

**TOWN OF DAVIE
PLATINUM CITY WORKSHOP
APRIL 6, 2011**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:34 p.m. and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ROLL CALL

Present at the meeting were Mayor Paul, Vice-Mayor Hattan and Councilmembers Caletka, Luis and Starkey. Also present was Assistant Town Clerk Roig recording the meeting.

3. PLATINUM CITY

Economic Development Manager Peter Tokar gave a presentation. He stated his group recommended a revised Master Plan for the next five to ten years that focused on business, not residential development in the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) area. They also discussed branding the Transit Oriented Corridor (TOC) area and suggested naming it the Central Broward Business Center. The district design guidelines they recommended included making it less heavy industrial, but not quite light industrial. They also recommended infrastructure improvements such as drainage and re-use and a utility study.

Mr. Tokar stated that some of the challenges in the north area included: lack of infrastructure, conflicting land uses, poor access, the Travel center and storm water management issues. Some of the opportunities included acquiring the Tindall Hammock sewer area and connecting Southwest 59th Street all the way through. In the central district some of the challenges included the Florida Power and Light Company (FPL) easement, lack of room for business expansion, lack of a centralized drainage system, lack of common ownership and lack of access to State Road 7. Mr. Tokar said possible improvements included the creation of another access point into the project and evaluation of the Sloan property for potential expansion of the Watson site. Mr. Tokar said their advice would be to start drainage and infrastructure expansion at the corner of Orange Drive and the Florida Turnpike.

Mr. Tokar stated the south area challenges included the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) retention areas, the cemetery site, the auto auction and the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel. Opportunities included: working out a deal with FDOT to relocate the drainage areas under the power lines to create redevelopment opportunities, utilizing flexible redevelopment and easy design guidelines, identifying a dedicated source of funding, making utility improvements, undertaking streetscape improvements, offering economic incentives and creating a marketing campaign.

Mr. Tokar explained the next steps which would be to brand the area, create the frequently asked questions sheet, create a comprehensive utility plan for the TOC, explore enterprise and trade zones, have a business retention program, and explore the formation of a funding source.

Mr. Tokar said he and Building Department representatives had been sitting on the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance's Permit Action Committee to consider becoming a designated Platinum City. He introduced Mason Jackson, CEO of Workforce One and Chair of the Greater Fort Lauderdale Governor's Council.

Mr. Jackson stated that there had been complaints about the permitting process everywhere he went. The feeling was that the process was prohibiting entrepreneurship, business expansion and relocation, and in general adding costs to doing business in Broward County.

Mr. Jackson explained that the biggest permit issues seemed to be the costs of unknown delays and the money spent paying people to negotiate the system. Mr. Jackson stated that there were simple things that could be done to improve the process, and they were contained in a resolution he wished Council to consider. He congratulated the Town for being among the first in Broward to pass the ordinance, noting this was a visionary, proactive and strategic action.

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Mr. Jackson said the ordinance included putting the permitting process online for transparency, designating a concierge for qualified projects, and drafting a statement from Council. Adopting these elements would give the Town access to premium web and print exposure in the Alliance media, as well as site selection criteria.

Ron Drew, President of Communications and Marketing for the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance, said they were in competition with cities that brought jobs to their areas. They wanted to encourage high-value target industry jobs. Mr. Drew showed Council the Platinum City website where permits could be tracked online.

Mr. Tokar said the Town was two-thirds of the way to becoming a Platinum City but they still needed the reinforcement from Town leadership through a resolution stating their commitment. Mr. Tokar noted the resolution only applied to new, expanding or relocating businesses in targeted high-skill, high-wage job industries. Council could also choose to use the process for a project that would provide a significant economic benefit that may not be in a targeted industry.

Mr. Tokar had been working with the Building Department regarding improvement of the fee structure. He stated the current building fee schedule was very lengthy and cumbersome. He presented an example of how the new graduated fee structure would work. Mr. Tokar said this would provide an affordable, self-adjusting rate for the fees, which was easily calculated based on construction costs.

Mr. Tokar said they had also looked at the fire inspection fee. They had developed a more equitable fee structure and proposed coordinating payment with business tax receipts to reduce costs.

Mr. Tokar said these changes would make Davie a more business-friendly Town, improve their community and business image, allow them better marketing through the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance, increase efficiency in Town departments, and make the process more fair and sustainable.

Councilmember Starkey asked how businesses felt about including the fire inspection fee with a business license. She was informed that cities that utilized this had been surveyed and they reported great success. Councilmember Starkey wanted notice sent to business owners before the change took place.

Vice-Mayor Hattan suggested an installment plan, and Mr. Tokar said they could look into this. Mr. Tokar stated the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance was a public/private partnership with Broward County; the Partners' Council was free to municipalities. There would be no cost to the Town to be Platinum designated.

Councilmember Luis said he had wanted to discuss the permit issue with the new Town Administrator and suggested placing this on a future Council agenda. He stated most developers felt the affordable housing fee was the largest impediment to bringing new projects to the Town. Councilmember Luis suggested suspending the fee for one year and then reviewing it. Council directed staff to gather information on this for Council.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss and no objections, the meeting was adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

Approved _____

Mayor/Councilmember

Town Clerk