

Countywide Community Revitalization Team

Meeting of January 13, 2009

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Palm Beach County Vista Center, Room 1 W47-50

Minutes

Present:

Joanna Aiken, Solid Waste Authority
Shirley Cantelo, Old Trail Resident
Gerry Carsillo, Sun Court Resident
Deputy J. Coker, P.B.C. Sheriff's Office
Ruth Mognillansky-De Rose, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization
Duane Gainer, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization
Linda Jeter Goddard, P.B.C. Commission on Affordable Housing/HCD
Tim Granowitz, P.B.C. Parks & Recreation
Deputy Chris Grant, P.B.C. Sheriff's Office
Sylvia Jackson-Hamilton, P.B.C. Water Utilities Department
Andy Hartman, P.B.C. Engineering
Deputy J.P. Harvey, P.B.C. Sheriff's Office
Deputy J. Hightower, P.B.C. Sheriff's Office
Brendhan Horne, Royal Palm Estates
Kathy King, Lake Worth West
Dave Kouns, Roan Lane Resident
Ilene Long, Old Trail Resident
Chrystal Mathews, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization
Roy McGinnis, PACE EH/Department of Health
Corporal Natasha Mitchell, P.B.C. Sheriff's Office
Pam Nolan, P.B.C. Office of Economic Development
Michael Owens, P.B.C. School District
Estella Pyfrom, Project Aspiration
David Rafaidus, P.B.C. Community Services
Myrtle Rainford, Gramercy Park Resident
LaToya Ricketts, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization
Craig Spataro, P.B.C. Weed & Seed
Mary Tarr, Old Trail Resident
Houston Tate, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization
Deputy Dwayne Thomas, P.B.C. Sheriff's Office
Martha Turner, Gramercy Park Resident
Gail Vorpagel, P.B.C. Code Enforcement
Brenda Warren, Royal Palm Estates Resident

Dean Wells, P.B.C Building Division
Rachel Williams, Gramercy Park Resident
William Wynn, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization

I. Welcome and Introduction:

Duane Gainer began the meeting and mentioned CCRT items that needed to be discussed. He thanked participants for their attendance, introduced himself and asked the meeting participants to introduce themselves.

II. Presentation:

Estella Pyfrom gave a presentation concerning Project Aspiration. Project Aspiration is a model unit (custom designed bus) that will enable individuals to access educational services within their neighborhoods. Project Aspiration will address sustainable solutions, focus on individual and group needs, relate to education and self improvement, as well as other human relations resources. The project will provide education, parental involvement, and cultural exposure opportunities within and outside the area at no charge. A copy of the presentation was distributed to attendees. For more information, visit www.projectaspiration.com. A question and answer period followed the presentation.

III. Department Updates:

Michael Owens, Palm Beach County School District, reported on the following:

- Construction of the Pahokee High School Stadium has begun;
- Pahokee Middle School construction should begin in February 2009;
- Currently in negotiations with the City of Pahokee regarding a water line along Larrimore Road, cost \$390,000; and
- Stacy Street School should open in August 2009.

Pam Nolan, Palm Beach County Economic Development Office, reported the following:

- Recently completed a “draft” of the Palm Beach County Public Market Network to provide an opportunity to farmers, craft people, and small business owners. It is divided into two (2) markets, one for the East and one for the West. They would be open seven days a week, year round.
- Farm Your Back Yard Program is being started by Cooperative Extension for people who have less than five acres of land. For more information, call the Cooperative Extension Services at 561-233-1715 and ask for Art Kirstein. This program should compliment the “Green Market” which is currently open on Saturdays during the season.
- A lot of “stimulus packages” are coming through the Federal Government. Some of the things the County is looking at include the Inland Port in the Glades and dredging the Rim Canal near Lake Okeechobee. The County is looking for “impact” projects in the Glade’s area and private sector jobs. Some Departments have asked for assistance but it is difficult because there are no jobs on the “back end”.

Mr. Gainer asked Ms. Nolan if she had any “figures” for the “stimulus” package. Ms. Nolan replied that a lot of money had gone into the Economic Development Administration, money has flowed in for Stormwater Management which may affect the Lake Worth Park of Commerce whose biggest problem is drainage. Major money is available but jobs must be attached. Some of the funds are “disaster” related. Ms. Nolan said she would e-mail the OCR what her office had received. Discussion ensued in regards to various “big ticket” projects and dissemination of information.

Mr. Gainer conveyed to Ms. Nolan that Palm Beach County Planning Division may be interested in some stormwater funds for their Urban Redevelopment Area (URA).

Mr. Gainer asked the group if there were any questions. Mr. Dave Kouns, Roan Lane/Elmwood Estates resident, asked if the Inland Port was a “done deal”. Ms. Nolan replied that the Inland Port is one of Palm Beach County’s Legislative (Tallahassee) requests. Mr. Kouns said he adamantly opposes the project if it involves digging a canal from the Port of Palm Beach to Lake Okeechobee. It was explained that the Inland Port is not really a port at all but more of a warehouse or storage facility. Discussion ensued about the Inland Port concept.

Andy Hartman, Palm Beach County Engineering, reported on the following:

- Cinquez park is almost complete, awaiting the final plans;
- Sun Court is at 95% plans complete;
- Navarre Road is at 65% complete;
- “A” Street is at 35% complete;
- The survey is now being completed for Coconut Road; and
- Finalizing Royal Palm Estates.

Mr. Gerry Carsillo of Sun Court asked what exactly did 95% design plan mean. Mr. Hartman replied that it means the plans are almost done and should be going out for bid. Mr. Carsillo said his concern with the project is that if it takes too long, inflation will result in greater costs, and there may not be enough money to complete it. Mr. Carsillo further stated that if the project goes out for bid soon, and the costs projected now, the County may be able to hold whoever gets the bid to that price. Mr. Hartman reiterated it is a few months out and he cannot give a specific date. The next steps will be the final review, going to bid, and then go to the Board of County Commissioners (Board).

Mrs. Moguillansky-De Rose added that OCR is bringing CCRT/OCR Funding Recommendations for FY 08-09 to the Board for approval on February 3rd. Included in those recommendations is a request for \$217,800 for paving and draining improvements on Sun Court.

- The cleaning of the ditch that was requested in Old Trail should be done in about four weeks.

Joanna Aiken, Solid Waste Authority, reported on the following:

- The Great American Clean Up registration deadline is February 13th. For those who did not receive the form via e-mail, contact Ms. Aiken at (561) 697-2700. Ms. Aiken stated that all of the CCRT neighborhoods should participate.
- Paint Your Heart Out and Rebuilding Together are continuing events every weekend. On Saturday, January 17th, they will be painting a house in Gramercy Park between 9:00 am and 1:00 pm. Ms. Aiken asked everybody to stop by if in the area. Mr. Tate thanked Ms. Aiken for all of her efforts and recommended that residents utilize SWA's programs to beautify their communities.

Mr. Gainer asked neighborhoods represented at today's meeting for a commitment to participate in the Great American Clean Up. Commitments were received from Old Trail, Sun Court/Elmwood Estates, Royal Palm Estates, Lake Worth West, Watergate Estates and San Castle.

A Deputy from San Castle inquired about streetlights. He was directed to speak with William Wynn of OCR after the meeting.

A Deputy from Watergate Estates asked about using the painting programs for foreclosed properties. He said the neighbors have taken it upon themselves to mow the lawns of the foreclosed properties but the houses are falling into disrepair. Ms. Aiken replied that authorization from the homeowners is required before SWA can go onto the property. Brendhan Horne responded that the financial institution is the one that needs to be contacted and let them know that you are looking at keeping the property up. He said they will usually work with you. Ms. Aiken added that some of the Paint Your Heart Out sponsors are banks. Mr. Tate said we need to sit down and plan it out.

Tim Granowitz, Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation, reported on the following:

- Parks is ready to meet with Watergate residents to review the plans for the park at the next community meeting. The plans should be completed about 90 days after the meeting, then they go out to bid, then construction.
- Glades Pioneer Park Splash Pad is in permitting; construction will begin once the permits have been received.
- Westgate Splash Pad plans are 75% complete; should go to contractor in April 2009.
- Spoke with WUD today in reference to their work on the lift station and water lines on Bridgeman Road which is nearing completion; when it is complete, Parks will meet with WUD to see what land is available for the CCRT park.

Someone from the group asked about the park in Gramercy Park. Mr. Granowitz responded that Commissioner Greene is allocating \$500,000 for that project. Mr. Granowitz thinks that this item will go to the Board this month for approval. The total project now consists of a CCRT Park and a 5,000 square foot community center, at a total estimated cost of 2 million dollars. There is currently \$225,000 allocated by Parks and CCRT. With the \$500,000 from Commissioner Greene, we will be about one-

third of the way to the 2 million needed. If the Board approves the project, we can begin discussing land acquisition, where the rest of the money will come from, and get the project into a capital program for the future. Mr. Tate stated that he thought \$250,000 had been allocated for the park. Mr. Granowitz replied that is probably accurate but either way we are still over a million dollars short, but we can begin design and land acquisition. The biggest part will be the land acquisition. At that time the park portion can move forward while we work on the design for the community center.

Mr. Gainer asked the residents of Gramercy Park if they have any questions. Ms. Williams asked about the streetlights. Mr. Tate responded that Mr. Reid is not in attendance today but that he had attended a community meeting on January 5th and at that meeting it was reported that FP&L had assigned a designer to the project and have given a tentative date of late February, but he gave a date of March/April to account for any delays.

Deputy Jimmy Hightower asked Mr. Granowitz if he was in charge of Westgate Park. Mr. Granowitz replied that yes, Westgate Park is a County Park. Deputy Hightower stated that on the weekends between 200 and 500 individuals gather to play soccer in a vacant field on Congress near the Palm Beach Kennel Club. The field is private property and the owner does not want them there. The Sheriff's Office does not want to arrest them but they are trespassing. Deputy Hightower referred them to the Westgate Center where they were told every individual would have to pay a fee to use the field. Mr. Granowitz replied that the fields are currently "down" due to re-sodding but most of the county fields have fees and that the individuals would have to work out something with the Center Director, Lee Powell. Mr. Tate responded that OCR would take a minute to look at the situation and attempt to work something out. Mr. Granowitz added that there may be some other parks (County) in the area. Mr. Tate replied that OCR would get back with Deputy Hightower within the next couple of days. Discussion ensued briefly on this matter.

Deputy D. Thomas asked for a confirmation of the "finish" date for Gramercy Park streetlights. Mr. Tate responded again, March or April.

Linda Jeter Goddard, Palm Beach County Housing and Community Development, reported on the following:

- Funds are still available through the Utility Connection Program; up to \$10,000 may be obtained to offset the costs of utility connection.
- Rental Assistance funds are still available, up to \$5,000 can be obtained to cover first and last month rent, security deposits, utility deposits, etc. if you have to move (especially if your home has been foreclosed). For more information call 561-355-4775.
- HCD is still looking for participants for their Rehabilitation Program. All HCD programs are income-based. For more information visit their website at www.pbcgov.com/HCD.

IV. Resident Comments:

Brendhan Horne, Royal Palm Estates (RPE), reported on the following:

- Wanted to thank SWA and all the deputies that assisted Deputy Tramonte after his family's house fire.
- Would like Code Enforcement to do a "walk" down Banana Road.
- Requested a status update on streetlights.
- The final meeting in reference to the Linear Park will be held on January 21st.
- Has a meeting with representatives from the Race Trac Gas Station tomorrow, January 14th. There was a brief discussion about the project.
- New Year's resolution with the Boys & Girls Club is proceeding; would like to continue following up on the Cypress Trail Pedestrian Crossing Pathway and the "bridge".
- Sidewalks and streetlights on Wallis are still needed.
- Would like an "official" notification from Engineering when the roadway project is done;
- Requested an e-mail from Code Enforcement containing the statute/law prohibiting "temporary" roadside signs.

Kathy King, Lake Worth West, reported on the following:

- Have 3 new programs:
 1. Tiny Tots ESOL
 2. Women's Club
 3. Pink Shoe Laces Walking Club

Dave Kouns, Roan Lane/Elmwood Estates, reported on the following:

- There is an issue with an absentee landlord on his street (Wilshire Street; the adjacent neighbor and Mr. Kouns have both contacted Code Enforcement (Mr. Kouns presented a copy of the letter); would like some assistance.
- Trying to get more neighborhood residents involved; Mr. Tate asked Mr. Kouns to invite OCR to their community meetings. Gail Vorpapel of Code Enforcement asked for, and received, Mr. Kouns' cell phone number.

Brenda Warren of Royal Palm Estates thanked OCR/CCRT for all of the opportunities provided to her neighborhood and all of the improvements they have gone through. She requested a copy of the NPG application that was previously submitted to OCR.

Mr. Gainer asked if there any more resident reports or comments. There were none.

V. OCR Staff Updates:

Mr. Gainer updated the group on the previously mentioned OCR/CCRT Funding Recommendations for Fiscal Year 2009. There were some minor changes to the original table received by the group in November of 2008. Mr. Gainer went over the different projects and program allocations.

VI. Questions/Comments:

Mr. Gainer asked if there were any more questions or comments. Ms. Mathews announced that the 2009 NPG would be released on February 16th, with a grant deadline of June 19. Letters of Intent are mandatory and due to OCR on April 24th.

Ms. Ricketts announced that the Resident Education to Action Program (REAP) would begin its first 6-week session in Belle Glade on January 22nd. Sessions in central Palm Beach County will begin on March 17th, and they will be held at the Vista Center. Grants are available to REAP participants through the Next Top Neighborhood Award Program.

Mr. Gainer mentioned that there is a Summer Camp Scholarship Program available for parents (low-income). Applications will be taken from January 12th to February 27th at various locations throughout the County. For more information call 1-866-728-1427.

Mr. Tate asked if in the future, all deputies could provide an update on activities in their respective neighborhoods.

The next meeting will be held February 10th.

Adjournment: 11:50 am

Minutes prepared by: Duane R. Gainer, B.P.M, Senior Planner_____

Approved by: Houston Tate, Director_____