

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

Kickoff Meeting

May 15, 2019

11:00 A.M.

City of Ormond Beach
Conference Room 103
42 North Beach Street
Ormond Beach, Florida

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. MEMBERS PRESENT

Committee Members

Dorian Burt
Debbie Cotton
Ronald DeFilippo
Frank Ganz
Bonda Garrison
Lewis Heaster
Charles Lichtigman
Nancy Lohman
Thomas MacDonald
Jason Morgan
Ellen Needham
Susan Persis
Ashley Rose
Lori Tolland
Katie Tripp
Alex Bittner (excused)

Staff

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

Consultants

Peter Sechler, GAI Consultants
Molly Stahl, GAI Consultants

III. WELCOME, WORKING LUNCH

Mr. Steven Spraker, Planning Director, welcomed the committee members to the meeting.

IV. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM MARCH 28, 2019 AND APRIL 17, 2019

Mr. Spraker asked for corrections for the March 28, 2019 and/or the April 17, 2019 meeting minutes. Ms. Tripp suggested a correction to the April 17, 2019 meeting minutes, page 3, second paragraph: the Ormond Beach Library **may already be doing this** and are still well used. Mr. Spraker agreed and stated that a motion is not needed for the minutes, but corrections will be made. Mr. Spraker added that the evening public meeting is today at 6pm at the Anderson Price building.

V. TOP INPUT TO DATE, ISSUES ORGANIZED BY THEME, SURVEY FINDINGS

Mr. Sechler announced today's session will be focused on the committee's specific ideas, along with a voting exercise. The next stage will be in June when Mr. Sechler and Ms. Stahl will come back with framework ideas and the top ideas for the CRA update plan. All input from the group was organized under themes. Mr. Sechler continued that almost 400 people completed the survey. He added that **Environmental Sustainability and Coastal Resiliency** will be a new theme going forward. The themes and mission statements are as follows with the capability to refine moving forward:

Economic Development; fostering a successful, attractive, pedestrian oriented downtown retailing place with interesting places to shop and work, quality civic assets, proximate parking and nearby supportive residential (including mixed use) development. The committee has discussed City Hall and unmet potential, critical mass, inconsistent retail hours, common hours, retail uses and what is missing, as well as job support to bring back families, the police station and site potential, and the library lease renewal.

Sense of Place & 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. The committee has discussed bridging the bridge and connecting the four corners, a new "three district nomenclature", a place to stay – not just stop, better signs and wayfinding, bridge as branding, the tale of two downtowns, and safety & security.

Arts & Culture; utilize art, social events, cultural and historic assets to enhance the shared feeling of community. The committee has discussed Deland being a good comparable, transition for Granada traffic during the day to usable at night, art walk and adding more activities, who to attract and target, how to tell the story, museum row, the MacDonald House – unmet opportunities, and historic and cultural tourism.

Recreation & Open Space; maximize the use of available open space for community enjoyment, fostering a sense of environment and water, civic pride and social interaction for a variety of people on regular and festival days. The committee has discussed where the realm might be and how to connect it to the community, big moves and pocket parks, four corners park coordination, museum row, local destinations, floating docks, an Ormond boat tour, parks and food on the water, dog and kid friendly environments, and a community center.

Transportation & Circulation; reclaim Granada Boulevard and other streets as part of the shared public realm as a quality centerpiece for development accommodating and supporting ALL modes of transportation. The committee has discussed public parking in the river district, beachside parking-shopping center used as beach parking, walkability, walkable access from the neighborhoods, livability, micro-mobility – bike shares, scooters, etc. Mr. Sechler reported that 75% want Granada Boulevard slowed down and more pedestrian friendly, easier to cross the street, better branding. There is a 25% minority report that tugs on the other side of the issue with Granada being the only road going over the river with people needing to get somewhere. Some are concerned if Granada gets slowed down too much then it could become a hassle. Granada Boulevard is an FDOT road, State road, and hurricane evacuation corridor.

Residential Neighborhoods; preserve and enhance neighborhoods while fostering quality re-investment on vacant or underutilized parcels. The committee discussed supporting downtown living—Millennials, townhome nature, and the standards and regulations that come with it to prevent things that prevent bad relationships visually, but also to encourage people to develop in ways that are harmonious with downtown and historic neighborhoods. There is a desire to get a little more downtown living approximate to the corridor – a consistent theme.

Ensuring the Vision; committing to a strategy of action organized around projects and champions to get results. Mr. Sechler stated that Ormond Beach has done a good job over the last 10 years, and this will be part of the committee’s job to take all of this input and gather ideas and to get something coherent that can be taken down one piece at a time. The committee has discussed the recognition of the world changing and the paradigm shift time period about mobility, micro mobility, experience based retail, comfort, access proximity, and authenticity.

Environmental Sustainability; create an environmentally conscious community that respects and maintains the natural environment. This issue was raised by the public meetings that it needs to be pulled out of the other topics, making it its own entity for clean air, water, and beaches.

Mr. Sechler highlighted some of the packet information emailed to the committee regarding the survey; 353 responses back from the public survey, 88% of them were from full time residents. Two-thirds were from the riverside, and one-third from the beachside. The primary respondents being 50+. There was one respondent between the age of 18-24. Based on the map on the survey and shown overhead survey 27% of the participants viewed downtown as the Creek District (Gateway), 90% as the River District (Downtown), and 63% the Beach District (Beachside).

When asked what the survey participants valued the most in the downtown area some of the responses were the bridge for walking, restaurants and public access to the water front, the library, the quaint small town feeling, and the walkability of the bridge and parks. Some of their issues and concerns about the downtown area were traffic moving too fast to safely enjoy the downtown space, the need for more places to go and hang out with family and friends, both day and night, parking, aesthetics, signage, and a unified inviting look. Mr. Sechler continued that another need for downtown is to give people visiting clear reasons to believe there is a place to go, park your car once, and explore. Parking, signage, and unifying ideas will assist in this area. People want to see more interesting retail and mixed use development as far as the type of development that should be encouraged downtown.

When asked what the best way to bring new businesses and people to the downtown area, some of the responses signified the need for more parking options or better public transportation, safer walking and crosswalks, advertisement of a family friendly atmosphere, as well as incentives for unique shops designed for tourist browsing, relocations of existing businesses, convert parking area in front of Dunn’s to a festival/showcase area – something different every week.

VI. COMMITTEE IDEAS/OPPORTUNITIES/IDEAS FOR THE CRA

Mr. Sechler called on committee members around the room for their individual input on ideas that put the concepts discussed into motion. As Mr. Sechler facilitated, Ms. Stahl noted them on posted sheets.

Mr. Jason Morgan suggested, like everyone else, he wants to see walkability and slowing traffic, and feels the need for defined parking. He continued that the traffic might be slowed down by policing or removable speed bumps. Another suggestion of Mr. Morgan's is to widen sidewalks and convert a lane to parking in the evenings.

Ms. Bonda Garrison agreed with Mr. Morgan's comments regarding parking, policing and traffic calming. Ms. Garrison noticed that small villages have speed bumps, as well as where the pedestrian crossing is during her recent vacation in Europe. Regarding parking, Ms. Garrison suggested land acquisition and parking garages. There is a vacant lot on beachside near where the new Starbucks is going up that could be made into public parking. Ms. Garrison is with the Historical Society and suggests developing a museum row concept. Another suggestion is to turn the MacDonald House into the Museum of Ormond Beach History, and open up Pilgrim's Rest Church with exhibits and activities. The Ormond Garage is another site that already exists and can turn into another place to go in Ormond Beach to learn about the history and culture. She also suggested using the four corners of the bridge as a history trail and could put kiosks in them. Ms. Garrison shared an idea she saw in France called La Petit Trains that could be mocked here similar to a narrated trolley or shuttle.

Ms. Ellen Needham advised her first interest is in preservation and preserving the charm in the downtown areas and protecting properties. She continued that she is not in agreement with a downtown hotel. Ms. Needham believes that the parking should be placed back away from Granada or behind the tennis courts in the Gaslamp and Casements area. She feels that the City should use properties it already owns and use them for parking, or develop and expand parking next to the yacht club, across from the church. Another suggestion is to integrate the church parking site and connect it through an alley easement. Ms. Needham echoed the interest in the water taxi for the four corners and connection of both sides.

Mr. Charles Lichtigman stated because of the growth of Granada Boulevard we have diminished our size of the sidewalks. There should be incentives for people to leave enough space to make it a walkable, enjoyable environment, not to build up to the property line. The City should not encourage building up to the property line. Mr. Sechler suggested another way to state it would be that when property redevelops or there is property investment we should seek sidewalk easement to create a wider sidewalk condition. Mr. Lichtigman commented that parking needs to be secure. People need to be comfortable parking. Mr. Lichtigman added that he would like to see lights under the bridge.

Ms. Tolland added that there is a desire for green space, pocket parks, and courtyards in between shopping and restaurants, increasing outdoor eateries, pastry and ice cream shops, that are kid and dog friendly, would go great with the widening of the sidewalks. Mr. Sechler replied that the property owners have to be ready to participate. Ms. Tolland stated that she would like to see a reimaged City Hall, and readdress the signage, maybe

installing something overhead, and remove all temporary signage. She added she feels we are neglecting the gateway area. Can use the TIF taxes to address it.

Ms. Dorian Burt stated the sidewalks belong to the FDOT and feels there is no need to have private property give 5 feet of property for a sidewalk. All of the sidewalks needs to come out and be redone. She continued that the City needs to continue the underground utilities on key corridors and infrastructure. The river district is great due to Ms. Burt fighting for it and stated everyone else has to fight for it for the rest because it is an eyesore. Mr. Sechler commented that the sidewalk topic seems daunting but that he has worked with multiple places for years that have done it successfully. He will assist with it.

Ms. Burt added that it is important to keep the library, even if it has to be moved. Steven Spraker commented that the library could be renovated and may not be necessarily where it is but to have it somewhere downtown, so it needs to be part of the strategy. Mr. Sechler suggested the Steering Committee recommend then that the City Library not get rid of it as it is an important civic use for downtown in the plan update, and needs to remain part of the strategy. The steering committee was in agreement that the library needed to remain in the Downtown area.

Mr. Kevin Wakefield stated that he was part of a festival put on by the Rotary and Ormond Mainstreet which was very well attended. At the event he heard people in conversation expressing the desire to reach into the waterway by incorporating ferry and micro transportation. He added that people travel to other cities like DeLand or New Smyrna for events like beer festivals. Incorporate more experiences downtown to decrease auto transportation through the City. There was one recently and he heard people expressing that they would like more events like that here in Ormond Beach. He also heard from young families that they did not want to travel to restaurants with their kids after leaving the initial event. There is a want to brand the bridge and the four corners as a destination where you can spend the day.

Ms. Debbie Cotton, Ormond Beach Chamber of Commerce, mentioned she would love to see a community event center in the downtown area. If the police station closes it may be possible to have it there. Business meeting and community meetings could be held there. There is currently not a large enough place right now to do so without spending a large amount of money to rent the space. There was a question about the Anderson Price building and if it is used for such events which is to be determined. Mr. Sechler suggested wording the recommendation from the Committee similar to the library, with a community center that can support a range of uses from local community groups to business meetings, retreats, and weddings. Parking will be important. Ms. Cotton continued that the bridge is the main connector and monies and time should be spend on enhancing it with lighting and paint.

Ms. Susan Persis agreed with Ms. Cotton on the community center idea. She advised that the downtown golf cart transportation idea mentioned in a prior meeting, due to the parking issues, would also be a good idea. Ms. Persis also likes the idea of enhancing the four corners, incorporating exercise stations, walkability, and ferry transportation.

Ms. Nancy Lohman brought attention to the need for activities and a choreographed identity of the four corners of the bridge. Mr. Sechler commented that dock edge and

fishing activities are being discussed for that area. Ms. Lohman touched on the need for adding interactive kids and family activities such as paddle boarding and kayaking. Other ideas discussed for the area were eateries or concessionaires. Ms. Lohman stated the corner of the Pilgrims Rest Church is underutilized and is beautifully landscaped thanks to the City. It would be nice if it was part of a museum village with the Casements, the MacDonald House, with coordinated parking and a cute tennis pro shop. Pilgrims Rest could be moved. Mr. Sechler suggested what he sees is putting it in an area where it is socially relevant in a park or with other historical assets. Another suggestion Ms. Lohman had was for better signage in lieu of the 4 x 4 signs.

Ms. Katie Tripp commented on mixed use development downtown in terms of millennials, when we have a lot of retirees who have a lot more time and money to spend downtown and are looking to downsize. After hours and weekend outdoor events can be done at the City utilizing the City parking lot for pop up activities and vendors diversifying with what downtown offers. Ms. Tripp suggested it would be beneficial to have a farmers market on the weekend for those having to work during the week when the City holds theirs. Regarding the library, Ms. Tripp sees it being used as a civic center with the view of the water. If downsizing, it could be use of an existing space. Ms. Tripp stated there were great ideas in the Walkable Cities book that Ms. Williams recommended. If you incorporate street side parking and have the public pay for, it will create business, turnover, and revenue for other improvements. Reducing to one lane at certain times, the more street side parking, attracts more people. Another idea mentioned was when the streets are narrowed and there is a natural tree canopy, it has a natural slowing effect on cars without having to go to DOT. Ms. Tripp suggested an idea of reducing a lane of A1A south of Granada to create street parking to assist with the parking issues at the Granada beach approach.

Mr. Thomas MacDonald expressed the need for more crosswalks on East Granada. He also had suggestions for where to put parking garages, one of them being the trailer park behind Maria Bonita's restaurant. He thinks that Museum Row and beachside parking are great ideas as well, but needs to create revenue. Mr. MacDonald agrees with saving the MacDonald House and the history, but to generate taxes from where it is at.

Mr. Frank Ganz stated his first issue is developing the side streets. There are a lot of vacant lots, unused buildings and commercial. If the CRA can do anything about the development of the infrastructure of the streets and sidewalks with underground utilities and get the streets ready for businesses to be on the streets it will help traffic with Granada diverting people to other streets. It will also decrease the walking on Granada. The more the corridor can be widened the better it will be for when we have to stop building on Granada due to growth and FDOT. Mr. Ganz suggested the more grants and tax incentives MainStreet can get, the more we can target the areas that need to be developed. Mr. Ganz also agreed with the bridge ideas and to name the bridge something other than the street name. He suggested to do something similar to Bryant Park in New York where they have little glass huts they rent out to vendors.

Mr. Sechler advised that the side streets are going to become important utilizing property for parking, access, getting around. The City is working on some of the sites now.

Mr. Lewis Heaster commented that the more people that are living downtown, the more successful the downtown area is going to be. If you walk there, you do not have to worry

about parking because you live there. The Building Improvement Grant has been successful for downtown redevelopment. Replicating it will incentivize multifamily, mixed use development. Ideas mentioned were property tax abatement, and can waive impact and permit fees. In the online survey it showed the want for retail mixed use. Mr. Heaster suggested getting ideas for how to propose doing it, perhaps by changing zonings, have multi-family next to single-family, or downtown commercial areas, financial incentives. The key is to get builders and developers to look into it.

Mr. Sechler stated that another way it can be done is by stating that the CRA needs to become a more active player in incentivizing it and helping to facilitate it.

Mr. Ron DeFilippo agrees with most comments and advised he feels signage is important. Creating green space on Granada Boulevard would also be essential. He added that libraries are changing and they should be incorporated into historical centers and things that are important to the community. In turn, to take those facilities and incorporate them into public areas. Mr. DeFilippo stated that the police could have done a better job with Lucky's Supermarket, and that they should have been policing traffic. If we did have trolleys for downtown transportation they would have been stuck in traffic for a while during their opening.

Mr. Sechler asked if there is a need for a hotel. A hotel guest spends about 3-4 times the daily spending whether they are a seasonal or permanent resident. Mr. DeFilippo stated that DeLand took an old building downtown and demoed it to make it a courtyard.

Ms. Ashley Rose added that traveling, she met people in Indianapolis and Virginia Beach and they knew about the City of Ormond Beach. She stated someone in their family lives here. Each person stated that they do not stay in Ormond, that they stay elsewhere. We do not have anything other than their families, the beach, and restaurants.

There was discussion on character hotels like a Hampton Inn or Hyatt with nice rooftops verses normal hotels, and the differences.

Ms. Rose continued that a focus should be creating an identifiable and sustainable culture of downtown separate to beachside and riverside districts. There should be more culture. She elaborated about the fact that there is a carpet store in the middle of a street of restaurants, which seems out of place.

Mr. Sechler stated the input of the DSC seems parallel to the ideas of the branding team. Both conversations are headed toward an idea of understandable districts that are visually coherent, clear and safe for parking, things to do with side streets to get around, and explore. The bridge is the signature item.

Ms. Rose added that it would be good to incentivize businesses to stay open seven days a week. Currently they close at 5:00 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. The businesses want a main street for walkability, but they close at dark, other than restaurants.

Mr. Sechler coordinated the prioritization dot activity directing everyone to stick their dots on the sheet of ideas they would like to see implemented.

VII. PRIORITIZATION AND VOTING

Mr. Sechler reconvened the meeting after the activity. He stated a lot of the ideas were related and similar. He announced the takeaways were looking at the bridge district as a distinct place, and leveraging the recent retail development activity, but have to look at how to put it together. Does the signage, parking, side streets, and alley access make sense? He thinks that City Hall property can be amplified and is underutilized. It is a critical site and should be a dynamic civic site and fully utilized. There was further discussion on other City Halls with nice cafes and restaurants in them.

Mr. Sechler concluded explaining tonight's public meeting will be doing something similar where they will be able to put post it notes on themed boards. The issues will be organized with a coherent set of ideas with recommendations how to proceed and act on the ideas. There are some things boiling at the top that can get baked into the plan over the summer.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m. The next committee meeting will take place June 26, 2019 to draft the framework with ideas and recommendations about how the CRA can be positioned going forward. The updated CRA plan should be adopted in September.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcella Miller, Recording Secretary

ATTEST:

Steven Spraker, Planning Director