

City of Gainesville

*City Hall
200 East University Avenue
Gainesville, Florida 32601*



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 22, 2009

1:00 PM

City Hall, Room 16

Community Development Committee

*Commissioner Jack Donovan, Chair
Commissioner Scherwin Henry, Member
Commissioner Thomas Hawkins, Member*

Persons with disabilities who require assistance to participate in this meeting are requested to notify the Equal Opportunity Department at 334-5051 or call the TDD phone line at 334-2069 at least two business days in advance.

CALL TO ORDER

The CDC was called to order at 1:10 pm.

ROLL CALL

Present: Jack Donovan and Thomas Hawkins

Absent: Scherwin Henry

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Community Development Committee approved the agenda as drafted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

080760. Minutes of December 23, 2008 (B)

RECOMMENDATION *The CDC approve the minutes of December 23, 2008.*

Approved as Recommended

DISCUSSION OF PENDING REFERRALS

080465. Status Update on the City Commission Strategic Initiative to Continue to Remove Barriers, Consolidate Layers of Regulation and Consider Expanding Team to Include Outside Representation (B)

This item is a request for the Community Development Committee to receive an update on the progress of Strategic Initiative 2.4.

The CDC heard an update on the Strategic Initiative 2.4 from Champion Erik Bredfeldt, Director of Planning and Development Services. Mr. Bredfeldt gave a brief history of this initiative and updates on the four concentrations/tracks being worked on with respect to this initiative.

The first track was a status update on the RFP to hire a consultant to assist with the Land Development Code and Comprehensive Plan. It is anticipated that the RFP will be out the second week of February.

The second track was that the City Manager was approached by a developer in town, John Hudson, who expressed an interest in helping staff look at code issues and how the development review process is coordinated. He will ultimately report back to the City Commission with his results.

The third track is an update on the move towards coming up with an electronic data

management system for functional areas. Planning is already online, and it is anticipated that Building and Code Enforcement will all be online by June, 2009. Commissioner Hawkins commented that the current process is not seamless, and that if more information can be found online it will be helpful for staff as well as the public. Commissioner Donovan mentioned that he was under the impression that they were trying to avoid having people go through the clerk and allow them to go directly online. Mr. Bredfeldt said that they are trying to make it available for people to do business online as much as possible.

The fourth track involves the development of a new procedure for City projects that will be coming to the City Commission soon from General Services Director Milton Reid. Assistant City Manager Fred Murry briefly described the new proposed process and anticipated the presentation to the City Commission sometime in late February.

Mr. Bredfeldt gave a brief description of the RFP process at the request of Commissioner Hawkins. Commissioner Hawkins requested to be enfranchised as much as possible with the upcoming RFP process.

RECOMMENDATION The Community Development Committee receive an update on the progress of Strategic Initiative 2.4.

Approved as Recommended

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080467.

Status Update on the City Commission Strategic Initiative to Increase the Amount of Affordable Housing and Low-Cost Housing Throughout the City (B)

This item is a request for the Community Development Committee to receive an update on the progress of Strategic Initiative 2.6.

The CDC heard an update on the Strategic Initiative 2.6 from Champion Jackie Richardson, Housing & Community Development Manager. She introduced members of the team that worked on this committee that were present; Mr. Randy Wells, Chairperson of the SHIP Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, Teresa Osoba, Housing & Community Development Supervisor, and Rick Hutton of GRU who worked on the Connect Free Program. She also extended a special thanks to Erik Bredfeldt and Ralph Hilliard for all of their assistance with the SHIP Affordable Housing Advisory Committee.

Ms. Richardson explained that the desired outcome of this initiative was to continue providing and improving affordable housing opportunities for City residents. This was a new initiative first introduced in December 2007, and later adopted and added to the Strategic Plan in February 2008. Around the same time, the State passed House Bill 1375 which required local governments who receive SHIP funds to create and establish SHIP affordable housing advisory committees, which are called SHIP AHACs. Once this directive was received from the state, it was thought that the SHIP AHAC could be used as a catalyst to help with this initiative. The purpose of these committees are to prepare a housing plan every 3 years by reviewing the City's Comprehensive Plan, Policies, Procedures, and Regulations as they relate to

affordable housing. The committee is then responsible for recommending specific actions and initiatives for housing incentives to continue to facilitate affordable housing and provide opportunities to residents. The state had a defined process that the committee had to follow in order to meet the State deadlines. She turned the floor over to Mr. Wells to give a brief summary of what the committee has accomplished to date, on-going projects, and anticipated actions steps and timelines.

Mr. Wells said that there was a two element goal; the first was to meet the state requirements so that SHIP could continue to receive funding, and the second broader goal was to accomplish the affordable housing for home owners and renters. He feels that there needs to be more work done on many of the recommendations, especially if the committee is to continue making future recommendations that were not included this year, but the state deadlines limited their ability to do so. He mentioned that he would look forward to the opportunity for a workshop to be provided through the Florida Affordable Housing Coalition (FAHC). This committee had focused on three topics, but the FAHC had a broader range of topics they could look at. The three that interested him were flexible zoning uses, exclusionary zoning, and the benefits of transferable development rights. If there are other topics that interest the any of the Commissioners, he would like to know so they can do more work on them. He explained that there had been problems for the committee with membership attendance, and that new members would probably need to be added in order to remain productive. There were a few particular topics that members found challenging, and he hoped that the workshop process or other outreach to the community (neighborhood associations and such) may help temper some concerns, address the valid issues that people have such as impact on property values and the quality of life in a neighborhood. A few of the other topics that the committee found interesting include the issue of energy efficiency, and identifying "student" marketed properties vs family neighborhoods, and ensuring the properties previously marketed to students that are now being introduced into the affordable housing market provide safe, energy efficient, good places to raise a family. He asked again that if there are particular topics that the Commissioners would like to see the committee focus on or develop, the input is welcome.

Commissioner Donovan mentioned that when the first presentation was given that there were many good ideas and comments from the Commissioners and he hopes that they do get incorporated into the plans for the Committee. Ms. Richardson stated that the Commission will see the detailed recommendations again, most likely in February. Commissioner Donovan supported the idea of adding members. Commission Donovan encouraged the Committee to add numbers to the goals, and set measurable goals, even if they are not reached. Mr. Wells discussed some of the benefits, challenges, and methods that could be used to set these goals. Commissioner Donovan expressed his desire to see a goal of every City quadrant offering the same proportion of affordable housing and that ultimately no one should ever have to live in a substandard house. Discussion continued about where we are with this issue, setting goals for where we would like to be in the future, and finding methods to get there. Ms. Richardson added that as part of the City's performance plan, the Housing and Community Development Department has to project how many residents are assisted annually through the housing programs, and that adding measurable goals to this initiative would help broaden those goals; she provided a copy of the Housing and Community Development 2008 Program Highlights which

outlined accomplishments over the past year for a variety of programs. She also provided a copy of the Neighborhood Stabilization Program Update, and expressed concerns that funding is always a concern. For example, the SHIP program allocation cannot be confirmed until July. The County is eligible to receive about 2.9 million in Neighborhood Stabilization funds, and the City is trying to work with the County to see how much of that the City can receive to provide additional assistance for City residents. Commissioner Donovan asked if the City is entitled to a specific percentage of the funds, or if the County is obligated to spend a certain amount of the funds in the City based on population. Mr. Murry stated that the City was working with the County to determine what percentage would be received. The City advocated for these dollars from the state, and the state obliged by giving the money to the County, as there was originally no money for the County. Based on the deadlines associated with this funding, the timeline will be very tight. There will only be 18 months in which the money can be spent, however six to seven of those months will be lost waiting on the State budget amendments to be passed, so staff is planning carefully to deal with this issue. He discussed various potential problems and opportunities associated with the State funding.

Ms. Richardson introduced Rick Hutton from GRU to discuss the Connect Free Program. This program is based on a City Commission Resolution passed in 2003. It is funded by using 50% of the surcharge collected from water and wastewater connections outside the city limits. The program provides free extension of water and wastewater to existing residences inside the City limits. They are pursuing this in neighborhoods, as well as with private homeowners. Recently they have even been able to consider using this program to assist with new affordable housing projects, such as Ernie's Chips, a subdivision near NE 12th Street. Commissioner Hawkins asked who is responsible for old septic systems when we connect wastewater. Mr. Hutton said that if the homeowner is income qualified, we pay for the abandonment.

RECOMMENDATION *The Community Development Committee receive an update on the progress of Strategic Initiative 2.6.*

Approved as Recommended

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080468.

Status Update on the City Commission Strategic Initiative to Improve Coordination with Alachua County in order to More Effectively Plan and Develop Gainesville's Urban Reserve Area (B)

This item is a request for the Community Development Committee to receive an update on the progress of Strategic Initiative 2.7.

The CDC heard an update on the Strategic Initiative 2.7 from Champion Erik Bredfeldt, Director of Planning and Development Services. Mr. Bredfeldt gave a brief history and update on the action steps for this initiative. The focus for the last several months was the recommendations concerning the Rusk Report. One point was that when and if the County does a large scale land use plan amendment in the reserve it will be brought before the City Commission for review. Secondly, was that someone would come over to the City Commission to give a flushing out of where the County is on their process. He has also been a formal participant on the Orderly

Annexation Team which brought a report to the City Commission in December, which was endorsed by the Commission. The last annexation was on the west, so the next will be on the eastside of Gainesville, but the team is still working on determining an area. The County is still working on an alternative Transportation Concurrency Plan, and they are still developing where that is going, but he will keep them posted. Strategic Planning Manager Karen Billings added that the alternating East-West Annexations would be larger scale referendums and that smaller scale annexations would still be taking place. There was discussion about pending annexations and how future annexations are going to be handled depending on what the County implements.

Commissioner Donovan asked how important the upcoming legislative meeting on the boundary adjustment act is, and whether or not Commissioners should attend this meeting. Ms. Billings responded that she felt it was very important as there was not a full consensus among the municipalities due to various concerns that were discussed.

Commissioner Donovan spoke about a few concerns he had about the second bullet of the action steps about "density" as a method of signaling or requiring annexation, and the first bullet under critical success measures about increased City involvement in the planning decisions, which could address the issue of annexing an area before it becomes too dense. He felt that we haven't made much headway in that area. He raised concerns about areas such as Jonesville, Haile Plantation, and Newberry Square that can create more problems than the County is willing to acknowledge, and that he would like to stay ahead of the density issue rather than responding to it afterward.

Commissioner Hawkins commented that he agreed with Commissioner Donovan but that the underlying problem was that at some point the County adopted a future land use map that granted development rights way out to the hinder lands. He said he felt that they are doing some very aggressive things to deal with these problems.

Ms. Billings wanted to clarify the connectivity between the two issues. She stated that the "density" trigger was based on a model out of North Carolina, where when you hit a certain population level you are automatically annexed into the annexing municipality, and that it is definitely linked because planning on the front end of the decisions could perhaps include implementing these density triggers. It could result in making developments outside the City less attractive as they would be built under the County, but once finished, could reach the trigger to be automatically annexed into the City. There was further discussion about what could result in low density sprawl.

RECOMMENDATION *The Community Development Committee receive an update on the progress of Strategic Initiative 2.7.*

Approved as Recommended

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080469

Status Update on the City Commission Strategic Initiative to Continue Implementation of the 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness (B)

This item is a request for the Community Development Committee to receive an update on the progress of Strategic Initiative 3.1.

The CDC heard an update on the Strategic Initiative 3.1 from Champion Fred Murry, Assistant City Manager and Jackie Richardson, Housing & Community Development Manager.

Mr. Murry gave a brief history of this initiative and the steps being taken to accomplish the goal of reducing the number of homeless persons in our area. He gave updates on the current agreements for the Office of Homelessness and the Cold Night Shelter program. The Point-In-Time Survey is getting ready to take place which gives a snapshot of the number of homeless persons in our community. The One Stop Center location should be brought to City Commission by the end of April. The Office of Hunger and Homelessness has a new Executive Director, Jon DeCarmine. The office of Homelessness also has a new Executive Director, Ms. Moraksi. Stakeholders are meeting every two weeks in order to determine the best, most cost effective location for the One Stop Center and the best way to provide the services to the homeless. Stakeholders include the City, County, Grace Marketplace, Housing Authority. One of the projects approved in the stimulus package was the One Stop Center. Several of the service providers are losing state resources, so they are evaluating to make sure that they are still going to be able to provide services. This group is looking at shelter services being a priority at the Center. The Alachua County Housing Authority has gone out and received funds for Vet services, a percentage of these funds can be used for homeless Vets.

Commissioner Hawkins asked if there were any members of the advocate committees at the meeting. Mr. Murry said that there are representatives of the advocate community as part of this group. Commissioner Hawkins said that he is more optimistic based on the report, and thanked the group for all their work. He suggested that if the group keeps running into obstacles he would consider a no housing option. Mr. Murry mentioned that the group is also considering an interim site to see how that will work. Commissioner Hawkins added that it may be worthwhile to empower a private organization with some financial backing from the City as a possible alternative if there are future roadblocks. Mr. Murry stated that he felt once the location is identified, that the community and stakeholders will join in to fund services. Commissioner Donovan stated that the plan originated with a no housing option, and as it has progressed it has been determined that the housing option is more of a necessity.

Commissioner Donovan commented about a news interview he had seen recently about the services provided by St. Francis House. There was a discussion as to whether or not St. Francis House was adequate, whether all the needs were currently being met, or if people were not seeking out services. Commissioner Donovan wanted to note that IHN is struggling right now, as a result of the downturn in the economy. Eric Bredfeldt wanted to note that St. Francis House has applied for their special use permit and it should go through the approval process in the next few months. There was discussion regarding complaints from the community about the homeless loitering on the Plaza and future options and alternatives with the new One Stop Center. Commissioner Donovan noted that during the last few months the number of homeless has fluctuated up and down, making it difficult to track success. He would

like to find a better way to determine effectiveness. The other point he wanted to make was that the dog park might offer an alternative venue for the homeless rather than the Plaza, and he shared his thoughts about alternative future plans for the Plaza incorporating commerce. He wanted to encourage any diverse thinking for alternatives.

RECOMMENDATION The Community Development Committee receive an update on the progress of Strategic Initiative 3.1.

Approved as Recommended

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080473

Status Update on the City Commission Strategic Initiative to Continue Annexation Efforts in the Urbanized Area in order to Maintain Social, Economic and Financial Diversity (B)

This item is a request for the Community Development Committee to receive an update on the progress of Strategic Initiative 4.1.

The CDC heard an update on the Strategic Initiative 4.1 from Champion Karen Billings, Strategic Planning Manager. Ms. Billings gave a brief history and update on the action steps for this initiative. She recently had a meeting with Commissioner Henry to discuss which area on the Eastside will be a large scale annexation referendum. There are a number of teams to address annexation, depending on what the activity is; internal and joint City/County teams.

The teams will be looking at the biggest issues with annexation such as what are the incentives for established neighborhoods to annex, and what can the City do to clean-up its borders. They were hoping to bring back a report at the end of the year as to overall impact of annexation on long term City Planning and what should the plan be for annexation and growth for the future. There has been a slow-down in annexation activity due to the slow-down in the housing market and development opportunities, so it is a good time to evaluate policy and how they wish to proceed.

Commissioner Donovan commented that he would like some clarification on the purpose of this strategic initiative. He discussed concerns he had about the wording as it relates to annexing urban areas, and environmental buffers or open green-space. He asked to get an articulation as to why the City would want the open green space, and a diversity of properties, and responsible growth.

Ms. Billings clarified that the green-belt concept or "buffer" was discussed at the County-wide visioning and planning committee conceptual land use planning. The concept of having the urban core and a green-belt or buffer will prevent from having a large patch-work of municipalities where Cities seem to run together, such as in South Florida. Growth can be defined however the City Commission sees fit, as to whether it be housing and development, or something else. However to control the land use and zoning categories it must be within the City's control to do so. As far as the diversity issue, it goes back to what was reported in the Rusk report in keeping the community socially, economically, and financially diverse.

Commissioner Donovan commented that he would like to see a better description for this strategic initiative to make sure that everyone is on the same page, and that the item is clear. Ms. Billings mentioned that this initiative was recently reworded as it previously stated to annex in order to increase the tax base, and that it was agreed that it did not reflect the intentions of the City as they did not want to annex just to increase the tax base, but to make sure that the diversity was controlled. Ms. Billings stated that they could definitely discuss these concerns at the Strategic Planning Retreat on February 9th.

Commissioner Donovan said he felt that the problem was that their goal was not necessarily to continue annexing, but to provide economic prosperity and quality of life, by proper planning and staying ahead of the curve rather than behind it. There was discussion about the high density areas in Gainesville today, how they are the ones struggling the most, what historical factors could have played a part in that, what urban sprawl really is, why it is considered bad, sustainability, and where we want the City to be in the future.

Commissioner Donovan would like to have clarification in this strategic Initiative that brings about the right discussion of how do we want to grow, where do we want to grow, why do we want to grow, where don't we want to grow, and why not, what kind of growth, what kind of diversity, and what is meant by diversity. Ms. Billings agreed to put this on the February 9th meeting to discuss further.

RECOMMENDATION *The Community Development Committee receive an update on the progress of Strategic Initiative 4.1.*

Approved as Recommended

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MEMBER COMMENT

Commissioner Donovan stated that he had emailed staff with concerns about the Vision Statement. He would like to re-open the discussion as he was concerned that two important points were lost with the new wording; one being that every citizen will experience the City as a safe and supportive community, and the second being what kind of healthy relationship we want with our region.

Staff advised that this was scheduled for the next meeting in February, but that the Committee could vote to look at it again in the next regular CDC meeting, or take it as is to the City Commission and make suggestions at that time. Commissioner Donovan stated that he would take the second alternative as he would like to have the Vision to the City Commission before the Strategic Planning Retreat. Staff agreed to modify the item to reflect both, and the recommended action will be to hear a report from the committee.

Commissioner Donovan expressed concerns he had about the RLUIPA referral. He stated that he felt that the Committee should vote on the 2,000 ft buffer area, and ask the University to have people come in and explain their views, so all sides can be heard, this Committee will be telling the Commission that it has referred something that is just too difficult to accomplish, and the Commission will be stuck. He would

like to decide whether or not to reconsider the 2,000 ft buffer, invite the University in particular as they were thought to be excluded, and get all view points before making a decision.

Commissioner Hawkins made comments, and there was discussion as to whether or not social service providers should be treated the same as for-profit service providers, and whether or not the Committee would make a better presentation to the Commission if they held a vote.

Commissioner Donovan brought up that he did not feel they could restrict religious groups near the University from providing social services (as to fulfill part of their faith obligation or mission) unless there was a public safety concern. He felt that there was a practical concern from homeowners/property owners, but that it may not have the effect they were fearing.

Commissioner Donovan asked staff to research when and why the 2,000 ft buffer was implemented. He has heard two different versions and would like clarification. Was it implemented before Danny Rollings, or after as a result. Staff agreed to research this item and get back to the Committee.

CITIZEN COMMENT

REFERRALS

040180 -- Principles of Sustainability in Significant Decisions

050761 -- Energy Efficiency Standards and Requirements

060285 -- Student Behavior Tracking

061025 -- Landlord License Fees for Non-Conforming Uses

070604 -- Annexation of Strategic Ecosystems

070629 -- 2002/2003 NW 3RD Ave Project - Status Report

070777 -- Removal of Lien Affecting 1245 SE 4th Ave & 1239 SE 3rd Ave

070871 -- Places of Religious Assembly

070980 -- Solar Panels vs. Removing Tree Canopy

080357 -- City of Gainesville Vision

080465 -- Continue to Remove Barriers (Regulation Review, Project Facilitation); Consolidate layers of Regulation and Consider Expanding Team to Include Outside Representation -- CCOM Strategic Initiative

080467 -- Increase the Amount of Affordable and Low Cost Housing Throughout the City - CCOM Strategic Initiative

080468 -- Improve Coordination with Alachua County in Order to More Effectively Plan And Develop Gainesville's Urban Reserve Area - CCOM Strategic Initiative

080469 -- Continue Implementation of the 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness (One Stop Center, Review Ordinances to Increase Beds, etc.) - CCOM Strategic Initiative

080473 -- Continue Annexation Effort In the Urbanized Area In Order to Maintain Social, Economic, and Financial Diversity - CCOM Strategic Initiative

NEXT MEETING DATE

February 26, 2009 1:00 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:37 PM.