



always delray

STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES

July 19, 2017, 6PM

ESD, 434 SOUTH SWINTON AVENUE, DELRAY BEACH, FLORIDA

➤ **Attendees:**

Steering Committee-David Schmidt (Chairperson), Anne Gannon, Alene Egol, Joy Howell, Kelley Johnson, Andy Katz, Reginald Cox, Yvonne Odom
Staff-Mark Stivers, Jasmin Allen
Consultant-Althea Jefferson, The Melgren Planning Group

1. Call to Order

Mr. Schmidt called the meeting to order at 6:04pm

2. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Schmidt approved the minutes from the June 21, 2017 Steering Committee meeting.

Mr. Stivers made one change to the minutes; change the header from "LIVE Subgroup Minutes" to "Steering Committee Minutes."

All voted in favor to approve the minutes.

3. Steering Committee Discussion

Mr. Schmidt stated that Vice Mayor Jim Chard was the Steering Committee Vice Chairperson. He suggested that the Steering Committee appoint a new Vice Chairperson in case he can't make it for a meeting.

Mr. Schmidt opened the floor for nominations.

Ms. Gannon nominated Ms. Odom.

The motion to appoint Ms. Odom as Vice Chairperson of the Steering Committee was approved.

Mr. Stivers introduced Althea Jefferson from The Melgren Planning Group (TMPG) for an update on the progress of the Comprehensive Plan and notes from the City Commission.

Ms. Jefferson stated she was going to go over item 4 (status update) on the agenda first. She said TMPG met the deadline for phase one by submitting the draft documents for the following elements:

- 🌸 Public Facilities and Services
- 🌸 Future Land Use
- 🌸 Intergovernmental Coordination
- 🌸 Capital Improvement

Ms. Jefferson noted that all phase one elements, except for Future Land Use, were turned in mid-July. Future Land Use was turned in towards the end of the deadline. She said that TMPG received comments from staff on those three elements.

Ms. Jefferson went over the drafts that are due in mid-September:

- 🌸 Housing
- 🌸 Transportation and mobility
- 🌸 Economic development
- 🌸 Coastal management
- 🌸 Open space and recreation

Ms. Jefferson stated that TMPG had met with staff and subject matter experts this week and went over the elements in phase three. She said there is currently a document inventory –a list of documents, by element, that were needed to make the proper updates. She said in addition to that information, the public comments further added to necessary updates.

Ms. Jefferson moved on to item 5A in the agenda, which went over the comments and feedback from the City Commission.

Ms. Jefferson said it is required to get feedback from the community in regards to the new Comprehensive Plan –Always Delray. She went over a photo from one of the community meetings, emphasizing the importance of community involvement.

Ms. Jefferson stressed the importance and uniqueness of adding an Economic Development Element, a Healthy Community Element, and an Education and Public School Facilities Element to the new Comprehensive Plan. She said the City Commission continued to stress the importance of education at all levels.

Ms. Jefferson went over more points made by City Commission:

- 🌸 Invest in community housing
- 🌸 Create more sustainable living
- 🌸 Have a true town center –live, work, play
- 🌸 Encourage visitors to actively travel (go to local restaurants)
- 🌸 Show people the importance of the City's historic trees and historic landmarks

- 🌸 Integrate eco-tourism/historic tourism within the realm of economic development
- 🌸 Make sure to touch every facet of the community (e.g. create material in different languages)
- 🌸 Plan for climate change and environment
- 🌸 Find creative processes to include things that would be appealing to not just residents, but visitors and businesses
- 🌸 Continue implementing policies in regards to recycling and safe communities –the current Plan protects and invigorates neighborhood plans (e.g. The Set)
- 🌸 Encourage more energy-efficient construction and appealing design

Ms. Jefferson stated TMPG has drafted the five C's of the Plan:

🌸 CENTERS

- ❖ Promote future growth and development in compact urban centers with amenities
- ❖ Serve as a destination, not pass-throughs >local land values increase, educational attainment increases, jobs increase
- ❖ Ms. Jefferson stated that in regard to centers, City Commission said they want to see:
 - More community centers
 - More incentives for developers
 - The City seize opportunities to engage and accomplish projects (redevelopment of City Hall and/or the Tennis Center with amenities)
 - More satellite locations that are more modernized
 - Congress Ave as the next big development >address workforce housing, don't recreate Federal Highway, and focus on small units
 - Priorities of actions
- ❖ Ms. Jefferson stated that Always Delray will have measureable performance measures that can be reviewed every few years.

🌸 CONSERVATION

- ❖ Protect the City's most precious resources
- ❖ Provide assurance of quality development that respects the City's physical features and environmental resources
- ❖ Ms. Jefferson stated that in regard to centers, City Commission said they want to see:
 - The E4 canal, parallel to Congress Ave, given a linear park design
 - Water retention >make those areas more park-like
 - The City show leadership in regards to Sustainability
 - Sea level rise to be addressed

- Better management in relation to number of parks the City has
- More efforts in encouraging a healthy lifestyle >utilize parks
- Integration of businesses in eco-tourism

COMMERCE

- ❖ Expedite the permit review process >cannot state it specifically in the Comprehensive Plan, must be done in LDRs
 - The Comprehensive Plan can establish policies that address implementing such wording in the LDRs
- ❖ The Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council is coming out with the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the region, including Delray Beach.

CONNECTIVITY

- ❖ Connect centers by corridors served by multi-model transportation systems
- ❖ Connect to all centers and services
- ❖ Ms. Jefferson stated that in regard to connectivity, City Commission said they want to see:
 - Complete streets
 - An environmental friendly alternative to the City trolley
 - More advertisement for golf cart transportation service (the Downtowner)

COMMUNITY

- ❖ Ms. Jefferson emphasized the significance of the City's neighborhood plans
 - Those plans will help redevelopment and revitalization in the future
- ❖ Preserving historical resources
- ❖ Educational resources and opportunities

Ms. Jefferson wrapped up the presentation and asked the group if they had any questions or feedback.

Ms. Odom stated the City Commission also emphasized the importance of trees. She said it is not in the current Plan and it needs to be addressed in Always Delray.

Ms. Jefferson said that trees will definitely be addressed in Always Delray, as well as policies that address the tree canopy.

Mr. Stivers stressed that in order to change the code, the City has to base the change on policies adopted by the City in the Comprehensive Plan. He said the tough balance is differentiating policies that apply to trees on City/public property, and trees on private residences.

The group brought up points to take into consideration when planting trees:

- 🌸 Watch trees with large roots and their proximity to sidewalks
- 🌸 Take into consideration which type of tree to plant > trees that bloom seeds or flowers that may stain sidewalks should be placed further away from right of ways

Ms. Odom asked about the vegetation on the beach; she said that there has been controversy as to whether the vegetation should have been cut or not.

Mr. Katz said the goal was to trim the vegetation back to 42 inches (about waist high). It is both environmentally desirable and gives people a view of the beach.

Mr. Stivers directed the Steering Committee to walk through all the major elements and identify major comments that came out of the community meetings. He briefly went over some main points within each element:

HOMELESSNESS

- 🌸 Moving forward with working together with partners
- 🌸 Building homes, affordable housing
- 🌸 Caring kitchen

AFFORDABLE/ATTAINABLE HOUSING

- 🌸 Filling in the housing gap \$150 -\$500; the City has subsidized housing and the City has housing in the \$600s and up
- 🌸 Housing diversity > allow for smaller units
- 🌸 More density > brings the prices of units down

Mr. Stivers stated that southern Palm Beach County is one of the fastest growing areas in the country.

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

- 🌸 According to the survey, a lot of people were in favor of closing down all or part of Atlantic Avenue to vehicles during a portion of the year

Mr. Stivers said that some communities have been successful with such, and some have failed; therefore, the City must think about it carefully.

- 🌸 Make the city more bikeable, not just walkable
- 🌸 Increase lighting where people want to walk (safety)

- ❖ Look into solar lighting
- 🌸 Continue or improve safety around the City of Delray Beach
 - ❖ Threats: sober homes
 - ❖ Liven/brighten the alleys

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

- 🌸 Make historic sound like it is valuable, not simply additional pressure or additional regulations
 - ❖ Look at the policies the City has set >how can the City not overburden property owners
- 🌸 Provide more incentives to historically designate homes
 - Some instances involve the conversion of historic properties into something other than a residence (e.g. bed and breakfast, office) >can get controversial
 - What is the ability to covert historic homes to other uses in the City?

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/MISC.

- 🌸 Small businesses getting pushed out due to high rent downtown
 - ❖ Gentrification: small businesses cannot afford rent; large corporations can afford the rent
 - ❖ Partner with a non-profit developer or development corporations (e.g. CRA)

Mr. Cox said the City needs to establish policies and incentives to provide affordable rents for businesses and residential homes.

- 🌸 How does the City keep land value from going up so fast?
- 🌸 What is the business model that will put affordability into businesses

Ms. Jefferson said to take a look at the Palmer Neighborhood in Orlando, Florida as a precedent

Mr. Stivers said that it is important to form policies that address such incentives into the LDRs. For example, one is allowed a base value of "x," but if one wants to go above "x," one has to look at community values to give back.

Ms. Odom said she is concerned about developers providing affordable units, thus getting the benefits, but then establishing a high HOA fee, which then defeats the purpose of affordable units. She said that along with affordable units, maybe there can be a way to put a cap on HOA fees.

Ms. Odom also said the City should establish a “nuisance tax” on property owners that let their home deteriorate. She expressed her frustration with property taxes rising for those who choose to improve their home, and property taxes lowering for those who neglect their home. She said it should be flipped.

Mr. Cox said that topic relates to code enforcement and minimum housing standards. He said it is easy to start a case, but difficult to follow a case through.

Mr. Cox said that the City of Hollywood tied their minimum housing standards with their Code of Ordinances. It was placed under a property owner’s tax bill each year. He said that is something the City of Delray Beach can think of.

Mr. Katz asked Mr. Stivers to explain the difference between a conservation district and a historic district in regards to abatement policies.

Mr. Stivers said that there are different levels of historic preservation; therefore, a historic district has more rules and regulations. A conservation district sets fewer regulations that tie with the established guidelines to preserve the context of the neighborhood.

Mr. Stivers said that one of the most pressed comments throughout the community meetings was to spend more time on education –education on *all* elements. More education about:

- 🌸 Safety
- 🌸 Environmental issues
- 🌸 Preparing for disaster
- 🌸 Property and maintenance –what is and is not tolerated
- 🌸 Etc.

PARKING AND CONGESTION

- 🌸 Some methods include simply letting the area get congested to the point where people see that other forms of transportation are more efficient
- 🌸 Different forms of transit downtown
- 🌸 Improved signage –more interesting way-finding signs

HEALTHY COMMUNITY

- 🌸 Access
 - ❖ To healthcare –especially in the NW and SW Neighborhoods
 - ❖ To healthy food
 - ❖ Different modes of getting around
- 🌸 Risky behavior
 - ❖ Not working together

the group moved back to the topic of economic development

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Stivers said the technology in the City is deficient; therefore the City needs to provide more and better access to internet, wifi and other technologies.

Mr. Stivers brushed on the topic of micro-transmitters. He said they can be pro-located on pre-existing structures.

The group discussed South Miami's new regulation to use renewable energy in new buildings. The group agreed that is something that should go into the Comp Plan.

Mr. Stivers said that the use of renewable energy is beneficial not only for energy conservation, but also for post-disaster recovery mitigation.

Mr. Stivers said that while the community survey showed that 78% of people want to see Congress Avenue as the next target development area, the City Commission has West Atlantic Avenue as their top priority (1. West Atlantic Avenue; 2. South Federal Highway; 3. Congress Avenue).

COASTAL MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

- 🌸 New facilities will need to be elevated and built to withstand damage from storms
- 🌸 Establish safe havens in the event of a natural disaster
- 🌸 Minimize density on the Barrier Islands and increase density in other areas in the City

The group dives back into affordable housing

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr. Cox brought up the possibility of increasing mixed housing types

Mr. Stivers said that the City needs to be careful with inclusionary zoning policies –some have succeeded and some failed miserably

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Ms. Gannon expressed concerns about the utilization of the parks (e.g. small parks getting taken over by Pokémon groups)

Mr. Stivers said that in that case, it is difficult to regulate a public use.

RECYCLING

Mr. Stivers asks how the City can further promote and/or incentivize recycling programs (e.g. beach clean-up parties).

Mr. Stivers also touched on the City creating development standards that will encourage more green building, and using renewable energy sources.

Ms. Odom asked what FPL is doing in regards to energy and how can Delray Beach work with that.

Mr. Schmidt brought up the formation of a solar co-op.

Mr. Stivers went over the timeline chart: He talked about scheduling a meeting in late August to go over the revised draft elements in phase one. He said that there will be another meeting in November or December that will go over the revised draft elements in phase two and three.

Mr. Stivers stated that after the Steering Committee review of all revised draft elements, TMPG will go through a final walk through, looking at all of the elements. He said the goal is to have a complete draft of everything (end of December/early January).

Mr. Stivers also stressed that in the upcoming public meetings, the City will put extra effort into capturing audiences of all ages –especially the younger generation.

The group finished wrapping up the meeting.

4. Adjourn