

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ZONE COMMITTEE (EDZC) MINUTES
MONDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2019 10:00 A.M.
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, VERO BEACH, FLORIDA**

PRESENT: Chairman Joseph Cataldo, Alternate Member #1 Bob DelVecchio and Alternate Member #2 Linda Moore **Also Present:** Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director; John Turner, City Attorney and Heather McCarty, Records Retention Specialist

Excused Absences: Garry Rooney, Terry Torres and Jessica Hawkins

Unexcused Absence: Mike Williams

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) August 19, 2019

Mr. DelVecchio made a motion to approve the August 19, 2019 minutes. Mrs. Moore seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

4. NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Moore said she is meeting with the County tomorrow regarding the painting of stormwater drains. She said there are many people interested in painting them and she thought maybe their Committee could paint one (1) to help gain some awareness about their Committee.

Mr. Cataldo asked Mrs. Moore how their parking situation is now that there are parking meters across the street and if they felt an impact. Mrs. Moore said not really, but the parking is terrible and it is not season yet. She said Friday nights are a problem, but people are finding spaces.

The members talked about the possibility of having a private individual use a golf cart to drive people around on the weekends.

Mrs. Moore reported that all of their items were approved by City Council. Mr. Cataldo said money has been allocated for lighting and Public Works will take it from there. He said next year, they will recommend appropriations for something else. He felt it was a good start and he would like to go back to things they can do either without money or money down the road.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A) Mr. Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director, to give an update on the Master Plan (Resolution presented to City Council is attached.)

Mr. Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director, reviewed that City Council approved the Resolution and the plan amendments. He explained it is being approved through a budget amendment and the public hearing will be held at the November 4th City Council meeting. Then he turns it over to Public Works for them to start the work on what they budgeted. He added they would be hiring an outside consultant to do the engineering for them.

B) Update on the American Icon Brewery crosswalk - Mr. Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director

Mr. Jeffries said he looked at the site plan file for American Icon Brewery and the traffic impact analysis that was done, which showed at the time, they weren't going to impact the traffic enough that would warrant any type of improvements on the road, including lane improvements.

Mrs. Moore said when they originally opened, they had access to the parking lot that is now a paid parking lot across from them. She said the parking lot across the street from American Icon and Jetsons was not that crucial then, but now that the lot across from her is paid parking that charges \$4 an hour, more people have to park in the lot across from American Icon. She asked if that changed the dynamics. Mr. Jeffries asked in terms of pedestrian safety. The Committee answered yes, that it is has always been a safety issue.

Mr. Jeffries clarified that now more people are parking across from Jetsons. Mrs. Moore agreed, including her staff.

Mr. DeVecchio asked if anybody is using the parking lot at the end of her building. Mrs. Moore explained they had started using that grassy lot when the other lot started charging, but now they are towing again so they cannot use the grassy lot anymore. She said she does not know the people who own it or what changed.

Mr. Cataldo asked if they are able to park at Firestone at night. Mrs. Moore said they can, but they (Firestone) don't close until 7:00 p.m. so they can't use the rows across from the bays until after that. She said some people park at the Freshman Learning Center (FLIC) and along 14th Avenue. She added when it rains, people will pay for parking and she reimburses them.

Mr. Cataldo thought maybe they would lower their parking rates if enough people weren't using it.

Mrs. Moore said they regularly have their Parking Attendant come in at 8:30 a.m. and anyone who is already there that didn't pay, they have them towed. She commented that her customers aren't getting towed, but they do actively let their customers know about available parking.

Mr. DeVecchio asked about the time-frame for starting the lighting. Mr. Jeffries said he has not spoken with Public Works yet, but he will find out and report back to them.

Mr. Cataldo said he would like to turn their focus back to creating more parking downtown and traffic calming.

Mrs. Moore said they brought up shared parking at the last City Council meeting in response to the study and all the lots that were empty. She explained that Mr. Lee Olsen has been trying to make deals with people who own parking lots beachside to be able to get parking for his staff. She said he offers to pay them and add them to his liability insurance, but everyone says no. She commented that it wasn't about the money; it was just they don't want restaurant customers in their parking lots. She said they have tried

that, but Councilmember Robbie Bracket's idea about the City getting involved in things of that nature hasn't been tried and she thought that might be more feasible.

Mr. Cataldo said that if the City maintains it, it would be a benefit to the lot owner, so he could see that being done. He added that the property owners would probably be more comfortable with indemnification from the City.

Mr. DelVecchio agreed and said that he has spoken with Mr. Olsen about it. He referred to the parking lot at the Ocean Grill, which is empty a lot. Mr. Cataldo said they own it, but agreed that during the day it is available.

Mrs. Moore commented that the busiest peak parking period beachside is Thursdays at 2:00 p.m. Mr. Jeffries explained that the retail businesses are open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and there is a lunch crowd along with people going to the beach, which is why it is busiest during the week.

Mr. DelVecchio commented they definitely have that problem downtown as well.

Mr. Cataldo said the courthouse has commandeered a whole street for parking and it says the spots are reserved for the courthouse during working hours, even though they have a parking garage.

The members had a brief discussion about the parking situation on the roads around the courthouse.

Mrs. Moore commented that she looks around and takes measurements to see where they could put angled parking in instead of parallel parking.

Mr. Cataldo brought up having diagonal parking on both sides of the street and making roads one-way, such as they did in downtown Stuart. He suggested they could do that on Old Dixie. Mrs. Moore pointed out that is a County road.

Mr. DelVecchio asked about the possibility of getting signage to let people know they can park at the parking garage. Mr. Jeffries said he could look into that.

Mr. Cataldo said it sounds like shared parking. The County owns the garage and the City would like to use it for its citizens and property owners. He doesn't think anyone can park there whenever because it is not necessarily public parking, which is why they can't put up signs. He added they should get clarification on that.

Mr. Jeffries said that he would look into it. Mr. DelVecchio said he did not think it was allocated solely for the courthouse. Mrs. Moore noted there is about 410 to 430 parking spaces in the parking garage.

Mr. Jeffries said he would look into it. He said that his department has not finished looking into the parking issues downtown. He explained they have certain incentives in their downtown zoning and they want to reassess that because when they were put in the Land Development Code in the 90's, it had been identified that there was a surplus of parking. They need to update the inventory and see where they are and then they can talk about some of the issues once that is completed.

Mrs. Moore said she thought it would be easier to make some of the side streets one-way.

Mr. Cataldo said there might be a solution that would narrow the lanes, which would slow people down.

Mrs. Moore pointed out that they do not get support when they talk about slowing things down.

Mr. Jeffries said they really have to look at where they are in terms of the development downtown. Mrs. Moore asked if that would be an outside study. Mr. Jeffries said this is internal work being done by staff. He said they are going back to the 1992 study that was done for downtown and looking at what has been developed since then. He commented that there has not been a lot of construction, but there have been change of uses that affect parking and they need to identify the net demand on parking. The basic thing is if they still have the surplus. Mrs. Moore said if they look at downtown as an overall, including the county parking garage, it does look like there is a surplus. But if they're talking about a specific block, it is a different picture.

Mr. Cataldo talked about fixing the problem downtown and making it vibrant and viable from an economic standpoint. He said downtown is not on automatic pilot, but it has come a long way. He said as an example, if SR 60 west bound was narrowed with parking on both sides, all those businesses would be desirable and the property values would go up. Mr. DelVecchio and Mrs. Moore agreed.

Mr. Cataldo commented that there is an election coming up soon and these are the kinds of things they should explore because it might not require dollars. Mrs. Moore agreed they should see who has an appetite for it. She added that she would bring it up with the candidates at the Walking Tree. She said she is supportive of trying.

Mr. Cataldo said he has no problem going to every City Council member, but right now, they know they are not with them, but that is going to be changing. He added they know there is the potential for money from FDOT through their programs that they should explore, but they need support.

Mr. DelVecchio asked Mr. Jeffries how is their relations with FDOT. Also, on the lighting, back in July he had talked about some grants maybe being available and asked if he looked into that.

Mr. Jeffries said on the lighting, FPL had programs, but it is like a lease for the lights instead of purchasing them. The problem there is that EDZC funds need to be for a capital project so they could not use them for leasing. So that is why they are going to purchase the lights and install them.

Mr. DelVecchio asked if he has been talking to FDOT about Complete Streets.

Mr. Jeffries said he has had some conversations with the MPO. He explained there are a couple of issues that are not FDOT, or their staff's connection with them. He said when it comes to Complete Streets, right now they have a stated policy from the City Council that does not want the City to pursue Complete Streets.

Mr. DelVecchio asked if they could explore it. Mr. Cataldo thought they could.

Mr. Jeffries said he thinks they first need to address that issue with City Council.

Mrs. Moore commented that if it doesn't go back into the Comprehensive Plan, they are dead in the water.

Mr. Cataldo did not think it needed to be in the Comprehensive Plan and they just needed support. He suggested that the City could have a letter from the City Manager or a vote from City Council that they would support it.

Mr. Jeffries reiterated that they first need to address that with City Council. Mrs. Moore said she is going to address it with the new City Council candidates tomorrow at Walking Tree Brewery.

Mr. Cataldo said he thinks they should get the unanimous consent of their Committee again in support of this and then go to the City Council individually and explain that this is important to them and find out why they are against it.

The Committee had a discussion about Complete Streets. The members agreed it would be a good idea to put together a ten-minute presentation about Complete Streets and ask a Councilmember to sponsor them to get on the City Council agenda.

Mr. Cataldo asked Mr. Jeffries to look into the parking garage and if it is public or private, and also the parking spaces on 15th Avenue that the courthouse commandeered.

Mr. Jeffries said before they recommend anything, he wants staff to finish their parking analysis and see all the facts. He said he will be bringing it back to the Planning and Zoning Board and he could also bring that here to them.

Mr. Jeffries said that he would get with Public Works about their request to create more parking and see what they recommend.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Today's meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

/hm