

Ocala 2035 Vision Leadership Group Meeting

Citizen Service Center
Second Floor – Training Room
201 SE 3rd Street, Ocala, Florida

Thursday, June 22, 2017 - 11:30 am

Minutes Summary

The following members were present: Ruth Reed, Bob DuMond, Ken Ausley, Fred Roberts, Jr., Gilberto Martinez, Summer Gill, Ira Holmes, Mary Sue Rich and Patrick Gilman

The following members were absent: Narvella Haynes, Diana Schwartz, Clark Yandle, Paolo Mastroserio, Steve Albright, Grant McMahan, Ed Plaster, Michelle Partin, Todd Rudnianyn and Reginald Landers, Jr.

City Staff in Attendance: Melanie Gaboardi, Revitalization Strategies Director; Patricia Hitchcock, Planning & Zoning Manager; Elizabeth Koreman, Landscape Development Manager; Laurie Whitaker, Reinvestment Manager; David Boston, Senior Planner / GIS Analyst; Gus Gianikas, Senior Planner; Aubrey Hale, Urban Design Coordinator; Matrell Everett, Planner I; and Burnadine Rich, Community Development Grants Specialist

Citizens in Attendance: Jim Troiano, St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) and Idalia Barlow, Marion County Health Alliance

The following items were distributed at the meeting: none.

Mr. Boston called the meeting to order at 11:30 am.

Agenda Item #1: Proof of Publication

Ms. McKeever stated that the public notice was posted on the City of Ocala's website on June 9, 2017.

Mr. DuMond agreed to act as the Chairman for the meeting.

Agenda Item #2: Approval of March 23, 2017 Minutes

Mr. Gilman made a motion to approve the March 23, 2017 minutes; Mr. Roberts seconded the motion, which unanimously carried.

Agenda Item #3: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Action Plan

Ms. Whitaker introduced herself and informed the group that each year the CDBG Action Plan has to be completed and advertised to the public. On June 23rd the plan will be posted on the Revitalization Strategies website for 30 days. In addition, a hard copy of the plan will be available in our office for anyone that would like to review it. A public meeting will be held here in this training room on July 10th at 4pm and it is open to the public.

Agenda Item #4: Bi-Monthly Meetings

Mr. Boston restated the reasons for switching from monthly to bi-monthly meetings and reminded everyone that the meetings will continue to be held at 11:30 am. The majority of the members are good

with this time; however, if this changes, then we can revisit this issue and make modifications as necessary.

Agenda Item #5: Accessory Dwelling Units

Mr. Boston explained that the city is considering a code amendment for accessory dwelling units. They are not currently allowed in the single family residential zones. Lately though there has been quite a bit of a push from home owners who have taken on the job of caring for additional family members and would like to be able to build an extra house or an attached dwelling on their property. Mr. DuMond commented that from his business standpoint, Ocala has an aging community with folks coming back to be near their kids so this is probably something that the city is going to have to deal with. It is sensible as long as proper guidelines are set and the city does not allow some type of monstrosity that is intrusive to the neighborhood. Ms. Hitchcock explained that one of the things they have seen from the home owners is that the accessory dwelling units or workshops dimensions have been just as large as or larger than the primary home. Although nothing has been decided yet with regards to the size of the units, staff thinks that the dwellings should be set to some type of percentage so that it is smaller than the primary structure. The way the home owners have been getting around this now is to get a permit for a pool house or a game room which then turns into an accessory dwelling unit at some point after the permit has been pulled. Mr. Gilman stated that no matter what is decided; the key is enforcing whatever amendment the city puts in place. It is a great idea and will be successful if it is administered properly.

There was a short discussion about the allowable sizes of the units; regulating the residents who live in the dwellings; the parking requirements; and the compatibility of the dwellings to the neighborhood.

Ms. Hitchcock stated that staff would like to meet this head on and get a code in place for this soon. Mr. Boston emphasized that staff will come up with the amendment and bring it back to this board for review. By consensus the members agreed that they are all in favor of developing a code amendment for accessory dwelling units.

Agenda Item #6: West Ocala CRA Expansion

Mr. Boston referred to the West Ocala CRA Expansion area map from the power point presentation to show the properties that have been incorporated into the expansion. This area is referred to as Pine Oaks Square in the West Ocala Community plan. It probably should have been in the expansion area to begin with since the city has been doing a lot of work here already. In the conceptual plan the zoning for the sites include residential, mixed use, institutional, recreation and commercial. Staff is going through the process to include this site into the expansion plan. The visions for the area include transforming the 9-hole golf course into a Water Recharge Park and some Habitat for Humanity residential housing.

Agenda Item #7: The Yard at Pine Oaks Rezoning

Mr. Boston stated that this is a rezoning case. The property owner is requesting to change the zoning from M-3, heavy industrial to M-2, medium industrial. However, the city is recommending that it be changed to M-1, light industrial. The reason the owners are requesting this change is because the M-3 zoning is not consistent with the land use designation and the business that was on this site ceased operations over a year ago. The zoning has to be changed before the property can be sold or leased for any type of development. Staff is not supporting the change to M-2 because they are concerned about the potential for a company to come in here and open some type of business for outdoor manufacturing on this site. Ms. Hitchcock explained that the property became inconsistent with the

land use in 2013 when the 2035 Vision Plan was adopted; however, the existing business was allowed to continue operating because it was in place before the plan was adopted. The business lost its exempt status when they ceased operations for a 1 year period. The owner is required to make the zoning compatible with the land use before the property can be used for any type of business. There are a couple of developers interested in this site and they would like to do pallet manufacturing or a repair garage. Staff does not want to see either of these business here. Staff recommended the M-1 zone because it allows indoor industrial with some outdoor storage but no outdoor manufacturing. The Planning & Zoning (P & Z) commission approved the M-2 zoning at their June meeting. The next step for the rezoning case is to be introduced to city council at their July 18 meeting and approved at the August 8 meeting. If city council approves the M-2 zoning, the garage can be operated but a special exception would be needed for the pallet manufacturing. A staff member met with Dennis McFadden and informed him about this case and the potential risks if city councils approves the M-2 zoning. Mr. McFadden indicated that he would be sending the information out to the Governor's West members. A distribution list and maps can be provided to Ms. Reed so that she can inform the public about the zoning case and the upcoming council meetings. Ms. Hitchcock also indicated that she is available to speak with anyone needing more clarification about the case.

There was a short discussion regarding the reasons why it was necessary to support staff's recommendation to rezone the property to M-1 so that outdoor storage would not be allowed on this site. The general consensus of the Leadership Group was that allowing the M-2 zoning would be in direct conflict with the goals outlined in the 2035 Vision Plan; detrimental to the residential housing areas to the north and south; and an act of regression to the growth and development of the West Ocala area. The majority of the members were in agreement that they needed to show up at the city council meetings and speak if necessary to prevent the rezoning from being approved.

Agenda Item #8: Midtown Master Plan Adoption

Mr. Boston stated that the Midtown Master Plan was adopted recently and it is posted on the city's website now. Thanks to everyone that helped with the plan process for developing this plan. The city believes that this will be a successful action plan and they are moving forward with implementation immediately. Mr. Zobler has already put out a Letter of Interest for development and/or adaptive reuse proposals for three catalytic sites that were identified in the plan and he is already thinking about what improvements to make on 8th Avenue including looking at ways to implement a road dais along that street. Staff is pretty excited about moving forward with this design.

Agenda Item #9: Form-Base Code Administrative Draft

Mr. Boston stated that the administrative draft of the form-based code is completed. It is still going through an internal review process with staff and that should be completed soon. There will be a workshop sometime in the next couple of months. We should be able to conduct a workshop and some type of activity at our August meeting because by that point the public review and engagement process will just be starting. The administrative draft will be sent out to our community groups via email when the review has been finished. The need for this code was identified through the comprehensive plan update. Mr. Hale emphasized that the group should keep in mind when they are reviewing this code that the whole basis of it is to focus on the shape and characteristics of the buildings as well as frontage requirements; this code will not be looking at what goes on inside of the buildings. Mr. Boston specified that especially in the downtown areas there has been a lot of success with this type of code. The right form and design can be used to give the area a sense of place. This is the type of thing that keeps people coming back; it keeps people interested; and makes people like the area which then is the catalyst that encourages specialty services and businesses to move into the area to make it a memorable

and popular destination. This form-base code is being drafted to encourage that type of progress in our city. By using similar designs and placement of the buildings to keep the space open with a pedestrian friendly atmosphere that contributes to the overall appearance of the area. Mr. Hale explained that there are plenty of visual examples included in this code along with the text including pictures of items such as prohibited and allowed signage.

Agenda Item #10: Urban Residential Feasibility Study

Mr. Boston stated that staff is working on this study. The need for it came to our notice during the midtown planning process. The goal on the catalytic sites in the midtown area is to have more urban residential. Also, more households in downtown with people walking around to attract downtown businesses. It really has become one of the most critical components to the development plans on any of our sites. Staff was originally thinking they would do an urban residential feasibility study on the Midtown area with an option to do a study on the North Magnolia area. Zimmerman / Volk Associates, Inc. was hired as a consultant to do the study. Laurie Volk came to town last week and took a tour of the city. Ms. Volk concluded that we do not have an urban residential area anywhere in the core of the city yet. The consultants felt that it was important that the city focus on downtown so that an urban residential zone be established in the area where it is the easiest to do it right. This is the direction that the city is going with this study. The study is going to answer our questions about what households would want to live in an urban residential area; is there a need for it here in Ocala; and what type of properties should be offered; how many units there should be; and how do we go about making this happen in not just the downtown district but in all our districts such as Midtown and North Magnolia. Mr. Holmes stated that he supports the focus on the downtown area but felt that areas that are close by like Tuscawilla should be included as well. Mr. Boston explained that the consultants included the first three blocks north of SR40 within the Midtown area to be part of the downtown area focus as well. In addition to that the consultants will also be looking a little bit more closely at the Midtown catalytic sites before they look at the general area of Ocala. Mr. Hale stated that in relation to connectivity; the connectivity on Pine Street, SR40, 2nd Street, and 8th Avenue has been reviewed. Pine Street and 3rd both have barriers. However, SR40 and 2nd Street will be constructed with the same connectivity and design; plus they will have the same infrastructures in the medium to make them safer for pedestrians to cross the street. Eighth Avenue will be treated the same way as SR40 once the road dais is completed. Mr. Boston clarified that the city is initiating a lot of improvements to our public infrastructure by doing things like the Art Park Improvements, the Osceola Trail and all of the various park improvements. There is a lot the city can do to incentivize investment in an area but the really important thing that is needed in order to get businesses to come downtown is residential housing. Mr. Hale concluded that the city is at the point where it needs to determine which item needs to come in first: the residential housing or the business.

Agenda Item #11: Upcoming Meetings

Mr. Boston reviewed the upcoming meetings listed in the power point presentation.

Agenda Item #12: Comments / Questions

There was a brief discussion about getting some type of reoccurring event or attraction into the downtown area that would draw tourists to visit the place on a regular basis.

Ms. Reed made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Gilman seconded the motion; which carried unanimously.

Mr. DuMond adjourned the meeting at 1 pm.