

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ZONE COMMITTEE (EDZC) MINUTES
MONDAY, MAY 16, 2022 9:30 A.M.
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, VERO BEACH, FLORIDA**

PRESENT: Chairman Joseph Cataldo, William Watkins and Sheila Schweitzer **Also Present:** Jenny Flanigan, Assistant City Attorney; Matt Mitts, Public Works Director and Heather McCarty, Records Retention Specialist

Excused Absence: Bob DelVecchio

Unexcused Absence: Terry Torres

1. CALL TO ORDER

Today's meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) February 21, 2022

Ms. Schweitzer made a motion to approve the February 21, 2022 minutes. Mr. Watkins seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3. NEW BUSINESS

A) Lighting Project Update – Kimley-Horn

Mr. Matt Mitts, Public Work's Director, said Mr. Brian Good with Kimley Horn, who is assisting the City on their lighting project, is here today to give them an update.

Mr. Brian Good, with Kimley-Horn, went through his Power Point presentation (attached to the original minutes). He covered the objective of the downtown lighting improvements project. He showed pictures of the lighting for Old Dixie Highway, 14th Avenue, and 21st Street and talked about the different light fixtures being proposed in each area. He went over the map showing locations of the lighting throughout downtown and the illumination of the existing lighting. He showed pictures and specifications of the LED Pendant Fixtures proposed on 14th Avenue and the LED Post Top Fixtures being proposed on Old Dixie Highway and 21st Street. He explained the concrete painted poles are approved by FDOT and being supplied by FP&L and also will be maintained by them.

Mr. Good talked about the LED Roadway Fixtures that are being proposed and explained that FP&L right now is working with the City to replace the existing cobra-head lights with these fixtures to improve lighting at intersections. He said that 21st Street is a little problematic with fixtures all along the south side that are cobra-head fixtures mounted to existing utility poles. He said they are looking at supplementing lighting on the north side where they can. He explained the reasons they would not like to propose additional poles on the south side of 21st Street was because of the high utility corridor. He showed the existing lighting along the corridor and showed the areas where they are proposing additional lighting.

Mr. Good handed out copies of their Evaluation of the Existing Corridor (on file in the City Clerk's office), which was a more detailed layout of the illuminance along the corridors they are looking at. He said their

intention is to provide a proposed lighting plan with the improvements he briefly discussed and then at a later meeting have a discussion with them about illuminance levels and the lighting improvements being recommended.

Mr. Cataldo asked if there were any examples of the concrete poles FP&L is proposing so they could see them. Mr. Good answered that there were not any close by, but he would send them some photos of the poles.

Mr. Cataldo questioned if the existing decorative lamps along 14th Avenue which give it some charm would be replaced with just a concrete pole painted black. Mr. Good said that on 14th Avenue south of 21st Street where those decorative acorn lights are is outside of the corridors they are evaluating. He said those were done about 10 years ago and are aluminum poles painted black. He added that from speaking with staff, they learned that there were some issues with maintenance and the paint de-laminating off of them.

Mr. Cataldo asked for around Pocahontas Park and the canopies, do they make fixtures that are lower than the 14.5' poles. Mr. Good explained FP&L does not support a 10' or 12' decorative pole and since the City is looking at FP&L to maintain them, they have to use an FP&L approved pole.

Mr. Good said he would look into the possibility of shorter poles to use around Pocahontas and the trees.

Mr. Watkins questioned if right now they are just talking about putting in lights on the west side of the street. Mr. Good showed where on the west side, there are a few concrete poles with the cobra-head fixtures, which they would be replacing with a decorative pendant fixture. Also, there is no lighting on the east side and they are proposing lower level pedestrian lighting there along the Park edge.

Mr. Watkins asked if there is existing electric to hook in to. Mr. Good explained they would be able to tie into the existing circuit on the west side since they are converting to LED lighting.

Mr. Cataldo asked if FP&L pays for the lights. Mr. Good said there is an existing tariff for the lighting program and their monthly usage cost covers the cost of the fixture, the pole, and the electric usage monthly. He added it also covers maintenance of the pole and fixture. He said that it is around \$50 a month.

Mr. Good said he would be sending the proposed lighting layout and fixtures to the City in about two (2) weeks and they would then get it to the Committee prior to the next meeting where they can then talk more about the proposed lighting.

4. OLD BUSINESS

A) Twin Pairs

Mr. Matthew Mitts, Public Work's Director, said there is not really any new news to report. They are still waiting for Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to schedule a meeting with them. He reviewed that FDOT is going to repave SR60 at some point in the future, but they have not officially put it on their schedule yet but they are anticipating it will be this year and the construction will be five (5) years thereafter. The project would be entered in this year to start design and FDOT is looking for feedback from the City as far as what they want. They are also working with them on safety improvements, including lowering the speed limits, radar signs, pedestrian walking improvements, speed control, etc...

They are also trying to get feedback from FDOT Complete Streets analysis of the corridor. He said right now they are dealing with a few different people at FDOT and that there is not just one (1) manager assigned to them yet. The City has indicated to FDOT they are interested in discussing the safety improvements.

Mr. Cataldo talked about Complete Streets and his thoughts about it being what is needed for SR60 downtown.

Mr. Mitts said they are trying to get FDOT's Complete Streets department involved with the project so it can be done at the same time. He said everyone there has been cooperative and is responding, but added that this project isn't officially on their work plan yet.

Mr. Cataldo commented that he has heard that when it hits the five (5) year plan, it's too late.

Mr. Mitts reiterated that they are currently in contact with FDOT. He said that at a staff level, they see the Complete Streets program as a benefit to improve safety along the corridor.

Mr. Cataldo asked if FDOT would be willing to meet with City Council at a public meeting to talk about their program and what it has to offer.

Mr. Mitts said they have not had a meeting with them yet to discuss it. He said that FDOT approached them last year and let them know that SR60 will be on the radar for their work program.

Mr. Cataldo asked if their Committee should reach out to them and ask them to come to the City and discuss this.

Mr. Mitts said they are welcome too, but suggested they hold off until he has a meeting with them and he can bring that up with them.

The Committee had a brief discussion about the Complete Streets program and what has taken place over the years.

Mr. Mitts said this is an on-going matter and he will be happy to keep them updated. He said they are in the due diligence phase of this and gathering what resources are or are not available.

Ms. Schweitzer wanted to know if it was appropriate to discuss the homeless problem downtown. She talked about some of her experiences with the homeless as a business owner. She emphasized that it has become problematic.

Mr. Cataldo agreed. He said they had talked previously about moving the dumpster area from behind where Ms. Schweitzer is referring to behind the Pipe Den. He said it is falling apart and is creating a home behind there for the homeless. He said one of their previous suggestions was to consider moving that enclosure. He explained there is wasted paved area that could be a couple parking spaces if they moved the enclosure and it would clean up that corner. He noted that it has been recently surveyed and possibly that could be shared with the City. He said this is a project this Committee could recommend.

Mr. Mitts said they would look into that.

The Committee asked if they could have Police Chief David Currey attend their next meeting to discuss the homeless issue again.

Ms. Flanigan said they can and also wanted to say that it is appropriate to bring up those safety issues here. She explained that the City as a government entity is restricted from regulating people who are peaceably assembling under the first amendment right. She explained that last year the City did adopt a panhandling Ordinance to address the issue of people being harassed on the sidewalks. She said that it is possible that some of their concerns may already be regulated. She said that Chief Currey could explain that further at a future meeting. She asked them to keep in mind that the City cannot regulate homelessness. A specific area and safety issue, such as the dumpster area Mr. Cataldo referred to, can be addressed by the City.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Joe Coakley said he was here today representing Main Street. He said in regards to the homeless people downtown, he sees it as a huge issue and he sees it becoming more of a problem. He understands the federally enforced regulations. He said there is a very important health issue and maybe they could address it from that standpoint. He said there are people down there relieving themselves on the benches and it is a public health issue. He asked that they look at addressing that. He added that they are not necessarily bad people and he feels sorry for them, but it is not their responsibility to take care of them. That is somebody else's and they need to try and find the right parties that might be able help them.

Mr. Watkins reiterated that having Chief Currey attend one of their meetings to discuss this would be great. Ms. Flanigan said they could ask him. She referred again to the panhandling Ordinance that is pretty new and said that a lot of businesses might not know about it. She agreed it is a great idea to have Chief Currey come to discuss the measures that the City has taken that maybe the public isn't aware of.

Mrs. Elaine Jones, President of Main Street Vero Beach, said they do have a big problem with the homeless. She said there a lot of issues with Downtown Friday and the vendors and having the homeless stay very near to them and downtown. She said it is a problem with the vendors and the children who are present. She said she has noticed that there are organizations who are bringing them food in coolers and blankets. She commented people are afraid to walk down there.

Ms. Schweitzer added they are having issues with them climbing up on their roof and making shelter.

Ms. Flanigan said that would be trespassing and there are laws to address that. She suggested she calls the non-emergency police number, unless there is a threat to their safety and then should call the emergency number. She added this is definitely the appropriate place to talk about safety issues downtown.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Today's meeting adjourned at 10:23 a.m.

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