



# always delray

## STEERING COMMITTEE –LIVE SUB-GROUP MINUTES

June 21, 2017, 6PM

ESD, 434 SOUTH SWINTON AVENUE, DELRAY BEACH, FLORIDA

- **Attendees:** David Schmidt, Anne Gannon, John Miller, Yvonne Odom, Alene Egol, Joy Howell, Steve Mackey, Kelley Johnson, Andy Katz, Reginald Cox, Jeff Meiselman

### 1. Call to Order

David Schmidt called the meeting to order at 6:04pm

David Schmidt welcomed the newest Steering Committee member, Anne Gannon.

### 2. Approval of Minutes

David Schmidt presented the minutes from the February 15, 2017 Steering Committee meeting for approval. ves.

All voted in favor to approve the minutes.

### 3. Steering Committee Discussion

- Mark Stivers informed the Board members that two Steering Committee members have resigned –Tom Laudani and Yulia Konovnitsyna.

Mark provided Comp Plan updates:

Mark stated that the City has signed a new contract with The Mellgren Planning Group (TMPG) and that they are very dedicated and committed to keeping the project on task. City Staff are now reviewing the draft documents including the data, graphs, background information and goals, objectives and policies.

He informed the Committee that as the elements start rolling out, the sub-groups will be meeting to review and edit them. A key part of this review is to make sure that the public comments what have been received have been included in the Elements as appropriate.

The other big change that has happened is that Staff met with the City Manager and the Commissioners, and thanks to Vice Mayor Jim Chard, they realized the time line for this project was unreasonable to have it adopted by

February. Mr. Stivers further explained that with the expanded timeframe, the project team will be able to expand the public input process. A meeting will be scheduled in in mid or late August to walk through the first four draft elements.

The goal is to have all the elements drafted and complete by mid to late November. At that time We are then going to shop it around and make sure people get a look at it, we're going to let the public see it, then clean it up, and then we are going to get it into the formal review process with the end goal of having a final adoption in July 2018.

Mark Stivers introduced the new Assistant City Manager, Caryn Gardner-Young and Kailtyn Forbes from The Mellgren Planning Group (TMPG).

Ms. Forbes stated that the end goal is to go for an award-winning Plan, a bright, contemporary, readable, user-friendly document. She also provided background information on TMPG. Ms. Forbes stated that TMPG has finished drafting three elements, Intergovernmental Coordination, Capital Improvement, and Public Facilities in Phase 1; Phase 2 is being worked on as well, and Phase 3 will be due around Thanksgiving.

Mark Stivers proceeded to provide highlights of the last three Community Meetings.

#### LIVE 1 Meeting, March 15, 2017

Mark Stivers discussed the Housing and Historic Preservation Elements and noted that one of the big issues that came up was homelessness and stated that the City Commission recently discussed the Caring Kitchen's search for a new home. Public input focused on the provision of shelter for the homeless and building homes for them. There was a presentation at a recent City Commission meeting regarding the Downtown Ambassador Program that the DDA has, and one of the things they do is wake up some of the homeless people and make them move.

Anne Gannon inquired if the City has undertaken a study of the homeless people determining what their needs are? Mark Stivers responded that the Homeless Task Force did a time and place study in March, counting how many homeless people there are in the City.

Anne Gannon stated that as important as the count is, the City needs to find out what their needs are so we can get them back on their feet. It will help us determine the next steps we need to take to help them.

Yvonne Odom stated that that the school district has a person who is in charge of homeless students who go to school.

Commissioner Chard stated that there are 190 homeless students in the City.

Yvonne Odom responded that maybe we should have some coordination with the school district. Do we make them independent or do we keep them homeless forever?

Anne Gannon stated that there are organizations like the Lord's Place that have facilities in West Palm, Lake Worth, but the person needs to make a commitment to not drink, etc. They actually have a culinary school there.

Doctor Victor Kirshen stated that this is a county problem. How does Delray get involved? And if we do get involved, where is the money going to come from?

Anne Gannon responded that this is a money problem. This is about connecting the homeless to the organizations that already exist.

Mark Stivers stated that this is part of the Intergovernmental Coordination element, and the City just made a list of all the inter-local agreements. We all need to work together. It is similar to traffic issues. A City cannot solve traffic problems by itself because there are people who pass through our City. These are all regional issues, but we have to take responsibility and work together.

Vice Mayor Chard stated that there is a homeless task force that is organized by Ezra Klein, who is in charge of low income housing. He stated that a more comprehensive approach should be taken to connect their efforts with what we're doing.

Alene Egol stated that there are faith-based organizations including Goodwill and The Lewis Center. We have to be able to get homeless people to these organizations not only to survive, but be trained or get the professional help they need.

Mark Stivers stated that we have a great connection with Healthier Delray Beach, and they are key partners in this.

Mr. Stivers stated another key topic was affordable housing and how we maintain housing stock in the City for everyone. One of the main points that has come up in almost every meeting is the housing gap: There's housing and programs for low-income people and we have a lot of housing being

built for the market rate housing. But our housing study shows those homes are starting at \$500,000-\$600,000 and up. So there is a crisis of this gap between the two.

Mr. Stivers stated that some of the things that came out the meetings are providing incentives to developers and builders for increasing density in order to help them to be able to build more at a lower final cost.

Yvonne Odom stated that she would love to see people who work for the City be part of this incentive, because there are a lot of people who work for the City and they cannot afford to live here, including teachers who teach here.

Reggie Cox stated that regarding homelessness, we know it's a regional program, but I think we need to have a real conversation regarding what is Delray's contribution going to be to this? We have to look at the absorption rate compared to other areas (e.g. Miami Dade) and determine what resources we will need.

In regards to affordable housing, the CRA is preparing The Set Transformation Plan. All the data just came out, and it talks about the housing gap. We need to infuse that information into this process.

Mark Stivers informed the Board that The Set Transformation Plan is being reviewed and as soon as they get it cleaned up, will be provided to the group. Mr. Stivers also shared with the Board that the City Commission approved an inter-local agreement with Treasure Coast Regional Planning and South Florida Transit to do a study of the new rail station. Tri-Rail and the Coastal Link plan is looking to locate a station just north of Atlantic Avenue and a design charrette is being planned for this fall.

Another study that is happening is the DDA is partnering with Robert Gibbs to do a retail study of the area. They'll be looking at local businesses, rental rates, etc.

The other study involves working with the County and the MPO to change how we assess the transportation impact fee. Right now the City has a transportation concurrency exception area in the downtown which will probably go away and be replaced with a mobility fee.

Steve Mackey stated that the only way we can address affordable housing is to build more units. So in regards to long term planning, we need to figure out where these units are going to go. You need more units to make it affordable.

Yvonne Odom suggested that she would like us to do more mixed housing where there are different price points for housing and different housing types in the same area instead of concentrating low income housing in one area.

David Schmidt stated that if the study with Robert Gibbs identifies areas or nodes where we want to place mixed housing there needs to be neighborhood oriented businesses.

Alene Egol suggested that tax abatement programs should be investigated.

Anne Gannon responded that the program would first have to come from the State of Florida, it would not come out of Delray Beach and it is very difficult to tell that to the general population because what really happens is the tax base gets shifted to people who can pay it.

John Miller inquired if the City has a history of going from R-1 (Single Family) zoning to RM (Multiple Family) zoning, because that's what may be required.

Mark Stivers stated that it is often a hard sell because you can add some higher density on the edges, but when you start getting into the inner neighborhoods it becomes difficult to do this without changing the character of the neighborhood which often results in a lot of push back from the residents that.

Vice Mayor Chard stated that this really goes into the intergovernmental part of the Comp Plan and we do have three entities in the City that do work on affordable housing: the CRA, the Delray Beach Land Trust, and the Housing Authority. It would seem that they are major leverage points that need to be incorporated into the Plan. He noted that as proud as he is of those programs, he believes we can be doing more.

Mark Stivers mentioned the action of the City Commission with respect to the new ordinance regarding community residences, and the issue regarding the rehab industry and their housing impacts.

Mr. Stivers also stated that for affordable housing and mixed types of housing, there has been numerous comments in the Community Meetings regarding micro units but our LDRs currently don't allow them. This is something we need to look into.

Andy Katz suggested that in writing the Comp Plan, maybe using a side bar that has no more than eight points on a certain document, provides to the reader the gist of the document and maybe they will be inclined to read it.

Reggie Cox stated that gentrification is not new, but we need to decide how serious we are about it. He stated that the Set Transformation Plan is a wealth-building plan. So there is a housing crisis but there is also a serious stock of sub-standard housing that exists in our community as identified 20-30 years ago. There needs to be a strong implementation plan that comes out the Comp Plan. What we have to think about is how do we leverage the tax dollars, and involve partnerships with other organizations to get those funds in from other areas to help us.

John Miller suggested that the City needs to tie this to historic preservation. There are five historic districts in Delray which contain some of the most desirable properties because they are downtown. So the development pressures on those homes are immense. Why do people come here? Is it the look, the feeling of walking downtown? If we aren't careful, we can build up density and look like Boynton and Boca, is that what we want for Delray?

Mark Stivers suggested that the members view the meeting on the City Commission meeting on June 13<sup>th</sup>, because the Preservation Task Force gave an amazing presentation to Commission.

Anne Gannon stated that when the historic designation was placed on her neighborhood it was to save the neighborhood which had a lot of dilapidated houses. Historic districts get a bad name and we need to change the perception of that. A designation is saving the character of Delray.

Steve Mackey stated that what happens is a designation puts limitations on a structure, and some people feel like their property rights are being taken away, and therefore push back. Maybe the City can provide them other ways to use that property. The hard part is trying to give these structures a second life. If we can convince the home owners to get the structures a second life, we can preserve it properly.

John Miller stated that they're very attractive targets for redevelopment because they are generally close to downtown and are generally small structures on large lots, so if you have a 15,000 sq. ft. lot and a 2,000 sq. ft. house, and someone can put up 10,000 sq. ft. on it and get it to \$2 million with a cost of \$400,000 to purchase. That's why the historic districts and the residents that live there are fanatical about preserving and protecting it.

Steve Mackey stated that it needs to be communicated what the second life could be.

John Miller stated that adaptive reuse is necessary to continue our historic districts, but it has to be appropriate.

Mark Stivers stated that one of the big topics is preserving the landscaping and the historic trees.

Vice Mayor Chard noted that there are a lot of trees that are older than the historic houses and contribute equally to the actual buildings. Also, the streetscape is very appealing, and often we don't include that in our historic preservation. In a lot of cases the old trees are removed but then the lot stays empty for years, when the tree could have stayed there.

#### LIVE 2 Meeting, April 29, 2017

Mark stated that the next Community Meeting focused on Transportation & Mobility and Healthy Communities. A big topic was complete streets and a copy of the new City's policy on complete streets policy was provided to the members. Mark also stated that the discussion involved:

- The Mobility Fee and how we are collecting impact fees now
- The key streets that need transformation?
- That we need to work with our partners on those are county roads i.e. Congress Avenue, portions of Atlantic Avenue where we don't have full control of those roadways
- Better signage, and to promote more mass City transportation and expand the trolley routes.

Mark Stivers stated that complete streets are truly being able to accommodate *all* modes of transportation in that corridor. And maybe the complete street isn't just one road, maybe it's the road plus an associated alley or an associated drainage area that can also be used for transportation.

Joy Howell inquired what a complete street would look like on Swinton Avenue.

Mark Stivers stated that for Swinton Avenue, it would include adding in a buffered bike lane so you have room for bikes to travel. Instead of putting one on each side, you put a dual lane on one side of the road, and that's where we're looking at with the County along Dixie Highway, and include a sidewalk. You might choke the road down a little bit, but you make room for other modes of transportation.

Mark Stivers noted that one of the biggest things the City is going to be attacking right away is sidewalks, building complete connected sidewalk system throughout the City is important.

Vice Mayor Chard: What needs to be considered is how wide we want our streets to be or how narrow can we make them? There are cities that have 15 foot right-of-ways for roads.

John Miller stated that because those landscape islands on Swinton Ave and Seacrest Blvd, you can't make a turn there. Landscape people driving trailers drive up over the island. So a good design doesn't mean just narrowing, but making it livable as well.

Mark Stivers: That's why I say complete streets have to accommodate everyone. One of our biggest issues with complete streets is accommodating emergency vehicles. Also mentioned was the conversation from the Planning and Zoning Board meeting that the City really needs to overhaul our parking standards and the new focus on mechanical lifts.

Vice Mayor Chard stated the City needs dis-incentives for people to come in a car.

Mark Stivers mentioned that the County is looking at Route 1 Federal Highway, looking at the corridor, and they're studying it from the southern tip of Boca to above West Palm. The County and the MPO are all working together with that.

Healthy Communities – the key issues identified:

- Basic nutrition and getting that into schools.
- Addressing homelessness.
- Addition of neighborhood commercial uses – where you can buy fresh produce.
- Expanding community gardens.
- Access to local healthcare. It's something we really need to address.
- Safe routes to school.
- Reducing crimes in neighborhoods.
- Affordable housing.
- The issue of getting the neighborhood to work together and how do we get these neighborhood units.
- Dealing with the sober homes or community residences.
- Building partnerships can we build? How do we build partnerships to accomplish our goals?

Steve Mackey inquired if Paint up Delray and Curb Appeal are coming back as they have not been held up for a couple years.



Reggie Cox responded to that the Community Improvement runs Curb Appeal.

GROW Meeting, May 20, 2017

Mark Stivers stated that the May 20<sup>th</sup> meeting focused on future land use, sustainability and resilience, and public facilities and identified the following key issues:

- Public Facilities: Capital Improvement Plan, how are projects funded and how do we fund them? The Commission did pass a very large \$31 million bond to begin working on some significant capital improvement projects in the City, so we have to make sure we prioritize and get a lot of these projects done as efficiently as possible.
- What is the role of the government and what is the role of the private sector.

Reggie Cox stated that we need to evaluate what the non-profits good at? Delray has a lot of experts in all neighborhoods in the City.

Yvonne Odom responded that a big component is Parks and Recreation where public and private can work together, and really help the kids too.

Vice Mayor Chard stated that from a comprehensive plan point of view, we should make it very clear if we are going to support golf courses and the tennis center. And if so, are they the same golf courses we have now? They do represent a huge opportunity to be mixed recreational use.

Yvonne Odom agreed. She stated that when you own the land, you can partner with whoever you want. But once you sell it, you've given up your rights as the public, and everyone cannot afford to be a member to play golf.

Anne Gannon inquired in the light industrial and industrial areas, do we know how many of those buildings back there are businesses and not empty? It' is a great space that is underutilized (along 10<sup>th</sup> and Linton).

Steve Mackey responded that they are and the industrial real estate market is shifting from your small bay type and during the last housing bubble, they took most of the land and built housing on it, squeezing the industrial land even smaller. And then they took commerce, and they're building huge distribution places. So any small bay building is probably under the most pressure under any real estate in South Florida.

Anne Gannon stated that most of the small businesses in Pineapple Grove are being pushed out. I'm getting ready to lose more tomorrow. Where do you go for the drycleaner and the flower shop? I would not want to change that.

Steve Mackey mentions that the ones who service homes are the ones in the bay buildings. He further states it would be nice to see if we can have another conversation about an open-space land trust. So 50 years from now, we can pull together our vacant land and make a park or something by creating a land trust, such as in Colorado, you can borrow against it, and the City can fund it, trade with developers. There are a lot of mechanisms for land swaps and leveraging. But you need to have that 50 year vision.

Vice Mayor Chard stated that we do have a land trust in Delray. So far, it has only focused on residential land. There is no reason they couldn't also do commercial and open space. It has the mechanisms and administrative staff.

Vice Mayor Chard inquired as to the two most rapid growing uses in Delray are? And further questioned if from a Comprehensive point of view, do we want to be a car dealership or self-storage city?

Steve Mackey responded that the self-storage that we are talking about is low impact and while he is not sure if it's good or bad for a city, many people are downsizing homes and need to put their stuff somewhere.

John Miller stated that within the last five years, the square footage for parking space has doubled.

Vice Mayor Chard inquired if the community wants the City to have tools to address that. I think the solution we came up with Kaufman Lynn was ingenious. It was dead space because it was next to the railroad tracks, so have self-storage there doesn't cut down on the quality of life in the City. But West Atlantic? North Federal? That's a different story.

Steve Mackey stated that the car dealerships model has shifted, the more cars they can store on-site, the more money they make. He said that is why these cars pour out of everywhere, where maybe 15 years ago, dealerships weren't storing so many.

Vice Mayor responded that why they are going vertical, the Gunther Volvo on north Federal is going up six stories.

Mark Stivers reminded the Board of the upcoming Sub-group meetings

#### **4. Adjourn**