



Legislation Text

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Southern Charm Kitchen Update (B)

On June 9, 2008 the CRA closed on the properties located at 1712 SE Hawthorne Road and 1714 SE Hawthorne Road. The CRA approved the concept of a small restaurant or diner for this site and general scope of a Request for Proposal (RFP) to attract a business as a tenant. The RFP was issued in June 2010 and one proposal was received for the site proposing a café/restaurant use.

The proposer was Southern Charm Kitchen, by Omar and Arpita Oselimo the founders and owners of Reggae Shack Café located on University Avenue. Southern Charm is a restaurant café that is rooted in traditional southern cooking that take classic dishes and traditional recipes and transform them in a contemporary fashion to suit current tastes, local preferences, and available seasonal ingredients.

In September 2010, the Oselimos received the CRA's first Grow Gainesville Fund, a SBA 7(a) loan to help towards the interior build-out, furniture and equipment, and operating expenses for the café space. The CRA then entered into a lease agreement with an option to purchase. On June 28, 2017 Southern Charm Kitchen exercised their option and provided notice of their intent to purchase. The Oselimos agreed to the price but haven't been in a position to follow through on the purchase of the building.

Since its opening in August of 2011, Southern Charm Kitchen has served as a catalyst for continued redevelopment along the Hawthorne Road corridor. The establishment is one of the only sit-down family restaurants to exist on the east side and has been well-received by the community.

Due to challenges faced by the restaurant owners, Southern Charm has been closed for business and the CRA has received inquiries about future plans for the facility. At today's meeting CRA Staff will update the Board on the details surrounding the closing, what the lease requires and options for moving forward.

Not applicable at this time

CRA Executive Director to the CRA: Hear update from CRA Staff