside of A Street in the future.

The redevelopment of the parcel located at A Street as an important step in continuing housing development within the Northwest neighborhood. Using other housing development in the neighborhood as a model, there can be two homes constructed on A Street that would fit the areas affordable housing needs.

The City would look to work with a developer to build two 3/2 single family unit home that meets HUDs definition for affordable housing.

We will be partnering with developer Keystone Challenge Fund to create the Keystone Phase III build on these lots

## **KEYSTONE CHALLENGE FUND OVERVIEW AND PLANS FOR REDEVELOPMENT**

Keystone Challenge Fund is a Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) that serves to develop affordable housing specifically in low-income communities.

For over 30 years, Keystone has provided affordable housing to low and moderate-income homebuyers to connect families with homeownership. As a result, nearly 4,300 families have become homeowners throughout Polk County.

In 2021, the CRA and the City partnered with Keystone for the project, Keystone Phase I and II. Keystone was able to build four single family unit homes and rehabilitate two homes on B Street.

## **LAKE WALES CONNECTED PLAN ACTION STEPS**

Action # Description

- 9 Provide down payment assistance and low-interest mortgages for infill housing in the Northwest Neighborhood
- 27 Identify properties owned by CRA or the City and explore joint ventures for new housing
- 38 Provide first-time homebuyer counseling and education (NOTE: For this project, this service will be provided by Keystone Challenge Fund)
- 39 Provide down payment assistance and low-interest mortgages for infill housing

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The CRA will pay \$30,000 to purchase the property on A Street.

The \$30,000 will come out of the Land-Strategic Development Line Item. These funds are available under the budget line item.

## **OTHER OPTIONS**

Not accept CRA staff recommendation.

[End Agenda memo]

Darrell Starling, CRA Project Manager, reviewed this item. James Slaton, Executive Director, said the County and Keystone are eager to do another phase with us.

Commissioner Howell made a motion to approve this purchase. Mayor Fultz seconded the motion.

Roll Call vote:

Commissioner Howell "YES"

Mayor Fultz "YES"

Commissioner Williams "YES"

Commissioner Hilligoss "YES"

Chair Robin Gibson "YES"

Motion passed 5-0.

## 6. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

James Slaton, Executive Director, announced two promotions. Darrell Starling is now a CRA Project Manager and Cheryl Baksh is the new CRA Specialist. He congratulated them and commended their hard work.

Chair Gibson asked about the Park Avenue Connector Trail. Mr. Slaton said there will be an agenda item in February. They are meeting with the low bidder soon to address the increase cost and value engineer the project to bring the cost down. Chair Gibson asked when we might turn date. Mr. Slaton said he does not know. He will know more after the next meeting.

Chair Gibson asked about Park Avenue, Scenic to Wetmore, and bids are done where are we. Mr. Slaton said we are working with FDOT permitting and it may be 60 days to get specifications. Michael Manning, Assistant to the City Manager, said we are between crafting the construction documents and actually bidding the project. There will be significant work on Scenic. All the components take time to review. Chair Gibson expressed concern with how slow FDOT is.

Chair Gibson expressed concerns about the Grove Manor project and reviewed the efforts to get funding to redevelop that property. He asked about the letter sent to the Housing Authority requesting them to get a new firm. Mr. Slaton said he sent the letter and offered to help with process to find a new firm. Representatives from the firm Smith and Henzy had not seen the letter and he sent a copy to them. Chair Gibson said we have committed \$1million to make this happen. He recommended meeting with the Housing Authority at the next CRA meeting to discuss this issue. Commissioner Howell agreed. If this group keeps dropping the ball then we need another meeting to discuss it. The City's money needs to go in the right direction. She agreed to meet with the Housing Authority about this. Mayor Fultz agreed with meeting the board to make sure they have seen the letter and see what the Housing Authority desires. Commissioner Hilligoss says he does not want to lose time. Chair Gibson asked if the board got the letter. Narvelle Petersen said he had not seen the letter. Michelle Threatt said she got an email with the letter. Mr. Slaton said he emailed the board a copy of the letter. There was consensus to schedule a joint meeting. Mr. Petersen said he would like the Housing Authority to meet first so they can discuss before this joint meeting. Chair Gibson agreed and said that is a good idea. He said the plan will include open space that we could sell. Mr. Slaton said if we do an RFQ that the current company could submit their qualifications to compare them to others. We might better understand all the pieces.

Chair Gibson asked about the Seminole hotel bid process. Mr. Slaton said disposition is easy, we will advertise for a proposal. This is public. Proposals will be ranked and a recommendation will be brought to the board. Chair Gibson said he wanted to avoid criticism on how this is handled.

Commissioner Howell asked to remind the FDOT to put the Wiltshire sign back up. Mr. Slaton said he will do this.

Mayor Fultz said he spoke to a representative from FDOT about upcoming closures at HWY 60 and 27. We need to do our best to educate the public on this. Mr. Slaton agreed and they do push that information out to social media.

Mayor Fultz commended Autumn Cochella and Stephanie Edwards on their new certifications.

7. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 4:22

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Chair/Vice-Chair

ATTEST:

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City Clerk/Deputy City Clerk