

**THREE CORNERS STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2022 1:30 P.M.  
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, VERO BEACH, FLORIDA**

**PRESENT:** Vicky Gould, Chairman; Christine Pokorney-Sickterman (via GoToMeeting); Sydney O’Haire (via GoToMeeting); Chloe Rose Schwartz (via GoToMeeting); Linda Moore, Mike Johannsen, Harry Howle, Ben Earman, Jeff Stassi and Laura Moss, County Commissioner **Also Present:** Monte Falls, City Manager; Jenny Flanigan, Assistant City Attorney, Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director, and Tammy Bursick, City Clerk

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Today’s meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A) April 26, 2021**

**Mrs. Moore made a motion to approve the April 26, 2021 minutes. Mr. Howle seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

**3. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

**A) Master Concept Plan Adoption**

Mr. Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director, reported that what they have in the document that he provided them is the information to approve the master concept plan. They have a draft executive summary for the Three Corners project. The summary is the written and illustrated description of the master concept plan for the Three Corners site. Staff is requesting that the Committee confirm the master concept plan for the Three Corners project. He said that City Council will hold a public hearing on a Resolution approving the master concept plan on January 18, 2022. He explained the basis of the master concept plan is the community plan, as recommended by the Steering Committee on April 26, 2021, and accepted by City Council on May 18, 2021. The master concept plan also includes recommendations from the marketability and financial feasibility analysis prepared by Mr. Hank Fishkind of PFM Group Consulting and presented to City Council on November 16, 2021. The steps to date have been to review the project goals, review of previous master concept plans, direction on revised master concept plan, recommended community plan, City Council accepting the community plan, and the Economic Feasibility Analysis of the community plan presented to the City Council on November 16, 2021. He went over the goals that the Steering Committee previously came up with, which there were eight (8) goals. He said that there have been no changes and they are incorporated in the document.

Mr. Jeffries reviewed the recommended community plan and showed on the map where the various structures will be located. He said the plan is based on the economic feasibility study that was presented to Council on November 16, 2021. The marketability and financial feasibility study is what the consultant came back with and is located on the City’s website. He went over the recommendations made by Mr. Fishkind, which have been incorporated in the master concept plan as directed by the City Council (backup material sent to the Steering Committee and on file in the City Clerk’s office).

Mr. Harry Howle asked if there was anything about mixed use in the market row area.

Mr. Jeffries said yes and it is where the Steering Committee recommended putting it.

Mr. Jeffries continued by going over the Waterfront Village. He said that the development of the Waterfront Village will have a pedestrian destination with a compact mix of uses. The area could be an entertainment district with family-oriented amusements, a small aquarium, or music venues, and include outdoor cafes and recreation areas. Any proposed development for this area of the Three Corners site would have to be consistent with the plans described in the master concept plan. He brought up the Marina where there could be day-docks, overnight docking for the hotel or residents, commercial tours, and a water taxi. It shows a fishing pier with a structure for vendors related to the fishing pier, a plaza with recreation at the end of the harbor, and a bike trail trailhead. He said with the reuse of "Big Blue" the priority to redevelop the building for commercial/hotel/cultural/event center (if feasible to the potential developer) with indoor public spaces (reuse of great hall), performance/cultural venues, retail or restaurants. It allows for the use of the building roof top for a bar or restaurant with views from the existing structure. It provides the ability to develop the area as a combination of destination or resort hotel, conference hotel, condo-hotel units, and cottages. It will allow flexibility for the developer, based on financial feasibility, to redevelop the existing facility making use of the structure height, reuse portions of the building, or construct new facilities at a maximum building height of 50-feet. The central open space is framed by structures containing the hotel, condo-hotel, retail, and restaurant uses. Although there is flexibility in the final design, any new development would have to maintain the central open space feature.

Mr. Jeffries discussed the south parcel where the Wastewater Plant is located. He said on the waterfront the site will be used for the Youth Sailing Foundation as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City and Youth Sailing Foundation. It shows a Park and natural space on the peninsula. It provides a location for an environmental research center next to Youth Sailing. It allows for the reuse of the south water tank for a possible cultural or arts venue or if a philanthropic organization is identified as a potential project donor. The skate park is shown under the bridge or could be located adjacent to the bridge on the south parcel. The Wastewater facility site (western portion of the property) is the former facility site and is mothballed for future expansion of the north parcel development or mixed-use residential development and in the interim could be used for community events. Mr. Jeffries asked the Committee to keep in mind that this is a concept plan and some things will move around as they go through the final process.

Mr. Jeffries explained that the next steps will be to take the master concept plan to the Planning and Zoning Board and then back to the City Council for adoption. They will then issue a Request for Information (RFI) to develop the north parcel (Power Plant site). They are hoping to find out who is interested in developing the land and partnering with the City. Then the City will have this item on the November ballot as a referendum item. Once approved by the voters, he will proceed with the Comprehensive Plan amendments to incorporate this plan into the Comprehensive Plan and do a Future Land Use Amendment. Then once the Comprehensive Plan has been updated, staff will proceed with developing the new Land Development Regulations.

Mr. Mike Johannsen asked if an RFI is necessary from the developer in order for the developer to submit a Request for Proposal (RFP). Mr. Jeffries answered yes.

Commissioner Laura Moss commented that the Steering Committee has always said that any retail located on this property should not be in competition with other areas, such as Downtown or Royal Palm Pointe. She asked if the consultant is aware of this. Mr. Jeffries said that he is. She then asked if the consultant knows that they are in the process of redoing their Marina. Mr. Jeffries said that he has discussed with the consultant what they have in progress so far as redoing the Marina. He was not sure if the consultant has reviewed the whole revised Marina plan or not. Commissioner Moss asked about parking and what were some of the ideas to have additional parking on the site. Mr. Jeffries commented that they have looked at the third parcel as potential parking and he thought that it was financially feasible. Commissioner Moss wanted to make sure that residential development is still off the table except as part of a hotel situation. Mr. Jeffries answered yes and said that they are not calling it multi-residential, just some kind of residential development as part of the hotel. Commissioner Moss wanted to make it clear that the City Council has been opposed to any residential development on this site. She said once people live there then it becomes theirs and this property should be accessible to all the people as it belongs to them. She was also a little hesitant about having time shares. She reiterated that this property belongs to the people and they need to be cautious of that. Mr. Jeffries explained that the hotel is just the anchor to the site. The consultant's job was to say if the plan was feasible, which he thinks it is and there needs to be a three to five star hotel at this designation. The nicer hotels in Vero Beach are getting older ranging from 15 to 20 years old and there is a demand for a newer upscale hotel. Commissioner Moss wanted to make sure that the consultant understands that they want to use the Power Plant and have it be new and unique. Mr. Jeffries said that he understands that.

Dr. Baker asked Mr. Jeffries to define retail.

Mr. Jeffries explained that they were talking about having things like boutiques on the property and not a grocery store or Home Depot. They are talking more about specialty retail. Dr. Baker asked how many are planned to be in that area. Commissioner Moss said if you look at the map it shows a few sites that have retail on it. She did not think that they should be focusing on retail.

Chairman Vicky Gould asked if anything has been taken into account on how to get people crossing Indian River Boulevard safely.

Mr. Jeffries explained that the consultant is aware of the road connection on the site. Some of the plans show a 2-story structured parking facility. He said that proper parking would be based in the Land Development Code.

Chairman Gould said that she was thinking more about getting in and out of the site and the safety of it.

Mr. Jeffries explained that safety has been taken into consideration and will be handled through the site plan approval process. A traffic analysis will also need to be done.

Mr. Monte Falls, City Manager, commented that building an overpass has come up, but it is just a function of money in order to do that. He doesn't see using the off site lot to be the answer to parking.

Mr. Howle commented that he was removed from the Committee when Mr. Dick Winger was appointed to the City Council. He doesn't want to see this project slowed down and would request one (1) of the

members who has been on the Committee the whole time to make a motion to approve the concept plan as submitted.

**Mrs. Moore made a motion to approve the concept plan with any typo/modifications that need to be made to the plan be allowed.**

#### **4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Gary Foojohn (spelling may not be correct) commented with all due respect the hotel is very nice, however he is concerned about how much more traffic will be generated.

Mr. Falls commented that what is going to happen when this project is built that traffic will not get any better. There will be a traffic count done and it will meet the currency for the traffic that they have in place.

Mr. Foojohn said this design will impact the residents of this community. They need more of a recreational concept and they don't need any more traffic. He hears people say everyday how crowded it is in this City with all the traffic that they have now. It doesn't make sense to have a traffic study done after the referendum.

Chairman Gould wondered how they would do a traffic study before they know what is going to go on the site. She doesn't think that they have a traffic problem. She agrees that new people are moving here. She said this County is growing and there is nothing they can do about it.

Mr. Foojohn said that they can manage the growth and consider the traffic. He sees down the road that this is going to be a mess.

Mr. Falls commented that the City has gone through a painstaking process to get what the public wants and this is what they have asked the City to bring to them. The City has done their best to get public input on the project and this is where they are today.

Mr. Foojohn brought up the survey that was done when this project was first introduced and brought up what people want to see on this property.

Ms. Sydney O'Haire felt this was an unproductive conversation. She said that their town is growing. She asked Mr. Foojohn how long has he lived in this community.

Commissioner Moss did not think that people should be "grilled" when they come forward and speak under public comments.

Ms. O'Haire felt that it was unproductive to talk about traffic.

Chairman Gould expressed that she appreciates all public comments. She was happy to hear Mr. Foojohn's point of view and said that is part of this whole process.

Mr. Foojohn could not understand why they were looking at making things worse.

Chairman Gould could understand the love of recreation. She pointed out that this is a huge piece of property and there will be plenty of green space on this big piece of land.

Mr. Foojohn commented that if they have another pandemic this property would be empty so then who is going to pick up the bill when that happens.

Mr. Falls explained today all the Steering Committee is doing is approving a conceptual plan. Once they get a plan approved by a developer then it comes back for site plan approval to make sure all the Codes are being met. He said the plan would then go before the Planning and Zoning Board and then to City Council for final approval. This will allow for more public comments to be made.

Commissioner Moss mentioned that the referendum will consist of 75 words or less. She asked staff what they expected to convey to the community with only being allowed to have 75 words.

Mr. Jeffries explained the 75 words would describe what is being proposed on the north parcel and refer to the community plan. He said the information will be posted on the City's website.

Commissioner Moss commented there have been changes made since the Committee approved this plan (referring to the feasibility study that was done). The community wants this to be a unique piece of property and not just another hotel. She hopes people understand this when they go to the polls.

Mr. Jeffries agreed that the language that they use in the referendum is important. He noted on page 8 of the document it talks about the hotel and the appropriate language that should be considered.

Mr. Jeff Stassi commented that they do have to be careful when working to get developers interested in the project.

Mr. Leonard Markir expressed that after observing the Committee today he knows they are going to vote for this. He said when they are looking at getting a developer they have the opportunity to come up with a whole type of criteria on what they would like to see developed on this property. For the City of Vero Beach they have come to the conclusion that in the worse case scenario this is going to be revenue neutral and he does not necessarily agree with that. They have to be able to say that they should take care of their residents, this is a dynamite site and not spend money. They are now two (2) years down and that green space on the south side is the same green space existing on the north side. He reiterated this property has been sitting for two (2) years. Getting a developer to agree with that concept and develop the property could take years. Then talking about greenspace on the south side will be 10 to 20 years. There is a problem with the whole process. He would like to see that green space on the north side used by the Recreation Department. The negotiation at worse case revenue neutral does not need to be that way. He knows there was some discussion with the Steering Committee about having a boat rack storage on the property because there is space for it, but they decided not to deal with it. He was pretty sure the Steering Committee will go ahead and allow the City Council to put the pedal to the metal and authorize Mr. Jeffries to do the referendum.

Mr. Ken Daige commented that it is sometimes hard for people to come to these meetings and speak their truth especially when the press and facebook can really beat them up on what they say. He has lived here for 43 years and one thing he is curious about is the parcel that will go on the ballot. He questioned will it be the old Power Plant site and not the south side where the Waste Water Treatment Plant is located. He would like to see open space and not a charge to use it. If they read this plan it says whoever owns the hotel will have complete control of that property. He said apparently there are 10 developers interested in this property and he would like to know who they are and where are they from. He also asked will the property be leased or sold. He wanted to show up today so that the City Council knows

that there are concerns out there. He knows that the Steering Committee will probably move this forward and he hopes the community knows what they will be getting. He also is getting concerned as this rolls out on how much other protected property they will need. He cautioned that there could be some problems down the road. He agrees this City is built out and they are fortunate to have height limits in the Charter because most places build up to allow for more growth.

Mrs. Linda Moore asked Mr. Jeffries if he said that the developer can change aspects of the plan. Mr. Jeffries explained it is very clear in the document what is allowed in central park. The City might retain parts of this property under their control. How it is functioned and operated is done as part of the master agreement on the north parcel.

Mr. Jeffries commented that when they are talking about traffic impact that most development is occurring out in the County. He said it is about 80%.

Commissioner Moss agreed that the County is basically out of control and it is time for the County to revisit their Comprehensive Plan. There have been a number of people expressing their concern about growth in the County. She said that they are looking at one of the most valuable pieces of property on the east coast and they need to be very protective of it.

Mr. Jeffries brought up the visioning process that is taking place in the County and the upcoming meeting that will be held to discuss it.

Commissioner Moss said that meeting was being conducted through the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the general public has never heard of MPO let alone are following them. She continues as a County Commissioner to work on this.

Mr. Jeffries said that the next County visioning meeting will be held at the end of January and this is the time for the citizens of this community to be involved with the visioning process of the County.

Commissioner Moss stated that she requested that these meetings be uploaded to the County's website.

The City Clerk read a letter from Mrs. Rosemary White into the record (on file in the City Clerk's office).

Dr. Baker stated that he would like to see open space be a priority before any building begins on this property. He would like to see more recreational activities occur on the property. He was not sure that they needed all these buildings going up there. They should develop green space first and then see if they want to expand. He reiterated that he is concerned about green space.

**Mrs. Linda Moore made a motion to approve the master concept plan (allowing for corrections to be made). Mr. Harry Howle seconded the motion and it passed 5-1 with Dr. Richard Baker voting no.**

## **5. ADJOURNMENT**

Today's meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

/tb

