

**THREE CORNERS STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES
THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 2021 1:30 P.M.
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, VERO BEACH, FLORIDA**

PRESENT: Vicky Gould, Chairman; Christine Pokorney-Sickterman, Vice Chairman; Members: Linda Moore, Mike Johannsen, Harry Howle, Dr. Richard Baker, John Cotugno, Chloe Rose Schwartz, Ben Earman, Jeff Stassi, and Laura Moss **Also Present:** Monte Falls, City Manager; John Turner, City Attorney; Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director and Tammy Bursick, City Clerk

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) December 10, 2020

Mrs. Moore made a motion to approve the December 10, 2020 minutes. Mr. Stassi seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

A) Master Concept Plan Discussion

Mr. Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director, reminded the Steering Commission that at their last meeting, there were several organizations and individuals, such as Youth Sailing and the Recreation Advisory Commission, who presented ideas for the developing aspects of the site within their expertise. He said that today he is requesting that the Steering Committee give their feedback and have a discussion of those presentations based on some discussion points, which will be the North Parcel (former Power Plant) and the South Parcel (Wastewater Plant). He said that they will review the Post Pandemic Plan that they received from DPZ in June and they will not be going through the beginning of the process. They are trying to move forward from where they are now. He wanted to get the Steering Committee's feedback and pass that information on to DPZ and then come back and reconfirm those elements. He started off today's meeting by going through the goals that the Steering Committee came up with and were approved by the City Council.

Mr. Jeffries reported that he received an email from Mr. Andres Duany/DPZ titled "Three Corners: Point of Clarification." This document is attached to the original minutes. Mr. Jeffries made it clear that this was Mr. Duany's professional opinion. He (Mr. Duany) started off by saying that there is no such thing as a "standing ovation plan." A Steering Committee was formed and it approved one (1) of the plans-one that "moth-balled" the south side. All those plans were based on the assumption from DPZ that there may be funds available from the City. Subsequently, since the City Council has not allocated funds to this project, DPZ thereby prepared the "post-COVID plan" at no charge. With the same program as before, but adding a boat barn with a sales value of \$9 million and apartments with a sales value to the City of \$6 million and concretized the "Trader Joe's at their third corner" with a value of \$1 million. The sum of \$16 million would have provided funds now unavailable for the City to be used for infrastructure, extensive landscaping, etc. This plan also made two (2) changes, which were creating a variant on the enclosed-corridor hotel involving separate bungalows and all the exterior spaces were redesigned with landscaping and picnic tables that would create social distancing. He explained how it works financially is that the City sells the sites for the boat barn and

the apartments to pay for all the infrastructure and the hotel site is sold on the condition that it renovate the Power Plant into a conference center and build a meeting hall/chapel. The Youth Sailing Club pays for its own facilities. The open market buildings and the two (2) restaurant buildings are leased to operators. Funds for the performing arts and digital graffiti complex, as well the associated art cottages are raised by incremental donations from residents, principally on the island. If the City decides not to provide funds for construction from the reserve and eliminates the boat barn and apartments, then funds for what remains must be funded by the City. He then laid out three (3) options to choose from.

Chairman Gould read the memo into the record.

Mr. Jeffries made it clear that this was coming from Mr. Duany as he sees the cost for the project. He then went over the first Three Corners Plan that was recommended at the Steering Committee meeting held on June 16th. He said that when Council was about to adopt the Plan, Mr. Duany said that because of the pandemic that another plan should be considered. So now there is a Post Pandemic Scenario Plan B. Then there were some comments about the loss of revenue so there was another plan called Post Pandemic Scenario Plan C. Then at the August 18th City Council meeting there was a Post Pandemic Scenario Plan D presented. The latest Plan is Post Pandemic Scenario Plan E, which after some discussions from some groups there were some modifications to it. He is comparing the elements from the June 16th Plan and the elements from the latest Plan in place today.

Mrs. Moore commented that the Steering Committee did not know anything about the Chambers Music Society of Lincoln Center when this plan was developed.

Mr. Jeffries said that the Chambers Music Society will come up later in their discussions this morning.

Mr. Jeffries referred to his memo of January 7, 2021 concerning the Master Concept Plan. He started off by going through the North Parcel (former Power Plant). He went over "Big Blue" as a hotel conference center.

Mr. Stassi asked what staff was going to do with the property. Are they going to lease the property, sell it or put out an RFP. He said knowing these things will have a big impact on their decision.

Mr. Jeffries said that he is working on getting out an RFQ to see if there are partners who will work with the City on feasibility. They would like to have one (1) master lease with a developer and they wouldn't get caught up in a long term lease, but it is something they have to work through. He said what they are looking at today is what, as a community, do you see as a plan.

Mr. Monte Falls, City Manager, added that they have to get the voter's approval to do anything with this site. Since the City is retaining the property it is more palpable in taking it to referendum.

Mrs. Pokorney-Sickterman asked if the Steering Committee will be able to review the RFQ before it is issued or prepared.

Mr. Jeffries explained that is something that he works with the Purchasing Department on.

Mr. Falls added that would be outside the scope of the Steering Committee. He doesn't anticipate bringing it up for discussion with the Steering Committee for recommendations. However, it is a public document for review.

Chairman Gould explained that the RFQ will be done before this item is taken to referendum. She understands what Mrs. Pokorney-Sickterman is getting at is if developers come in and change the Plan that the Steering Committee came up with and Council have agreed on.

Mr. Falls explained that after the Steering Committee and the Council have approved the Plan then they will take the Plan to developers and ask them what they can do with this Plan. They want to get these questions answered for the public before it is taken to referendum.

Mr. Jeffries said what they are discussing today is what they would like to see in the Plan. Mr. Scott Johnson, who presented his plan for the Chambers Music Society showed an interest in using a portion of Big Blue, which there could be a combination of uses in the building than just a hotel and conference center.

Mrs. Pokorney-Sickterman agreed with retaining the building and using it for multiple uses.

Mrs. Moore loved the idea of a hybrid scenario. She said they could have the hotel, conference center, and the Chamber Music Society there.

Mr. Stassi expressed the importance of having a timeline when they put out the RFQ and how long the developer is going to take before they start the project. He said Big Blue is a rundown building. They need to have a positive force that someone will move forward on it.

Mr. Jeffries commented that it was more of a function of the implementation aspect. It is a good point on how long the City is going to wait until something happens.

Mr. Howle commented that it depends a lot on the market and feasibility. He said that the people in the business of developing will know whether or not they can develop the building and then they will have their answer.

It was the consensus of the Steering Committee that there will be multi use of Big Blue and retaining the entire building and not just portions of it.

Mr. Jeffries brought up if there were other places on the property where a hotel and conference center can go on the site.

County Commissioner Moss asked if Big Blue is taken down, will the Chambers Music Society want to still be in that location or would they rather be inside the tank.

Mr. Jeffries said that they could do something in conjunction with the hotel.

Mr. Cotugno said if Big Blue was not there they could move the hotel closer and have an entrance from Indian River Boulevard and avail more parking and make more of a majestic entrance.

Mr. Falls agreed that it was a hard question to answer as to where the best location for the hotel should be. He said if Big Blue was not there what would this site look like and no one has the answer to that.

Mr. Howle expressed that the City will always have control of what goes where. He said lets not rule out having something feasible there if Big Blue is no longer there.

Mr. Falls stated if Big Blue was not there then the hotel could possibly go a little further to the east.

Ms. Gould wondered what the repercussions would be if Big Blue was taken down regarding the site that it sits on. Also, wouldn't they lose the ability to have a rooftop restaurant.

Mr. Jeffries explained they would lose some of the height, but never precludes them from having a roof top bar. He said that developers interested in the property are aware of the height restrictions in Vero Beach and the height that Big Blue provides.

Mr. Falls agreed that they always worry about contamination. But, when Florida Power and Light (FPL) took the substation down there were not any major issues. He said everything looks good so he is encouraged.

Mr. Stassi explained when a developer comes in they will do a Phase 1, a Phase 2 and then an environmental analysis of the property.

County Commissioner Moss commented that she was never in love with those cottages.

Mr. Jeffries said that they have been told by developers that the cottages are more expensive than a hotel.

Mr. Howle did not think that they should be focusing on a post pandemic focus. He said things are getting better and life will move on.

It was the consensus of the Steering Committee to leave it up to the hotel as far as the cottages go and remain being open.

Dr. Baker said that was not in favor of the cottages.

Mr. Jeffries expressed if the market calls for it there could be additional hotels on the site for the selection of price points (moderate price of hotel on the site). The Steering Committee agreed with having another hotel there if the developer chooses he wants one. They all agreed it is a big site.

Central Open Space

Mr. Jeffries brought up the community pool that DPZ had put in the Plan and said that the City already has a community pool at Leisure Square and they don't want to duplicate the things that they have.

Mr. Falls said that they probably wouldn't be opposed to something like a splash park if a developer brought it up. He said when talking about a pool it generates no income and then they are talking

about an expense the City would have to take on forever. He said taking care of a pool is expensive and something that the City would not entertain.

Mr. Howle commented that the Steering Committee is getting into what they think can happen to this property. He said what they need to do is paint with a much broader brush and say here is what we want and the developer can decide if it is feasible and then that Plan can be taken to referendum. He said that it is not their decision to decide what brick goes where.

Mr. Falls wanted the Steering Committee to agree on a Plan that as a Committee they feel comfortable with before it is taken to referendum.

Mr. Jeffries said that there could be a water feature on the site, but not a pool like the one (1) that they have at Leisure Square.

Waterfront Promenade

Mr. Jeffries explained that they needed to talk about what will draw people to the location. He asked do they want to create a destination. The Steering Committee agreed that is what they wanted.

Mrs. Pokorney-Sickterman wanted to make sure that they were including the things that the Recreation Commission mentioned at their last meeting that they wanted to see on the site.

Mr. Jeffries showed the June 16th Plan and said that he thought that was what they were looking at. He said that no one is eliminated from having different things on the site. The property is huge and available to the community.

Mrs. Brooke Steinkamp referred to the letter prepared by the Recreation Commission and presented to the Steering Committee at their last meeting. She said if there are questions about it then they need to reach out to the Recreation Commission. She made it clear that it was not their recommendation to preserve 90% of the land. That suggestion was in an email from someone in the public. She said that now she was speaking for herself and not the Recreation Commission. She did not believe that Leisure Square was conducive to children and small families. The pool is closed to the public on Saturday and Sunday afternoons, which are the times that families would be using it.

Miss O'Haire felt that putting the skate park by the bridge where they had it originally makes a lot of sense.

Mr. Jeffries felt in looking at the Plan it incorporates everything that the Recreation Commission would like to see there. He said if they go back to the June 16th Plan it calls for outside restaurants, cafes and includes indoor restaurants, as well as food trucks.

Mr. Earman asked about the chapel. He was told that Mr. Duany wants the chapel to have multi uses.

Mr. Falls felt that the chapel could be in conjunction with the hotel and managed by the hotel. He doesn't want to see it maintained by the City. He said that the City does not want to be in the wedding business.

Chairman Gould could see what Mr. Duany was looking at so the City would not be responsible for the different things going on the property.

County Commissioner Moss commented that the so called chapel would be revenue producing. She knows that the City Council and previous Steering Committee came to a consensus that the property is not for sale and they are not selling the property. She felt that a boat barn is not the highest and best use of the property and also residential was the last item that the community wanted to see go on the property. She also felt that the June 16th Plan was a standing ovation plan.

The Steering Committee agreed with focusing on the creation of an entertainment district by adding more family amusements, small museums, an aquarium, and music venues.

Marina

Mr. Jeffries asked the Steering Committee if they wanted to have day-docks only or include more marina services. This could include a dry-storage boat facility and a location for vendors related to the fishing pier (bait shop) and bike trail trailhead.

It was discussed as to why Mr. Duany included the boat barn in the Plan. They were told it was because it would generate money.

Mr. Falls explained that at the beginning when the charrettes first started the Finance Director explained that there is \$21 million generated from the sale of the Electric Utility, but that money has not been committed to this project. The Finance Director made it clear that there was not additional monies available for the maintenance of the facilities that are going on this piece of property. He said that the City Marina will be building their own boat barn and they would not want to compete with themselves.

Mr. Jeffries added that a boat barn at this location is not compatible with the uses on Indian River Boulevard.

It was the consensus of the Steering Committee that the boat barn would not be in the Plan. They were open to having site seeing tours operating out of this location, such as having a water taxi go back and forth. They also agreed to include a location for vendors relating to the fishing pier (bait shop) being there.

Residential

Mr. Jeffries brought up should residential uses be located along the north canal. He said that when the survey was done (pre-charrette) the public was not in favor of residential.

Mr. Earman would not be opposed to having apartments built on top of a commercial building, such as what 14th Avenue has.

County Commissioner Moss recalled that the reason that they mothballed the south side was not because they didn't have ideas for it, but the idea to put apartments there was brought up and the Steering Committee didn't think it would pass a referendum.

Mr. Earman commented that having apartments such as what he described creates built in traffic and allows for better security because people are on the premises.

Mr. Howle said if they do allow apartments then they need to be placed where the noise is not a problem.

A comment was made that it would be nice for musicians or artists to have a place to live. They would not want to see these residential dwellings become super expensive for someone to live there.

Mr. Jeffries suggested seeing what designs come back and to say that they are open to the idea. This way people will see what the costs are going to be if they have them or don't have them on the property.

County Commissioner Moss expressed that this is a very valuable piece of real estate and it is important to get this right. If they are not 100% sure of what they want to go on the property then to wait on it. The City will be spending more than \$50 million to move the Waste Water Treatment Plant so they want to make sure that they do the right thing with this piece of property. She said that the City Council never voted that we would not spend a penny on this piece of property.

Mr. Falls commented that what he said earlier is that the City has not made any commitments to use any of those monies from the sale of the Electric Utility for this property. There could be tax increases in order to fund certain things. He was encouraged by the discussion that there may be some tradeoffs. The Plan will be taken to City Council for their input and to let the public know what they have decided.

Ms. Pokorney-Sickterman asked if the public poll that is going to be taken will be done before this goes to referendum.

Chairman Gould agreed that it would be unconscionable to come up with a Plan that would not make money for the City.

South Parcel (Wastewater Plant)

Mr. Jeffries recalled that at the last Steering Committee meeting Youth Sailing Foundation gave a presentation on where they want their new building located on the site. It was the consensus of the Steering Committee that they all wanted Youth Sailing Foundation to be a part of this project. At that time, Mr. Stu Keiller, Executive Director for Youth Sailing Foundation, went over the certain specifications that would work for them. If there is anything certain about this property it is that Youth Sailing Foundation will be there.

Mr. Stassi asked if the RFQ will cover just the north side of the property or both the north and the south properties together.

Mr. Falls said that their intent is to include the whole site. He said that developers may say that they are not ready to develop the south side of the property and that is fine. They want to take the entire site to the public in the referendum question.

It was mentioned that some of the members liked Mr. Johnson's idea of having the parking for Youth Sailing be located inside the tank.

Mr. Jeffries said that he doesn't think that he has ever seen a round garage. He said that they need to look at what is functional and feasible and he was not sure that would work.

Chairman Gould read the email that the Steering Commission received from Mr. Scott Johnson regarding putting the parking in the large tank (on file in the Clerk's office).

Mr. Falls commented that it is only a function of money and it is easy to spend someone else's money.

Mr. Stu Keiller, Executive Director for the Youth Sailing Foundation, gave an update of where they are from when he was at the meeting last month. He passed out the drawings of the new building and what it will potentially look like. They have had another 10% increase in attendance and now have over 200 families coming to Youth Sailing seven (7) days a week. The building that they are proposing is flexible. They need to operate a maintenance facility on the ground floor. The top floor is an educational facility. They can raise the money for the building, but they cannot raise the money to rehabilitate the tank and there is no interest from their donors in doing that. They have raised \$700,000 already and he felt they could raise the rest of the amount needed. They want to preserve the waterfront. There will be a picnic area and kayaks there. They could easily double the amount of people they have now and they are ready to go. They think that they can take the lead and pull other developers in.

Mrs. Pokorney-Sickterman thought that maybe the southernmost tank could be used for parking.

Mrs. Moore said that the southernmost tank is also huge.

The question was asked if there was any word back from Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) about parking under the bridge.

Mr. Keiller said that Mr. Falls and Mr. Jeffries were working on that. He said that they just need a small number of parking spaces close to the building and enough space to allow the boats that are on trailers to get in.

Mr. Jeffries said that they are trying to do an integrated plan with parking in it. However, they need to get a plan first before they can decide where the parking will go. Some parking is closer to the building because of ADA requirements. The overall demand will be based on the entire site.

Dr. Baker was in favor of allowing Youth Sailing to be on the property. He said this is a keystone group and the Steering Committee needs to support them. He said the parking lot should be pervious.

Mr. Johannsen asked if they would like a motion to approve Youth Sailing on the property with the proviso that the parking is pervious.

Mrs. Pokorney-Sickterman wondered if they would be making a mistake if they said yes to Youth Sailing and it doesn't work for the developer and the whole site in general.

Mr. Jeffries explained that what they were looking for is an overall recommended Plan. He said that is the purpose of the discussion today. The charge is to figure out how to get Youth Sailing on the site based on their specifications.

Chairman Gould said it was the consensus of the Committee that Youth Sailing be given what they need.

Mr. Jeffries said that the direction is to include in the design the location for a new building for Youth Sailing that meets their specifications and they are willing to do parking around the waterfront.

Mr. Cotugno agreed that Youth Sailing is a key part of this site and they prefer a freestanding building, which should be incorporated with Youth Sailing working with the developer.

Mr. Jeffries explained that the Youth Sailing building will be incorporated into the Plan. The City Council will be considering an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at their next meeting saying that this will be a use on this site.

Mr. Falls explained that the developer will do his design knowing that Youth Sailing will exist on the layout. The design will show one (1) tank being taken down.

Mr. Johannsen asked who pays to have the tanks taken down.

Mr. Falls said it is all a part of the demolition project for the Waste Water Treatment Plant.

Mr. Keiller referred to the last page of his handout where it showed the proposed leasing area that was drawn by City staff. He said that if this footprint was in the master plan then they would be ready to go.

At this time, the Steering Committee took a ten-minute break and the meeting reconvened at 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Falls wanted to remind everyone that the Steering Committee is an Advisory Committee to the City Council. The City Council has the last decision concerning Youth Sailing.

Reuse Water Tank Site (eastern portion)

Mr. Jeffries reported that as of today they have not heard that any developers are interested in using the water tank on the eastern portion of the land and there have not been any non-profit organizations come forward saying that they were interested in it.

Mr. Falls expressed that the tanks could be repurposed if someone wanted to do that and pick up the cost. He said If someone wants to use the tank it becomes a part of their package and the City doesn't have a problem with that.

The Committee discussed that this could be a great place for a cultural venue. They agreed to leave it there and continue exploring different uses for the site.

Mr. Earman commented that it would be nice to have an outdoor performance plan. He hoped that the space in Big Blue would be available to other organizations wanting to use it and not just Chambers Music Society.

Mr. Jeffries wanted to reconfirm that the Steering Committee was in favor of having a location for the Environmental Research Center. The Steering Committee all agreed that is something that should be part of this Plan.

Wastewater Facility Site

Mr. Jeffries said with this site there would be a plan that could be used for future development and not have to put it in the referendum.

Mr. Falls reminded the Steering Committee that there are some things that doesn't need referendum approval.

Mr. Jeffries said that he has talked to different types of developers who all had different ideas, but didn't get into any specifics.

Mrs. Schwartz had some fear of putting commercial use in the Plan and taking it to referendum and it failing, which drives her to mothballing.

Dr. Baker suggested having a botanical garden.

Mr. Jeffries said that is the concept that Youth Sailing is talking about in their design.

Dr. Baker said there needs to be more. This is a nice place to plant a lot of trees and help their climate change.

County Commissioner Moss commented that the Waste Water Treatment Plant will be in place for the next five (5) years and they couldn't do anything until then.

Mr. Falls didn't think that mothballing this piece of the property would delay anything. He said that there may be some suggestions in the RFQ's that they receive back and they can incorporate those suggestions into the Plan.

The question was brought up regarding the west parcel across Indian River Boulevard and what will happen with that piece of property.

Mr. Jeffries said that piece of property will be sold to a commercial developer.

Mrs. Pokorney-Sickterman asked if the developer will come and give them a presentation.

Mr. Jeffries explained that the Steering Committee's task is to come up with what the community wants on this property. He said that discussion with the developer will occur between the developer and the City Council.

B) Approval of Future Meeting Dates

The Steering Committee approved the future meeting dates: February 11, 2021, March 11, 2021, April 8, 2021 and April 29, 2021.

Mr. Falls thanked the Steering Committee for their time and services.

Chairman Gould apologized for how long the meetings have been going. She said that this is a very big Committee and they want to incorporate what is important to everyone.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Comments were made earlier in the meeting.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Today's meeting adjourned at 4:21 p.m.

/tb