

**JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
STEERING COMMITTEE
APRIL 6, 2001
8:00 A.M.**

1. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 8:10 a.m. Present were Chair Chuck Bonfiglio, Vice-Chair Larry Davis, Councilmember Geri Clark, Councilmember Susan Starkey, Neal Kalis, and Wayne Arnold. Also present were Economic Development Coordinator Margaret Wu and Committee Clerk Jenevia Edwards recording the meeting. Delia Alonso, Bob Boegli and Richard Abraham were absent.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 2, 2001

Councilmember Clark made a motion, seconded by Mr. Arnold, to approve the minutes of March 2, 2001. In a voice vote, with Mr. Abraham, Ms. Alonso and Mr. Boegli, being absent, all voted in favor. **(Motion carried 6-0)**

3. OLD BUSINESS

3.1 Large Agency Meeting

Chair Bonfiglio suggested that Ms. Wu make the same presentation that she had made at the December 1, 2000 meeting. He commented that the large agency meeting was scheduled for May 8th at 5:30 p.m. Ms. Wu indicated that she felt her presentation had been too long and she would attempt to fine-tune it. Chair Bonfiglio agreed but indicated that the presentation had to be lengthy in order to be informative.

Councilmember Clark commented that she would like to discuss redevelopment at the upcoming meeting, specifically in District 1. She commented that she was unsure about the approach to redevelopment and asked for Ms. Wu's assistance in pointing out areas in District 1 that needed to be addressed. Ms. Wu indicated that she would also discuss this with Redevelopment Administrator Will Allen.

Chair Bonfiglio recalled that a few months ago, another topic that was suggested for the agenda was to explore grant funding or alternative financing to long term redevelopment of commercial property and for tax deferment and low interest loans. Ms. Wu explained that there was a loan subsidy program being offered through the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). Mr. Kalis commented that although that was a good topic, the loan subsidy program for the CRA was limited to the Western Theme District. He expressed the opinion that consideration should be given to expand the program to other areas within the redevelopment area. Councilmember Clark commented that the areas she had thought of were in the redevelopment area, but not along Davie Road. Mr. Kalis asked Ms. Wu to mention this item to Mr. Allen, not necessarily for an agenda item but for discussion at the April 9th CRA meeting.

Chair Bonfiglio asked about additional items for the agenda. Councilmember Starkey responded that Council meetings should be shortened. A discussion ensued with the Committee presenting various strategies and suggestions in which this might be accomplished. Councilmember Starkey suggested that Council meetings begin earlier with a set time for development items. Mr. Kalis commented that in some municipalities, the meeting time was set by resolution and a majority vote was needed to extend the meeting.

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Mr. Kalis referred to Code enforcement, landscaping and signage issues that had been discussed at a previous meeting. He commented that it might be too soon to discuss these issues again, however, he had a problem with the portrayal of the Town's image. Mr. Kalis advised of previous suggestions that he had made if the Town would establish a landscaping program. Vice-Chair Davis inquired if the Town's Code Compliance representative could attend the upcoming meeting to discuss the issue and possibly offer some resolution to the problem. Following a brief discussion on the Code enforcement issue, Mr. Kalis expressed the opinion that he believed the Town's philosophy was, "live and let live." Councilmember Starkey commented that she believed that this issue was politically driven and was something that could be addressed internally.

Councilmember Clark stated that in defense of the Code Compliance Division, it was a situation of lack of manpower. She explained that with a staff of only three employees for the entire Town, it was an impossible task. Councilmember Clark commented that there was allocation in the budget for three additional employees which was still not enough. Councilmember Starkey expressed the opinion that if there was a backlog, issues with the most complaints would be addressed first as well as those presented by Council. Chair Bonfiglio and Vice-Chair Davis agreed that the Committee was assuming that a lack of manpower was the problem when there might be other problems that the Committee was not aware of. Vice-Chair Davis commented that policy-driven decisions were another factor and he would like to know what those policies were.

Ms. Wu inquired if the idea was to have Code Compliance Official Daniel Stallone attend the meeting on May 8th, with Chair Bonfiglio responding affirmatively. Mr. Kalis expressed the opinion that that was an uncomfortable position in which to place Mr. Stallone. Discussion continued with regard to inviting Mr. Stallone with no determination being made.

Councilmember Starkey indicated that she would like to see written suggestions from Mr. Stallone identifying issues and suggestions as well as a scenario that could be utilized to bring those issues to a conclusion. Councilmember Clark indicated that she would speak with Mr. Stallone and let him know what he should expect.

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Agrarian Committee

As there was no representative present, no report was made.

4.2 Community Redevelopment Agency

Mr. Kalis advised that he had attended a meeting in which Town Administrator Tom Willi, Ms. Wu, Development Services Director Mark Kutney and Robert Shapiro had discussed the multi-story, mixed-use building project proposed for Davie Road. Mr. Kalis advised that discussions had taken place with several residential developers who appeared interested in the project. He explained that there had been discussions concerning the future of the utilities plant and whether it would be available for acquisition as surplus property. The possibility of acquiring other properties, including Varsity Square, was also discussed. Mr. Kalis commented that Mr. Shapiro was encouraged by the discussions and the possibility of participation by the CRA and the Town in this project.

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Mr. Kalis indicated that he had been contacted by Richard Abraham who informed him that he would be contacted by Mr. Shapiro regarding changes concerning offers made by LefMark to the Bianco family regarding their property. He explained that offers had been made on Varsity Square and that there had been discussions with Dunkin Donuts representatives.

Mr. Kalis informed the Committee that eventually he had been contacted by Mr. Shapiro and they had discussions regarding Related Companies and the City Place project which had been undertaken in the Palm Beach area. An interesting aspect of the project was its architectural feature which was an old church that was redeveloped into a mixed-use residential retail development.

Mr. Kalis advised that there was the possibility of a joint venture with LefMark and Related Companies to undertake a small scale project at the Davie Road site. He commented that this project would be comprised of a residential component along the exterior with an interior plaza with multi story retail shops and restaurants. Mr. Kalis commented that Mr. Shapiro believed that the project was economically viable. He added that there was a proposed meeting with the CRA, the Related Companies representative and Mr. Shapiro to proceed with the project.

Mr. Kalis indicated that he had asked Mr. Willi to advise him as to when the utility plant would be phased out, as this was a critical part of this project. Mr. Kalis spoke of the Walgreens' site plan that was again discussed by Council. He advised that this item was tabled, possibly for the last time. Mr. Kalis explained that this would allow the developer, the CRA and staff to reach a compromise suitable for everyone involved. There was a brief discussion that the developer would attempt to revise the site plan to conform with the Griffin Road Corridor Plan. He commented that if this conformance was not forthcoming, Council would make its final decision.

Regarding the construction problems with the new houses in east Davie, Mr. Kalis indicated that the CRA was working to have the problems resolved. He advised that the CRA was in the process of acquiring five additional lots in the neighborhood which would become part of a housing program and commented that a new contractor would be hired for this project.

Mr. Kalis advised that Mr. Allen would be working with staff to identify which sidewalks and lighting needed to be improved in the neighborhood. He referred to a proposed meeting with a neighborhood retailer regarding the creation of a streetscape project on Orange Drive similar to that on Davie Road. Ms. Wu apprised the Committee of the availability of grant funds from Florida State University and Broward County through a program called "Walk Florida". She indicated that funds were available to be utilized to develop pedestrian friendly neighborhoods and she believed that the proposed project for Orange Drive would qualify. Mr. Kalis asked Ms. Wu to provide this information to Mr. Allen.

Mr. Kalis provided an update on the ongoing discussions with the Town, the Florida Department of Transportation, and the South Florida Water Management District concerning the landscaping of the canal bank. He indicated that the CRA and the Town had been asked to "sign-off" on a permit and explained why the CRA was reluctant to do that.

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4.3 Davie/Cooper City Chamber of Commerce

Chair Bonfiglio advised that Executive Director Arlene Broleman was creating the Chamber's membership directory. He commented that the Chamber's Business Expo was being planned for July 24th at Rolling Hills. Chair Bonfiglio referred to the Orange Blossom Festival and inquired if any Committee members had attended. Mr. Arnold explained that he had participated in the parade and that Councilmember Clark and Councilmember Starkey also attended. He indicated that the assessment was that this year's turnout was very low which was a direct result of the festival not being impacted by the rodeo. Mr. Arnold commented that of the five festivals he had participated in, this was the best. He advised that there had been no complaints from business owners who did not have access to their businesses due to the road being blocked. Mr. Arnold stated that Police Chief John George and staff members responsible for organizing the festival should be commended for their work.

4.4 Davie Economic Development Council

As there was no representative present, no report was made.

4.5 Davie Merchants and Industrial Association

Mr. Arnold informed the Committee that Chief George had been the guest speaker at the latest Davie Merchants and Industrial Association meeting. He stated that Irv Rosenbaum would be the speaker at the upcoming meeting.

Mr. Arnold commented that the turnout at the past meeting was the largest since he became president. He commended Councilmember Starkey for her participation.

4.6 Planning and Zoning Board

Vice-Chair Davis referred to the telecommunications tower issue and inquired what had happened when it went to Council. Councilmember Starkey responded that the cell tower component could not be discussed; however, allowance was made for public input. She clarified that it was the rezoning that was denied and not the permit for the telecommunications tower.

Councilmember Starkey suggested that she would direct staff to research ordinances on telecommunication towers to see the effect on residential communities in other areas. She indicated that the Codes in other areas might be stricter than the Town's. Councilmember Starkey commented that that was important so as not to leave the Town open to liability.

Vice-Chair Davis indicated that from the discussion at the Planning and Zoning Board meeting, technology was too advanced for these types of outdoor towers. He commented that this appeared to be an archaic form of communication when others were using satellites.

Vice-Chair Davis referred to the issue of the proposed Publix Supermarket located in east Davie and indicated that the Planning and Zoning Board had voted in favor of allowing the project to proceed. He commented that he wanted to address the issue at the Council meeting and due to the length of the meeting, the item was not discussed until very late. Vice-Chair Davis explained that Council's decision created a major public impact.

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He commented that although he understood the reason why it was allowed to proceed, he believed that Council “rolled-over” and it would happen again in the future.

Mr. Arnold commented that although the cell tower component of the telecommunications could not be mentioned, information was “co-mingled” in the back-up material received by Council. He referred to the Publix project and indicated that it was desperately needed in east Davie and in his opinion, Council had acted correctly. Vice-Chair Davis commented that he agreed that there was a need, but another approach could have been used. He felt that Council “buckled” under the pressure and a precedence was now set. Following a brief discussion, Councilmember Starkey indicated that although she respected Vice-Chair Davis’ opinion, he should be reminded that it was a minor opinion of the majority of residents in that area. She indicated that the needs of the community should be respected.

4.7 South Florida Education Center

As there was no representative present, no report was made.

4.8 Town Council

Councilmember Clark commented that there was a great deal of input on the issue of lengthy meetings and she did not want to appear redundant. Councilmember Starkey asked for the Committee’s patience, commenting that she was enjoying what she had undertaken and was very excited. She commented that she welcomed an audience from any of the Committee members in their agencies/committees/departments if they had any concerns. Councilmember Starkey explained that she had taken a six month hiatus from her regular employment to allow her to get a grasp on Town issues.

5. COMMENTS AND/OR SUGGESTIONS

Mr. Kalis complimented Councilmember Starkey and other Councilmembers and indicated that the demeanor was obviously respectful at the last Council meeting, although the differences of opinion were expressed with passion.

Regarding the lengthy Council meetings, the current system was briefly discussed. Both Mr. Kalis and Councilmember Starkey indicated that the sign-up method practiced in other cities was very popular and allowed citizens the opportunity to express themselves. Councilmember Starkey commented that public comments were important and provided a good opportunity but it should not be misused. She commented that recommendations should be made by other Councilmembers, as well as herself, to make some changes to the format. Councilmember Clark explained that suggestions and recommendations had been made in the past; however, no changes were made. Councilmember Starkey suggested that the proposed changes should be made by motion and suggestions be made as to what format should be used. Mr. Arnold commented that public expression was great even if the expressions were carried out by the same individuals every time. He referred to the quasi judicial portion of Council meetings and indicated that most of the problems existed with that segment. Mr. Arnold indicated that a resolution would be difficult because each item stood on its own.

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Chair Bonfiglio asked that the Committee decide on a moderator for the Large Joint Agency meeting.

Mr. Arnold made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Clark, to ask Mayor Venis to moderate the meeting. In a voice vote, with Ms. Alonso, Messrs. Boegli Abraham being absent, all voted in favor. **(Motion carried 6-0)**

Mr. Kalis commented that although he was not opposed to having Mayor Venis moderate, previously, whoever was the chair of the Committee acted as moderator. He explained that he felt that based on the discussions at these meetings, the Committee had a better idea for the direction the meeting should take. Mr. Kalis commented that by being moderator of the meeting, the Mayor had the opportunity to steer the meeting in whatever direction he chose. Chair Bonfiglio explained that from his observation, the position of moderator went back and forth. He suggested that if the meetings were held twice a year, the Chair and the Mayor could alternate as moderators.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Arnold made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Clark, to adjourn. There being no further business and no objections, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

Approved: _____

Chair/Committee Member