Community Redevelopment Advisory Board Regular Meeting Minutes

March 27, 2025 at 5:30 PM

City Hall Commission Chambers
401 S. Park Avenue

Present
Carlos Benitez, Jay Trent, Pragasen Ramiah, Michael Perelman, Carl Creasman Jr

Absent
Lindsay Eriksson

Staff Present
Assistant Director of Economic Development and CRA Kyle Dudgeon, CRA Coordinator Anne Sallee, Director of Office of Management & Budget Peter Moore

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m

2. Consent Agenda

a. Approve the minutes of February 27, 2025

Motion made by Mr. Trent to approve the minutes, seconded by Dr. Perelman. Motion carried unanimously with a 5-0 vote.

3. Public Comments (for items not on the agenda)

4. Action Items

5. Non-Action Items

a. Winter Park Enhancement Area (Brownfield) Program

Mr. Dudgeon provided an update of the Winter Park Enhancement area program through the city's Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB). He covered background updates to the program, next steps, approvals and potential expectations moving forward. Florida Statute 163 (the statute that governs CRA's) and F.S. 376 (the statute that governs enhancement areas) have a strong correlation.

There may be opportunities for joint ventures with EDAB and programming incentives as Statute 376 is governed by the Florida Department of Economic Protection (FDEP). This department designates and approves these zones. The term "enhancement areas" is preferred over "brownfield areas". A map displaying all enhancement areas in the state was presented. Local jurisdictions can propose areas to the DEP. It is worth noting that one out of every two CRA's is also classified as a brownfield area.

Local benefits include state funding and grants, job creation incentives financed by the state, environmental assessments, cleanup initiatives, tax incentives, liability protections and various local programs. Several different types of programs under F.S. 376 can be utilized as enhancement areas overlayed with CRA, including loans, grants, permit waivers, payment amortization schedules and technical assistance. One noteworthy option is the transportation impact fee waivers and permit fee waivers outlined in F.S. 376.84 section 2.

Dr. Perelman inquired about the necessity of waiving permit fees. Mr. Dudgeon responded that waiving the 5% cost of the permit could support redevelopment efforts and address the time value associated with a project. Mr. Creasman offered an example of how permit fee waivers may be beneficial for affordable housing projects. Mr. Dudgeon indicated that the focus is predominantly on commercial projects, maybe including a multi-family development. Mr. Moore remarked that permit fees may represent as much as 16% of the overall project costs.

The enhancement area serves as a tool for planning specific types of development envisioned by the city for designated locations. To move forward, we need to complete three key steps: send a notice to all eligible property owners, notify FDEP about the area we wish to engage with and establish a resolution for commission approval. Last November, we held a work session with the city commission, who expressed their support for this initiative. We anticipate progressing with this project into the spring.

CRAB plays a crucial role when specific elements or incentives require fiscal accommodation. Given the significant relationship between enhancement areas and the CRA, a presentation will be given to the board for consideration in such situations.

Mr. Ramiah inquired about how this program will assist current property owners. Mr. Dudgeon explained that with any form of redevelopment, we can offer grants, permit waivers, and property cleanup to alleviate the liability for property owners. However, Dr. Perelman opposes the idea of removing liability from property owners.

Mr. Benitez inquired whether specific enhancement areas have been identified for targeting or if the goal is simply to be available and offer alternatives. Mr. Dudgeon responded that they will provide eligibility information, and interested individuals would need to go through a separate programmatic process. This would involve discussions about incentives and any necessary liability considerations, which require city commission approval. Funding will be determined on a case-by-case basis, and grants will be reviewed by staff before being approved by the commission.

Mr. Creasman summarized that the projects the CRA is engaged in may present an opportunity to access state funding to support its initiatives. Moreover, if new concepts emerge, there may be an opportunity to explore the enhancement area funds. Mr. Benitez suggested looking into the Denning/Fairbanks sinkhole area and the site designated for new commercial property, where the installation of a drainage ditch is needed. Both locations could be identified as enhancement areas.

b. MLK Community Playground Improvements

At the fourth community meeting, the overall feedback was positive, with recommendations that primarily focused on materials and finishes, such as those used for the playground structures and surfaces, connectivity to the adjacent residential area across Denning, and adjustments to the placement of some play structures. The project has been community-focused from the beginning.

Dix Hite's work was to create a playground conceptual plan, which informed the solicitation for a construction contract. The team included Ovation Construction, Foster Conant (Landscape Architect), and Miller Recreation Equipment. There should be no significant design changes now, only a progression in detail from conceptual to 50% drawings to final construction drawings.

Next steps involve finalizing the construction documents to 100%. Staff will review them with the Commission in Spring, aiming for construction to tentatively start in mid-to-late summer. The build is expected to last about 7-9 months, influenced by material and labor lead times. Completion times may vary as the process is still early. An additional community meeting, designated as Meeting Number 5, will be held. The project will subsequently return to CRAB, the Parks Board, and thereafter be presented to the City Commission.

Approximately 30 individuals attended the community meeting. The staff will distribute the geographic map following the fifth meeting. As part of the parking enhancements, there will be an increase of approximately 25 additional spaces and this will include an agreement with Valencia for expanded parking options.

6. Staff Updates

a. Staff Updates

Mr. Dudgeon provided a list of current projects in the packet, with particular emphasis on the Lake Rose property. He has begun to integrate several ideas proposed by the board into the project's vision. A session with the relevant departments is scheduled for April 15. Additionally, a proposal for a dock was mentioned. Austin's lease is set to conclude in August, and the development of the Lake Rose project will occur in phases.

b. CRA Annual Report FY24

Hard copies of the CRA Annual Report for FY24 were distributed to the board members..

c. Board Appointment Update

Mr. Trent was advised to submit a new application if he wishes to be reappointed. There is currently a vacancy for seat 4.

7. Board Comments

Dr. Perelman requested an update on Unity Corner. We are currently waiting for a date from the foundry.

Mr. Trent praised Mr. Ramiah for his leadership role in the Taste of Hannibal Square. He also acknowledged Mr. Benitez, the executive director of the Saint Peter Claver Prison Ministry. Mr. Benitez was humbled by the compliments, and both men expressed their gratitude. Unfortunately, the audio was not heard when Mr. Ramiah invited the staff to greet his group.

8. Upcoming Agenda Items

Mr. Dudgeon will be absent for the April and May meetings. Mr. Moore and Ms. Sallee will be working with the board on agenda items.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Approved by the board on May 22, 2025
/s/ Bahiyyah Layton, Board Coordinator