

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
BOCA RATON COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
MONDAY, AUGUST 8, 2005
3:30 P.M.

The regular meeting of the Boca Raton Community Redevelopment Agency was called to order by Chairman Bill Hager at approximately 3:35 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG:

ROLL CALL:

Chairman Bill Hager
Vice Chairman Susan Whelchel (arrived at 3:40 p.m.)
Commissioner Steven L. Abrams
Commissioner Peter R. Baronoff (arrived at 3:42 p.m.)
Commissioner Susan Haynie

Also attending the meeting were:

CRA Executive Director Jorge Camejo
Boca Raton City Manager Leif J. Ahnell
Boca Raton City Attorney Diana Grub Frieser, Attorney to the Agency

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA:

There were no amendments to the agenda.

MINUTES:

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 25, 2005

Motion was made by Commissioner Abrams, seconded by Commissioner Haynie, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried 3-0 on a voice vote; Chairman Hager, Vice Chairman Whelchel, Commissioners Abrams, Baronoff and Haynie voting yes.

REGULAR BUSINESS - PART I - QUASI-JUDICIAL & RELATED PUBLIC HEARINGS:

There were no items for consideration.

PUBLIC REQUESTS:

Dr. Fred Cichocki and Robert DePalma advocated placing a natural history museum in the cartoon museum building, saying it would boost knowledge and education.

REGULAR BUSINESS - PART II - RESOLUTIONS:

There were no items for consideration.

QUASI-JUDICIAL PUBLIC HEARING – APPEAL OF BOARD DECISION:

There were no items for consideration.

OTHER BUSINESS:

There were no items for consideration.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

1. Reuse of Cartoon Museum Building:
 - Presentation by General Growth Partners (GGP) and
 - Mizner Park Cultural Arts Association, Inc. (MPCAA)

General Growth Partners (GGP): Planning and Zoning Director Carmen Annunziato introduced Kate Blomgren, Senior Director for GGP. Ms. Blomgren used a PowerPoint presentation to provide an overview of a proposed plan for renovating the cartoon museum building. GGP would like to create a multi-use facility to function as an anchor for Mizner Park; this could then create a higher demand for other space in the park. Ms. Blomgren referred to the partnership between GGP and the MPCAA and then focused on the proposed plan for the first floor, which would house three commercial tenants with an entry lobby for the second and third floors as public space; the second and third floors would house non-profit organizations. Leasing and design was occurring now; construction was planned to commence in January 2006. GGP planned to use existing space where appropriate; however, some areas would be demolished or remodeled. Ms. Blomgren spoke to possible expansion of the building on the west side of the park (Federal Highway) and the possible demolition of the southeast corner in order to provide increased ceiling heights for the new tenants.

GGP planned to file the IDA application by September 2005 and would work with the City to make tenant announcements as they come available; design and construction updates would be provided periodically throughout the process. Ms. Blomgren concluded her presentation and answered questions from Agency members. She explained that the Grand Opening was anticipated in time for the holidays in 2006. While she could not discuss anything at this time with regard to the first floor tenants, Ms. Blomgren indicated that a bookstore is planned; other tenants may be entertainment-based with restaurants. Attention turned to whether a separate entrance for the second and third floors was possible; currently one must pass through the main lobby. Agency members questioned how GGP planned to file an IDA if the design was unknown. Ms. Blomgren advised that GGP has preliminary plans and a traffic study and would request the IDA on a "fragmented" or partial basis.

Responding to Agency members, Ms. Blomgren detailed plans for restoring Mizner Park, which included refacing work, lighting for the common area, and higher operating standards for the parking garages. Ms. Luanne Lenberg, Vice-President and General Manager of GGP, spoke to restoration of the buildings, using stucco and repainting. GGP was also interfacing with the residential portion of the project to restore the Palm Tower building. In addition, a lot of money was going into "behind the scenes" work, such as repairing/replacing rooftop cooling systems and expansion joints in the garages. In response to comments regarding observations of low customer traffic in Mizner Park this past weekend, Ms. Lenberg clarified that weekends are not key days for Mizner Park; many sales are derived from office workers. She added that sales performance is up 17% and advised that three new stores and a new restaurant were anticipated to open before the end of the year. In regard to the fountain, Ms. Luanne stated that this project is in the design bid phase, which should be concluded in 30 days; as updates become available, GGP will contact the City regarding same.

Mizner Park Cultural Arts Association, Inc. (MPCAA): Charles Siemen, President of the organization, advised that, at this time, none of the non-profit entities that have come forward have the resources to be in the museum building. He then spoke to the design of the second and third floors, saying they could be improved by converting part of the second floor into a black-box theatre, containing 250-300 seats; the theatre could be used by a variety of organizations. Remaining space could be used for studios and offices for BRET, exhibition space (flexible space), and banquet space. As a multiple-use facility, Mr. Siemen noted that the Boca Raton Museum of Art and the Center for the Arts could use same. He then advised that an IDA would be filed starting with a footprint but final elevations and floor plans would be deferred until a later date, at which time the parties would be able to logically move forward and provide opportunities for progress. Responding to Agency members, Mr. Siemen indicated that information is

available to interested non-profit organizations regarding standards and economic terms. He added that the economic terms and conditions are available in the basic MPCA document.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT:

The City Attorney had nothing to report at this time.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS:

Vice Chairman Whelchel reported that she had recently met with Mizner Park representatives and other interested parties to discuss marketing strategies for promoting the downtown; CRA Director Jorge Camejo and Community Resources/Affairs Specialist Emily Lilly were also in attendance. At that meeting it was agreed that there was a need for the City to be supportive of visual marketing tools that Mizner Park could use; The Recreator was specifically mentioned. Ms. Whelchel also stated that more City events need to be held in the downtown; adding that Ms. Lilly would be an excellent source to consult regarding such opportunities.

Commissioner Baronoff advised that he had spoken with representatives from the Center for the Arts (CFA) in connection with creating a signature event for the downtown. Consequently, the CFA will seek permission to present a signature event to this body.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion was made by Commissioner Abrams, seconded by Vice Chairman Whelchel, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously on a voice vote; Chairman Hager, Vice Chairman Whelchel, Commissioners Abrams, Baronoff and Haynie voting yes.

The regular meeting of the Boca Raton Community Redevelopment Agency adjourned at approximately 4:19 p.m., Monday, August 8, 2005.

Bill Hager, Chairman

ATTEST:

Sharma Carannante, City Clerk