

**MIDTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AREA BOARD
MINUTES**

Tuesday, August 13, 2013

A meeting of the Midtown Redevelopment Area Board was held Tuesday, August 13, 2013, at 6:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers, Daytona Beach City Hall, 301 S. Ridgewood Avenue, Daytona Beach, FL. The following people were present:

Board Members

Mr. Martin Tooley, Chair
Ms. Patricia Heard
Mrs. Denise Cato
Mr. Wilburn Williams

Board Members Absent:

Mr. Kenneth McGee
Dr. Irma Browne Jamison (excused absence)
Ms. Kenya Ford (excused absence)

Staff Members Present

Mr. Reed Berger, Redevelopment Director
Mr. Charles Bryant, Redevelopment Project Manager
Mr. Ben Gross, Assistant City Attorney
Ms. Becky Groom, Recording Secretary

1. Call to Order

Mr. Tooley called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Ms. Groom called the roll and noted members present as stated above.

3. Invocation

Leah Reddick of the Fellowship Church of Praise gave the invocation.

4. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Mr. Tooley led the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. **Approval of Minutes for July 9, 2013**

Mr. Tooley stated that the minutes should read that Mr. Bryant read the agenda item for Item 8 on Page 6. He also stated the last paragraph on Page 9 should read Harris' grocery store, not Harry's.

Board Action

Mrs. Cato made a motion to approve the minutes of July 9, 2013, with corrections as noted. Ms. Heard seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously (4-0).

6. **Staff Reports**

Police Department

Mr. Tooley stated he was very concerned about the number of homicides and noted there were two homicides listed in the Compstat report.

Mr. Tooley stated sexual batteries were up 130% and sexual battery on a child was up 367%. He stated most sexual offenders were able to find residence in Midtown based on the law. Mr. Tooley stated the offenders were directed to the Midtown area which caused an increase in crime. He stated he would like Capt. Blanchette to provide input at the next meeting.

Mr. Williams stated the number of sexual offenders was increasing and something needed to be done to address the growing population, not only in Midtown.

Mrs. Cato stated when someone was released after incarceration, and the family did not take them in, they were released to where they were grounded. She stated she was shocked to find there were 15 sexual offenders within a two block radius in Midtown.

Mrs. Cato stated she was concerned about the number of homeless people living in overgrown areas or abandoned houses. She stated she was concerned when there was an event on beach side, that the homeless were told to leave the beach side and directed to Midtown.

Ms. Heard stated she would like the Board to look at the boundaries of Midtown.

Mr. Tooley asked Capt. Blanchette be invited to attend the September meeting to address the Board's concerns.

Code Enforcement

Mr. Tooley stated he was concerned about the Masonic Lodge on South Street and Marion Street. He stated there was historic significance to the structure but something needed to be done to fix the situation because the building was unsafe. Mr. Tooley stated he was concerned that homeless may attempt to use it for shelter because the building had been closed since the hurricanes. He stated he lived diagonally across the street from the building and stated something must be done since it was a safety hazard.

Mrs. Cato asked if the building had been deemed a historic site.

Mr. Bryant stated yes.

Mrs. Cato stated representatives from the Masonic Lodge approached the board about two years ago to ask for help. She asked where they could go to secure funding to make improvements. Ms. Cato asked if the building was demolished, if the property could be retained by the Masonic Lodge and a new structure built on the property.

Mr. Bryant stated he met with representatives of the Masonic Lodge a couple of years ago and the Board approved a grant that had to be presented to the CRA for funding. The Masonic Lodge applied for a grant in Tallahassee and submitted the grant request without approval from the CRA and they were denied. Since that time, little or nothing had been done to the building. If the building was demolished, they could retain ownership of the property if they paid for the demolition. If the City paid for the demolition, the City would place a lien against that property for the cost of demolition.

Mr. Berger stated that previously demolition was imminent and staff intervened. He stated some work was done inside to stabilize the structure. Mr. Berger stated State funding was limited and there was no money for grants.

Mr. Tooley stated some of the people involved with the lodge were construction workers and contractors and they knew what to do.

Mr. Tooley stated some of the items listed in the report will take some time to resolve, such as the Masonic Lodge, but properties such as 545 Magnolia Avenue only needed a weed eater to remove the weeds and bring it into compliance.

Mrs. Cato stated the property was behind Pierre Lewis' home and she was surprised it was not taken care of.

Mrs. Cato stated she was concerned about weeds growing over the sidewalks and blocking pedestrian flow.

Mr. Williams asked if hedges grown over the sidewalk can be removed by an adjacent property owner.

Mr. Gross stated if the growth was in the right of way, the City can remove it. He stated if the overgrowth was on your property, you can remove it but you cannot remove it if it was just growing onto the sidewalk. Mr. Gross stated that you would have to ask the City to remove it.

Mrs. Cato stated the trees were overgrown along Beville Road next to the golf course.

Ms. Heard stated overgrowth was the responsibility of the homeowners and many properties had been neglected over the years.

Mr. Tooley stated he was glad Code Enforcement was acting on some of the items. He stated some could be resolved quickly.

7. DEV2013-064, Conceptual Site Plan Review, Harrison Rhodes Memorial

Mr. Bryant read the staff report and stated the project was a proposed educational facility to be located on the BCU campus. The applicant proposed to demolish a portion of the existing Harrison-Rhodes Memorial Building and construct a new 4 story, 28,373 sq. ft. building.

Mr. Steve Buswell, Parker Mynchenberg Engineers, stated the project was on a tight schedule and stated a special meeting of the Board may be needed.

Mr. Irvin Ross, Bethune-Cookman University, requested a special meeting of the Board in order to expedite the project and not have to wait until the September meeting.

Mr. Bryant stated a special meeting was requested for Site Plan approval prior to the September regular meeting.

Mr. Tooley asked if the Historic Preservation Board had made a recommendation on the item.

Mr. Bryant stated if the building was historic, it would have to be reviewed by the Historic Board, but it was not historic.

Mrs. Cato asked if the building will be used for classrooms.

Mr. Ross stated it will be used for classrooms, labs, teaching space, and offices. He stated the front of the building will remain as is and will be restored.

Mrs. Cato asked the project remain as clean as other projects have in the past. She stated she was also concerned about student safety.

Mr. Ross stated the project will remain clean and a construction fence will be placed around the project.

Mrs. Cato asked how long the project will take for completion.

Mr. Ross stated he planned on the project being completed in 10 months.

Mrs. Cato asked about parking.

Mr. Ross stated there will be some additional parking and it will be accessed by walking.

Mr. Williams asked if the project will encompass the same area or if it will expand to the west.

Mr. Ross stated the project will use the same footprint.

Ms. Heard stated she looked forward to the campus growing and was excited about the project.

Mr. Berger stated he would like to know that the Board members were agreeable to holding a special meeting.

Mr. Bryant stated he would poll the Board members to see if they will be available on either August 27 or August 29 for a special meeting.

Board Action

Mrs. Cato made a motion to hold a special expedient meeting with BCU regarding DEV2013-064, Harrison Rhodes Memorial. Ms. Heard seconded the motion and it carried unanimously (4-0).

Mr. Berger asked if there were any other comments from the Board prior to the special meeting.

There were no comments or questions from the Board.

8. Discussion Item: Midtown Master Plan Update

Mr. Berger stated he had been in touch with Prof. Huffman and Prof. Huffman stated that he had changes to make. He stated the work was being done via the computer and telephone. Mr. Berger stated that Midtown was in the sequence and being considered as a part of the overall LDC rewrite. He stated that by the end

of the year, there will be a draft LDC to review which will address all of the provisions in the Master Plan.

Mr. Berger stated they were preparing the documentation for the Comp Plan Amendment. He stated it had been suggested they will be attempting to rezone all of the property in Midtown that conformed with the Comp Plan. Mr. Berger stated it would be presented in September and then move forward to the Planning Board and City Commission.

Mr. Berger stated a colored map was included in the packet which outlined the zoning and land use.

Mr. Berger stated he had informed Mr. Huffman he would like him to be here in September and funds had been reserved for him to visit Daytona Beach.

Mr. Tooley asked for clarification of the purple and green colors on the map.

Mr. Berger stated the purple was the industrial area which will become eco-industrial and was the Dickerson Center.

Mr. Berger stated the formal recommendations will be presented to the Board in September.

9. **Redevelopment Project Updates**

Mrs. Cato stated there was a lot of vacant property owned by people who did not live in Daytona Beach. She asked if the City had a lawn/landscaping service they hired to ease the dilapidated look and blight on some of the properties. She asked if funding for that would come from Midtown's budget or the City's budget.

Mr. Bryant stated the properties listed in the report had been forwarded to Barbara Collins, who is in Code Enforcement responsible for lot clearance. He stated the City had a contractor who was responsible for mowing properties and then a lien was placed against the property for the cost of the mowing.

Mr. Gross stated there was a request scheduled for the next City Commission meeting to increase the contract for lot mowing.

Mrs. Cato asked how someone could get on the list to be a contractor to do the mowing.

Mr. Bryant stated contractor would have to go through the Purchasing Department.

Mr. Williams stated he was concerned about a property on Orange Avenue before Reva Street and the face of the property was horrendous.

Mr. Bryant stated the property was 836 and he had been dealing with the property for a long time. He stated it was the John Birch property and had been an issue for a long time.

10. Public Comments

Ms. Patricia Jones, 507 S. Keech Street, stated she had attended the meeting as a result of attending a Neighborhood Watch meeting. She stated she wanted to be more involved in the community and she was pleased with what she had heard from the Board. She stated she would encourage others to attend the meetings so they would know what was going on in the community.

Mr. Leah Reddick, 844 Martin Luther King Boulevard, stated a list of vacant properties in Midtown was recently released by the City. She asked what would be the bidding process for acquiring the property and if they could know what it can be used for before being purchased.

Mr. Berger stated most of the properties on the list for disposal were in Midtown and almost all of them were single family. He stated the preference was to have someone purchase the property who will actually build on the property and preferably a homeowner who will live in the community. Mr. Berger stated that the City Commission will make a final decision on the disposal of the properties sometime in the fall.

11. Board Comments

Mrs. Cato asked if any of the property available for disposal was zoned for commercial and if businesses can be placed on the lots.

Mr. Berger stated the zoning will be considered and the property may be rezoned. He stated with few exceptions, the properties were residential. He stated there would be a very small number available for retail and noted the properties were small lots.

Mrs. Cato stated she was concerned about the recent newspaper articles regarding the murders in Midtown. She stated there was a major project at the Daytona International Speedway and projects on the beach but Midtown will still sit idle. She stated she was concerned about the amount of money being spent on the lights for the turtles on the beach side. She asked if Midtown will be included in the "One Daytona." Mrs. Cato asked if anyone from Clarion had spent any time in Midtown. She stated she drove down MLK and grass was growing in the street. Mrs. Cato stated the Orange Avenue project had been put on hold and things needed in Midtown were pushed under the rug. She stated if their City Commissioner wanted Midtown to be a place where people wanted to come and live and invest, she thought a lot more needed to be said and done on Midtown's

behalf. Mrs. Cato stated they kept being told nothing can be done because of money but yet she saw City money being spent all around Midtown.

Mr. Williams stated he was pleased to see they had target dates for the Midtown Redevelopment Plan. He stated he will continue to encourage the citizens to become involved in the community. Mr. Williams stated he was working to put an initiative together to help the schools with their truancy problem.

Ms. Heard stated things were discussed at meetings and answers were not brought back to the Board, such as the number of hair shops being opened. She stated there were 3 on two blocks on Orange Avenue. She stated the commissioners see it and they were not talking about it. She stated that the windows are covered at businesses throughout the town and nothing was being said.

Ms. Heard stated she did not think both of the awnings would remain at the Johnson's Service Station. She stated the old tent was removed but the frame was still there and she wanted to see the old tent down.

Ms. Heard thanked Ms. Reddick for talking about the sale of the properties. She stated hopefully people in the community will hear about the properties before the people who work for the City buy them up.

Ms. Heard stated the marquis at Bethune Cookman was beautiful and added to International Speedway Boulevard

Ms. Heard stated she would like to see the area cleaned up at the service station at the corner and hoped something will be done within the next month.

Ms. Heard stated the Mayor needed to get busy and bring people together as One Daytona with one vision.

Mr. Tooley thanked Ms. Jones and Ms. Reddick for attending the meeting.

Mr. Tooley stated he would like to have sheets for speakers to sign it at the meetings so there was a record of who spoke.

Mr. Tooley stated there was a community festival planned and put together and never brought to Midtown. He stated the City cannot work together when they fragment and ignore the Redevelopment Board when the festival was being held in their section.

Mr. Tooley stated there needed to be some solutions to the problems in Midtown. He stated they needed to look for investors to come into Midtown to redevelop. Mr. Tooley stated he was trying to contact a gentleman in west Florida who put together the tri-city project. Mr. Tooley stated a lot of what needed to be done will have to be accomplished through private industry.

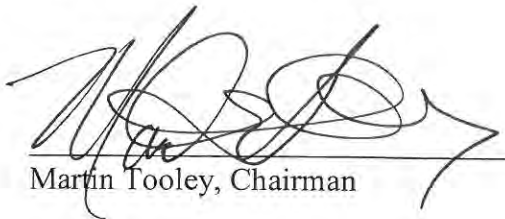
Mr. Tooley asked that everyone remember Dr. Jamison in their prayers and think of Ms. Ford since she was unable to attend due to an illness.

Mr. Tooley encouraged citizens to attend the Midtown meetings so they were aware of what was going on in the community.

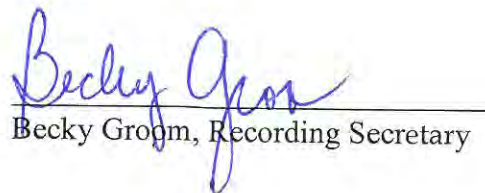
Mr. Tooley thanked Mr. Bryant, Mr. Berger, Mr. Gross, and Ms. Groom for their assistance at the meeting.

12. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:46 .m.



Martin Tooley, Chairman



Becky Groom, Recording Secretary