



Meeting Minutes Community Redevelopment Agency

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

7:00 PM

Commission Chambers

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order on the above date by Chair Bill Ganz at 7:00 p.m., in the City Commission Chambers, 150 NE 2nd Avenue, Deerfield Beach, Florida.

Present:

Mr. Todd Drosky
Mr. Michael Hudak
Mr. Ben Preston
Chair Bill Ganz

Also Present:

City Manager David Santucci
City Attorney Anthony Soroka
City Clerk Heather Montemayor

Absent:

Vice Chair Bernie Parness

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

There was a moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Community Redevelopment Agency Meeting Minutes - December 12, 2023

MOTION was made by Mr. Hudak, seconded by Mr. Preston, to approve the December 12, 2023 minutes as submitted. Voice Vote:

Yeas: 4 - Mr. Drosky, Mr. Hudak, Mr. Preston, and Chair Ganz

Nays: 0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

January 10, 2024

MOTION was made by Mr. Preston, seconded by Mr. Hudak, to approve the agenda as submitted. Voice Vote:

Yeas: 4 - Mr. Drosky, Mr. Hudak, Mr. Preston, and Chair Ganz

Nays: 0

GENERAL ITEMS

1. Discussion regarding micromobility.

Kris Mory, Director of Economic Development, said there has been a re-emergence of solicitations from micromobility vendors with the approval of the Freebee rideshare program. Thereafter, she highlighted a brief presentation. Micromobility is transportation using electric bikes and scooters that can be borrowed as part of a self-service rental program. The micromobility pros consist of last mile transport, clean energy, reduction of traffic congestion, no need to repark for second destination, and it can be a district amenity. The cons consist of accidents, injuries, fatalities, which can lead to liability issues, as well as storage litter, lack of wide sidewalks and bike lanes in Deerfield Beach, and Hillsboro Bridge difficulties. Further, the current ordinance, which was adopted in 2019, does not allow for motorized scooters on public streets or roadways within the City; however, due to the launch of Freebee and competition in the transportation market, it is being brought forward for reconsideration.

Mr. Drosky asked that this be brought forward not necessarily for reconsideration, but for consideration, due to the Freebee program. Further, he said when he attended the National League of Cities conference, there was a huge turnout from the micromobility/scooter companies. He stated that the project may or may not be for Deerfield Beach, but he wanted it brought forward to see if there was any interest in discussing it further. Although he understands the cons of the program, one of the companies is willing to attend a future meeting to address any questions/comments/concerns posed by the Board. Mr. Drosky reiterated that it may not be a program for this city, but with the Freebee program, he wanted to bring it forward for board consideration.

Mr. Hudak said he is open to new ideas and concepts but spoke in opposition to micromobility, whereas, the beach is only a mile long, and he does not feel it would be a good fit for Deerfield Beach, nor the individuals who frequent the beach. Further, he said Hillsboro bridge is already extremely challenging and reiterated that micromobility is just not a good fit for this city, nor the beach goes.

Chair Ganz stated that finding alternative methods of transportation to cut down vehicular transportation is key; however, he agreed with Mr. Hudak, as this type concept doesn't make sense for Deerfield Beach. Thereafter, he commented on the issues that occurred when they were first introduced years ago. Lastly, he spoke in opposition to future exploration.

2. Discussion regarding parking enforcement in the Cove Shopping Center.

Kris Mory, Director of Economic Development, highlighted a brief presentation. Thereafter, she provided a brief history of parking at the Cove Shopping Center. Currently, the two-hour parking is not being enforced; ongoing issues, which include beach and island employee parking, weekend bicycle enthusiast parking, evening parking shortage, owners and employees park directly in front of stores, and back in parking that is creating traffic flow issues; and post-COVID issues, which include businesses claiming parking spaces, non-parking uses, and new businesses generating more demand; therefore, businesses are asking for solutions. Thereafter, a photograph depicting the two-hour parking spaces was displayed, whereby, per the City's ordinance the two-hour parking is only in effect from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday - Saturdays. Further, Ms. Mory said Code Compliance has begun enforcing the post-COVID issues, i.e. removing signage, games, tables, etc., and the addition of Freebee will help with the parking issues as well.

Continuing, Ms. Mory said staff is recommending the installation of parking kiosks throughout the Cove Shopping Center parking lot, as it would be a tool to enforce the two-hour parking, whereby, individuals would have to register their license plate; reinforce parking kiosks with parking app or QR codes; easy to identify two-hour parking by special space striping, as well as easy to identify wheel stops. Further, she said monies were not budgeted for this type program; nevertheless, the parking lot would require 13 kiosks and require monthly service charges, installation, and shipping - \$115,000; ongoing annual maintenance - \$13,000; signage is a cost that would need to be determined; striping and wheel stops - \$15,000; and other incidental costs, to include enforcement, processing software, payments, and citation processing. Ms. Mory said there is a long-term solution outlined in the five-year capital improvements plan, which is a structured parking facility.

In response to Mr. Hudak's question, Ms. Mory said she is unsure how many spaces a parking structure would accommodate, whereby, a feasibility study would need to be conducted.

In response to Mr. Hudak's question, Anthony Soroka, City Attorney, replied that the Cove Hotel Developers Agreement also included other owners of property within the Cove; therefore, it is still binding and enforceable until

GENERAL ITEMS - CONTINUED

January 2026. Further, he explained that since that time there was the right to prepay, so the City received all of the payments, but it does not affect the 10-year period upon which the City was restricted from charging for parking in the parking lot.

In response to Mr. Hudak's question, Ms. Mory replied that the ordinance can be amended to include the enforcement of two-hour parking on Sundays.

In response to Mr. Drosky's questions, Ms. Mory replied that the two-hour parking only includes the designated spots, whereby, the Ordinance would have to be amended to add additional spots; nevertheless, the interior parking spaces were not originally included because they were meant to be for employee and business owner parking. Further, she said if an individual does not register their vehicle, they will receive a ticket. Ms. Mory stated that 1,100 parking citations were issued at Sullivan Park last year to individuals who did not register their vehicle.

In response to Mr. Drosky's question, Rodney Brimlow, Director of Public Safety, replied that a citation is \$30.

In response to Mr. Drosky's comment, Ms. Mory stated that the parking garage charges \$25 for all day parking.

Mr. Drosky said he is amenable to the kiosk solution, whereas, in 2026 he would like to see that parking lot be paid metered parking. He stated that there is nowhere else in South Florida that has free parking east of Federal Highway; nevertheless, this is not a money-making situation, but a way to control the flow of traffic and parking. Furthermore, implementing the kiosks will allow individuals to get familiar with registering their vehicles, so should paid parking be implemented in 2026, individuals are not surprised. Lastly, Mr. Drosky spoke in support of amending the Ordinance to extend the p.m. hours and include Sundays.

Mr. Preston said he is unsure about amending the Ordinance, as Deerfield Beach is a small town, and the residents must be considered.

Chair Ganz said amending the Ordinance and implementing the kiosks will help our struggling businesses. Further, he disagreed with allowing free parking along the intracoastal because Deerfield Beach is a small town, whereby, non-residents use that parking lot as well; nevertheless, Deerfield Beach residents want to ensure that businesses in the Cove are thriving. Thereafter, he provided a brief history of the Cove parking lot. Chair Ganz said this board must look out for the residents, and give them accessibility to popular restaurants and businesses in the Cove.

Mr. Hudak agreed, whereby, businesses in the Cove, and all throughout the CRA are struggling, and the main issue is the lack of parking. Thereafter, he briefly commented on the Freebee program. Further, he said individuals, who mainly are not city residents, are taking advantage of the free parking, which is adversely affecting the Cove businesses. Thereafter, he provided examples of how individuals are taking advantage of the free parking at the Cove. Mr. Hudak said a solution must be established, whereby, the parking lot is not for beach goers, but for the businesses. Lastly, he does not believe anything is being taken from the residents, whereby, the parking lots are being re-evaluated to ensure they are being properly utilized.

Mr. Preston said the business community should always be thought of; nevertheless, the residents must be considered as well. Further, he said there has not been any evidence or a survey done stating that those who park at the Cove are non-city residents. Lastly, Mr. Preston stated that he does not want ordinances or the implementation of rules and policies to be heavy handed; nonetheless, he agreed that businesses must be protected.

Chair Ganz spoke in support of implementing the kiosks for free parking.

3. Discussion regarding a retail attraction strategy.

Kris Mory, Director Economic Development, highlighted a brief presentation. She said the CRA is experiencing a post-COVID retail environment and brick and mortar stores are having a hard time surviving. Thereafter, various photographs of brick-and-mortar vacancies were displayed. Further, Ms. Mory suggested modifying the Commercial Façade Program and offering window displays, a mini façade, i.e exterior signage, lighting, etc., or interior tenant improvements. She also suggested establishing a framework for retailers to contribute to the Freebee rideshare in lieu of parking, which would need further research and program policies for future consideration. Additionally, an incentive program could be established; and marketing could be conducted through social media, influencers, and

GENERAL ITEMS - CONTINUED

collaboration. Ms. Mory outlined the budget implications, micro façade - \$100,000 and marketing, which can be done on a limited budget by contracting with a social media marketer. Lastly, she said these ideas are things that have not been done in the past, but could be implemented in the future to be more competitive in the retail market.

Mr. Hudak said the CRA has been focused on infrastructure, which has done amazing; however, with the CRA sunset, this board must try to increase its programming to attract new businesses. Further, he spoke in support of the Freebee option, as there have been businesses who could not open due to the lack of parking. Mr. Hudak also spoke in support of an incentive program, i.e. tax break to bring in new businesses. Although parking is a challenge, other challenges exist, which must be identified, so we all have an understanding as to why businesses are not coming to Deerfield Beach, and why the current ones are struggling. Mr. Hudak suggested beautifying those vacant spaces, as some are deplorable. Lastly, he said ideas must be developed to attract businesses because it is vitally important to the lifeline of Deerfield Beach.

Chair Ganz spoke in support of a mini façade program and asked that the framework be established by the next meeting. He would like a rideshare framework for parking to be established in two months. Further, Chair Ganz said an influencer is only going to be effective for existing businesses, whereby, they cannot help with vacancies; nonetheless, he asked what staff is currently doing to bring businesses into the CRA to fill these vacancies. Thereafter, he commented on projects occurring in Boca Raton.

Ms. Mory said the CRA does not perform active marketing but the City performs proactive marketing; whereby, small business marketing is done through the Chamber of Commerce and city staff has regular outreach with commercial brokers. Further, the CRA has one on one relationships with most of the property owners, so when they need assistance, it is provided. She explained that CRA staff, regularly, reaches out to many of those vacant property owners to see what can be done.

Chair Ganz said the CRA is not going to be a solution for these businesses; therefore, he suggested seeking individuals who are looking for areas to establish their business and connect them with the owner. Further, he agreed that things must change and stated that filling those spaces should be our number one priority in the coming year.

ADMINISTRATION COMMENTS

4. Update regarding the launch of Freebee Rideshare.

Kris Mory, Director of Economic Development, said there is an underutilized parking lot on the north side of Fire Station 1, which will be used to store the Freebee Tesla's when they are not in use. Furthermore, staff has determined how to bring power to the site. Ms. Mory said the launch of the program will be no later than March 15th.

5. Update regarding the S-Curve Utilities Undergrounding and Streetscape Improvements Project.

Kris Mory, Director of Economic Development, said the S-Curve does not look good right, whereby, the sidewalks are torn up; nevertheless, staff is doing their best to stay on top of certain things, i.e. trash pickup. Further, she said a sign will be installed in the swale area to identify that it's a CRA beautification project.

Chair Ganz suggested posting the renderings of the final product.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Peggy Ross, 103 NE 19th Avenue, Deerfield Beach, said the parking at the Cove, as well as at the beach must be enforced and properly monitored. Further, she said parking at the Cove should not be utilized by employees, but stated that employee parking should be free.

BOARD COMMENTS

Fire Station 75 - Mayor Ganz asked that the parking lot be resurfaced. Also, there is a parking space used to house barricades and he asked that it be open to the public.

BOARD COMMENTS - CONTINUED

There were no other board comments.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION was made by Mr. Hudak, seconded by Mr. Preston, to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 p.m. Voice Vote:

Yeas: 4 - Mr. Drosky, Mr. Hudak, Mr. Preston, and Chair Ganz

Nays: 0

BILL GANZ, CHAIR

Heather Montemayor, City Clerk