



Leadership Group Meeting Minutes

07/23/15

Leadership Group Meeting, Thursday, July 23, 2015, Customer Service Center Training Room, 2nd Floor.

Co-Chair Clark Yandle called the meeting to order at 11:45 pm. In attendance were Mr. Yandle, Robert DuMond, Grant McMahon, Gilberto Martinez, Ruth Reed, Ira Holmes, Ed Plaster, Summer Gill, Fred Roberts, Jr., and Narvella Haynes. Staff present included Tye Chighizola, Peter Lee, Mike Daniels, and Intern Kyle Rodriguez.

I. Form Based Code

Mr. Daniels described the progress being made on the Form Based Code, and then explained that the proposed Code was part of the implementation of the 203 Vision. The organizing principle of the Code is Street Types and Building Form, rather than uses. The Code is much more graphic in nature than traditional zoning codes. Article I describes the four Street Types, which are Core, Standard, Residential and Thoroughfare. Article II lists Building requirements, such as type, location on lot, build-to lines, frontage requirements, parking locations, primary facades and signage. Article III lays out the process for Site Plan review, adjustments and incentives. Staff has almost completed the first two Articles, while the remaining three Articles are in draft form. Completion is expected by the end of 2015. Mr. Daniels expressed a desire to set up separate meetings with Ed, Gilbert, Paolo, Fred, Steve and Bob over the coming months to discuss more details.

Mr. Chighizola stated that we are working on further changes to our existing sign codes that are precipitated by a recent court case. More details will be provided when available.

II. Retail Strategies

Mr. Lee explained the City has hired a company called Retail Strategies to assist the city with locating retail businesses in the downtown area. The businesses may occupy existing space or construct new buildings. Their contract is multi-year, with substantial progress to be made within the first 6 months. The company is currently working on a marketing strategy and will be making a site visit. Ms. Pope explained that an interactive map is being prepared for all spaces within the downtown. She also mentioned that the software BaseCamp is being used to track the team's progress. Contact her with any questions.

III. Various Site and Other Issues

A. Site at SR40 and Pine Avenue

Mr. Daniels told the group there was a proposal to site an auto upholstery use in the former Foxy Jail Bond building. The use requires a special exception to locate there. Ms. Hitchcock explained the business owner has decided to apply for the special exception. She stated there were other automotive uses currently in the downtown. The applicant has another space at 620 SW 13th Street. Mr. Dumond stated the applicant runs a very clean business and his existing site is neat. Mr. Roberts asked if the applicant would be permitted to use the entire block. Ms. Hitchcock stated the variance would apply only to the smaller part of the lot. Mr. Lee explained the issue is really the location being a gateway into the downtown and the long term use of the site. The City and volunteers recently repainted the building to beige. The owner, Mr. Dinkins, has agreed to not have leases longer than 1 year. Ms. Hitchcock explained the applicant stated he wanted to “make the building a billboard for his other location” by using window signage. This action is not permitted by code as it constitutes an off-site sign. Ms. Pope explained the City is utilizing grant programs to help businesses improve their sites, which in turn conveys the message of what is expected for downtown properties. She stated there are many ways to encourage a business to locate or not to locate at a specific site. Mr. Daniels noted the special exception application is expected to be heard on August 17, and members of the Leadership Group are encouraged to attend and/or place comments on the Google Group site.

B. Ritterhoff Site

Mr. Chighizola explained the situation with this historic home as being in danger of disappearing. The family has looked at several options pertaining to future plans for the property, from keeping the house, moving it, removing it, and possible redevelopment schemes. There have been several public meetings. Mr. Roberts stated there had been at least 2 contracts offered, but none had worked out. One contract had estimated 1.5 million dollars to rehabilitate the house. Next steps will be announced as they come available. Mr. Yandle asked what kind of support was expected of the Leadership Group, as there were so many options. Mr. Roberts said there was little objection to 3 or 4 units being constructed there should the house be demolished. The property is zoned R-3. Mr. Chighizola stated he wanted to ensure that all parties received the right information.

C. Hoenstein Property, Pine Avenue and Fort King

Mr. Daniels described the location and how the City has received several proposals for the site, with the latest being a new Starbucks located there. The latest design is the closest to the form the City wants to see. Ms. Reed asked about driveways and curb cuts, especially pertaining to the church to the east. Mr. Roberts and Mr. Daniels stated they were confident they would be able to work with the applicant.

D. Google Groups

No one has used the Group yet. Mr. Dumond stated the group should be reminded via email before the next meetings. Ms. Pope stated it would become easier when more material is added to the Group and it becomes a habit.

E. Corridor Grants

Mr. Daniels stated the corridor grant award committee is meeting next Tuesday at 1.30pm in the Training Room to select the winners for the West Ocala grant. There are 11 applications, and he is confident all the money in the grant can be expended. Mr. Lee talked of doing annual reviews to tweak any issues for future grant programs.

F. Parking Garage

Mr. Daniels noted that the applications have been narrowed down to three. Applicant presentations to the Selection Committee are expected next week.

IV. Upcoming Meetings

- A. City Council, Aug 4 & 18
- B. Planning Commission, Aug 10
- C. Ritterhoff Meeting, Aug
- D. OHPAB, Aug 6
- E. Board of Adjustments, Aug

VI. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mr. Yandle suggested approving minutes at the next meeting. Mr. Roberts moved to adjourn, and Mr. Martinez seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 12:51pm. The next scheduled meeting will be September 24, 2015.