

**MINUTES  
CITY OF ORMOND BEACH  
CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP  
CITY WELCOME SIGNAGE**

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**January 15, 2013**

**6:00 PM**

**Training Room**

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**I. Call to Order**

Mayor Ed Kelley called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Present were Mayor Ed Kelley, Commissioners James Stowers, Troy Kent, Rick Boehm, and Bill Partington, City Manager Joyce Shanahan, Assistant City Manager and Public Works Director Ted MacLeod, City Attorney Randy Hayes, City Clerk Scott McKee, City Engineer John Noble, and Landscape Architect Paul MacDonald.

**II. Discussion**

Ms. Joyce Shanahan, City Manager, stated that the workshop was being held for informational purposes only and no decision was needed. She stated that staff met that week with Mr. Dick Jaffe, who owned the property adjacent to where the sign would be located, and that she would speak about their meeting after the presentation.

Mr. John Noble, City Engineer, stated that the city welcome sign project was in the Capital Improvements Program for FY 2012-2013. He stated that in 1999 the city received a lease agreement from Developers Diversified to build a welcome sign on the southeast corner of Williamson Boulevard and SR40. He explained at that time it had not been built for financial reasons. He stated that the lease was still current and they were presenting a conceptual plan for the development of a city welcome sign which mimicked the size and scale of Ormond Beach's Andy Romano Beachfront Park's welcome towers. He stated that after the CIP was approved and the fiscal year entered, staff met with Mr. Paul Momberger of Zev Cohen & Associates to design the project. He stated that Mr. Momberger received survey information, looked at site constraints, met with various organizations, and developed a design. He stated that the next step had been to go to the city's continuing contract managing firm, Bomar Construction, to receive construction costs. He noted that the project cost came in somewhat above the budget of \$185,000. He stated that some alternative options had been identified and the project was scaled back to what they felt the Commission was envisioning.

Mr. Paul Momberger, Director of Planning and Landscape Architecture at Zev Cohen & Associates, stated that there were some utilities in front of the site. He stated that they were doing their best to identify all of them and understand which ones could be relocated and which ones had to stay. He noted that there was a city well at the site which could not be moved, as it was a productive well. He noted that there were power poles related that could be relocated and some of those items were alternates on the cost estimate. He stated that the Florida Power and Light (FPL) pole and fiber optics were unable to be moved at this time, but he noted that a mast arm would be installed there in 2014. He stated that they were proposing to relocate the power

poles and one alternate was to consider piping the ditch and filing it. He noted that although it was not that visible from Granada Boulevard, it was a large ditch. He stated that it might be appropriate to pipe it and then connect sidewalks through the towers.

Mayor Kelley asked Mr. Momberger if they could first see the design for the sign itself without all of the alternates.

Mr. Momberger stated that the sign design showed what all of the alternates would look like so that they could get a price for them. He stated that the base bid was for the two towers, the fencing and signage which contained the "Welcome to Ormond Beach" letters, the basic site work, landscaping, and lighting. He stated that those costs totaled just under \$250,000. He stated that the alternate options included filling the ditch, installing a pond fountain, upgrading the palm trees from date to Medjool date palms, putting in St. Augustine grass, removing the FPL pole guide wires, and replacing the fence at the pond.

Ms. Shanahan asked the Commission for their opinion on the sign itself and if they liked the way it looked. She asked if it was what they envisioned.

Mayor Kelley stated that he did not originally envision the towers. He stated that he also did not envision paying almost \$400,000 for a sign. He noted that the two towers would cost \$120,000 and that seemed way over the top to him. He stated that amount was almost what had been envisioned for cost of the entire sign. He stated that the design looked beautiful but noted that he had concerns with the additional costs. He stated that the city had budgeted and planned for \$185,000. He stated that there was a private individual, who wished to remain anonymous, willing to contribute up to \$50,000 towards the costs which would put the city down to \$135,000, and he stated that he had felt comfortable with that amount.

Commissioner Boehm stated that he knew that the towers were optimal and that he loved them. He asked if a miniature version of the towers could be made, that were slightly taller than the "Welcome to Ormond Beach" lettering, which would give the same impression but would cost \$40,000 instead of \$120,000.

Commissioner Kent stated that they could do that but that it would look like a monopoly piece.

Ms. Shanahan stated that she thought that it would be exactly like the sign that was on US1; whereby, Commissioner Kent agreed. Ms. Shanahan stated that the scale of the road dropped off significantly there. She stated that even if the towers were dropped lower, they would look short and squat.

Commissioner Boehm stated that a lot of the cost of the towers was in the coquina.

Ms. Shanahan suggested that maybe there could just be one tower.

Commissioner Boehm stated that he agreed with Mayor Kelley about the cost issue. He stated that he went and walked the proposed site. He noted that the site was not very attractive and he felt that the only way to make it attractive would be to get it completely cleared, which meant to do basically everything that was on the

alternates list. He stated that without the alternates being done, there would be too many poles and boxes. He noted that the ditch at the site was also very unattractive.

Ms. Shanahan stated that there would be one chance to get it right. She noted that they did not get it right on the sign on US1. She stated that she also had heart palpitations when she saw the cost.

Mr. Momberger noted that the City of New Smyrna Beach just spent \$1.1 million on their welcome signs. He stated that did not mean that Ormond Beach had to spend that much. He stated that one tower would probably suffice. He stated that the tower on the left was needed more than the other. He noted that eliminating one tower would certainly reduce the cost.

Mayor Kelley stated that he felt it would look unbalanced with one tower on the end, looking like a thumb sticking up.

Mr. Momberger stated that he did know if the sign needed to say "Welcome to Ormond Beach". He stated that was over the top as well. He stated that the sign could be done with an architectural icon statement with just a logo on it.

Mayor Kelley stated that the letters for "Welcome to Ormond Beach" were a minor part of the cost.

Mr. Momberger stated that he did not feel that the other tower would look unbalanced without tying it to the fence work.

Mayor Kelley stated that they could take both towers down, take out the "Welcome to Ormond Beach," and stick up a 20-foot sign with just the seal on it but felt that would look terrible, as well.

Ms. Shanahan noted that the Commission was looking for a gateway statement.

Mayor Kelley stated that he was looking for an \$185,000 gateway statement.

Ms. Shanahan noted that it was a terrible site to begin with, but it was the only site that they had. She stated that there was no other suitable site out there. She stated that the site was also complicated by having the shopping center located behind it and noted that the shopping center did not want their visibility to be blocked from the roadway. She stated that the city would have to work with the shopping center, as well.

Commissioner Stowers stated that he still liked the path and felt that the cost coming in high was a hiccup. He stated that he was willing to go through the alternates and willing to remove items to trim it down a little bit. He noted that the biggest cost was obviously the tower construction. He also noted that there was a proposed sidewalk with an arch so that people could walk under them. He stated that he felt like it was a waste of energy to put a sidewalk and pavers in that location. He stated that it was gateway signage and noted that 99% of the people going through there would be in their vehicles. He stated that he felt spending money for a pedestrian friendly sidewalk in the sign was not appropriate; whereby, Ms. Shanahan stated that she agreed.

Commissioner Stowers stated they could eliminate all of those aspects and perhaps have the same height for the towers but make them slightly narrower. He stated that there would still be the coquina feature, the cupola, but it would be a narrower structure so that the shopping center still had the viewing angles it desired. He stated that he had to believe that would be significantly cheaper. He stated that he thought the sign was a worthwhile endeavor, even if the cost came in at \$225,000. He stated that he agreed that the \$375,000 cost was too much.

Commissioner Kent stated that the design was beautiful and that he loved the picture when he looked at it. He stated that his issue with it was that it was not realistic and did not show the shopping center behind it, the chain link fencing, and the brush. He stated that he knew he would be told that the vegetation under the sign would not grow up over the "Welcome to Ormond Beach" lettering, but he was concerned that it would, and noted that when it was trimmed back it would not look as attractive. He stated that eight years prior he and Commissioner Partington had turned down a sign with a dolphin jumping out of it that would have cost \$87,000, because they thought that the amount of money was outrageous. He stated that he had mentioned at the time that he purchased his home for \$105,000 and would not favor spending \$87,000 in taxpayers' money on a sign. He noted that he had softened some since then.

Commissioner Kent stated that the last time the Commission spoke about welcome signs they had discussed erecting four signs in four different locations. He stated that he was on board for spending \$100,000 for each of those signs. He stated that \$375,000 for a welcome sign was too much and would not get his vote while he was elected. He noted that he loved the design and how it tied into the beachfront park theme but lamented that the cost was too rich for his blood. He stated that New Smyrna Beach and Orlando had spent over \$1 million on welcome signs. He stated that we did not have to 'keep up with the joneses.' He stated that he was comfortable with about \$150,000 on a sign and had thought that there would be four signs initially.

Mayor Kelley stated that the Commission had said that they needed signs at US1, at Daytona Beach, and at A1A, as well.

Ms. Shanahan stated that A1A would be incorporated with the Andy Romano Beachfront Park.

Commissioner Partington stated that he agreed with everything that had been said. He stated that the sign design did not show them what it would actually look like because the shopping center behind it was not depicted. He stated that there was a fair amount of food traffic in that area but he still agreed with Commissioner Stowers that most of the traffic would be in vehicles. He stated that he also agreed with Commissioner Boehm that if the project was going to be done, it needed to be done on that scale to get it right. He stated that the citizens voted to tax themselves \$3.5 million for a beautiful beachfront park with gorgeous signs and amenities and noted that they would be looking for the same thing in this instance.

Commissioner Partington stated that he was not comfortable with a guaranteed maximum price for the proposed design. He stated that there had been a discussion a couple of years before about the Commission trying to get accurate numbers. He stated that the guaranteed maximum price set the top limit, and then they would

receive change orders for more later on down the road. He stated that it was already also too rich for his blood. He stated that he did not know that the taxpayers would really support almost \$400,000 for a "Taj Mahal" welcome sign that was like a monument to nothing. He noted that the site area was unattractive. He stated that the easy response would be to say "no," but the harder and more daunting thing to do was to try to figure out some way to make something more positive happen.

Commissioner Partington stated that he thought that the whole Commission wanted some kind of welcome sign in that area and to help the city have an identity. He stated that he thought that if the alternate site improvements had their cost reduced by 20% or 30% and could be done in a one to two year period, noting that the site needed improvements no matter what was done with it, then down the road either the current or a new Commission, working with the private partner willing to donate \$50,000, could decide what size or scale of an actual sign they wanted to do. He noted that was one option for a solution. He stated that even \$250,000 was a lot to him and that he was more in the \$100,000 range.

Ms. Shanahan showed the Commission a photograph of a smaller monument type sign and stated that would be what they could get for \$100,000. She noted that the sign would have to be very large in order to be seen. She stated that the city had asked Zev Cohen & Associates to work on preparing a simulation in order to see the sign in the real world setting.

Commissioner Kent stated that he knew it was comparing apples to oranges, and he had mentioned it before, but noted that he felt that one of the classiest signs the city had was The Casements sign. He clarified that he was not suggesting that type of sign be put in that location. He stated that he asked how much that sign cost and was informed that it had been done in house for \$400. He stated that he could not think of any constituent he would want to look in the face and tell them that he voted for a \$375,000 sign.

Mayor Kelley stated that he believed the prices were inflated and that he could get that exact same sign built for a lot less than what the city would be paying. He guaranteed that he could do so and stated that he had proved it more than once before. He stated that an individual could go out and contract with individuals instead of going through the city process. He opined that the numbers were ridiculous.

Mr. Momberger stated that alternates were really not needed. He stated that the only one he would really recommend was the removing of the utility strands. He stated the base cost of \$250,000 plus the utility strands would be \$290,000. He stated that they could take out one tower and examine that as an idea.

Mayor Kelley stated that he did not think that any of them wanted to take out just one tower.

Commissioner Kent stated that he wanted to talk about the \$38,417 for the utilities and was looking at what would be removed. He stated that he had to have his utilities undergrounded for his pool at his home, and noted that was on a much smaller scale. He stated that it had cost him \$350.

Mr. Momberger stated that these utilities were far more complicated. He explained that from what he understood, those cables provided structure to the cables across the street. He stated that it created a whole configuration where just to move those they would have to restructure some other lines down the way and perform transfers. He noted that it was overly complicated because of the location. He stated that he initially had thoughts similar to Commissioner Kent. He stated that he did not think the costs were inflated, but that they were a product of the situation at the site.

Commissioner Boehm asked whether it was possible to move the sign to the front of the property. He stated that in his opinion they had to try and figure out whether they could get a \$175,000 or \$180,000 sign designed on that corner that would work. He noted that the one they were looking at would not and everyone agreed that it cost too much money. He stated that as far as he was concerned the sign had to be put somewhere else on the property and made smaller but still visible.

Ms. Shanahan stated that it could not be moved much further up because of the large ditch.

Mr. Momberger stated that the concern with moving the sign up was that the utilities became even more right on top of the sign. He noted that obviously the utilities were a major issue.

Mayor Kelley stated that he went out to the site the previous year and met with Mr. Dick Jaffe. He stated that Mr. Jaffe actually thought at that time that he owned the site and did not realize that the city had a lease. He stated that he had walked the site as much as anyone in the room had. He stated that Mr. Jaffe had cleared out some of the rubbish and stated that the location of the sign would determine whether or not the shopping center would be seen.

Ms. Shanahan stated that in her conversations with Mr. Jaffe his concern was the shopping center being blocked. She stated that she had spoken with him about the concept. She noted that the current easement language said that they could put a sign there but that it could be removed after 90 days by the property owner. She stated that she did not want to spend that amount of money on a sign if she could not get an easement from him for it.

Commissioner Boehm stated that sounded like leverage to him. He stated that he was on the property that day and the trees there screened the shopping center from view.

Ms. Shanahan stated that Mr. Jaffe had been clearing the trees.

Commissioner Boehm stated that you could not see through the Wendy's.

Commissioner Kent stated that he looked forward to anyone telling him that the welcome sign would not benefit the shopping center.

Ms. Shanahan stated that she told Mr. Jaffe that it would benefit him.

Commissioner Stowers noted that he was looking at Google Earth and the corner on the exit ramp off of I-95. He stated that he did not know who owned that corner.

Mayor Kelley stated that a Sunoco was going into that location.

Commissioner Stowers noted that it was a redevelopment site. He stated that he did not know what was anticipated on the smaller corner right at the exit ramp and Granada Boulevard, but he assumed it was nothing.

Ms. Shanahan stated that she did not know which corner he was referring to.

Mayor Kelley stated that it was the exit ramp on I-95 north where the Waffle House and gas station were.

Commissioner Stowers stated that location would still catch anyone coming into Ormond Beach from anywhere on I-95 or west of the city.

Ms. Shanahan stated that she thought they started with the site they did because they had the easement.

Mayor Kelley stated that he was hearing that the Commission loved the design that was there but that it was too rich for their blood and they wanted to know if something could be designed that would work at the site for around \$150,000 to \$200,000, because the private partner would be giving \$50,000 towards it.

Ms. Shanahan asked if the Commission did not want to use the \$185,000 budgeted plus the \$50,000 donation.

Mayor Kelley stated that he did not. He stated that an alternative would be to try and get private donations for each tower and name them after the donor, offering an example of a \$60,000 donor receiving their name being placed on the bottom of the tower. He stated that the costs were outrageous to him.

Commissioner Boehm noted that the person's name would have to be incredibly large on the tower in order for anyone to see it.

Commissioner Partington asked how the public private partnership was done at the recreational fields and asked if there would be a way to partner with the Ormond Beach Chamber of Commerce so that the city could contribute money and the Chamber would be able to do the negotiating and cost cutting that the city could not accomplish. He noted that the lack of ability for the city to do such cost cutting continued to be overwhelming.

Mayor Kelley stated that he started out trying to speak to Mr. Jaffe along those lines. He stated that Mr. Jaffe may be playing hardball but that he wanted the sign because he wanted that area cleared out and any improvement on that corner would be an advantage and benefit to him. He stated that Mr. Jaffe also wanted something else.

Ms. Shanahan stated that Mr. Jaffe also wanted pole signs.

Commissioner Partington noted that Ms. Shanahan got frustrated at his comments but stated that the city was stuck in a box of government bureaucracy that it could not break out of because of all the legalities and rules.

Ms. Shanahan stated that was what cost money. She stated that the city's insurance requirements cost money for those that did business with the city. She stated that they had to have certain protections to protect the public community assets and as much as they did not like it that was the box that they lived in. She stated that it frustrated her as much as it did them. She noted that she kept the purse strings closed tightly. She stated that they were bringing the Commission a conceptual idea of what they felt they had envisioned. She noted that when the sign was put on US1 everyone thought it would be spectacular. She stated that when it got there everyone was shocked at the scale and size of it because the area was more vast than they could have imagined.

Ms. Shanahan stated that the last thing she wanted to do was to spend \$185,000 on a sign that would get lost and be disappointing. She stated that she was trying to bring a gateway and entrance to the community. She noted that she tended to agree that the sidewalks were not necessary and that most of the alternatives were not need at that point. She explained that they could clear up the telemetry around the well themselves. She noted that piping the ditch would probably be something they wanted to do. She stated that working with Mr. Jaffe to get some contribution or assistance would also be something worthwhile to pursue. She stated that she needed to know more scale and vision direction from the Commission rather than the nuts and bolts.

Mayor Kelley stated that in his initial discussion with Mr. Jaffe, he thought that maybe Mr. Jaffe was willing to put the fountain in or something along those lines. He noted that meeting occurred over a year ago.

Commissioner Partington stated that they would still need \$106,000 worth of the alternates, based on their discussions. He stated that he thought they should have a fountain in the pond but did not know why it would cost \$20,000.

Ms. Shanahan stated that she thought that the fountain would be difficult to see.

Mayor Kelley stated that if it had lights on it and more than a ten horsepower motor it would not be.

Mr. Paul MacDonald, Landscape Architect, stated that they selected a ten horsepower motor for the design. He stated that a single cascade column would shoot up 30 feet, so he was pretty confident that it would be visible.

Commissioner Partington asked how much the US1 sign had cost.

Mr. MacDonald stated that just the sign installation was \$12,000 and that it was another \$8,000 to bring the power and water there and clear the site.

Commissioner Kent asked what the cost was to build the sign. He noted that the city paid for half of the cost and the Ormond Beach Chamber of Commerce paid for the other half.

Mr. MacDonald stated that it had cost \$20,000 total, with \$10,000 from each party.



Mr. Momberger suggested that they come back with a new design and show the Commission what a \$150,000 sign would look like and where it would be located. He stated that he felt that the direction was that the budget needed to be minded.

Commissioner Boehm stated that if they were going to receive a \$50,000 contribution, he felt that they would be comfortable with a \$200,000 sign, because the city would only be spending \$150,000.

Mayor Kelley asked why most of that sign design could not be done for around \$200,000.

Commissioner Boehm stated that the designers could get more creative with what they had to spend. He stated that the cost of coquina alone was almost \$37,000.

Mayor Kelley noted that they could use fake coquina. He directed staff to bring back a \$200,000 proposal.

Ms. Shanahan stated that they would take another look at the project. She stated that she was sorry if she frustrated the Commission.

Mayor Kelley stated that none of them felt that she did. He stated that they understood that Ms. Shanahan was as tight with the budget as they were.

Ms. Shanahan stated that she did not want to have another sign issue like the one on US1, and that they would go back to the drawing board.

**III. Close the Meeting**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

Transcribed by: Colby Cilento