

**ENGLEWOOD COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA (CRA)
ADVISORY BOARD
Minutes of January 10, 2008**

A regular meeting of the Englewood Community Redevelopment Area Advisory Board was held on Thursday, January 10, 2008, at 1:00 p.m., at Lemon Bay Park, 570 Bay Park Blvd., Englewood, FL.

Members Present

John Radkins, Chairman
Harry Colburn
Norman Caldwell
John Davison, Vice-Chairman
Mary Ellen Diez
John Mead
Todd Tracy

Sarasota County Staff Present

Debbie Marks, CRA Coordinator
Jessi Pasternak, Admin. Assistant II CRA
Jim Ballenger, Mobility/Road Program

Call to Order

Chairman John Radkins called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Roll was taken and Harry Colburn, John Radkins, Todd Tracy, John Mead, John Davison and Norman Caldwell were all present. Board member Mary Ellen Diez was delayed and in route to the meeting. She was not present for roll. There was a quorum.

Approval of Minutes

December 13, 2007

Chairman Radkins questioned if there were any changes to the December 13th minutes. Todd Tracy responded with one correction on page three, second paragraph, line five. The words "on some old pilings" should be removed. The new sentence should read, "...constructing a new dock where one used to exist."

Chairman Radkins asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Todd Tracy made the motion, and John Mead seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Open to the Public

None.

Continued Items

Englewood Sidewalks: Jim Ballenger, Sarasota County Mobility/Road Program and Bill Nichols of DMK Associates returned in order to get the Advisory Board's recommendations for future sidewalks in Englewood.

Board member Mary Ellen Diez entered the meeting at this time and apologized to Chairman Radkins and the room for being late.

Chairman Radkins asked Todd Tracy to present his changes to Mr. Ballenger and Mr. Nichols, and then if the board felt they needed to add anything else they could do it after Mr. Tracy had finished. Board member Todd Tracy started by pointing out that there were some sidewalk sections already constructed that weren't on DMK's map. These sidewalks were at the intersection of McCall Road and Wentworth, which continues to Artists Ave., and there was another section in front of the Catholic Church from Old Englewood Rd. down Kilborne Avenue. In regards to the high priority sections, Mr. Tracy suggested by the school where Wentworth and McCall Road intersect. He feels that the sidewalk should continue on Wentworth towards SR 776, since it is near the elementary school. Another would be a connection from McCall Road down Perry Street to SR 776. Mr. Tracy also would like them to explore ways of connecting the north side of Englewood to the sports park off River Road. At this time, the only way of getting to the sports park is on East Dearborn Street. The sidewalks on Bay Vista Blvd. and the east side of Old Englewood Road are not a priority. However, Mr. Tracy felt that a double sidewalk down Wentworth to connect it to West Dearborn Street is important since the area is in the RCTOD plan.

Mr. Davison agreed that the side walks on the east side of Old Englewood Road are not a priority, and the areas around the elementary school should be a main focus. After some questions from the Advisory Board regarding permitting and financing, Mr. Tracy made a motion to drop the sidewalk design on the east side of Old Englewood Road, north of Wentworth. He also recommended dropping the design work for the Bay Vista Blvd. area, and to reallocate the design dollars to extend the segments on Wentworth and Perry Street. Plus, the completion of the additional sidewalk connectivity segments that DMK proposed. John Mead seconded the motion. After some discussion, the motion carried unanimous.

Comments/Reports

Marketing Plan: Chairman Radkins updated the room that the billboards have been installed at both locations (North Englewood and El Jobean). He then asked Jessi Pasternak to elaborate on the other topics that the committee discussed. Ms. Pasternak discussed several publications that the committee is advertising in, including the Boca Beacon Visitor Guide, the Englewood Sun Herald Discover Guide and the Venice Gulf Coast Living magazine. She went on to inform the room that the banner ad is posted and live on the Sarasota Convention and Visitors Bureau website. The Olde Englewood Village advertisement is on the "things to do" page. Ms. Pasternak also requested any event dates for the O.E.V.A event card, since they are getting ready to print more.

Once Ms. Pasternak finished the update, Chairman Radkins informed the room that Erik Schlake, a local decorative artist, had an idea that he brought to the marketing committee, and wanted to discuss with the Advisory Board.

Mr. Schlake approached the board and thanked them for their time. He then discussed his idea of having an Englewood Mural Project. Mr. Schlake explained that he is part of a master

muralist group called Arête (pronounced ar-uh-tay). Arête was established in order to pursue their craft as well as raise the professional standards of the industry. One of the goals of the organization is to develop professional collaborative retreats in order to share skills, develop new techniques and disseminate the information to the rest of the industry through online forums as well as professional publications. When Mr. Schlake realized that the group was searching for a location for their first retreat he immediately thought of Englewood. With its warm climate, welcoming community and artistic history Englewood was the perfect destination. He then went and spoke with Bruce Rodgers, Director of The Hermitage, and they both agreed that Englewood was an appropriate location for the group's retreat. Mr. Schlake went on to identify the community's benefit from having the group's presence. He explained that the industry has over 200 million dollars in product sales, numerous conventions, trade shows and classes. Most professionals travel at least twice a year for some sort of professional development. Once The Hermitage was secured for the week of February 17, 2008 the original intent was to get technical information on different products and techniques and then to filter it throughout the industry. In fact, several industry companies, such as Golden Acrylics, offered to donate any product needed for the retreat because they recognized the value in having so many masters in one location.

Mr. Schlake continued that at some point the idea was suggested that a mural should be created for downtown Englewood. Originally, he thought that this was not the intent of the retreat; the intent was for professional collaboration. Then it was proposed that if the travel expenses were supplied, why not take advantage of having these masters in Englewood, and have them create a custom mural. After Erik Schlake brought it back to Arête, they all agreed that the idea had a lot of potential. Mr. Schlake went on to inform the Advisory Board that the arts already attract numerous visitors to Sarasota County, and if there is a reason, such as a mural of this caliber, in South County then there would be an opportunity to capitalize on bringing those visitors to Englewood. Mr. Schlake went on to show several slides to the room of some work of the artists who are interested in participating in the retreat, including Skip Dyrda, Carol Pascale, Tania Seabock, Todd & Eric Lindbergh. He also thanked Mr. Bill Tryder of the Arts Alliance of Lemon Bay for his assistance in showing the images.

When Erik Schlake finished with his presentation, Chairman Radkins elaborated that Mr. Schlake is here to ask for up to \$10,000 of seed money from the Advisory Board to help with supplies, food and travel expenses for Arête. Mr. Colburn suggested that an "Art in Public Places" committee be created. He also recommended having a more formalized way a group requests money from the Advisory Board.

Erik Schlake explained that the artists selected would work on the project during the week of February 17-22 at the Hermitage. They would set up a large tent, and the mural would be created on removable panels and then fixed to the side of Vino Loco located at the corner of W. Dearborn Street and Elm. The building owners, Janet and Don Landis, generously donated the space. However, the mural will be removable in case of new construction at which time it could be relocated to a more permanent public space, such as the future playhouse or an area park. Erik Schlake is working with Elaine Miller of Suncoast Architect to determine what the panels will be made of. Arête is committed to making this an annual event, including raising funds for next year to support it. The mural unveiling would be on Saturday, February 23rd in conjunction with the 2nd Annual Dearborn Street Wine Walk. The mural will be some type of image

portraying Englewood history. There will be one day of public viewing at the Hermitage during the creation process, however, this date and time has not been determined yet. Mr. Schlake also explained how he would be working with other area organizations, such as the high school, Arts Alliance of Lemon Bay and the Historical Society. He noted that if one of these artists was commissioned to do a project of this scale, the cost would be a minimum of \$50,000.

The CRA Advisory Board recognized the obvious benefits to Englewood, among them beautifying the Olde Englewood Village, creating a 365 day a year destination for visitors, uniting community organizations and schools, promoting economic growth and reinforcing community pride. Tom Minnich, Elaine Miller and John Fellin expressed favorable public comments to the board. The Advisory Board also expressed their excitement for the project; however, Mary Ellen Diez asked Debbie Marks where the money for this project would come from.

Ms. Marks explained that there is \$100,000 sitting in the professional services budget that is not being utilized this fiscal year. She explained that pending the approval of North County staff that money could be moved to be used for this type of project. Chairman John Radkins asked if there was a motion. Mr. John Davison, Vice Chairman, made the motion to approve up to \$10,000 to be used for supplies, food, travel and other expenses pending the approval of the North County staff. The motion was seconded by Mr. Norm Caldwell. Discussion ensued, and the motion carried unanimously.

Signage/Landscaping Project: Debbie Marks informed the room that thanks to the help of local community members and Chairman John Radkins and Mr. Todd Tracy the planting project at the new "Welcome to Englewood" sign on East Dearborn Street was completed. She also commented that Bill Nichols of DMK also delivered the permit to her for the signs at Old Englewood Road and 776.

RCTOD/Code Changes: Ms. Marks explained that Vivian Roe, the consultant, has finished the legal description and will be submitting that package along with the Town Center amendment the first of next week.

Waterfront Properties Update: Debbie Marks explained that the Board of County Commissioners did give the approval to move ahead with the demolition of the buildings on the Cherokee Street properties, and they authorized us to move forward with the funding from the West Coast Inland Navigational District. The application has been completed and submitted for \$230,000. The WCIND board has it on their January 16, 2008 meeting agenda. Ms. Marks also discussed how this demolition is being done differently, since local organizations such as Habitat for Humanity are being asked to bid on removing and recycling the materials inside the houses. Then the fire department will be training and burning the buildings to help reduce the overall cost of demolition. She is hoping to have the demolitions completed by the first week in March. Chairman Radkins thanked both Vice Chairman Davison and Ms. Marks for all their hard work on this project.

Ms. Marks also explained how the Cherokee Street properties do not need to be rezoned, and she continued with a short update on the banner over SR 776. Ms. Marks expressed that Mr. Fellin

provided her with the original paper work for the sign and she has placed several calls to D.O.T, however she hasn't heard anything back from them yet. Also, she elaborated on how she would like to explore other banner options along Dearborn Street, including custom banners that match the theme of the billboards. Ms. Marks questioned if the board would authorize her to explore these options. The Advisory Board offered her their support and encouraged her to do the research.

Open to the Public

Chairman John Radkins invited Kimley-Horn and Associates to the floor. JP Marchand wanted to inform the room on the Gottfried Steward Street Village, even though it doesn't fall in the Englewood CRA it will directly impact the area. After a brief introduction and update on the overall plan, the group invited the room to a more detailed presentation that was being offered at the Green Street Church on January 8th at 7pm with the Olde Englewood Village Homeowners Association.

Joyce Colmar of Vino Loco gave an update on the 2nd Annual Dearborn Street Wine Walk. Ms. Colmar explained how the event will be twice as large as last year. They are still looking for sponsors and restaurants to participate. The event will take place on February 23, from 2pm-dusk, and the proceeds will benefit the Lemon Bay Playhouse. Tickets are available at Vino Loco and the Lemon Bay Playhouse for \$45 each.

Todd Tracy questioned if the CRA Advisory board was contributing to the Wine Walk in anyway. Ms. Marks and Ms. Pasternak elaborated that the CRA is purchasing in the permits and helping with the road closure. Plus, the mural unveiling will be taking place on the same day, so the publicity will benefit the Wine Walk too.

Advisory Board Comments

Norman Caldwell questioned again about architectural and landscape guidelines in the CRA plan. Ms. Marks informed him that the architectural guidelines are in the amended plan that is moving forward. The landscape guidelines are lower on the priority list. Mr. Caldwell asked why so much money was being budgeted towards the storm water design. Ms. Marks responded that she would do some research and get back to him. Mr. Caldwell concluded that it was a good meeting.

Harry Colburn commented on the January 29th proposed Property Tax Amendment.

Mary Ellen Diez did not have anything to add. She offered her time to Mr. John Fellin, who was in the audience and implied he had something to discuss.

John Mead did not have any comments.

Todd Tracy felt they had a great meeting. He thanked Howard White of DMK for his assistance on evaluating the Cherokee Street properties. Mr. Tracy also suggested that the February agenda should have the "art-in-public places" committee on it.

John Davison expressed how excited he was with the audience's support, and he thanked them for being at the meetings.

John Radkins requested to discuss at next months meeting a formal procedure for funding requests from the CRA.

Chairman Radkins then invited Mr. John Fellin to speak. Mr. Fellin expressed how he felt the community should be aware of an issue that is coming in April. There is going to four separate comprehensive plan amendments; one is going to be a referendum for movement within the urban service line. He elaborated on Hometown Democracy, and advised to be careful what you wish for.

Ms. Marks also informed the room that the Englewood Chamber of Commerce is hosting a panel forum discussion on the proposed property tax amendment. Representatives from both Sarasota and Charlotte Counties will be present. The meeting will take place at the Lemon Bay High School on January 17th at 5:30pm.

Adjournment

Chairman Radkins adjourned the meeting at 3:27 pm.