MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
BOCA RATON COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2024
1:30 PM

The Regular Meeting of the Boca Raton Community Redevelopment Agency was held in the Auditorium at 6500 Congress Avenue. The meeting was called to order by Chair Fran Nachlas at 1:31 PM.

Chair Nachlas announced that at the request of the City Manager and due to scheduling needs in connection with the City Council Workshop, this meeting will temporarily be adjourned and reconvene immediately following the Workshop Meeting.

The meeting was reconvened at approximately 2:31 PM and Chair Nachlas proceeded with the items on the agenda.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG:

2. ROLL CALL:

Chair Fran Nachlas
Vice Chair Andy Thomson
Commissioner Yvette Drucker
Commissioner Scott Singer
Commissioner Marc Wigder

3. AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA:

There were no amendments to the agenda.

4. MINUTES:

A. Minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 4, 2024

Motion was made by Commissioner Scott Singer, seconded by Commissioner Marc Wigder, to approve the Minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

5. PRESENTATIONS:

A. Update on East Palmetto Park Road - Alta Planning & Design

Municipal Services Director Zach Bihr introduced Alia Awwad with Alta Planning & Design. Ms. Awwad began the presentation with a brief summary of the seven community outreach events and online community input survey. She outlined the community suggestions, community impact of survey responses, safety along East Palmetto Park Road, the Vision Zero goal to moving towards zero traffic deaths, parking, and connectivity. Developed concepts included several evaluated options: keeping current conditions (no build) east of US1, an enhanced option that would repurpose some street parking spaces for expanded sidewalks and green space, a further enhanced option going from a 5 to 4 lane conversion for more space, having a pedestrian realm on both sides of the road by going to a 5 to 3 lane conversion, and lastly, a travel lane/on-street parking conversion which maintains travel lanes at peak times and converts outside lanes to parking during off-peak times. Maps and diagrams were shown for each option. Tradeoff analyses of the options were then reviewed, such as intersection safety improvements, traffic impacts, parking considerations, and tree canopy. Other options resulting from community input were also shown and included an elevated walkway/bikeway over the median to minimize impact inspired by the High Line in New York City, elevating East Palmetto Park Road itself,

and elevating Dixie Highway itself. Next steps were outlined and a slide showing downtown connectivity was shown. Upon concluding, Ms. Awwad made herself available for questions. Mr. Bihr added that staff had been working closely with Alta to present all possibilities to Council. Further analysis would be needed for costs and engineering on any of the options. Extended discussion began with Council Members providing their thoughts on the options presented and additional suggestions. Mr. Bihr provided additional information and Executive Director George Brown complimented Alta and staff for their hard work.

B. Presentation by Juan Caycedo - requested by Chair Fran Nachlas

Andrea Levine O'Rourke, representing Workshop 344, a group initiative invested in improving East Palmetto Park Road, began the presentation by explaining the group's mission. She outlined the history of Downtown Boca Raton visioning, strengths and weaknesses of the area, priorities for change, definition of Type C Streets, and effects of a three-lane section. Ms. Levine O'Rourke elaborated on the group's recommendation to reconfigure Palmetto Park Road as a three-lane road with parking on both sides as they feel it provides the most flexibility for emergency vehicles in the event of a blocked lane and to eliminate right turn lanes in pedestrian zones. A photo was displayed of Palmetto Park Road showing three segments: west, downtown, and beach, and issues such as evacuation, emergency response and safety vs. perceived delays were reviewed. The group requested time to further collaborate with Alta and City staff. Juan Caycedo, architect and member of Workshop 344, continued the presentation showing various slides including a bridge sketch connecting the Brightline station over Dixie and Federal Highways to Sanborn Square and a re-imagining of East Palmetto Park Road with a roundabout at 5th Avenue. Additional features such as a three-lane section, gondolas, roundabout at Mizner, and elevated crosswalks would create a bold, signature street.

Commissioner Scott Singer left the meeting at approximately 2:30 PM.

Deputy Mayor Drucker commented on having a process for ad-hoc presentations. Council Member Wigder suggested having a Downtown Task Force and thanked everyone for the presentations. Chairman Nachlas also thanked everyone for the presentation and was amenable to having a future Workshop meeting to hear other ideas.

6. QUASI-JUDICIAL AND RELATED PUBLIC HEARINGS:

There was no business to consider.

7. PUBLIC REQUESTS:

David Kaye commented on previous remarks regarding traffic delays along East Palmetto Park Road and emphasized a dangerous intersection on NE 5th Avenue due to cars speeding around the corner. He felt that brightly painted crosswalks would help drivers to be more aware with a minimal cost involved.

Jonathan Ounjian commented on various issues regarding development in the City and Ms. Drucker responded.

8. RESOLUTIONS AND REGULAR PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. Resolution No. 2024-08-CRA

A resolution of the Boca Raton Community Redevelopment Agency amending the rules of the Boca Raton Community Redevelopment Agency for Individual Development Application (IDA) procedures for clarity and to delegate approval authority for IDA building permit review to staff for process efficiency consistent with Ordinance No. 5706; providing for severability; providing for repealer; providing an effective date (AM-24-10)

Executive Director George Brown gave a brief summary of the resolution. The public hearing was opened and, seeing no one come forward, closed.

Motion was made by Commissioner Yvette Drucker, seconded by Commissioner Marc Wigder, to approve Resolution No. 2024-08-CRA. Motion passed on a 4 to 0 vote; Chair Fran Nachlas, Vice Chair Andy Thomson, Commissioner Yvette Drucker, Commissioner Marc Wigder voting yes.

9. OTHER BUSINESS/SETTLEMENTS:

There was no other business to consider.

10. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

A. Update on the Downtown Projects

Ruby Riley, Downtown Manager, gave the presentation. She provided an update on hurricane and storm preparations completed at Mizner Park and Sanborn Square, and new additions to Mizner Park including an art piece. The tree trimming for the holiday season was completed in Sanborn Square, paver repairs were ongoing in the Downtown, and staff continued to explore installing digital information kiosks. Upon concluding, Ms. Riley made herself available for questions.

B. Update on Parking for Businesses with No On-Site Parking

Stephen Timberlake, Special Projects Manager, gave the presentation. He began with review of parking along the NE 1st Avenue zone and the launch of a pilot parking program for a 29-minute free parking zone. An overview was given of potential risks, how the process would work, and meter transaction steps. Next steps were presented. Upon concluding, Mr. Timberlake made himself available for questions. Ms. Nachlas commented on the concerns of a business owner who only has on-street parking and how it would affect his business. Discussion ensued. There was consensus to move forward with the 29-minute free parking on a three-month trial basis.

11. ATTORNEY'S REPORT:

The Agency Attorney had no report.

12. COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS:

Deputy Mayor Drucker gave a brief PowerPoint presentation with an update on her attendance at the National League of Cities: Tampa City Summit and participation in several constituency groups for transportation infrastructure, Hispanic Elected Officials, and Women in Municipal Government.

Council Member Wigder inquired about a new traffic study in conjunction with the extension of Ordinance 4035. Mr. Brown responded that a new study would need to be researched and commented on the risk of traffic building on Palmetto Park Road. Mr. Wigder shared a photo and commented on having a policy against parking on a bike lane. Mr. Brown reported there was code already in place and monitored by the parking division. Mr. Wigder then commented on the Boca Connect, an article on Robotaxis being tested in BRiC, new historical exhibits for the Boca Raton Centennial and suggested having a ceremonial meeting around the May charter date in 2025 at the Council Chambers of the Old Town Hall.

Chair Nachlas highlighted upcoming Downtown events and showed photos of her and fellow commissioners at various community events. She reminded everyone to download Myboca.us apps and take the Downtown mobility survey.

13. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned without objection at approximately 5:12 PM.

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Fran Nachlas, Chair

ATTEST:

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Kathleen Maxwell, Recorder on behalf of
Mary Siddons, City Clerk