

**ENGLEWOOD COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA (CRA)
ADVISORY BOARD
Draft Minutes of November 8, 2007**

A regular meeting of the Englewood Community Redevelopment Area Advisory Board was held on Thursday, November 8, 2007, at 1:00 p.m., at Lemon Bay Park, 570 Bay Park Blvd., Englewood, FL.

Members Present

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

Sarasota County Staff Present

Shannon Staub, County Commissioner
Debbie Marks, Interim CRA Coordinator
Jessi Pasternak, Admin. Assistant II CRA
Kevin Smith, Public Works Facilities
Bill Wisniewski, Planner Parks & Rec.

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, Mary Ellen Diez, John Davison, and Norman Caldwell were all present. There was a quorum.

Approval of Minutes

September 13, 2007
October 11, 2007

John Radkins asked if there were any changes or discussion to the September 13th minutes and transcript. Vice-Chairman Colburn and Todd Tracy reminded the room that at the last board meeting the board accepted the transcribed dialog into the minutes, so the board only had to approve the minutes. Prior to doing that, Todd Tracy had a few corrections that he wanted to discuss. The first was on page two of the October 11th minutes, second paragraph, which group is being discussed? Debbie Marks responded that it is the OEVA group. Also, Todd questioned the same paragraph, line six where “is” should be “it” was in the progress. He commented that the staff did a great job with the minutes.

Todd Tracy also found one mistake on page one of the transcript from the September 13th meeting, under Vice-Chairman Colburn comments, line six, “probably” should be changed to “partially”. Vice-Chairman Colburn also suggested removing the comma after “old signs” too. Todd Tracy also had another change on page three, “Cruise in” should be spelled “Cruizin”.

Chairman Radkins asked for a motion to approve both sets of minutes. Norm Caldwell made the motion, Vice-Chairman Colburn seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Debbie Marks commented on a visit from the Chairman of the Sarasota County Planning Commission, John Fellin. He suggested that the CRA Advisory Board adopt the Sarasota County Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners format for transcribing the meeting minutes. Debbie provided copies of minutes from those boards, and asked that the CRA Board review them for a discussion at December's meeting.

Election of Officers

Chairman Radkins notified the room that traditionally, as noted by Mary Ellen Diez, the Election of Officers was performed before the public comments. So, the board was going to switch those two items if there were no objects.

John Radkins asked for nominations for the position of Chairman. John Mead nominated Chairman John Radkins. Mary Ellen Diez wanted to second the nomination if one was needed. Todd Tracy also wanted to express his support for the nomination. Chairman Radkins asked for a motion to approve. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Radkins asked for nominations for the position of Vice-Chairman. Mary Ellen Diez nominated John Davison. John Mead seconded the nomination. Norm Caldwell nominated John Mead for the position, and Todd Tracy seconded the nomination. Todd Tracy asked for a discussion, and the nominees were asked if they were interested in the position. Both commented that they were interested. John Radkins asked for a motion to close the nominations. Mary Ellen made the motion, seconded by Todd Tracy. Chairman Radkins asked for a show of hands for John Davison's nomination, five board members raised their hands. John Radkins asked for John Mead's nomination, two board members raised their hands. John Davison was named as the new Vice-Chairman.

Open to the Public

No comments at this time.

Staff Comments/Reports

Marketing Plan: Chairman Radkins explained that the marketing committee has been working on several items. The main topics are the Boca Grande Visitor Guide which will be a co-op advertisement with the local merchants. The CRA's cost will be \$859 for this annual publication. A 13 week, 2x3 advertisement, in the Boca Beacon highlighting the Cruizin' on Dearborn Street and the Saturday Nite Live. The cost to the CRA will be \$583.96. Another item is a 1/6 page color ad for 6 month contract in the Venice Gulf Coast Living magazine. The total cost to the CRA will be \$2,925. One other publication that the CRA will be advertising in is the Charlotte Harbor and the Gulf Islands Visitor's Guide produced by the Charlotte County Visitor's Bureau. This will be a full page advertisement with photos and a listing for \$1,570.

Finally, the last major item for discussion is billboard rentals. Currently the CRA is renting a 10' x 20' non-illuminated billboard on the corner of SR 776 & Elm Street. The contract expires on December 31, 2007. The marketing committee is recommending that the CRA does not renew

the current billboard lease, but instead rent two new billboards. The north billboard will be located on the right side of SR 776 (southbound) at the junction of Old Englewood Road. It is a 10' x 40' illuminated sign for \$10,200 a year. The second, south, location will be on the left side of SR 776 (westbound), one mile east of the El Jobean Bridge. This is also a 10' x 40' illuminated sign for \$9,300 a year. John Radkins informed the room that the Lemon Bay Art Alliance had donated their time and design. After some discussion with the audience and a visual presentation of the design and locations, Chairman Radkins asked for a motion from the board. Todd Tracy made a motion to commit to the northern new location of a billboard and abandon the current one at SR 776 and Elm. John Mead seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion, but Harry Colburn who was opposed. Motion was passed.

John Davison made the motion to accept the El Jobean billboard location, seconded by Norm Caldwell. Todd Tracy asked for discussion and felt that a billboard on the west side of The El Jobean Bridge would be a better location. John Davison felt that since it is only a one year contract, that it should be taken advantaged of now to avoid missing the current season. John Mead supported his discussion. The motion carried with a five to two vote, Harry Colburn and Todd Tracy were opposed.

John Mead suggested that the Marketing Committee should look at advertising with the Englewood Review publication, and other local avenues. He also was interested in the status of the cables across 776. Taylor Meals gave an update, that the cable could be reinstalled but there is a special cable and company that is required. He has the name of the company and will provide it to the CRA office.

Signage/Landscaping Project: Debbie Marks gave an update that the sign is completed, however, beautification/landscaping still needs to be finished. Debbie suggested making this a community project and have a planting day. She has already spoken to the Kip Alexander a Horticulturist for Sarasota County and he has made some landscaping recommendations. Todd Tracy had some concern about using Gold Mound Lantana opposed to the Muhly Grass. He felt that the Lantana could be too invasive. Ms. Marks mentioned she would speak to Kip about Todd's concerns. The board agreed to move ahead with a planting day, and to invite the community. Chairman Radkins and Todd Tracy volunteered to help, and so did a number of other board members. Debbie will look at dates following the Thanksgiving holiday and report back to the board.

RCTOD/Code Changes: Debbie Marks gave an update that Stantec is finalizing the petition that is going to the Planning Commission. Unfortunately, the Comprehensive Plan has to be amended to rezone some properties that fall outside the Town Center Plan boundary. The CRA is moving ahead with the current plan, and will rezone the properties that can be rezoned. Then once the Comprehensive Plan is amended the properties that are affected will be rezoned, however, it will be 2009 for those parcels. Chairman Radkins reminded the room that once this is finished there are still other requirements (such as ADA) that will have to be met before a business can be established. Debbie thanked Chairman Radkins, and mentioned that she will be creating an information brochure for the public explaining exactly what has to be done.

Waterfront Properties Update: Debbie Marks explained that the county is moving ahead with rezoning the waterfront properties. But, they are taking a step back to see if there are any other uses for 61 Cherokee Street property instead of demolishing it completely. It could be a concession stand serving food. However, they could not dine within the building. Chairman Radkins expressed concern about not having a restroom and Kevin Smith from Sarasota County explained that if there was a restroom it would have to meet ADA standards. However, even if both structures are removed they are leaving the water and sewer connections for future restrooms. Todd Tracy asked if they could just gut the existing building and make a pavilion out of it. Debbie said that she is being told no, but they are still looking at options. Elaine Sanchez-Miller explained that it is residential versus commercial restrictions. Debbie Marks is planning on getting the public meetings started in December beginning with the Cherokee Street properties.

Chairman Radkins asked Vice-Chair Davison if he would be interested in chairing a subcommittee focusing on the waterfront properties. John Davison said yes, he is very interested.

Debbie Marks thanked all that participated in the Halloween Safe Walk, especially Mary Ellen Diez who dressed as a witch.

Open to the Public

Russ Kyper wanted to give an update on the Buchan Fly-In. He thanked everyone who attended and mentioned that the committee is calling it a success. There were 25-28 planes that flew in. Also, he wanted to thank all the sponsors who participated. Russ explained that there is a lot of interest for the next fly-in and they are looking at dates.

Bill Tryder wanted to thank Debbie Marks for all she did and is doing with the RCTOD he is confident it is moving in the right direction. Bill also wanted to invite everyone to the Arts Alliance of Lemon Bay Grande Opening Saturday night from 6 pm – 9pm.

Stephanie Franklin from Dany Magill Inc. wanted to invite the room to attend their Grande Opening tonight for their new office on McCall Street.

Advisory Board Comments

Norman Caldwell thanked Commissioner Staub for attending today's meeting. He also wanted to confirm with the board that things are progressing with landscaping/architectural guidelines.

Harry Colburn discussed that he feels there is a need for some non-profit type ventures, one being a tree canopy another being art in public spaces.

Mary Ellen Diez wanted to publicly acknowledge Debbie Marks and Jessi Pasternak thanking them for all their hard work.

John Mead expressed that he hoped to see everyone and the CRA Board at the Saturday Nite Live on Dearborn Street.

Todd Tracy thanked the audience and all the individual representatives that were present for the meeting, including the Commissioner, the Chamber, the Arts Alliance, the Lemon Bay Playhouse and the press.

John Davison wanted to thank Russ Kyper and the Buchan Fly-In committee for their success. He also was excited to comment on how great the Halloween Safe Walk was, and the other events that are taking place on Dearborn Street. Mr. Davison also demonstrated his enthusiasm for having the opportunity to work on the waterfront property subcommittee.

John Radkins thanked the board in their confidence for reelecting him as the Chair. He also wanted to echo Mary Ellen's statement about working with Jessi and Debbie. He finished by asking Commissioner Staub if she had anything to say.

Commissioner Shannon Staub expressed her excitement about the Buchan Fly-In and the performance the night before at the Lemon Bay Playhouse. She commented that she is a little disappointed that the financial items aren't moving through for the stormwater. She went on to thank everyone for attending the meetings and hanging in there. She is very optimistic about the future.

Chairman Radkins pointed out a mistake on the agenda about the date for agenda items. It should be December 13, not November 8.

Adjournment

John Radkins made a motion to adjourn, seconded by John Mead. Meeting adjourned at 2:22 pm. However, there was a last minute speaker, Bill Wisniewski II, Senior Planner with Sarasota County Parks and Recreation. He wanted to inform the group that Parks and Recreation is moving ahead with remodeling the Decagon Buildings at Buchan Airport. He also had some drawings to share with the room.