

Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)
Meeting Minutes June 13, 2023
(DRAFT)

6/13/2023 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

CRA Members Present: Chair Robin Gibson, Keith Thompson, Mayor Hilligoss, Daniel Williams

CRA member Absent: Danny Krueger

Staff Members 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 2:00 p.m.

2. COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

3. Minutes - May 9, 2023

Commissioner Thompson made a motion to approve the minutes of May 9, 2023. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion.

by voice vote:

ALL "YES"

Motion approved 4-0.

4. Park Avenue/Market Plaza Streetscape Construction Agreement With Gomez Construction

[Begin Agenda Memo]

SYNOPSIS: Staff is requesting CRA Board approval of Change Order #4 with Gomez Construction for utility revisions and paver change.

RECOMMENDATION It is recommended that the CRA Board take the following actions:

1. Approve Change Order #4 with Gomez Construction.
2. Authorize Executive Director of CRA to execute agreement on behalf of the CRA.
3. Authorize expenditure of \$187,000.60.

BACKGROUND Change Order #4 includes additional utility improvements to demolish and replace approximately 88 linear feet of 8" clay gravity sewer main and two manholes with current industry standards. As well, tactile pavers will replace the cobblestone pavers in the respective area. Due to the revisions, Gomez Construction is requesting an additional 28 days to address such changes. The adjusted substantial completion date will be August 15, 2024.

In accordance with the Lake Wales Connected Plan, the CRA designed a full streetscape treatment to Park Avenue from Scenic Highway to Wetmore Street. It is the Community Redevelopment Agency's ultimate

goal to encourage redevelopment and activation of the City's Historic Downtown District. By leading the way with this significant public infrastructure investment coupled with utilizing proven streetscape techniques, staff believes that these goals will be realized.

OTHER OPTIONS Do not approve Change Order #4 with Gomez Construction.

FISCAL IMPACT The total fiscal impact for this change order is \$187,000.60.

[End Agenda memo]

James Slaton, Executive Director, reviewed this item.

Chair Gibson asked to confirm that this work was not part of the original contract. Mr. Slaton confirmed this.

Commissioner Thompson made a motion to approve this change order. Mayor Hilligoss seconded the motion.

by voice vote:

Commissioner Thompson "YES"

Mayor Hilligoss "YES"

Commissioner Williams "YES"

Chair Robin Gibson "YES"

Motion approved 4-0.

5. Façade Grant Program

[Begin Agenda memo]

SYNOPSIS Fiscal Year 2022 – 2023 allocated \$100,000 for a Façade Grant for downtown that would be administered by Lake Wales Main Street, Inc. The goals of the Façade Grant are twofold: (1) to further the purpose of the CRA, by raising the tax base and property values; and (2) to further the objectives of the Downtown Historic Overlay District by providing a financial incentive to owners located within the Downtown Historic Overlay District to restore, preserve, and encourage the reuse of downtown's historic resources, all of which will stimulate investment and raise property values.

RECOMMENDATION Staff recommends the approval of the Façade Grant Program.

BACKGROUND The Façade Grant Program offers a matching grant for exterior improvements only and may be applied to a front or side facade, provided the side façade abuts a public right of way on First Street, Scenic Highway or Market Street. Facades located on property abutting alleys are excluded from consideration.

Downtown Lake Wales is in a Local Historic District and the Façade Grant Program is applicable to those structures within the Downtown Historic Overlay District. Design Guidelines for correct restoration and rehabilitation are available at the Lake Wales Main Street office. Priority will be given to buildings with inappropriately applied facades that cover windows or walls, are unsightly, are out-of-scale, and are in need of rehabilitation/restoration.

Prior to formally applying, an applicant must meet with Lake Wales Main Street staff to discuss the project. The project must be consistent with the City of Lake Wales Land Development Regulations, Section 23-423

"Downtown Mixed-use Design Standards," and the "Downtown Historic Overlay Design Guidelines," both of which are available at the Lake Wales Main Street office.

The Facade Grant Program offers up to \$50,000 per property for eligible projects. The applicant is eligible for a fifty percent (50%) reimbursement equal to or less than \$50,000. For example, if the property owner spends \$80,000; the awarded match would be \$40,000. If the property owner spends \$100,000 or more the grant/match would not exceed \$50,000. Grant monies will be paid upon completion of the project, once proper documentation is turned in to the office of Lake Wales Main Street and reviewed and approved.

Application and Grant Process

- Applications and supporting materials can be picked up at the office of Lake Wales Main Street
- Applications will NOT be accepted for projects that have already commenced construction,
- The applicant must be the property owner and grants will only be made to the property owner,
- Only complete application packets will be considered,
- Projects must be reviewed and approved by the Historic Preservation Board and a Certificate of Appropriateness issued,
- If the project is approved by the Historic Preservation Board, Lake Wales Main Street will make recommendations to the CRA for approval or denial,
- If the project is approved by the CRA, Lake Wales Main Street staff will notify the applicant if funds are available or if the application is placed on a "waiting list" for façade grant assistance,
- Successful applicants will be required to enter into a grant agreement with Lake Wales Main Street, Inc.
- To hold harmless the City of Lake Wales, the Lake Wales Community Redevelopment Agency, the Historic Preservation Board, Lake Wales Main Street, Inc. and its Board of Directors.
- Commencement of substantial construction on the rehab project must begin within 90 days after notification of project approval. If work has not begun within 90 days of approval, the grant application is subject to be voided. Project should be completed in a reasonable period of time. The project should be completed within 180 days of commencement of substantial construction. Lake Wales Main Street must approve any extension beyond 180 days.
- Grant money will be paid upon completion of the project; once proper documentation is turned in to the office of Lake Wales Main Street and reviewed and approved. Street Façade Grant Criteria Applications will be assessed and judged on the following criteria:
 1. The property must be located within the Downtown Historic Overlay District (see attached map),
 2. Historic/architecturally significant buildings will be given priority,
 3. The impact of the project on the downtown streetscape,
 4. The project should preserve the architectural integrity of the structure and restore the original building façade,
 5. The extent to which the project is compatible with the area's historic character,
 6. The original condition of the building and the need for the proposed change,

7. The extent to which the original building features or significant modifications are preserved or enhanced,
8. The removal of unsightly or historically inappropriate alterations,
9. The quality of work proposed,
10. The unique qualities of the individual buildings and streetscape within the context of the area in which the project is located,
11. Visually prominent and economically blighted buildings will be given priority,
12. The project must comply with all applicable ordinances, laws, building codes and Design Standards.
13. Only one (1) façade will be eligible for funding per applicant/property owner per Lake Wales Main Street fiscal year.

Guidelines, Policies and Procedures for Façade Improvements

1. The downtown Historic Overlay District Design Guidelines and the City of Lake Wales' Land Development Regulations, Section 23-423 "Downtown Mixed-use Design Standards" are used as a guide,
2. Planned improvements must preserve the architectural integrity of the building and restore the historic appearance of the façade,
3. Colors should be harmonious with the neighboring structures, and a minimum of three colors (base color and two trim colors) are preferred,
4. The surface cleaning of structures must be by the gentlest methods available. Inappropriate chemical cleaners should be avoided due to possible damage to aged building components. Sandblasting is NOT an approved method of cleaning,
5. Commencement of substantial construction on the rehab project must begin within 90 days after notification of approval, and the project must be completed within 180 days of commencement of substantial construction, unless an extension is approved by Lake Wales Main Street. The grant will be paid to the recipient after it is completed and all bills relating to said work are paid, documented with receipts/canceled checks, pursuant to the Grant Agreement with Lake Wales Main Street.
6. The size, color and shape of a sign should compliment the building and add to the historic flavor of the area. All signage must comply with the local sign ordinance.
7. The following items and work are ineligible for reimbursement:
 - a. Infill projects
 - b. Roofs,
 - c. Landscaping improvements, including, but not limited to, plantings and hardscapes,
 - d. Interior improvements, unless the interior spaces have exceptional architectural, artistic, or historic importance and that are regularly open to the public,
 - e. Personal property and equipment,
 - f. Interior window and door treatments,

- g. Security systems, including window bars and cameras,
- h. Sidewalk improvements,
- i. Tools and equipment,
- j. Paving and/or parking lots,
- k. All structural improvement of the property, including additions, not contributing to the aesthetic, historic and/or rehabilitation improvement of the property.
- l. Building permits.

8. The following items and work are, but not limited to, considered eligible for reimbursement:

- a. Exterior walls and materials,
- b. Exterior building painting and re-siding,
- c. Exterior door, windows and storefront feature repair, replacement, and renovation,
- d. Gutters and downspouts, cornice flashing and repair,
- e. Awnings and canopies installation or repair,
- f. Historic decorative exterior architectural features,
- g. Replacement and/or uncovering of architectural features,
- h. Replacement of non-historic storefronts and features with historic storefronts and features,
- i. Restoration of original and/or historic facades,
- j. Structural stabilization,
- k. Masonry repairs and repointing,
- l. Exterior building lighting, but not parking lot and pavement lighting,
- m. Masonry cleaning by the gentlest means possible if required for façade painting, stucco work, etc.,
- n. Other façade-oriented repairs and improvements,
- o. Exterior signage.

9. The money is in the form of a grant, not a loan and is available as follows:

NO FAÇADE GRANT SHALL EXCEED \$50,000 First time rehab this program = Up to a 50% match (two-to-one match) After 10 years under this program = A second rehab of the same façade may receive up to 25% match

FISCAL IMPACT The Façade Grant Program offers up to \$50,000 two-to-one matching funds. Total budgeted amount in CRA downtown Façade Grant is \$100,000. National Main Street research has shown that the economic benefits of a façade improvement is the following:

- Visible impact in sales
- Rise in property taxes
- Increase in new businesses and customers
- Increase of neighboring property owners to make improvements

[End Agenda Memo]

Ronni Wood, Interim Main Street Executive Director, reviewed this item. She distributed a map of the Downtown Historic Overlay area that would be eligible for these grants.

Commissioner Williams asked about a similar program for Lincoln Avenue area. Ms. Wood said it is a good idea. She would be glad to work with Darrell Starling on developing a program.

Chair Robin Gibson shared, in an effort at full disclosure, about the building he is working on restoring. He explained that it is a costly project and may look to apply for this grant. He suggested that he recuse himself for this discussion and vote. Albert Galloway, Jr., City Attorney, agreed.

The gavel was turned over to Mayor Hilligoss for this item.

Commissioner Thompson asked if others besides the Chair are interested in this item. Ms. Wood said yes and there is a positive return on investment with increased investment, increases interest and increased property taxes..

Commissioner Williams made a motion to approve this program. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion.

by roll call vote:

Commissioner Thompson "YES"

Commissioner Williams "YES"

Mayor Hilligoss "YES"

Chair Robin Gibson "Recused"

Motion approved 3-0.

Albert Galloway, Jr., City Attorney, said that when Mr. Gibson's project comes up for a vote he will have to recuse himself from that one as well. Chair Gibson agreed.

6. Sale Of CRA Properties In The Northwest Neighborhood.

[Begin Agenda Memo]

SYNOPSIS:

The purpose of this request is to consider the sale of five CRA owned properties to Florida Development Corporation (FDC).

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

1. The CRA Board authorize the sale of the CRA property at 0 Sessoms Ave W, 0 C St, (2) 0 D St, and 138 E St to Florida Development Corporation for \$34,157.00. Property number (s): 27-30-02-901000-001110, 27-29-35-879000-002130, 27-29-35-880000- 006030, 27-29-35-880000-007010, 27-29-35-880000-002110.

2. Authorize the Executive Director of the CRA to sign a vacant land contract with the contingency that the development agreement must be executed prior to closing.

3. Authorize the Executive Director of the CRA to enter into a developer's agreement and at said agreement shall include, at a minimum, a reverter clause and project timeline.

BACKGROUND On April 18, 2023, the CRA advertised five (5) Request for Proposals (RFP 23-532, 23-533, 23-534, 23-535, 23-536, 23-537) for the properties at 0 Sessoms Ave W, 0 C St, (2) 0 D St, and 138 E St. The intent of the RFP is to offer the property for sale to promote redevelopment. The redevelopment of the property is intended to provide senior housing in the Northwest neighborhood.

The Ranking Committee reviewed several proposals. The Committee chose FDC's proposal and staff is recommending that the CRA Board accept their bid. This is based on the company's plan for redeveloping the properties by building a senior housing in the Northwest neighborhood. FDC will build five 1900 sq ft duplexes each comprised of two bedrooms and one bath.

LAKE WALES CONNECTED PLAN ACTION STEPS

Action # 9 Description Partner with housing contractor to build infill housing in the Northwest Neighborhood

FLORIDA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Florida Development Corp, Inc. (FDC) is a progressive real estate development company founded in 2016. Its founders have over 60 years of collective experience in affordable housing development, community & economic development, weatherization, financial and project management.

Their projects include numerous new construction homes, multi family, weatherization and single-family rehabilitation projects, and an adaptive reuse of a commercial building for a PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) manufacturing company. Their most recent project is the building of a single-family residence on Lot 19; just south of the B Street Lot 22 they were awarded.

FDC has provided services to municipalities, and nonprofit organizations in Hillsborough, Pasco, Polk and Orange Counties as well as various areas throughout Central and Western Florida

FISCAL IMPACT None - FDC has offered to pay \$34,157.00 for the properties.

[End Agenda Memo]

James Slaton, Executive Director, reviewed this item.

Chair Robin Gibson said the FDC Corp. is planning to move their headquarters to Lake Wales. Mr. Slaton confirmed this. Chair Robin Gibson said that this same company is operating the business incubator. Mr. Slaton confirmed this.

Commissioner Thompson made a motion to approve this sale. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion.

by voice vote:

Commissioner Thompson "YES"

Commissioner Williams "YES"

Mayor Hilligoss "YES"

Chair Gibson "YES"

Motion approved 4-0.

Chair Robin Gibson asked if the Care Center has applied for money on the Park Avenue Apartments. Mr. Slaton said not yet but Mr. Quam has assured him they will.

7. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

James Slaton, Executive Director, said there was a good article in the Ledger yesterday on the implementation of the Lake Wales Connected Plan. He encouraged the members to look at this.

Mr. Slaton said that representatives from Inspire Placemaking will have an event tomorrow at the Eagle Ridge Mall food court to collect input and answer questions on the CRA expansion.

Mr. Slaton said that at the next CRA meeting he will bring a property purchase agreement for 2 lots on Park Avenue owned by the Friedlander. They will sell them to the City for below market value to support our downtown efforts. He thanked the Friedlander family for being willing to do this.

Chair Robin Gibson said that he was glad to see the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation is a partner in the Lake Wales Envisioned Plan.

8. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 2:27 p.m.

Chair

ATTEST:

City Clerk/Deputy City Clerk