

PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

March 18, 2024 2:30 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Greg Premier, Chair
Tom DeYampert, Vice Chair
David Hubbard, Member
Susan Konczal, Member
Tiffany Secka, Member

STAFF PRESENT: Jennifer McMahon, Chief Operating Officer
Andrew Dickman, City Attorney
Ginny Bodkin, Deputy City Clerk
Brandon Berry, Senior Planner

Chair Premier called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Approval of the Agenda –

Motion: Member Secka moved, and Vice Chair DeYampert seconded to approve the March 18, 2024 agenda as presented: the motion passed unanimously.

2. Audience Comments –

John Kurzman gave comments regarding lots and beach access in the Comprehensive Plan.

City Attorney Andrew Dickman noted for the record that he asked Mr. Kurzman to refrain from his comments as the subject matter he was discussing was germane to the agenda.

Chair Premier adjourned the meeting as the Planning Board called the meeting to order as the Local Planning Agency (LPA) at 2:36 PM.

3. Approval of Minutes – December 18, 2023

Motion: Member Secka moved, and Vice Chair DeYampert seconded to approve the December 18, 2023 minutes as presented: the motion passed unanimously.

Attorney Dickman addressed the board regarding acting as the Local Planning Agency (LPA) under Florida Statute 163.3174 and reviewed the quasi-judicial process. Items 4a. and b. are companion items and will be heard at once. Mr. Dickman requested that the members announce any ex-parte communication they had regarding this Conditional Use Permit.

Chair Premier adjourned the meeting as the Planning Board and reconvened as the LPA at 2:30 PM.

Member Secka disclosed that she drove by the property to take an overall look and read the letters that were forwarded by the City.

Vice Chair DeYampert stated that he was familiar with the property; he received letters through the City and reviewed them including lobbyist Robin Miller but did not discuss anything with her.

Chair Premier disclosed that he viewed the property multiple times from different angles, and he researched 1754 Properties.

Member Hubbard disclosed that he had general conversations with some residents, and studied the Tradewinds website, as a guest would.

Member Konczal disclosed that she reviewed all of the emails forwarded from the City and she did not receive any personally. She had two conversations with her neighbors and walked through all of the buildings of the Tradewinds.

Following the ex-parte disclosures, the Deputy City Clerk swore in all those who would be speaking, presenting, or providing testimony to the Board.

4. Action Items –

a. Conditional Use Permit #23033 (Resolution 2023-27): Tradewinds Resort (5600, 5700, 5750, 5800, 5900, 6000 Gulf Blvd) - Companion item to Agenda Item 4.b.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF ST. PETE BEACH, FLORIDA, APPROVING A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT, PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 35.3.(b)(1) AND 35.4.(b) OF THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE, TO ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION OF A FOUR-PHASE TEMPORARY LODGING REDEVELOPMENT THAT WILL INCLUDE 1,596 TOTAL TEMPORARY LODGING UNITS, OR 63.18 UNITS PER BUILDABLE ACRE, OF WHICH 629 UNITS ARE ADDITIONAL ABOVE EXISTING, 59,895 SQ. FT. OF MEETING SPACE OF WHICH 14,303 SQ. FT. IS ADDITIONAL ABOVE EXISTING, 79,126 SQ. FT. OF RETAIL AND RESTAURANT SPACE OF WHICH 42,964 SQ. FT. IS ADDITIONAL ABOVE EXISTING, 31,105 SQ. FT. OF OFFICE SPACE OF WHICH 10,486 SQ. FT. IS ADDITIONAL ABOVE EXISTING, AND DEVELOP NEW LODGING, ACCESSORY AND AMENITY STRUCTURES CONTAINING THE AFOREMENTIONED UNITS, ACCESSORY SPACES AND AMENITIES, AS WELL AS OUTDOOR AMENITIES AND PARKING GARAGES, THAT WILL EXTEND UP TO 116 FEET IN HEIGHT ABOVE BASE FLOOD ELEVATION (BFE) TO THE ROOFLINE AND 128 FEET IN HEIGHT ABOVE BFE WHEN INCLUDING ROOFTOP AMENITIES OR DECORATIVE FEATURES, AND PERMIT TWO ROOFTOP DINING AND DRINKING AMENITIES THAT INCLUDES THE PLAYING OF OUTDOOR MUSIC, TO PARCELS #06-32-16-00000-230-0300, 06-32-16-00000-230-0200, 01-32-15-00000-110-0600, 01-32-15-00000-110-0610, 01-32-15-18142-000-0000, 01-32-15-18142-000-0001, 01-3215-00000-110-0500, AND 01-32-15-00000-110-0400 WITH ADDRESSES OF 5600, 5700, 5750, 5800, 5900, AND 6000 GULF BOULEVARD; INCORPORATING THE CONDITIONS OUTLINED HEREIN; AND PROVIDING FOR CORRECTION OF SCRIVENER'S ERROR AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Senior Planner Brandon Berry made a presentation to the LPA (Board) that is made part of the record. The presentation included the following information:

- Timeline
- Site plans

- Phases of the proposed development
- Floor plans for rooftop dining, drinking and music areas
- Open areas and benefits to the community
- Staff recommendation
- Recommended conditions

Mr. Berry noted that the approval of the CUP would be contingent upon the passage of the companion Development Agreement (agenda item 4.b.), which he reviewed:

- Applicant requests the project's development to span up to 20 years
- The CUP and Development Agreement are companion items
- Development commitments by developer and the City
- Concurrency
- Transportation Study updates needed
- Notice of next hearing - April 15, 2024, 4:00 PM Commission Chambers, City Hall

Following the City's presentation, Mr. Berry introduced the City's Transportation Expert, Engineer Dave Muntean of Halff Associates, who had reviewed the traffic study and methodology.

- Applicant's Traffic Study was submitted and re-submitted and appears on track for approval
- Reducing driveway number from 10 to 4 was a positive change for pedestrians and flow
- Communication with the applicant substantial during the process

Mr. Berry indicated that the Public Works Director and Fire Marshall were available to answer questions regarding sewer, stormwater or fire concerns. There is currently no per room data per room EMS or Sheriff calls.

Following the City's presentation, the applicant presentation began with Joe Smith, the CEO of 1754 Properties, Weston, Florida; he spoke about his organization, some of their other properties, and reviewed their healthy financial and technical capabilities in conjunction with the Cumming Group.

Ms. Batsel began the review of the applicant's presentation, which is part of the meeting record.

- Proposed project spans three districts in the Comp Plan (map); Zoning/FLU
- Request details: 63.18 temporary lodging units (TLU), height, two rooftop amenities, net increase of 629 units, over four phases
- New and existing buildings
- Review of Four Phases – new units and parking for each, eliminating curb cuts, meeting, office and retail space, temporary beach access during construction
- Integration of the entire site including comprehensive stormwater redevelopment, internal road, landscaping and branding/theme – one zoning lot
- Conceptual Timeline 2024 – 2044

The following professionals provided their expert testimonies as outlined; their presentations are included with the applicant's presentation in the meeting record:

Steve Henry, PE of Lincks & Associates, Tampa - Transportation

- Methodology – used Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) trip generation rates for both existing and proposed units for net increase in traffic; future analyses will be counts

- Looked at full build out traffic, linked roadways and intersections, and worst-case peak hour volumes
- The Analyses will be updated for each phase
- The project does comply with the Land Development Code

Mr. Henry answered Board questions.

Scott Eisenhart, AIA of Nunzio Marc Desantis, Dallas, TX – Architect

- Beach access diagrams and north/south connection of the proposed beach walkway
- Vehicular access diagram – gets circulation off of Gulf Blvd.
- Pedestrian circulation – buffered from Gulf Blvd., elevated sidewalks over internal roadway, way-finding signs, proposed beach walkway
- Building heights and compatibility – turtle friendly lighting, garage car light screening – comparable in height to Seamark
- Beach-front restaurant - Scrubber for exhaust control, tall glass second level to screen terrace noise, high walls top of tower two to control roof deck noise
- Fire and Security
- View Corridors and Separation – balconies have no direct sight into Seamark, panoramic views from rooftop terrace, shadow study
- Garage facades – use of greenery, façade options
- Energy saving techniques
- Rooftop terrace, garage screening elements and landscaping, Florida friendly vegetation

David Perry, PLA, ASLA of Perry Becker Design, LLC - Landscape Architect

- Requirements and compliance
- Gulf Blvd. buffer and shade trees
- Beach access/fire access
- Dune restoration

Chair Premier called for a recess at 4:45 PM and reconvened at 4:55 PM.

Abdul Alkadry, PE, Harris Civil Engineers, Orlando - Engineering

- Existing drainage conditions and proposed design
- Pretreatment, post treatment exfiltration for each phase; each phase will stand on its own
- Underground vault detail
- Site circulation and access - Queueing for up to 65 cars, fire access
- As conditioned, the CUP is consistent with provisions of LDC and Comp Plan

Greg Pepitone, Tourism Economics/Oxford Economics Company, Economist

- Impact Study for the expansion of Tradewinds 2027-2046
- \$3.5 billion in sales to local businesses and \$409 million in state and local taxes over the 20 years; 508 jobs annually; direct spending impacts
- Property Tax analysis

Ken Metcalf, AICP Planning Director for Stearns, Weaver, Miller - Planning

- Planning Overview – CUP Summary – 629 units, 3 towers, 25.26 acres
- Statutory Requirements – consistency with Comp Plan

- CUP Use & Numeric Consistency, Setbacks
- Compatibility (consistency with Sec. 4.4(a), 4.12(a)) – project is consistent with all
- Professional opinion was - No unreasonable or disproportionately negative impacts

Joe Smith of 1754 Properties reviewed the community benefits of the project, including a view terrace on 12th story which will be open to the public.

Attorney Elise Batsel summarized that the applicant has met all of criteria required in the CUP application. The Development Agreement is a contract between the Developer and the City specifying what the Developer will do in return for the City allowing pauses for the phases to allow those units to be absorbed into the market without the CUP expiring.

The LPA members began a question period for the applicant experts.

- Rooftop view terrace is opened as public space if there are no events
- Residents requested no excessive parking; applicant donated \$1.25 million for mobility services (Free Bee)
- Turtle lighting is in Development agreement; part of lighting standards for new development
- On demand airport shuttle service as needed/bus passes for employees
- State and local tax revenues are higher for new construction – average over 20 years
- Discounts for residents with a city driver's license – 20% food & beverage/chair rentals
- Resident parking for storms after guest evacuation; emergency vehicles have priority
- Fire Marshall Kelly Intzes – guests evacuate when mandatory (Condition 38)
- Dunes seaward of the CCCL are maintained by FDEP following the restoration

Following the Q&A, modifications to conditions were distributed and reviewed; a copy is made part of the meeting record:

- #7 - Clarification from “sell” to fee simple title and with the exception of Coral Reef property
- #12 - Removing AAA food/dining rating (there is casual beach dining)
- #20 - Phase 1 pool deck closed to guests at 9pm.
- #25 - Dune crossovers will be elevated with the exception of those at grade crossings already permitted by the FDEP.
- #26 - Phase 1 beach walkover relocation would be reviewed as part of site plan approval
- #29 - Previous surfaces in proposed pathways, open-air parking or non-traffic rated surfaces
- #35 - Modify water use reduction from 40 to 35% (applicant's error) per LEED
- #37 - Specifies green roofs on newly constructed buildings
- #38 - Provides applicant notice of violations and a 90-day cure period

The modified conditions were submitted to the record.

Public Comment

The following individuals spoke in favor of the Tradewinds CUP:

Robert Fisher, 4780 Brittany Drive S.

Dale Schueneman, GM Coral Reef Resort

Emily Schmoll, (resident) Director of Marketing on behalf of Blue Green Vacations

Victor Ortiz, 111 60th Ave.

Joseph Jenio, 5445 Gulf Blvd.

Robin Miller, President & CEO Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber of Commerce on behalf of its members
Season Wales, resident and employee of Tradewinds

The following individuals spoke against the Tradewinds CUP:

Deb Schechner, 710 Boca Ciega Isle Drive

John Kurzman, Bahia Honda Way

Dana Richardson, 5830 Bahama Way S.

Terri Grocott, 2841 Alton Drive asked for a more comprehensive traffic study

Lisa Reich, 78th Ave. spoke on behalf of sea turtles and asked who is going to enforce the sea turtle lighting ordinance

There being no further comments, Chair Premier closed the public hearing portion of the meeting.

Attorney Batsel provided rebuttal comments regarding the traffic study; it contemplated every single trip, and the numbers are under capacity. Additionally, the applicant has committed to doing a new traffic study at the beginning of each phase.

Joe Smith provided rebuttal regarding sea turtles. The applicant works with Sea Turtle Trackers and the City; they have replaced parking lot lights following their Turtle Trackers advice and are always working on improvements. The wood chairs will be replaced at a cost of up to \$2million to be done in phases, and they are tinting windows. Mr. Smith spoke about their intent to upgrade the port cochere at the Alden.

Chair Premier commented on heavy traffic, individuals looking for parking, and opined that the project is too large for the beach. He would prefer a CUP for each phase of the project.

Member Hubbard asked questions regarding jaywalking and the collection of traffic data. Traffic expert Dave Muntean explained using actual data on existing room counts and Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE) data for proposed rooms. Member Hubbard expressed concerns on using ITE data. Mr. Muntean answered questions of traffic level of service (LOS) on Gulf Blvd. Concurrency requirements are a burden of the developer for future phases.

Vice Chair DeYampert opined that St. Pete Beach is a resort community and the beach has changed. Developers want to enhance the beach, increasing property values - 600 rooms over a 20-year period are inconsequential based on growth in Pinellas County.

Member Secka opined that Gulf Blvd. is a thoroughfare to the more northern beaches, not just local.

Member Hubbard inquired about what would happen if Gulf Blvd. reached LOS Level D. Ms. Batsel explained that the LDC has a proportionate share mitigation payment that would go to the City to make improvements to the transportation network.

Motion: Member Secka moved and Vice Chair DeYampert seconded to recommend approval of Resolution 2023-27 with amended conditions, contingent upon recommendation of approval of the companion development agreement, to the City Commission. The motion carried 5-0.

Applicant Attorney Kevin Reali asked to ensure clarification on traffic counts for future traffic studies for the Development Agreement. Mr. Berry explained that the use of the existing level of service data from Forward Pinellas might not include Corey Landings or Sirata. Performing new traffic counts for each subsequent concurrency certificate might be appropriate – language may be changed in Section 4, H. ii. to reflect updated volumes based on Forward Pinellas data or actual data counts, as determined by the City Manager.

b. Development Agreement: City of St. Pete Beach and TRADEWINDS SPB DEVELOPER, LLC - Companion item to Agenda Item 4.a.

Motion: Member Secka moved, and Chair Premier seconded to approve the development agreement to the City Commission with the amendment to Item H. in the agreement to ensure that current data is used, which will come from Forward Pinellas data or actual data counts as determined by the City Manager (language to be defined by City Attorney and Staff). The motion carried 5-0.

Chair Premier adjourned the meeting as the LPA and reopened as the Planning Board at 8:17 PM.

Conditional Use Permit #23033 (Resolution 2023-27) will be heard before the City Commission on April 15, 2024 at 4:00 PM in Commission Chambers.

5. Discussion Items – None.

6. Adjournment –

There being no further business, Chair Premier adjourned the meeting at 8:18 PM.

These minutes were approved at the July 15, 2024 meeting of the Planning Board.