

M I N U T E S
ORMOND BEACH DOWNTOWN STEERING COMMITTEE

Public Meeting

May 15, 2019

6:00 PM

Anderson-Price Building

42 North Beach Street
Ormond Beach, Florida

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. MEMBERS PRESENT

Consultants

Peter Sechler, GAI Consultants
Molly Stahl, GAI Consultants

Staff

Steven Spraker, Planning Director
Becky Weedo, Senior Planner
Brian Rademacher, Economic Development Director
Julia Truilo, Ormond MainStreet Executive Director
Marcella Miller, Recording Technician

III. CONVENE, INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting started at 6:05 p.m. Mr. Peter Sechler, Planner/Consultant, GAI Consultants introduced himself and Ms. Molly Stahl, Planner/Consultant, GAI Consultants. Mr. Sechler stated that GAI is working with Mr. Steven Spraker, Planning Director, City of Ormond Beach and staff on updating the Ormond Beach Downtown CRA Master Plan. It was determined that half of the members in attendance were at the April DSC public meeting.

IV. RECAP INPUT TO DATE

Mr. Sechler stated that he has received hundreds of pieces of input and placed them into categories and will summarize in today's meeting. The online public survey is still on the Ormond Beach website. 350 + survey responses have been completed. A couple of exercises will be done tonight to discuss priorities moving forward.

Mr. Sechler explained that he led a consultant team in 2006 for the City for a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) plan at that time along Granada from US1 to A1A, on both sides of the bridge. At that time they were looking at the future possibilities and communities values with the roadway corridor, as well as the neighborhoods adjacent north and south. It was looked at how over time the community would be able to enhance itself and be a better place for social connectivity, physical beauty, and economic prosperity. The plan was finished in 2006 and then the project came to a halt after the hurricanes hit. As discussed in the kickoff session last month, since then over the last 5-6 years, an enormous amount of work has been done with the medians, the date palm plantings, MainStreet events, and in business and private property reinvestments. Mr. Sechler stated that the City today is a very different place than in 2006 and the things discussed today

may be the same subjects but the nuances of where we are and where we are headed today as opposed to where we were in 2006 are different. He continued that there have been issues with transportation and parking which were issues in 2006. There have been improvements since then but are still not where we want to be.

The goal is to build the kind of community and physical city desired, work on it as a community, as a city staff, as private investment, as business owners, as home owners, and as community advocates to try to move in a direction. Mr. Sechler continued that in 2006 there were a lot of public meetings with organization of all of the input placed in big community driven themes. He stated there were themes on Economic Development, Sense of Place and Appearance, Arts & Culture, Recreation & Open Space, Transportation and Circulation, Residential Neighborhoods, Standards and Regulations, and How to Ensure the Vision. The themes went into eight categories. Last month during the April public meeting, there were exercises with maps prepared with the following questions: Are all of the themes still valid? The response was yes, but to include a new theme; Environmental Sustainability. Mr. Sechler stated that between 2006 and today there has been a lot of discussion about the environment, and coastal resiliency that do not fit into the other themes. What are the issues, challenges, and aspirations of each theme? Mr. Sechler commented that now there is guiding framework with the following topics that are in need of being worked on in Ormond Beach. He added that now is the time to talk about the value set about the themes, and what can be done to address the concerns that have been raised under the topics.

Mr. Sechler reviewed the themes and mission statements from 2006 for discussion on if it feels right, or if there are things missing under each specific theme:

Sense of Place and Appearance:

Enjoy a physically beautiful environment of well detailed buildings, gateways, graphics and parks, landscaped parking areas, and screened service areas that contribute to a true urban environment. Mr. Sechler explained that urban refers to walkability, access and connectedness to things. Over the last month there have been discussion on wanting more outdoor gathering spaces along Granada, better graphic wayfinding signage, beautification on Granada, how to better incorporate what has been turned in to the Creek District, how to maintain the charm of the community, how to capitalize on the bridge, more trees, and to continue to renovate and celebrate the historic assets of the town.

Economic Development:

Have a successful, attractive, pedestrian oriented downtown retailing place.

Mr. Sechler commented that people like quality restaurants, interesting shops, and things to do. The properties in those businesses need to be economically vital. The quality of business has dramatically increased. The challenge is how to balance a retail place, with quality residential and not have the residential and commercial fighting against each other, and how to protect and stabilize the neighborhoods. The input has been about enhancing existing retail, opportunities for multi-story mixed use buildings where there would be retail on the ground floor with office or residential flats above, and encouraging small businesses. Mr. Sechler touched on other concerns regarding empty and underutilized lots and how to activate the properties. Some of them are under City ownership where the City or CRA may be able to assist. Other input has been the want for more variety of retail

downtown, renewing the continued reinvestment budget in the private sector. Mr. Sechler commented that on the discussion of residents verses visitors, people want to visit places that are enjoyed, loved, and authentic to locals. He explained how tourism will take care of itself.

Residential Neighborhoods:

Preserve and enhance existing neighborhoods while fostering quality, reinvestment on an incremental basis for properties that can be spruced up, cleaned up, made more beautiful, and in some cases infill development on a vacant property, or infill development on a redevelopment piece.

Mr. Sechler sees balance on the single family neighborhoods, historic neighborhoods and opportunities for townhome style or midrise development that can support downtown businesses transitioning from the Granada commercial corridor to the neighborhoods north and south. He added this includes the standards and regulations that will allow and reinforce good things to happen.

Arts and Culture:

Utilizing arts, social events, and cultural assets to enhance the shared feeling of community.

Mr. Sechler commented that Arts and Culture is still valid according to the input received. There is still a desire for more events and need to look at where we can hold them and draw people to Ormond Beach. There are historic assets in the City, but Mr. Sechler stated that the City wants to feel connected to it. Are we doing all we can do to leverage it as a cultural resource space for the locals and offering a cultural tourism opportunity for visitors? Mr. Sechler stated that the City is making strides, but there are things we can take the next step on.

Mr. Sechler went over some of the input received on arts and culture:

Preserving and improving existing assets, creating a museum corridor or district, leveraging the MacDonald House, developing a civic center, whether located at the old church or another location downtown, and dialing up cultural events and activities. The Steering Committee touched on this earlier in stating that the City should be having twice as many public events.

Recreation and Open Space:

Mr. Sechler commented on this topic in particular regarding input received that the City has open space, but is not maximizing the functionality and usability of things we have. The parks are not maximized to their potential in terms of relevance to people. Where can we create more opportunities for people to do things in the outdoor environment, particularly the bridge and four corners? Mr. Sechler advised that there was also input on pocket parks, exercise circuits, and to make recreation and open space more visible and usable to locals.

Transportation and Circulation:

Mr. Sechler stated that under this topic people are focused on the speed and driving behavior on Granada Boulevard. It is the main road and is the evacuation road, with one bridge. The input is that pedestrians, bicycles, landscape and beautification and quality of retail are compromised. Mr. Sechler added that mixed use infill residential can occur on

Granada Boulevard. Sidewalks are not wide enough, the cars go too fast, not enough opportunities to cross the street and it is a dangerous road. Mr. Sechler stated that not only is it important to balance the role, with balance and function of Granada Boulevard, but to also think about other forms of how people are getting around town. Mr. Sechler added that there has been discussion on micro mobility; loopers, circulations, golf carts, ferries, and on demand transportation service.

Ensuring the Vision:

Committing to a strategy of action, organizing projects to get results.

Mr. Sechler stated that the input shows that we are in a paradigm shift in how a lot of things have gotten to an inflection point. Ormond Beach is a more established and visually viable retail opportunity. Businesses are healthier today. Mr. Sechler added now is the time to look at what are the next level and next set of opportunities for quality retail, dining and so forth. Mr. Sechler stated that online retail is changing the society but has the potential of being the salvation of main streets. Main streets are the shared cultural asset of the community and are also the place to have an experience based retail opportunity as opposed to pushing buttons. This can be capitalized on here in Ormond Beach.

Mr. Sechler continued with delivering input received on micro mobility, Uber, Lyft, Bike share, Rideshare, where a vehicle is not needed to get around downtown. There could be a series of districts or sub areas that once you get into the district you can circulate around and have a variety of experiences.

Environmental Sustainability:

Mr. Sechler commented that the issues raised on this topic were about clean air, clean water, clean beaches, micro-climate, sea level rise, storm resilience, and more. Volusia County has a resiliency plan on how to have a healthy environment, healthy water, healthy wetlands, healthy river, and more environmental resilience. Mr. Sechler suspects that Ormond Beach will have one soon as well.

Mr. Sechler explained that on April 17 the DSC participated in a dot exercise to mark where they saw an issue or opportunity under the prior mentioned subjects. The public delivered information similar to the Steering Committee. At the same time the public survey was published on the City of Ormond Beach website with over 350 responses, most from full time residents. 90% of the full time residents are within the zip code of the downtown CRA. 32% of the input was age 45-65+. There was 1 respondent between the ages of 18-24. When asked where they considered downtown to be, the responses were US1 to the river. Mr. Sechler added that a lot of the input was on the need to enhance the bridge, better restaurants and public access to the water, and to have the library somewhere downtown. The enhancement of the walkability and preserving the small town character of Ormond Beach was also noted. Additional input was that the traffic moves too fast, not enough places to hangout, parking, signage and presentation. Mr. Sechler continued that input showed 88% visit downtown once a week, 50% visit 3 – 4 times per week. Restaurants, better quality, more active parks, more events, and more quality retail shops were some of the survey responses on where people would like to visit downtown. Mr. Sechler added again that walkability, safe crosswalks and parking were very paramount in the responses. Other responses showed the desire for more interesting places like sidewalk cafés, retail, food, and beverage spots. Mr. Sechler expressed that Ormond Beach is still a car city due

to the size and the corridor being long, but that people want to explore and navigate, going to multiple locations. There is a need to balance and localize walkability and a connected series of destinations along with enhancing bikes and mobility across the city. The input from the survey shows it to be too heavily dominated by the automobile and unsafe.

Mr. Sechler went over the survey feedback from the questions:

What type of development should be encouraged downtown?

Two broad categories were retail, and mixed use. Detailed comments showed that they do not only want certain types of food, beverage, shopping. The CRA can drill a little deeper into key unmet needs within the marketplace and look at targeted recruiting of certain types of businesses. An example is that of Lucky's Market recently opening in Ormond Beach, a new quality retailer. Mr. Sechler continued that mixed use shows consistent input that there is a need for more critical mass downtown. There are too many underutilized opportunities. Some of the properties could be positioned with residential in conjunction with retail. Mr. Sechler commented that Ormond Beach has a lot of candidate sites for it and can probably start the market for it.

What is the best way to bring new businesses?

People, and to provide more parking. If the access issue could be solved it would be easier to use the downtown. Advertising incentives. Have an opportunity to use parking areas for festivals and outdoor events on a regular basis. Easily understandable parking directions.

What does a day in Ormond Beach look like in 10 years?

"I live on beachside, and take my dog to a renovated and beautified park, I would walk around a new track, relax under a pavilion, do yoga downtown under the bridge, visit a farmers market on the way home, I would take a water taxi or the ferry to the mainland and enjoy happy hour at a brewery, or a local restaurant."

Mr. Sechler stated that a lot of comments were similar to this one, specifying a quality of life experience that is diverse with the capability of using the city. Currently there are portions of the city that can be used, and some that are difficult to use. Mr. Sechler continued that what the responses speak to is not only the quality of uses, but getting things connected and accessible to people.

V. SPECIFIC COMMUNITY IDEAS/OPPORTUNITIES/ACTIONS FOR ORMOND

Mr. Sechler asked if these types of subjects resonate, with the right things being discussed, or is there something missing?

A member from the public commented that environmental sustainability and a sense of place or development are probably twin pillars that affect each other, which he felt was an issue at City meetings before the election.

Mr. Sechler explained that GAI would be working on a draft report over the summer and will take the CRA update plan to the City Commission for approval in September. He continued that the purpose of the meeting is to recap a lot of input and have the public translate any input or ideas on an action or implementation idea of how to put the themes into motion. Mr. Sechler asked if there was a specific thought about something that could be done that addresses one of the themes. The attendees were directed to think about actions and implemental ideas that could be done to build the Ormond Beach desired on post it

notes and stick it to the board that has the theme that aligns with the action item note. Mr. Sechler explained their intent is to look for input from the Committee and public before they start drafting, generating the report from the themes, intent, leading to implementation, and a plan of action.

A 20 minute break was taken for meeting participants to complete the meeting exercise.

VI. PRIORITIZATION AND VOTING

Mr. Sechler explained the prioritization and voting exercise, to use circle tabs for things that are most high priority.

Mr. Sechler stated that what he did for the sake of the legibility of the ideas is look at each board and pull sticky notes off with similar topics, place them together, and headline them in a category.

Mr. Sechler directed to take 10 dots and place them on the boards that are the highest priority. Those will be the things that will need to be attacked by Fall.

Mr. Sechler read each category and top priorities aloud:

Transportation

Sidewalks, bikes, pedestrians

Traffic coning

Parking

Pedestrian bridge

Alternative transportation modes – trolleys, ferries, bike share programs

Recreation and Open Space

Activating the four corners, parks, and the bridge as a coordinated entity

Beauty and respite; swings and shade

Waters edge

Beaufort, SC type atmosphere

Bicycles

Paddleboards

Economic Development

Redeveloping key sites

Enhancing retail offerings

Detailed surveys

Sustainability

Recycling programs

Urban tree canopy

City utility systems, bring general infrastructure system up to date

Adapt, develop programs similar to other coastal communities

Environmental clean-up efforts

Incentives for clean buildings

Ensuring Vision

Ongoing advocacy group (may already exist through the MainStreet organization)

Ongoing communication on City progress and reporting

Mr. Sechler commented when this project was started, Mr. Spraker explained all of the things that the CRA accomplished on the kickoff night. Everyone was not aware that the City and CRA worked together to effectuate substantial changes. A member of the public asked the meaning of CRA. Mr. Sechler answered that CRA is Community Redevelopment Area. He added that it is a quasi-governmental entity that is defined and established within the Florida Statutes and is an agreement between the local government and the county that a portion of ad valorem taxes will get designated to go specifically into the district to execute projects that are in the district. It is an agreement that a portion of the tax generation of that area is not going to be used to solve general issues like police or fire. Mr. Sechler explained that CRA is powerful when it comes to TIF Financing = Tax Increment Financing. He further explained with an example of it. When a CRA is established there is a base year. Mr. Sechler described through an example that all the property within the designated CRA area in the year 2000 was worth \$100.00, taxed at a 10% tax rate it generated \$10.00 of taxes every year. That means that the tax generation in the base year is \$10.00 (\$5.00 for the City, \$5.00 for the County). Fast forwarding to the next year in the example, 2001, the properties have appreciated value. You are still being taxed at the same rate but the properties are now worth \$110.00. Instead of generating \$10.00 in tax revenue, it is now \$11.00. The extra dollar created in the appreciation of property is designated specifically to be spent in the CRA and that increment of growth and value creates an increment of growing tax revenue. The same percentage of tax bases is designated to be reinvested in the district on projects the CRA identifies. It is an agreement by the County that they forego some of that growth. There is an agreement that their portion, .50 cents of the new dollar, goes into the CRA. CRAs are ways to fund and finance tax dollars that you are generating, making investments in the community, directing it back in those businesses, neighborhoods, parks, and environmental areas.

A member of the public asked when the base year of the City's CRA was? Mr. Spraker answer 1984, and is extended 2036. Mr. Sechler stated that there has been one extension. CRAs are usually set up for thirty years. Mr. Sechler continued that you can bond a TIF projection. A local government or CRA can hire an economist that can make projections about how the growth and value of property will increase over time, and create new tax revenue that can be used by the CRA. You can choose aggressive, moderate, or conservative growth. You can do a projection of how the new increment of new tax value is going to grow and can bond it. Mr. Sechler commented that the City has a great CRA in a good financial position, and is being well managed.

Ongoing Advocacy and Ongoing Communication

Mr. Sechler stated that they have worked in other cities where there is a more regular branded communication about what the CRA is doing. It is possible the message is not getting to everyone. It is clear from the survey and exercise comments that people are engaged and want to know what the CRA is doing so progress can be tracked.

Codes and Standards

Mr. Sechler stated that they are doing regulations to encourage quality development.

Residential Neighborhoods

Mr. Sechler commented there are ideas of mixed use zones in bringing residential closer to the Granada Boulevard corridor. He added that there have been discussions about traffic coning for protection. Mr. Sechler continued with the desire for neighborhood access and walkability.

Grants and Perfect Standing Grants and Programs for Neighborhood Improvement

Mr. Sechler stated that there is a lot of discussion about improvements for businesses but asked if there are things to encourage incremental reinvestment in the residential neighborhoods.

Sense of Place and Appearance

Interesting uses, branding and graphics for the district

Lighting and color

Cultural tourism

Sidewalks and safety

Arts & Culture

Civic center and performing arts

More and better coordinated events

Having live music

Expanding mural and public arts program

Mr. Sechler concluded that those are the categories and for everyone to look over the boards and place their dots on what topics they felt were most important.

A 15 minute break for meeting participants to complete the meeting exercise.

Mr. Sechler highlighted where the dots were concentrated from the exercise:

Parking

Traffic Coning

Alternative Transportation

Four Corners Bridge District

Redeveloping Key Sites

Environmental Sustainability

Recycling Green Buildings

Urban Tree Canopy

Communication Platform

Codes and Standards

Mixed Use

Traffic Calming

Sidewalks and Safety

Branding District Graphics

Civic Center/Performing Arts

Public Art

Mural Program

Audience comments:

A member of the public expressed his concern with the City of Ormond Beach needing a major high speed access road with a lot of lanes to the beach on Granada Boulevard, similar to Dunlawton Avenue. He added that during emergencies and storms people have to get off of the beach fast.

VII. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS, NEXT STEPS, ADJOURN

Mr. Sechler continued that they plan to use the input from the meeting and structure it into themes that guide the plan, and use the framework as a way to start generating ideas to be implemented. From here the ideas will be organized, and be reviewed with the Steering Committee June 26. Mr. Sechler added there will be meetings with the City Commission in August that will be open to the public. The plan will be written, articulated, and be in a position to be adopted. The process can be tracked online by going to the City of Ormond Beach website or by using the QR function on your smartphone to bookmark the page.

A member of the public suggested for everyone to participate in civil discourse as well to share ideas. It is held every second and fourth Monday at the library at 5:30 p.m., but will be on Tuesday the next meeting due to the holiday.

Mr. Sechler concluded that there will not be another public meeting, and the next Steering Committee meeting would be at 6 p.m. on June 26, 2019.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcella Miller, Recording Secretary

ATTEST:

Steven Spraker, Planning Director