

Ocala 2035 Vision Leadership Group Meeting

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

Thursday, August 24, 2017 - 11:30 am

Minutes Summary

The following members were present: Ruth Reed, Summer Gill, Patrick Gilman, Paolo Mastroserio – arrived 11:40 am, Todd Rudnianyn and Ira Holmes

The following members were absent: Narvella Haynes, Bob DuMond, Ken Ausley, Clark Yandle, Fred Roberts, Gilberto Martinez, Steve Albright, Grant McMahon, Ed Plaster, Michelle Partin, Mary Sue Rich and Reginald Landers, Jr.

City Staff in Attendance: Peter Lee, Planning Director; Patricia Hitchcock, Planning & Zoning Manager; Lisa Walsh, Economic Development Manager; David Boston, Senior Planner / GIS Analyst; Nancy Smith, Senior Planner; Gus Gianikas, Senior Planner; Aubrey Hale, Urban Design Coordinator; Matrell Everett, Planner I; Winsome Jacobs, Information Technology Director; Melissa Northey, GIS Coordinator; and Ken Odom, Transportation Planner/Project Manager

Citizens in Attendance: Eric Borman, Partin Architecture; Jamie Kersey, FDOT; Carlos Rodriguez, FDOT; Idalia Barlow, Marion County Health Alliance; and Heather Johnstone, FDOT

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 August 2, 2017.

Ms. Reed agreed to act as the Chairman for the meeting.

Agenda Item #2: Approval of June 22, 2017 Minutes

Mr. Gilman made a motion to approve the June 22, 2017 minutes; Ms. Gill seconded the motion, which unanimously carried.

Agenda Item #3: I-75 at NW 49th Street Interchange Project

Mr. Boston introduced Mr. Carlos Rodriguez and stated that he was at the meeting to do a presentation on the I-75 at NW 49th Street Interchange Project. Mr. Rodriguez introduced himself, Heather Johnstone and Jamie Kersey and stated that they all work for the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). Mr. Rodriguez started off the review of his power point presentation by stating that the objective of the project is to build a new interchange to I-75 by extending NW 49th Street to NW 35th Avenue and relieve the existing Interchanges at US 27 & SR 326 by providing an alternate access to I-75. This is a very robust and industrial area with businesses like FedEx, Chewy and AutoZone located nearby that will heavily utilizing I-75, US 27 and 326. The main reasons for doing this project include the need to improve economic vitality and Interstate and Regional mobility with Marion County;

promote job creation; and accommodate future traffic growth. The key issues are the impacts to Baldwin Angus Ranch, bicycle and pedestrian connectivity through the interchange; vertical alignment; and the close proximity to NW 44th Avenue. The alternative concepts to evaluate are the modification of NW 49th Street alignment; cattle crossings to allow use of the Baldwin property SW of the proposed road; use of the remaining land for ponds; innovative intersection design; and investigative at-grade vs. elevated alignments. A traffic study has already been conducted and it justifies the necessity for an interchange at this location. Also, included in this is a prerequisite for FDOT to remain flexible for the future expansion of I-75 to an 8-lane highway by 2030 and possible future land use plans with a potential commerce park of 3,000 acres. Alternative interchange configurations with surplus capacity will also be considered while FDOT looks at the multiple concepts for this interchange. These concepts include several Diamond type Interchanges, a Single Point Urban Interchange and a Partial Cloverleaf Interchange. Each concept has benefits and drawbacks; therefore, careful consideration and exploration will be undertaken before a decision is reached on which model would be the most viable for this project. Coordination will be required with several utility companies such as Duke Energy, Teco People Gas, CenturyLink, as well as Marion County to determine the utility easements along NW 49th Avenue. Environmental concerns are being looked at by FDOT to address the cultural resources and socio-cultural issues; threatened and endangered species; noise, air quality, contaminations and soils. We are working with the key local officials and agencies to get the information needed to complete the study. Although, this is just the beginning of the project we recognize the how vital it is to have community involvement; therefore, a public hearing is scheduled for some time around July 2018. Plus there will be more presentations to the City and Marion County too. If the project stays on schedule, there will be a public workshop in 2018 and then a public hearing during the summer of 2019; followed by the location design concept acceptance in the fall of 2019. The information from the hearings, workshops and our presentations will all be available our website. There was a short discussion regarding the extension of NW 35th Street to NW 49th Street, the option to build the new interchange underneath I-75 and the possibility of future expansion to NW 44th Avenue.

Agenda Item #4: One Map

Mr. Boston introduced Ms. Melissa Northey the GIS Coordinator for the City's Information Technology Department. Ms. Northey stated that the purpose of One Map is to have all the data for the City of Ocala and its surrounding areas in one application. This will allow citizens to view a map of the City which has access to information pertaining to zoning districts, parcel boundaries, flood zones, water mains, electric lines, school sites, cemeteries, sidewalks, election districts, etc. One Map can be accessed by clicking on the link to the online map portal on the city's homepage. Ms. Northey went onto the City of Ocala's website and demonstrated how to use the application as she gave her presentation. And she further explained that the data is organized into 15 different groups with 122 different layers; both the groups and layers can be expanded. Also, each of them can be turned on or off so that the user can determine which information is displayed at any given time. Most of the data is updated on a weekly basis; however, the City's data is live and it is updated as soon as a change has been made to it. In addition, you can also click anywhere in the map for more information, measure distances, and print paper copies, pdfs, or image files of the map. Layers can be added to the app but there is no table of contents. However, there are some instructions to help navigate through the program. In conclusion, Ms. Northey stated that she hopes that everyone will find this map useful and advised that she is available to answer any questions. Mr. Boston stated that they are happy to add more layers and asked for this group to provide him with ideas or suggestions after they have had a chance to check out the application.

Agenda Item #5: Form-based Code Administrative Draft

Mr. Boston explained that he just sent this group the latest draft of the code and was not expecting to go into detail or get feedback at this meeting; however, if anyone happened to read the draft and would like to discuss it or has questions, he would be happy to answer any questions. Mr. Boston did a quick overview of the code by reviewing the various articles and sections including the minimum pedestrian requirements and signage. The group was asked to review the code and get back to him with any suggestions or ideas that they felt needed to be clarified or changed in the draft.

Agenda Item #6: Urban Residential Feasibility Study

Mr. Boston stated that staff received the study and the results were very encouraging. The study looked at people who are currently living within the Ocala city limits; households currently living elsewhere in Marion County; households with the potential to move to the City of Ocala from Lake, Sumter, Alachua and Citrus Counties and households with the potential to move to the City of Ocala from all other U.S. counties. Then then they identified the composition of households that are moving and from that pool determined the types of housing they are moving into; finally from there they figured out what percentage of these households would prefer living in downtowns or walkable mixed-use neighborhoods. The report showed that 80% of the demand for downtown housing is from millennials and 20% is from families with children. The study also found that there could be a demand for about 500 new residential housing over next five years. It also indicated that in the next five years, approximately 100 to 1200 units per year could be supported by the existing demand for housing in the downtown area. This report strongly indicated that there is a demand for housing in this area; therefore, the City will most likely be moving toward adding residential to its Downtown area. Plus, these efforts could also be used as a catalytic event to swing housing efforts into the Midtown area. Ms. Volk from Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc. will be coming to Ocala in August to formally present the study. The August 29th presentation will be in the evening at the IHMC Building and the August 30th presentation will be during the daytime at a City Council workshop. Please review the study and any questions can be addressed to me or Ms. Volk if you have a chance to attend the presentations.

Agenda Item #7: Upcoming Meetings

Mr. Boston reviewed the upcoming meetings listed in the power point presentation and indicated that he would be adding the East Ocala CRA Advisory Committee meetings in the future.

Agenda Item #12: Comments / Questions

Ms. Walsh asked when the Form-based code would be adopted. Mr. Boston responded that the timeframe is set for October 2018; however it is possible that this date will be pushed back but it will not be adopted any earlier than this timeframe.

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

Ms. Reed adjourned the meeting at 1 pm.