

## **2035 Leadership Group Meeting**

Thursday, October 27, 2016 - 11:30 am

### **Minutes Summary**

**The following members were present:** Diana Schwartz, Bob DuMond, Summer Gill, Grant McMahon, Ira Holmes and Gilberto Martinez

**City Staff in Attendance:** Melanie Gaboardi, Aubrey Hale, Peter Lee, Lisa Walsh, David Boston, Chip Rich, Barry Ginn and Jennifer Normoyle

**Others in Attendance:** Rafael Vazquez-Burney, Senior Technologist at CH2M in Tampa, FL

The meeting was called to order at 11:40 am.

- **Proof of publication**

Ms. McKeever stated that the Public Notice for the Ocala 2035 Vision Leadership Group Meeting was posted on the City of Ocala's website on October 12, 2016 at 1:49 pm.

- **Approval of 8/25/16 and 9/22/16 Minutes Summary**

Ms. Gaboardi commented that Rural King was referred to as Royal King on the 9/22/16 minutes which needed to be fixed.

The 8/25/16 minutes were unanimously approved and the 9/22/16 minutes were unanimously approved with the revision of Royal King to Rural King.

- **Levitt AMP Ocala Music Series**

Ms. Normoyle informed the board that the public affairs offices just finished applying for the Levitt AMP Ocala Music Series grant. The production of the events will be a joint venture with the Marion Cultural Alliance. This grant provides a \$25,000 matching grant so that 10 consecutive weeks of free concerts can be produced in Ocala. The vision is to have the entertainment take place in the West Ocala athletic field because it is an under-utilized area and is close to downtown; it is also an opportunity to bring attention to this neighborhood. If the city is chosen, it would be the first in the State of Florida to host the Levitt AMP series. The first step has been completed with the application. The second step is the public voting period. Staff needs the community to assist us by voting. The voting period runs from November 1<sup>st</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup>. In order to vote, go to the website listed on the hand out and register; confirm registration; then cast your vote for Ocala. Fifteen entities will be awarded a grant out of the entire country. If the City of Ocala is awarded a grant, the 10 concerts will be held in the summer time during the evening hours and each concert will be a different genre as required by the grant guidelines. Please spread the word and pass out copies of the handouts to everyone in the community and ask them to please vote for Ocala. The organizer will send out an email on November 21<sup>st</sup> to let us know the number of votes we received and our rank in the competition. The winners are

chosen by the greatest number of votes compared to the population. Notifications will be made in January and if we do not get the grant this time, the city can always reapply.

- **Pine Oaks Wetland Recharge Park**

Mr. Ginn stated that the Water Resources Department will be undertaking this project. CH2M Hill will be assisting the city with the design study and design effort. Mr. Vasquez-Burney stated that this project is being done for responsible water management. It is a forward looking effort to do the best to ensure that water is available for the future. The project is exciting is because it is not only about the water but is also about the citizens. The project is very important and beneficial ecologically, socially and recreationally. The rendering shows what the park is most likely going to look like. The reclaimed water is at the top and it goes through a serpentine flow path. Through this flow path the plants, the ecology and biology of wetlands are able to clean up this water and remove all the nutrients from it. It is designed for the water to sink down to the ground into the aquifer. This is particularly important in this area because of the Silver Springs system. The Silver Springs system has problems as to the quantity of the flow and the quality of the water. This project is really meant to help both of those things by adding more water to the aquifer and clean water because it is being treated to remove those nutrients. Geologic investigations are being conducted now to figure out how fast the water will flow through and determine when the water will go down by using an application ray. The way it works is by placing a level sensor in the area that communicates with the valve; the sensor will detect when the water is low and then the valve will open to allow more water to flow in to maintain the correct amount of water in the aquifer.

In addition, the city is planning to convert part of the club house into an education center to showcase the importance of the aquifer, Silver Springs system and the ecological benefits. The park is expected to draw in a lot of rare birds and lots of ecology that people can come to observe. There will also be boardwalks, alteration areas, jogging trails and biking activities throughout the park. If there are any concerns from the public, we would like to know about them. Also, if there is anything the city or the community would like to get included in the plan, now is the time to let us know about it so that we can ensure that those things are addressed and if possible included in our plans for the park. The investigations will be conducted onsite through the end of the year and design will start immediately after that. We expect to have the plans completed by summer time. The quality of the water is suitable for kayaking and paddle boarding because it is public access reuse; however, it is not designed for that use right now. The plan is to have shallow water levels with wetland vegetation. Reclaimed water will still be used because the city provides reclaimed water to all of its users; the excess is put into the spray fields. There is no odor because the city provides very good reclaimed water which has no odors. Even if odors were an issue, the wetlands systems would immediately take care of it. The mosquito issue will be addressed in the wetland design by creating different deep zones along the flow path that will never get dry. Mosquito fishes reproduce in high numbers and they will be allowed to flourish in these zones thereby ensuring that the mosquitos are not a problem. The mosquito fish can survive without the mosquitos because they eat other things and insects. So as long as there is connectivity between the

marsh zones & the deep zones and the deep zones never go dry, there will not be any mosquito problems.

The vegetative communities will be planned at the beginning so that there is a community of native species. At the beginning, it is good to be really aggressive with the exotics management. As the desirable species grow in and provide cover, they will out compete the exotics. The soil will not need to be supplemented; the existing sand will be used because the water has the necessary nutrients that the plants need to grow and over time a small layer of wetland marsh soil & other organic soils will develop allowing it to become self-sustaining. At the end of the flow path, there will be a two-fold space; one will be used to extract the material needed to build the berms but it also creates an area of already treated open water with an opportunity for a clear body of water to use for something like recreational fishing. No liners or clay will be used so that the water adapts and then more is added in at a set infiltration rate.

The park will be relatively low maintenance compared with the other alternatives. The bulk of the maintenance here will be parking such as keeping the boardwalks clean. Every few years probably retreating the boardwalks and the wood. It is probably a good idea for some vegetation maintenance to be done on a quarterly basis with some type of spray treatment to get rid of any invasive species. That is about all the maintenance that will be required. Also, it is possible that some permanent ground water monitoring will be required as well. There is no chance of flooding due to heavy rains because a DEP requirement makes us put in three feet of re-board on these types of ponds. Traditionally, the water from a 100 year storm in this area equals about one foot; this design will allow the ponds to take the flooding of a 100 year storm.

The area designated for this wetland project is a golf course right now. Boardwalks and trails will be added and the berm next to the clubhouse will become the entrance to the park. Some of the boardwalks will lead to the other islands and some will be for observation. The color coding is simply to identify different communities; the yellow area is still wet but very shallow and the blue area is a bit deeper and are existing ponds and will be used to create a deep marsh. This wetland can be used as a nursery to feed other areas of the city and it has been done before. The plants can be harvested, divided and transplanted to other places in the city. The golf course on the north side is going to remain where it is. There is a beautiful oak hammock of Laurel Oaks on the site which we are trying to preserve because they are appropriate to that location. The wetlands are pretty much on the fairways. The deepest part will be in the center region and it will be about 12 to 15 feet. The features of the bike trail has not been determined yet.

The funding for the project is being worked out now and hopefully it will be in the next fiscal year. The intent is to do the plan as one single project because it would take longer and be more expensive to complete it in phases. A pipe line does not need to be put in because luckily there is already a 20 inch line that goes to the golf course. So all we have to do is tap into that line which is already on the north side. Mr. Rich commented that this supplants our CUP agreement with St John's this will be recharging a lot more of the aquifer so it expands our ability to draw down the line. There has been no direction or

consideration given to putting a wetland park at the Perry Springfield in Belleview. The Silver Springs site was the most appropriate place for higher recharge that is going to directly affect the springs and it is much closer to our own well field which is where we will be pulling water from and the water cycle itself is much closer. The turnaround time from the water filtering through and getting back in is approximately two to three years. The anticipated time line for the start of construction is summer time, around July with a 10 to 12 month construction period.

Ms. Normoyle suggested that the consultants should contact the College of Central Florida to see if they would be interested in getting some of their staff to develop some type of curriculum for this project. Mr. Guinn stated that alligators will most likely be in the wetlands because they are a part of Florida's ecology. Signs will be posted throughout the site to notify the community of this fact. Mr. Vasquez-Burney stated that there is a relatively new Sweetwater Wetlands in Gainesville which is similar to this project if anyone would be interested in seeing an example. There is also an impressive YouTube video showcasing the destination. Mr. Boston stated that once the remaining items on the agenda were addressed and if sufficient time remained then the video could be pulled and viewed if the members were interested in seeing it.

■ **Downtown use restrictions**

Mr. Boston stated that the city is pursuing a code amendment to several use categories. The reason for the code change is because the city is trying to discourage certain business from locating downtown because they are not uses that contribute to the vibrancy and economic success of the downtown area. The establishments include pawn shops, tattoo parlors, check cashing businesses, bail bonds, and e-cigarette stores. The tattoo parlors already have a use definition and are already prohibited in the B-3 zone but they are currently permitted in the B-3A, B-3B and B-3C zones. However, with this amendment change, tattoo parlors would be permitted in the B-2, B-4 & B-5 zones and prohibited in B-1 and all the B-3 zones. For the three new uses, check cashing, vape shops, and the bail bonds would have use definitions approved and they would be permitted in the B-4 and B-5 zones & prohibited in the B-3 zones. Bail bonds would also be allowed in the M-1 and M-2 zones. This change would have a bit of a clearer delineation of what constitutes those uses; right now these items are kind of funneled into either general business service, office, or other uses. Pawn shops are also going to be restricted in the downtown; however, the code amendment for this went before the P & Z a while back and they will continue to be looked at as used merchandise stores. Any existing stores that fall within these categories will be grandfathered in. According to our maps, there are three businesses that would become nonconforming in the B-3 zones and those would be allowed to continue to operate until the establishment wanted to change its use or the building was left vacant for a period of year or more. The existing businesses can continue as they are but they would not be able to expand. B-3 is in the downtown area. For example, if another vape shop wanted to move into the space where Atomize was located within a year's timeframe, they would be allowed to move into this location. However, if a different type of business moved into the location and closed up, then another vape should could not open up at this location after this amendment is passed. This amendment will go before P & Z in November and then to the city council in

December. A copy of the proposed amendment will be available in the P & Z packet for anyone who like to review the document.

- **CIE update**

Mr. Hale stated that every year the city has to update a part of their Comprehensive Plan. The Capital Improvements Elements section concerning any projects that will effect either the Level of Service (LOS) or Level of Capacity (LOC) within the city limits has to be updated. A list of the current projects for the three specified departments (transportation, water & sewer and parks & recreation) was put together in order to complete this task. Only the funded projects are being included in the chart not future projects. The updates that will be included in the CIE are as follows: (1) Transportation - The majority of the updates consist of various FDOT funded street projects with a few city funded resurfacing projects; (2) Water & Sewer – The updates consist of water/sewer line improvements; hookup customers to new water & sewer line connections; and water treatment plant no. 2 lower aquifer wells & facilities expansions. This has been left in because it has the possibility to evolve into an alternative water source, tapping into the lower floor of the aquifer instead of the upper floor. Thereby, allowing it the potential to become our primary plant instead of remaining in the secondary position that it currently holds; and (3) Recreation & Parks – The two projects are MLK Recreation Complex and Scott Springs Improvements. Normally recreation & parks in not included in the CIE. However, this year these projects have been included because the city is looking at some sizable increases in use of at these parks and also by including them in the CIE the city is eligible for some state grants to help pay for some of the improvements.

Mr. Guinn confirmed that the Wetlands development probably needs to be included in this list because it is a project that the city needs to fund and build. Another reason is that this venture has a beneficial use to our consumptive permit. Essentially, with the permission of Florida State, the consumptive use permit will allow the city to be able to offset whatever millions of gallons of water that is pumped into this recharge wetland.

Mr. Hale stated that the CIE updates will be presented before P & Z and then to city council for final approval.

- **Upcoming meetings**

City Council Meeting on November 1<sup>st</sup> at 4pm – introduction of Paddock Ridge West;

City Council Meeting on November 15<sup>th</sup> at 4pm – approval of the Paddock Ridge West Conceptual Site Development Plan;

Ocala Historic Preservation Advisory Board Meeting on November 3<sup>rd</sup> at 4pm;

Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting on November 14<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm - medical marijuana ordinances and the B-3 use amendment for downtown;

Board of Adjustment Meeting on November 21<sup>st</sup> at 5:30 pm; and

Midtown Master Plan meetings on November 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> – steering committee meeting; four round tables (Social Services, Development & Real Estate, Mobility & Connectivity and Cultural Arts); popup activities on the Concord Square parking lot; and a formal presentation on the Downtown Square.

- **Final Comments** – Mr. Lee stated that the status on the hotel project is that the developer is still working on getting a flag hotel lined up for the project. The developer indicated that he is having some trouble getting a flag hotel onboard. However, there was a recent presentation to the city council featuring several different flag hotel options including a Radisson Red Hotel but no hotel has been selected yet.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:40 pm.