

**CITY OF WINTER HAVEN
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
FLORENCE VILLA ADVISORY COMMITTEE
City Hall – John Fuller Auditorium
451 Third Street, NW
Winter Haven, Florida**

Minutes

July 13, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 5:07 p.m. by Glenda Jones, Vice-Chairperson in the John Fuller Auditorium Winter Haven City Hall, 451 Third Street, NW, Winter Haven, Florida.

Advisory Committee Members Present: Glenda Jones, Jacqueline Staton, Mary Smith, Perry Burnham, Rev. Derrick Baker and Miriam Tillman

Advisory Committee Members Absent: Rev. Ronnie Clark, Vermell Brown, Barbara Jones, Rev. Deldrick Leonard

City Staff Present: Dale Smith, Assistant City Manager/CRA Director; T. Michael Stavres, Community Services Director; David Dickey, Community Development Director, Kim Hansell, Strategic Initiatives/Capital Projects Division Director, Erin Tilghman, Sustainability Manager, and Sheandolen Dunn, Executive Assistant/Deputy City Clerk

Others Present: CRA Board Members: Yvonne Brooks and Mike Easterling

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Advisory Committee Member Staton to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2009 meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

Introduction of New Committee Member

Dale Smith, CRA Director/Assistant City Manager, introduced Miriam Tillman as the new Florence Villa Advisory Committee member. Ms. Tillman will be filling a vacant seat which term is scheduled to expire March 2011.

The Committee welcomed Ms. Tillman.

PROJECT UPDATES

Inman Park - Update

T. Michael Stavres, Director, Community Services, provided an update and PowerPoint presentation on Inman Park. This park is approximately 7± acres and located at the southeast intersection of Avenue T, NW and U.S. Highway 17. Current site amenities include a burial plot for the Inman Family, picnic tables, benches, a large tree canopy and park signage. The CRA and Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plans listed the re-development of Inman Park as a priority.

In July 2008, the City was awarded a Florida Recreational Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) Grant for the renovation of the Park. The City's Technical Services Division is completing the design phase for the project, ultimately saving the City an estimated \$50,000 off what an outside consultant might charge to complete the same work. The goal of the proposed design is to keep the existing open space and tree canopy, while developing additional passive recreational opportunities within the park. Due to the large amount of right-of-way on Avenue S, SW and 6th Street, SW, the site can be served with on-street parking as opposed to developing a traditional large parking area within the park limits. In addition, the park is expected to have a high volume of pedestrian/bicycle traffic from neighboring condominium complexes and serve as a destination/stopping point for the Chain of Lakes Trail.

The demolition plan calls for the elimination of the horseshoe driveway and the existing picnic tables/benches. The development plan includes the following improvements:

- Development of a ½ mile 8-foot wide asphalt looped walking trail consisting of two ¼ mile sections
- New landscaping consistent with the Avenue T Streetscape
- Low berms to buffer the park from adjacent busy roadways
- An educational display pertaining to the Inman Family history and their contributions to the Winter Haven area
- Designated areas to display public art
- Picnic facilities
- 29 on-street parking spaces
- Upgraded gateway entry landscape feature
- Multi-generational interactive play area
- Four Florida Friendly Demonstration Landscape Gardens

Design documents are presently at the 60% Completion Stage and have been submitted to the Southwest Florida Water Management District for permitting review. Staff anticipates receipt of 90% design documents, including landscape

plans by late Summer 2009. Construction of the project will cost approximately \$400,000 and is anticipated to commence in Fall 2009.

Advisory Committee Member Burnham inquired about a crossover bridge.

Dale Smith, Assistant City Manager/CRA Director responded that the City has applied for a FDOT grant for a crossover bridge.

Lake Maude Recreation Complex

T. Michael Stavres, Community Services Director, presented an update and PowerPoint presentation on the Lake Maude Recreation Complex. In October 2001, the City purchased 24.5± acres north of Avenue O, NE and east of Seventh Street, NE for the purpose of expanding the City's recreational facilities/services and for additional well fields as needed. Since that time, numerous discussions have occurred regarding potential development of the site, including alternative uses of the property.

In 2007, staff initiated work on a City-wide Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan to evaluate the current infrastructure and identify areas in need of further development. During this process, several meetings were held with staff, individual stakeholder groups and the general public. From comments received at all levels and in conjunction with the consultant's inspection/assessment of existing facilities, recommendations were made for future recreational development aimed at addressing current and/or potential deficiencies within the existing inventory.

Shortly thereafter, staff commenced work on a conceptual design related to development of the aforementioned property (presently identified as the Lake Maude Recreation Area.) This effort took into consideration several factors including the need for certain facilities not presently available within the City's recreational facility inventory (i.e. additional athletic fields, walking areas, dog park); the desire to relocate certain existing facilities to be in closer proximity to residential areas and allow for their respective expansion and growth (i.e. Senior Adult Center and Tennis Complex); the availability of existing City-owned land; and the opportunity to co-locate facilities in close proximity to other complementary venues (i.e. DiamondPlex, Lake Maude Nature Park, Polk State College).

Working with the design consultant, staff generated a conceptual plan for the site which included the following amenities/elements:

- Tennis Complex with Support Structure (16 courts)
- Multi-Generational Recreation Center
- Shuffleboard Courts (24 courts)
- Horseshoe Facility (8 pits)
- Multi-Purpose Athletic Fields (2)

- Walking Trails (6 individual internal loops)
- Destination Playground with Splash Pad
- Dog Park
- Park Maintenance Facility
- Picnic Facilities / Site Furnishings

An initial draft of the conceptual plan was presented to the Florence Villa Advisory Committee during its October 13, 2008 meeting. Included was discussion on the future growth plans of Hurst Chapel AME Church located adjacent to the site and whether or not the City was willing to work with the church on future expansion. Staff noted the City was not opposed to this opportunity and requested the church provide a copy of its master plan once finalized.

During the months following, staff worked with the consultant to refine some of the conceptual elements and related documents. On June 25, 2009, staff hosted a public meeting at the Winter Haven Recreational & Cultural Center to present the initial concept and solicit citizen comments. Approximately 100 residents were in attendance and provided comments, verbally and via handwritten comment cards, on various components of the conceptual plan.

This feedback laid the ground work for staff to concentrate its efforts primarily on elements deemed most pressing by the community. It is anticipated that a revised plan will be available in Fall 2009 and be presented to a focus group comprised of various end users and impacted parties (i.e. area youth sports leagues, the Florence Villa Neighborhood Services Center, Hurst Chapel AME Church and the Florence Villa Advisory Committee). From that point, public input meetings will be scheduled in an effort to finalize the conceptual plan. Due to the uncertainty of cost and availability of funding, scheduling of the project in the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) will not occur until the conceptual plan is finalized.

Dale Smith, Assistant City Manager/CRA Director spoke briefly on the recent meeting regarding the Lake Maude Recreation Complex. Several members were in attendance and it has become evident the need for a "stakeholders" group that would be comprised of members from various organizations within the Florence Villa area to provide input on plans for the Lake Maude Recreation Complex.

Advisory Committee Member Staton commented that she is not against the dog park and does not understand the issue that has been raised by residents about the dog feces smell.

T. Michael Stavres, Community Services Director responded that the distance between the church and the actual park is approximately two to three hundred yards and the smell should not be an issue.

Advisory Committee Member Staton asked about the size of the complex and if it would accommodate large banquets, class reunions, weddings, etc.

T. Michael Stavres, Community Services Director indicated it has approximately 25,000 square feet. There will be a multipurpose room within this facility.

Advisory Committee Member Burnham inquired about the structure of the building and its ability to withstand hurricane force winds.

T. Michael Stavres, Community Services Director responded that there is a building code that has to be followed in order to meet Category 1 storm occupancy. However, all schools in Polk County are hurricane shelters and new schools are to be built to sustain Category 3 storms. All Polk County Schools are shelters. These shelters are equipped with kitchen facilities and generators to accommodate long-term occupancy.

Discussion ensued.

Lake Maude Natural Area - Update

T. Michael Stavres, Director, Community Services, shared a PowerPoint presentation of the Grand Opening ceremony of Lake Maude Natural Area.

Advisory Committee Members expressed their joy of having the park in the neighborhood and are very excited about the final outcome of the grand opening ceremony.

Avenue T Phase II -Update

Dale Smith, Assistant City Manager/CRA Director, provided an update and PowerPoint presentation on Avenue T Phase II where construction began in August 2008 by CenState Contractors. The project is 95% complete with plantings, irrigation, electrical and light systems and crosswalks installed. The contractor is currently finalizing a punch list to consist of changing the sprinkler heads and repairing a bad spot in the crosswalk at the intersection of Avenue T and First Street. Once the punch list items are done, the Avenue T Phase II project will be complete.

Florence Villa Phase IV - Update

Dale Smith, Assistant City Manager/CRA Director, provided an update and PowerPoint presentation. Florida Telecom began the Florence Villa Phase IV project in August 2008. This project is complete.

Advisory Committee Member Smith presented and discussed traffic study results she received from the Florida Department of Transportation.

Discussion ensued.

New Business

None

Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:24 p.m.