

**CITY OF WINTER HAVEN
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
FLORENCE VILLA ADVISORY COMMITTEE
City Hall – John Fuller Auditorium
451 Third Street, NW
Winter Haven, Florida**

Minutes

April 12, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Glenda Jones, Vice Chairperson in the John Fuller Auditorium Winter Haven City Hall, 451 Third Street, NW, Winter Haven, Florida.

Advisory Committee Members Present: Glenda Jones, Vermell Brown, Barbara Jones, Perry Burnham, Rev. Derrick Baker, Mary Smith

Advisory Committee Members Absent: Rev. Ronnie Clark, Rev. Deldrick Leonard, Miriam Tillman, Jacqueline Staton

City Staff Present: Dale Smith, City Manager/CRA Director; T. Michael Stavres, Community Services Director; David Dickey, Community Development Director; Erin Tilghman, Sustainability Manager and Sheandolen Dunn, Executive Assistant/Deputy City Clerk

CRA Board Members Present: Steven Hunnicutt; Dr. James Threlkel

Others Present: Terry Dewdney, Owner/Operator, Dewdney Car Wash

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Advisory Committee Member Brown to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2010 meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

Florence Villa Advisory Committee - Membership

Dale Smith, City Manager/CRA Director, presented the fact sheet on the Florence Villa Advisory Committee Membership. On February 9, 2004, the CRA Board approved Resolution R-04-02, adopting a set of By-Laws. The By-Laws are designed to simplify the organizational structure of the Advisory Committees and CRA Board.

The By-Laws state the Committee shall be comprised of ten (10) members who are residents of, or engaged in business within, the City of Winter Haven; provided, however, that a majority of the membership shall either reside or be engaged in business within the Florence Villa District with at least four (4) members also serving on the Florence Villa CDC Board. Terms of membership shall be for two (2) years. The Board shall appoint, or reappoint, Committee Members to fill seats numbered 1-10.

Rev. Ronnie Clark, Mary Smith, Jacqueline Staton, Barbara Jones and Rev. Deldrick Leonard have expressed a desire to be reappointed to the Committee to serve another two year term that will expire September 30, 2011.

Staff requested the Florence Villa Advisory Committee approve forwarding the reappointment recommendations below to the CRA Board for final approval:

1. Reappoint Rev. Ronnie Clark to fill seat 1 that expired September 30, 2009.
2. Reappoint Mary Smith to fill seat 6 that expired September 30, 2009.
3. Reappoint Rev. Deldrick Leonard to fill seat 7 that expired September 30, 2009.
4. Reappoint Barbara Jones to fill seat 8 that expired September 30, 2009.
5. Reappoint Jacqueline Staton to fill seat 9 that expired September 30, 2009.

Motion by Advisory Committee Member Burnham to approve the reappointments of Rev. Ronnie Clark, Mary Smith, Rev. Deldrick Leonard, Barbara Jones and Jacqueline Staton to serve another two year term to expire on September 30, 2011.

Motion carried unanimously.

1st Street Overlay - Update

David Dickey, Community Development Director, presented a fact sheet on the 1st Street Overlay District. On November 10, 2009, and January 12, 2010, City staff in conjunction with Martin & Vargas consultants, held workshops at the Northeast Recreational and Cultural Center regarding the creation and implementation of the 1st Street Overlay District. Approximately 90 people attended the two meetings. This initiative is being proposed to encourage economic development and to recognize the unique character of the area.

Through the use of an overlay the underlying uses in the area remain undisturbed. The overlay merely imposes separate development standards than those that would otherwise apply. The development and design standards set forth in this district intend to accomplish the following purposes:

1. Promote an attractive and inviting corridor;
2. Provide safe and convenient access to shopping and other essential services;

3. Promote sustainable use of limited land and investment resources by encouraging high building densities, allowing efficient shared parking areas, and ensuring multi-modal transportation access;
4. Provide for a sufficient amount of attractive and well-maintained landscaping to complement buildings and structures within the corridor;
5. Promote an increased level of economic development.

On March 16, 2010, the third neighborhood workshop was held to discuss the status of the project and in particular present a draft 1st Street Overlay Report. The draft report begins to lay out specific development regulations that will apply to property within the corridor and ultimately encourage investment in the area. Several audience members indicated their desire for the City to provide direct financial incentives to property owners for development/redevelopment assistance. Staff indicated that they had researched other central Florida programs and would develop a program for consideration.

The report will be presented to the Planning Commission this summer, with City Commission action this fall.

Advisory Committee Member Jones stressed the importance of always being aware of all activities that will take place in the Florence Villa area because citizens realize that we are the link between the City of Winter Haven and the community.

Advisory Committee Member Burnham questioned if there was any designation that can be overlaid in that area that would produce grant dollars?

David Dickey, Community Development Director responded that Brownfield was his next topic of discussion.

Discussion ensued.

Establishing A Brownfield

David Dickey, Community Development Director, presented a fact sheet on Establishing a Brownfield. With the passage of the Brownfields Redevelopment Act in 1997, Florida established a model for overcoming the barriers to brownfields redevelopment. The Act was created to enable the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and other regulatory agencies to assist in the reduction of public health and environmental hazards and to incentivize the reuse of these lands. For purposes of the Act, a brownfield is defined as:

abandoned, idled, or underused industrial or commercial properties where expansion, reuse, or redevelopment may be complicated by real or perceived environmental conditions.

The existence of brownfields within a community may contribute to, or may be a symptom of, overall community decline, lack of educational and employment

opportunities, and infrastructure decay. The environment is an important element of the quality of life in any community and brownfields redevelopment, properly done, can be a significant element in community revitalization.

The initial step in the redevelopment process is for a local government to designate the Brownfields area. The local government then notifies FDEP of its action which must include a resolution to which is attached a map clearly delineating the parcels and acreage included in the designated Brownfield area.

A designated Brownfields area may include one or more parcels of land. Please note that if a property owner within the area proposed for designation requests in writing to have his or her property removed from the proposed designation, the local government shall grant the request.

Cleaning up and reinvesting in brownfield properties facilitates job growth, utilizes existing infrastructure, increases the local tax base, removes development pressures on undeveloped open land as well as both improving and protecting the environment.

The designation of a brownfields area allows for certain state and federal economic incentives. These include a \$2,500 per job corporate income tax credit, 50% state loan guarantees for primary lenders for site rehabilitation and development costs, sales tax credit for building material purchases, and a 50% voluntary cleanup tax credit applied against Florida corporate tax.

The proposed area consists of 158± acres and is located west of Second Street, N, east of Sixth Street, NW, and north of Avenue M, NW.

Staff requested that the Florence Villa Advisory Committee recommend approval to the CRA Board to establish the Florence Villa Redevelopment Incentive District (Brownfield Area).

Advisory Committee Member Jones asked for clarification on exactly what a Brownfield is.

Dale Smith, City Manager/CRA Director responded that it is land today that is not useful and can be converted to productive commercial property.

Advisory Committee Member Brown commented that several of the orange groves in the areas in Florence Villa today could be considered Brownfield.

Advisory Committee Member Burnham questioned what extent does the environmental department allow the designation to stretch out from ground zero?

David Dickey, Community Development Director responded that either a contaminated or perceived contaminated area is the criteria. It does not have to be a toxic waste site. The perception has to be there.

Discussion ensued.

Façade Grant Application – Terry Dewdney

Dale Smith, City Manager/CRA Director, presented the fact sheet on the Façade Grant Application. In the FY 2009-2010 Budget, the CRA Board approved an allocation of \$20,000 for façade grants. At its March 8, 2010 meeting, the CRA Board approved three façade grant applications for a total of \$15,000 – leaving a balance of \$5,000. The grants were awarded to Tender Touch Dry Cleaners (William Chamberlain), Boyd Funeral Home (Hattie Wilson), and Dewdney Car Wash (Terry Dewdney).

Terry Dewdney has submitted an application for the remaining \$5,000 façade grant money to offset costs associated with the expansion of his car wash business located at 1650 First Street North. Although not specifically addressed, the award of a grant targeted at new construction does not appear to be consistent with program rules. Several funding criteria are germane to the request:

Proposed changes to the building's façade (front) must not remove, alter, damage, or cover up original or valuable significant architectural features of the building.

Only exterior improvements which can be seen from the public street front will be considered for funding.

However, the City Commission as well as the CRA Board has indicated a willingness to explore funding programs targeted at assisting new and existing businesses. It is proposed that CRA staff develop a funding program for this purpose.

Staff recommended that the Florence Villa CRA Advisory Committee deny the Façade Grant Application and direct staff to prepare a funding program to assist new and existing businesses.

David Dickey, Community Development Director indicated that he had been in discussion with Terry Dewdney regarding the denial of his application prior to this meeting.

Advisory Committee Member Jones asked for clarity on Mr. Dewdney's application and that he had been approved for the previous façade grant application award of \$5,000.

David Dickey, Community Development Director indicated Mr. Dewdney's application for the original façade grant was approved; however, his current plan does not meet the criteria of a "façade".

Discussion ensued.

Motion by Advisory Committee Member Burnham to deny Terry Dewdney's Façade Grant Application and direct staff to prepare a funding program to assist new and existing businesses.

Motion carried unanimously.

New Business

None

Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.