

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
BOCA RATON COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
MONDAY, AUGUST 24, 2009
1:30 P.M.

The Regular Meeting of the Boca Raton Community Redevelopment Agency was called to order by Chairman Scott at approximately 1:33 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG:

ROLL CALL:

Chairman Constance Scott
Vice Chairman Anthony Majhess
Commissioner Susan Haynie
Commissioner Michael Mullaugh (absent – excused)
Commissioner Susan Whelchel

Also attending the meeting were:

Boca Raton City Manager Leif J. Ahnell, Agency Director
Boca Raton City Attorney Diana Grub Frieser, Attorney to the Agency

ROLL CALL:

Chairman Constance Scott
Vice Chairman Anthony Majhess
Commissioner Susan Haynie
Commissioner Michael Mullaugh
Commissioner Susan Whelchel

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA:

There were no amendments to the agenda.

MINUTES:

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 27, 2009

Motion was made by Commissioner Whelchel, seconded by Commissioner Haynie, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried 4-0 on a voice vote; Chairman Scott, Vice Chairman Majhess, Commissioners Haynie and Whelchel voting yes.

REGULAR BUSINESS - PART I - QUASI-JUDICIAL & RELATED PUBLIC HEARINGS:

There were no items for consideration.

PUBLIC REQUESTS:

Lenore Wachtel opined on the closing of the post office in the downtown and suggested that the City could negotiate a lease for another property in the downtown that the post office might use. She also advised that she was unhappy with the amount of money spent in connection with the downtown (\$700,000 for consultants), indicating that residents were not getting a good return for the money. Lastly, Ms. Wachtel suggested the City allocate \$20,000 to hire teachers to tutor children participating in the City's summer camps. Details were provided on all the above.

Responding to Ms. Wachtel's comments regarding the post office, Chairman Scott encouraged everyone to contact their representatives (US Representative Ron Klein and Senator Bill Nelson) to let them know

that they desire the downtown post office to remain open. In addition, she urged the Chamber of Commerce and others who use post office boxes to contact their representatives as well and explain the importance of retaining a post office in the eastern part of the City. Commissioner Whelchel also provided additional commentary in regard to the above.

Lenore Stern Morris advised that she spearheaded many art tours in Beverly Hills, California, which resulted in a revenue stream for that City and suggested she could do the same for Boca Raton.

Bruce Retzsch suggested that UDA (Urban Design Associates) conduct a seminar for the Planning & Zoning Board (P&Z) and the Community Appearance Board (CAB), and other appropriate bodies, to review the new downtown design concepts.

Frank Leopoldo referred to a lack of activity in the downtown area, especially where restaurants are concerned, and advised that several cities in the United States have engaged in a promotion called, "Restaurant Week." He suggested the City might do the same, advising that there would be no cost to the City.

Motion was made by Commissioner Whelchel, seconded by Commissioner Haynie, inviting Mr. Leopoldo to return to the CRA with a plan for a "Restaurant Week." Motion carried 4-0 on a voice vote; Chairman Scott, Vice Chairman Majhess, Commissioners Haynie and Whelchel voting yes.

Following the vote, it was determined that Mr. Leopoldo would be available to speak to Agency members at their meeting of September 21, 2009.

REGULAR BUSINESS - PART II – RESOLUTIONS AND REGULAR PUBLIC HEARINGS:

There were no items for consideration.

OTHER BUSINESS:

There were no items for consideration.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

1. North/South Linkage - Pedestrian Plaza (aka the Spine)

The City's Landscape Architect Jeff Borick gave a PowerPoint presentation and discussed an alternate plan for the Spine, as proposed by staff. He delineated improvements proposed for Plaza Real South; the intersections of Plaza Real South and SE 1st Street, Plaza Real South and Royal Palm Road, Plaza Real South and Palmetto Park Road, and Palmetto Park Road and NE 1st Avenue; NE 1st Avenue; Boca Raton Road; NW 1st Avenue; and the pedestrian crossings at NE 2nd Street and Plaza Real North. Improvements included, but were not limited to, more shade and landscaping, decorative pavement and lighting, pergolas, banners, and awnings. Details were provided on all the above.

Overall, the CRA voiced support of the plan, which they suggested be presented to the Downtown Boca Raton Advisory Committee, the CAB, and P&Z, as well as downtown property owners. Other suggestions by the Agency included comparing this plan with that of UDA, a walking tour of the area, inclusion of the Art in the Park program, and elimination of a proposed lane closure by Mizner Park. It was noted that the plan presented today would not take the place of a Spine – property owners could still come forward with a plan for the Spine – but would provide a linkage between Mizner Park and Royal Palm Plaza in addition to beautifying various areas. Responding to the Agency, Mr. Ahnell advised that existing dollars from downtown special assessments could be allocated; the estimated cost was approximately \$3.5 million.

Chairman Scott congratulated staff on their efforts, noting that concepts found in UDA's proposed pattern book were used to prepare this plan. Responding to Chairman Scott, Mr. Ahnell provided a brief timeline, explaining that the project could possibly be completed by early next fall; at this time, staff would begin the process of obtaining input from the named parties.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT:

The City Attorney had nothing to report at this time.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS:

Commissioner Whelchel reminded those present of the second jazz event scheduled for Thursday, August 27, 2009, at 6:00PM.

Commissioner Haynie confirmed with Chairman Scott that merchants along Boca Raton Road were notified this Thursday's jazz festival. She then indicated support for Mr. Retzsch's proposal to schedule a UDA seminar for the Community Appearance Board, the Planning & Zoning Board, and the CRA. Ms. Haynie also suggested that the seminar be open to the public as well.

Vice Chairman Majhess advised that he would not be at this Thursday's jazz event; however, he attended the first jazz performance, which was impressive. He then asked the City Manager whether solar-powered signage might be used to promote same and suggested engendering relationships with the media (radio and television) to get the word out about these downtown events.

Chairman Scott again reminded those present of the August 27, 2009 jazz event, which would take place in the Sanborn Square District, and then advised that the third jazz event was scheduled for Thursday, September 24, 2009. Although the CRA originally planned on using three different venues for these jazz events, Chairman Scott suggested scheduling the third September performance at Plaza Real South (the site of the first jazz concert), citing better parking, and asked for the Agency's input. There followed discussion related to the location of the third jazz event after which, at Chairman Scott's request, Emily Lilly, the City's Community Resources/Affairs Specialist, explained how the events were advertised. Ultimately, it was decided that the original plan of three difference venues should be followed.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion was made by Commissioner Whelchel, seconded by Commissioner Haynie, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 4-0 on a voice vote; Chairman Scott, Vice Chairman Majhess, Commissioners Haynie and Whelchel voting yes.

The regular meeting of the Boca Raton Community Redevelopment Agency adjourned at approximately 2:40 p.m., Monday, August 24, 2009.

Constance Scott, Chairman

ATTEST:

Susan S. Saxton, City Clerk