

**THREE CORNERS STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2020 2:00 P.M.
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, VERO BEACH, FLORIDA**

PRESENT: Vicky Gould, Chairman; Linda Moore, Mike Johansen, Harry Howle, Dr. Richard Baker, John Cotugno, Chloe Rose Schwartz, Ben Earman, Christine Pokorney-Sickterman, Jeff Stassi and Vice Mayor Laura Moss **Also present:** John Turner, City Attorney; Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director; Tammy Bursick, City Clerk; Monte Falls, City Manager; and Records Retention Specialist, Heather McCarty

Excused Absences: Sydney O’Haire and Mark Tripson

1. CALL TO ORDER

Today’s meeting was called to order at 2:02 p.m.

A) Introduction of Members

Ms. Gould said they have five (5) new members on their Committee. The new members each introduced themselves.

B) Swearing in of New Members

The City Clerk swore in the new members en masse.

C) Sunshine Law Briefing

Mr. John Turner, City Attorney, pointed out that Vice Mayor Laura Moss has been appointed by City Council as a non-voting member and thanked her for her participation.

Mr. Turner went through a Power Point presentation on the Sunshine Law (on file in the City Clerk’s office). He said if they think something is a violation, please contact his office to discuss the matter. He told them that any materials that they generate regarding City business would be considered public records and copies should be given to the City Clerk’s office.

Ms. Gould added that if they have an idea that they want to share, they can send that to the City Clerk to be distributed.

2. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A) Mayor Young to present the Mission and Goals for the Steering Committee

Mayor Tony Young pointed out this week is Florida City Government Week. He talked about some of the things they are doing, including a Proclamation, making videos, and reading to kids at different schools. He thanked the Committee members for what they are doing. He said this

process is building upon success. He asked the Committee to leverage the talents here in their midst. He commented that people are watching and their input and their fingerprints will be on this as it goes forward.

Mayor Young read from a prepared statement (see attached) the mission of the Committee from his vantage point. He then read through the goals of this Committee and the planning premises.

Vice Mayor Moss commended the Mayor for his support of City Government Week. She said he has done this every year and is a strong supporter of it. She thinks this group is a wonderful representation of that and looks forward to including even more people. She said she hopes there will be a discussion of the continuation of the website SpeakUpVeroBeach.com and hopes that Mr. Jeffries will address that.

B) Presentation of the Overview and Status of the Planning Process for the Three Corners Project and the Next Steps in the Project – Mr. Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director

Mr. Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director, went through a Power point presentation on the overview and status of the planning process for the Three Corners project (on file in the City Clerk's office).

Mr. Jeffries explained that all the documents would be coming off the SpeakUpVeroBeach.com website and will all be recreated on the City's website with all the same information and the comments.

Vice Mayor Moss asked if it would be the same in that people could post to it the way they could before. Mr. Jeffries said there will be a dedicated email address, but he is not sure about the capabilities of postings.

Vice Mayor Moss said she thinks they need to keep people engaged the entire time, rather than the end when they are approaching the time for referendum. She would have liked to have continued with SpeakUpVeroBeach.com and hopes they continue it or something similar because it was interactive and people could post their thoughts and ideas. She feels if people can participate, the project will go more smoothly.

Ms. Gould agreed with that. She felt that posting comments was good and it allowed others to see them, which was the interactive and the transparent part.

Mr. Turner cautioned them to be careful about posting if they are a member on the Committee.

Ms. Gould said they knew, but it gave them access to what other people were saying, which helped them in the end.

Vice Mayor Moss pointed out she was talking about the entire community and not the members.

Mr. Jeffries said they will look into the capabilities of their City website and see if they can have some type of interaction, or reactivate SpeakUpVeroBeach.com.

Mr. Jeffries continued going through the Power Point presentation.

Mr. Johansen referred to the ELC referenced in the list of activities and asked if the Environmental Learning Center was planning on moving here. Mr. Jeffries said it was referring to a generic environmental learning or research type center on the south parcel, not the Environmental Learning Center in Sebastian.

Mr. Jeffries concluded with the Power Point presentation.

Mr. John Cotugno asked if in some point in this process, are they going to get some kind of feel for the health and wellness of the building to see if it is worth keeping or have a survey done of the building.

Mr. Monte Falls, City Manager, said it was never their intent to make that decision; it was going to be the intent of a developer that might be interested in developing the building. They felt it didn't warrant the expense of having a structural evaluation done if they are going to get someone that says they can't make the building work in any scenario. He said that would be part of their charge when they get a specific developer involved.

Mrs. Christine Pokorney-Sickterman said she has had several people ask if something could be done now with events on site to help engage the community further. She commented the tours of the Power Plant were really popular, but anything they could do onsite to further public engagement and generate interest in the community would be helpful.

Mr. Falls said that they have taken a look at that and as it sits right now, it is not ready to be used as a park. When they held the tours, they found people in places they should not have been that would put them in danger. He said it is still an industrial site with open pits in the grassy areas.

Mr. Cotugno asked if the new members have toured the site and if everyone has been on the roof. He said he understands it is a liability issue, but when you go on the roof, you understand how the site sits in perspective to the City and how the site has the ability to integrate all the neighborhoods of the City and how all of them are integrated into the Lagoon.

Mr. Falls said it is not something that everyone can do. The access is not a stairwell. He suggested that they get some video up there to be able to show people. The existing structure is 60 feet tall, which is above their height limit so when you get up there, you are above most other buildings and have a great perspective and a great unobstructed view. He said there is value in that and some developer may see that but it is going to have to be somebody that is going to be comfortable enough to be able to say that they can take the building, invest what needs to be invested in it and get a return on their investment.

Ms. Chloe Rose Schwartz suggested they consider changing the name from post pandemic because having the word pandemic in it could alienate people. Some other members said they agreed.

Mr. Falls commented that none of them knows what this is going to look like in a year or so. They need to be cognizant and make decisions that are going to hold up 20 to 50 years from now.

Vice Mayor Moss asked if DPZ would be involved in the project through its conclusion. Mr. Jeffries said that is going to be up to City Council. Right now their contract has ended and these additional scenarios have all been provided beyond their contract.

Mrs. Linda Moore asked if they are still paying them an hourly rate or anything. Mr. Jeffries said they are not. He said it is going to be up to City Council, but the proposal he has geared it towards is that they would be involved. Vice Mayor Moss asked when is he bringing that to Council. Mr. Jeffries answered probably in November.

Vice Mayor Moss said it should be up to the community, not a developer, if they want the building to stay or not. If they want to preserve that part of history, then they need to find a developer to work with that.

Mr. Falls said if a developer can use it and make money on it, it is going to be less cost to the 18,000 residents in the City of Vero Beach. He pointed out that during discussions in the community, there was a 50-50 split on whether to keep it or take it down.

Mr. Harry Howle said if the economy cannot support such an idea, then it falls back on the City, and that includes the wear, tear, and maintenance of a building that is getting no use whatsoever and that is expensive. He said if that is the case, they don't need it and it is nothing more than an eyesore and an expense at that point.

Ms. Gould said if they can find someone who can use it, amazing things can be done and they should consider that creativity. She referred to the Savannah Plant Riverside and water tanks being re-used in Shanghai and said that is how they retain history. She said maybe the 50 percent who want take it taken down may not consider the creativity and the history of this town.

Mr. Falls agreed. He said if they could get someone interested and involved as they were in Savannah, which has been a marvelous renovation of two (2) plants. He suggested everyone go look at their website.

Mrs. Moore asked if ideally they would be looking for a developer who has some interest in retaining the building.

Mr. Falls explained they envision having an RFQ process, where they have developers come in and tell them what their ideas are and then they would select the best one that had ideas that

mesh with the conceptual plan they come up. He added this is going to be an interactive process to the very end.

Mrs. Moore asked if that process would be before they go to referendum.

Mr. Falls said definitely. He said they are going to have one (1) chance at a referendum and they have to be to a point where they know it can be a reality and take something to the public with a real good handle on what that's going to be. He thinks Mr. Jeffries has laid out that process.

Mr. Mike Johansen asked where does that work with the public workshop and the developer and how do they blend them together.

Mr. Jeffries explained that the task here is for them to recommend the master concept plan from the plans that have been submitted. Then they are going to look at the feasibility of that plan and that is when the developer comes in during that economic feasibility aspect. He said their goal is to recommend the plan recommended by the community. Then they can show that to a developer to find out if it works.

Mr. Falls commented that a developer can make any plan work; it's what is it going to cost the developer and what it is going to cost the City. He said the more opportunity the developer has to get a return of investment, the less it will cost to the City.

Mrs. Moore asked if it has been resolved where Youth Sailing is going to go and where they could build their building. Mr. Falls said the only thing that has been resolved is that Youth Sailing will be going on the south side of the bridge.

Mr. Jeffries said that will be presented to them in December.

Dr. Richard Baker asked if there has been any discussion on the three (3) towers and the possibilities with them.

Mr. Falls said that DPZ has had a couple different renditions of where they end up, but that is going to be a function of cost.

Mr. Cotugno wanted clarification if all the drawings, specifications and everything generated by DPZ are going to be the City's property to use any way they want or not at all. He asked if they own all the intellectual property to do anything they want or use somebody else to generate additional drawings, specifications, or sketches based on these drawings.

Mr. Jeffries did not know what was specifically in the contract, but based on planning ethics, another planning firm would not pick up DPZ's work and change it. If they brought in another consultant, they would start over.

Mr. Falls said that is beyond the scope of the Steering Committee. He said they are going to have their final payment for the engagement with DPZ and they fully intend to bring them back to assist with this going forward.

Mrs. Pokorney-Sickterman said going forward they all need to work collaboratively, be patient, tenacious, and demand excellence. She would advocate for keeping the significant structures on the site and also the water tanks. She said anything they can do, if it's feasible keep those buildings, it will make for a more interesting project. She said she has visited the Savannah Plant and seen the pictures of refurbished water tanks. She talked about what a fantastic non-profit organization Youth Sailing is and she thinks they need to not discount what they can bring to the community. She brought up the possibility of using the larger tank for boat storage.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mrs. Broke Steinkamp said she was recently appointed to the Recreation Commission. She said the Commission has decided to attend the meetings and give their feedback on their parks and play spaces and what they would like to see happen so they will see herself or another member at their meetings going forward.

Mrs. Steinkamp said she is now speaking as herself, as a mom, and not as a representative of the Commission. She said she was curious how many in the Steering Committee have school age children. She feels the kids in the community are the ones most impacted by what happens at the Three Corners. She said she learned that Vero Beach is about 50% families, which surprised her. She encouraged them to reach out to their mom and dad friends and see what they have to say. She suggested they talk to kids and get their ideas. She knows housing on the site is not a popular concept, but she understands that certain sacrifices are going to need to be made. It has come to her attention that Indian River County School District has trouble recruiting and keeping good teachers because of housing. If they must make sacrifices, such as having housing on this site, she would like them to look at that option first. She noted from a parent's perspective, having teachers there could be keeping it safe.

Mrs. Steinkamp said the SpeakUpVeroBeach.com website was really great and helped everyone stay up to date. Moving forward, she thinks they need to keep the public more informed. She said many people in the community were confused because there was the "Standing Ovation" plan that was presented at the final presentation and then the Steering Committee made changes and the public didn't realize the changes that were made. She thinks that the website could be really helpful to keep people up to date with the changes that are made and allowing them to give their feedback.

Vice Mayor Moss said she does not think they need to sacrifice any of the property in terms of strictly financial interests. She said historically there has been a huge sentiment against any of it being residential. She said that property belongs to every single one (1) of us and not to any individual.

Dr. Baker said there was a Letter to the Editor recently about combining this with the Graves Foundation Recreational area by the High School. He thinks it is a great idea to make both areas a recreational area for their youth. He said kids are not outside enough and they need to get them out more. He feels they need to think about the Graves property and put some of the sports that would do good by the High School there and have the Three Corners be more water orientated type activities.

Mr. Jay Bird gave the Committee Members a notebook to take and review that he put together. He said the picture in the front is a rainbow over the Power Plant and he wanted to tell them they have a pot of gold to work with at the Power Plant.

A) Setting the Next Meeting Date

The next Three Corners Steering committee meetings were scheduled for November 12, 2020 at 1:30 p.m. and December 10, 2020 at 1:30 p.m.

Mrs. Pokorney-Sickterman brought up that going forward, she hopes they still support things like the Arts Village Downtown and not turn their back on what is going on there. She said they should be partnering and creating that kind of relationship with organizations like that and other areas so it's all collaborative and supportive and doesn't foster some kind of competitiveness.

Mr. Jeffries said that is an excellent point. He said he has seen cities do that where they get enthusiastic in one (1) area and do something that takes away from another area. He said as they go through the process, they need to keep that bigger picture in mind. He said they are creating a destination here. He said with the "Standing Ovation" plan, they were creating a destination that complemented and did not compete directly with their other areas, such as Ocean Drive or Downtown. This destination area would be different with the waterfront.

Ms. Gould said that is a great point because they want all areas in their community to thrive and be successful.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Today's meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

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