FORT MYERS BEACH
LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY (LPA)
MINUTES
Town Hall
2525 Estero Boulevard
Fort Myers Beach, Florida 33931
Tuesday, August 11, 2015

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chair Zuba. Members present: Chuck Bodenhafer, Al Durrett, John Kakatsch, Joanne Shamp and Hank Zuba.
Excused: Jane Plummer and James Steele.
Town Attorney: Derek Rooney
Staff: Matt Noble

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. INVOCATION

IV. MINUTES - May 12, 2015 and June 9, 2015

In the May 12, 2015 minutes, Mr. Bodenhafer suggested that restrooms be in commercial areas only.

MOTION: Mr. Bodenhafer moved to approve the May 12, 2015 minutes as amended; second by Mr. Kakatsch.
VOTE: Motion approved; 5-0 (Ms. Plummer and Mr. Steele excused).

MOTION: Ms. Plummer moved to approve the June 9, 2015 minutes; second by Mr. Durrett.
VOTE: Motion approved; 5-0 (Ms. Plummer and Mr. Steele excused).

V. PUBLIC HEARING - Mound House Parking Lot, REZ2015-0001 & SEZ2015-0001

Principal Planner Matt Noble reviewed the rezoning and companion request for a special exception to develop a parking lot at 216 Connecticut Street.

Alison Giesen, Museum Director, played the Mound House orientation film. She referred to the Florida Communities Trust Agreement and the Mound House Management Plan when discussing the need for additional parking. She requested that the LPA rezone it as dedicated off-site parking. She discussed the extended days and hours of operation, additional programs, additional volunteers and increased visitation.

Mr. Noble remarked that there was a definite need for additional parking and it was considered an accessory use for the Mound House. He stated that the parking lot design had been changed after meeting with the neighbors, but the overall concept was generally the same. Mr. Noble reviewed changes made as a result of the meeting and he provided a draft rendition of the landscape betterment plan. Conditions of approval: limit the parking lot to 27 spaces; the parking lot will not be lit at night; hours of operation have been limited from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.; it will be patrolled; and implementation of the final landscape betterment plan.

Mr. Kakatsch questioned turn-around areas in the parking lot. Mr. Noble pointed out where they were located on the map.

Mr. Bodenhafer questioned whether the Mound House would be self-sustaining. Ms. Giesen replied in the affirmative and stated that she had a designated employee for shuttling during normal business hours. He questioned whether the landscape plan included native and non-invasive species. Ms. Giesen responded that planting native species was part of their mission statement.

Mr. Durrett questioned whether the church parking would continue to be used. Ms. Giesen indicated that it would be used for smaller buses. Mr. Durrett felt that a low-key light should be installed at the entrance to the parking lot, if the project goes through.

Ms. Shamp questioned whether the CF zoning had been used before. Mr. Noble was not sure. Although she supports the Mound House, Ms. Shamp was conflicted regarding the residents' concerns and she did not favor any lighting. Ms. Shamp commented that the sidewalk was not in the plan. Mr. Noble replied that the design phase was two years out and discussions about the specific location had not occurred.

Mr. Kakatsch questioned whether funds were available. Mr. Noble responded that staff would research funding opportunities if the project was approved.

Mr. Bodenhafer felt that the church parking should be utilized until there was a clear need for additional parking.

Mr. Durrett expressed his concern for disrupting the residential neighborhood. He questioned whether there were other ways to bring people to the Mound House by working with businesses to shuttle people back and forth. Ms. Giesen replied that the marketing plan was in development and she did include plans to work with hotels and motels in future programming.

Mr. Zuba questioned whether 47 parking spaces between three locations would be sufficient. Ms. Giesen replied in the affirmative. Mr. Zuba was concerned that there were no preliminary costs or a budget. Ms. Giesen stated that she could provide preliminary numbers.

Ms. Shamp questioned the number of bicycle spots. Ms. Giesen responded that there were three sets of bicycle parking. Ms. Shamp felt that additional bike racks and better signage was needed. Ms. Giesen stated that improvements would be made. Ms. Shamp was concerned about commercial intrusion into residential areas, especially since traffic already went down Connecticut and turned at Shell Mound. She hoped alcohol would not be available and that the Mound House would not turn into an evening location.

Barbara Anderson-Hill, Chair of the Cultural and Environmental Learning Center Advisory Board (CELCAB) and resident of Madison Court, commented that CELCAB supported additional parking

since 1998. She reviewed the 2009 business model that estimated there would be 22,000 visitors per year or 140 people per day during the first year. As a resident of the Mound House neighborhood, she recommended a favorable vote to rezone 216 Connecticut from residential to a community facilities designation.

Dan Hughes, 270 Randy Lane, discussed his involvement with acquiring the property in 2000 and he referred to exhibits and documents provided in the packet. He addressed security issues, the fact that the public knew about the intent for use in 2003, the need for off-street parking was public record, the lot was used for parking by visitors and volunteers for five to six years after its acquisition and he discussed property values. He stated that if Florida Communities Trust determined that the Mound House was not being maximally utilized due to lack of parking, ownership could conceivably be lost and revert back to the State of Florida Internal Revenue Trust Fund. Mr. Hughes felt the property as depicted was visually attractive, unlike other properties on the island. He pointed out that 410 Connecticut just sold for $450,000. He discussed long-range consequences and recommended approval of the project.

Kelly Leary, 130 Mid Island Drive, read her letter to the editor in support of parking at 216 Connecticut.

Becky Werner, 7150 Estero Blvd., pointed out that no one complained about parking there before and it would be better to have a landscaped area. She supported rezoning.

Bonita Davis, 159 Connecticut St., stated that she supported the Mound House, but the Church had made some unpleasant changes on the street that contributed to flooding. She asked that the LPA consider the residents of Connecticut Street and stop making changes.

Shannon Mapes, 119 Andre Mar, and her neighbors were in favor of the parking lot.

Cherie Smith, CELCAB member, asked the LPA to look forward and she felt the parking lot was an absolute necessity.

Ms. Giesen stated that Phase 1 had been projected to cost $156,135.78, but that concept was minimal compared to the current plan.

Mr. Noble read and distributed a letter from Ceel Spuhler, CELCAB member. She supported rezoning 216 Connecticut and she submitted reasons for doing so.

Mr. Noble reviewed considerations. He stated that LPA members were required to make three specific findings: whether it complied with the Comprehensive Plan, whether it complied with the Land Development Code and whether it complied with any other applicable Town ordinances or codes. Staff found that the request for rezoning, as well as the companion special exception, complied with the Comprehensive Plan, the Development Code and any other applicable Town ordinances or codes.

Ms. Shamp questioned whether the hours could be changed to 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. except for special events. Ms. Giesen agreed to change the regular hours of operation. Ms. Shamp questioned commercial uses associated with the gift shop and the overall use of the Mound House as a commercial entity as opposed to a civic facility. She questioned whether the Mound House would be rented out for private events. Ms. Giesen referred to Resolution 05-13 and Exhibit C concerning specific uses for the Mound House.

Mr. Bodenhafer questioned the feasibility of limiting beer and wine to the interior of the Mound House. Ms. Giesen replied that Town Council would have to approve it.

Mr. Durrett recommended that CELCAB encourage people to kayak to the Mound House and he felt that closing at 6-6:30 p.m. was better than 5 p.m.

Mr. Bodenhafer expressed concern regarding funding. He preferred to continue to shuttle people until it was proven that additional parking was needed. He agreed that there should be lighting and he suggested a motion sensor light.

Mr. Durrett clarified that he recommended lighting at the entrance of the parking lot, not the entire lot.

Ms. Shamp remarked that she would not vote for the request if lighting was included. She stated that the request complied with the conditions.
Chair Zuba felt that there should be some designation of the entry with subtle lighting, such as a bollard light.

MOTION: Mr. Durrett moved to approve both rezoning to community facilities and the approval of special exception for the parking lot with the listed staff conditions, the restrictions that any lighting, if any, would be limited to the entrance and change the closing time to 6 p.m., except for Town approved special events; second by Mr. Kakatsch.

VOTE: Motion approved; 5-0 (Ms. Plummer and Mr. Steele excused).

Adjourn as LPA and reconvene as Historic Preservation Board - 10:50 a.m.

MOTION: Chair Zuba moved to adjourn as LPA and reconvene as Historic Preservation Board; second by Ms. Shamp.

VOTE: Motion approved; 5-0 (Ms. Plummer and Mr. Steele excused).

Special Certificate of Appropriateness - Newton Park Signage
Mr. Noble reviewed the packet of information and he pointed out that the large overhead sign was removed for consideration. He noted that the TDC provided funding. Maureen Rischitelli, Director of Administrative Services, explained that the sponsor panel was required by the TDC.

MOTION: Mr. Bodenhafer moved to approve the special certificate of appropriateness for the Newton Park signage; second by Mr. Kakatsch.

VOTE: Motion approved; 5-0 (Ms. Plummer and Mr. Steele excused).

Chair Shamp commended Mr. Bodenhafer and his wife for making a contribution to the County Owned Matanzas Pass Preserve.

MOTION: Mr. Zuba moved to formally thank Mr. Bodenhafer and his wife for their contribution; second by Chair Shamp.

VOTE: Motion approved; 4-0 (Mr. Bodenhafer abstained, Ms. Plummer and Mr. Steele excused).

MOTION: Mr. Kakatsch moved to adjourn as HPB and reconvene as LPA; second by Mr. Bodenhafer.

VOTE: Motion approved; 5-0 (Ms. Plummer and Mr. Steele excused).

(Clerk's Note: Awaiting Form 8B, Memorandum of Voting Conflict from Member Bodenhafer)

VI. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN FISCAL YEAR 2015/2016

Ms. Rischitelli indicated that the list of proposed capital improvements were previously approved last year with the exception of 216 Connecticut St. parking, which would be determined based on the LPA's recommendations. Discussion was held concerning costs for various capital improvement projects.

MOTION: Mr. Durrett moved to approve the capital improvement plan FY 2015/2016 and resolution number 20-15; second by Mr. Bodenhafer.
VOTE: Motion approved; 5-0 (Ms. Plummer and Mr. Steele excused).

VII. EAR DISCUSSION - Review of Elements
Transportation Element

Mr. Noble began with goal seven to focus on improvements. He felt that the speeding issue should be eliminated. Mr. Durrett suggested eliminating section 73 and he discussed running a leased tram system that ran four months a year, providing golf carts as an alternative, and off-island valet parking. Discussion was held concerning costs to operate the trolley during season, tolls, the hidden path study, water taxis, floating docks and hotels providing shuttles. Mr. Noble suggested introducing different alternative travel modes such as golf carts and trams, supporting private efforts to run water taxis, and expanding the hidden path system where feasible. Discussion was held regarding a boardwalk from Times Square to the Lani Kai, traffic calming, bike racks on Estero Blvd., section 73 buildings closest to the street should be replaced, section 74 was out of date, and optimized parking supply should be slightly modified. Mr. Noble stated that a policy should be included to encourage adaptive reuse of existing structures. Discussion was held concerning how to attract pedestrian traffic south of Times Square; landscaping was a key factor. The bridge at the south end of the island was discussed as it related to policy 7-G-4. Mr. Noble remarked that the policies regulating deliveries and access to Estero Blvd. should be reworded. Discussion was held regarding rezoning and traffic impact studies.

VIII. LPA MEMBER ITEMS AND REPORTS

Mr. Kakatsch expressed concern regarding traffic on Estero Blvd. and he suggested construction occur 24/7.
Ms. Shamp relayed complaints about seaweed collecting on the beach. Mr. Durrett stated that they should involve Marine Resources Task Force (MRTF).

IX. LPA ATTORNEY ITEMS - none

X. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ITEMS - none

XI. ITEMS FOR NEXT MONTH'S AGENDA

XII. PUBLIC COMMENT - none

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Kakatsch moved to adjourn the meeting; second by Mr. Bodenhafer.
VOTE: Motion approved; 5-0 (Ms. Plummer and Mr. Steele excused).

Meeting adjourned at 12:02 p.m.

Adopted _____ With/Without changes. Motion by _____

Vote: _____

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