



COMMISSION WORKSHOP MEETING CITY OF ST. PETE BEACH

155 Corey Avenue

Tuesday, October 04, 2011

6:00 PM

Call to Order
Pledge of Allegiance
Invocation
Roll Call

WORKSHOP MEETING

- 1. Corey Avenue Area Beautification and Traffic Analysis**
- 2. Adjournment**

APPEALS

If a person decides to appeal any decision made at this hearing, they will need a record of the proceeding and, for such purpose, may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceeding is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. (F.S. 286.0105) The City does not furnish verbatim transcripts; interested parties should make the necessary arrangements for verbatim transcripts.

Agenda Material is available for review at City Hall on the Friday preceding the meeting. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and F.S. 286.26, persons with disabilities needing special accommodation to participate in this proceeding should contact Public Services at (727) 363-9243 no later than four (4) days prior to the proceeding for assistance.

**CITY COMMISSION
WORKSHOP MINUTES
COREY AVENUE**

**Tuesday, October 4, 2011
5:00 p.m.**

**CALL TO ORDER
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
INVOCATION
ROLL CALL**

PRESENT

**Commissioner Al Halpern
Commissioner Jim Parent
Commissioner Marvin Shavlan
Vice Mayor Beverly Garnett
Mayor Steve McFarlin**

ALSO PRESENT

**City Manager Mike Bonfield
Public Services Director Steve Hallock
Community Development Director Karl Holley
Senior Planner Catherine Hartley
City Clerk Rebecca C. Haynes
Engineer Consultant Jerry Dabkowski**

1. Corey Avenue Area Beautification and Traffic Analysis

City Manager Bonfield presented a report of the Corey Avenue proposed changes and enhancements. He stated that Corey Avenue struggles to meet the needs of the businesses owners and the community. He stated this workshop is to talk about the project in detail and, once a decision is made on how to proceed, the project can be implemented in small increments. Mr. Bonfield stated that this will be a long term project, subject to changes throughout the process.

Catherine Hartley, Senior Planner, provided a power point presentation and explained that the Comprehensive Plan included a Community Redevelopment District that was further broken down into sub-districts. She noted that the Downtown Redevelopment District is being promoted 'to create a livable community where safe and comfortable pedestrian and bicycle mobility is emphasized over vehicular transportation'. Ms. Hartley explained that a second sub-district, Blind Pass Road and Gulf Boulevard, shall be reclaimed as a local street; thirdly, a downtown street grid is introduced to improve traffic flow and safety.

Ms. Hartley noted that Gulf Boulevard currently exists as a barrier to safe pedestrian crossing because of the number of lanes and traffic volume. She explained that future vision is to encompass Gulf Boulevard, Corey Avenue, 75th Avenue and Blind Pass Road. City Planner Hartley commented that Corey Avenue is slated for cosmetic improvements including new landscape and trees, new benches and new trash receptacles. The proposal is to redirect traffic to give Corey Avenue more visibility and create inviting street designs.

Mr. Jerry Dabkowski, Consultant for LPA Group, gave a power point presentation regarding the theoretical change in the traffic flow and estimated that 24,000 cars per day travel on Gulf Boulevard, 75th Avenue and Blind Pass Road. He advised that part of the Comp Plan is to enhance the operation of 75th Avenue and Blind Pass Road intersection. Mr. Dabkowski presented various ideas for pedestrian traffic patterns, streetscapes and additional parking for the area allowing for easier pedestrian navigation in the shopping district. His proposal is projected out to the year 2035 with a simulated traffic flow utilizing the proposed traffic pattern. Mr. Dabkowski noted his plan does not require any right-of-way purchase and does not change the evacuation route.

Audience Comments

Don Michael, 7261 Bay Street, expressed his concern that the proposed change seems to be a "little bit overboard". He suggested that stairways be built across Gulf Boulevard for pedestrian beach access.

Tom DeYampert, 510 - 78th Avenue, was concerned with traffic deviating from the new route onto other residential streets in the area.

Mr. Dabkowski commented that route is designed to alleviate vehicle traffic in neighboring areas.

Jack Jensen, President of Point of View Interior Design, Corey Avenue, asked if the drawbridge was considered when studying the flow of traffic under the proposal.

Dee Bell, 326 72nd Avenue, was concerned about the increased traffic at the intersection of 70th Avenue and Blind Pass Road and suggested that intersection should be a four-way stop.

Brandon Sadone, PJ's Oyster Bar, was concerned that this project will have a negative impact on businesses at the west end of Corey Avenue. He suggested that the City relax the regulations to attract new business instead of spending money on this project.

Chris Gregory, 7103 Blind Pass Road, expressed concern that his area would become a slum. He inquired about the traffic patterns on Gulf Boulevard and the intersection of Blind Pass Road and 75th Avenue.

Mr. Bonfield advised that 73rd Avenue to Blind Pass Road is another project that the City is working on with FDOT and it will integrate with this proposal.

Steve Valor, 7141 Bay Street, owner of Willy's Restaurant and Bar, felt that making the area more pedestrian friendly would benefit the businesses. He complimented City staff noting they are easily accessible and have done an exceptional job with this plan.

Chuck Flint, 5675 34th Street North, Property Manager for PJ's Seafood, asked if the proposal was a result of safety or economic concerns. He was concerned that people traveling north on Gulf Boulevard may not see the businesses on the west end of Corey and the businesses will suffer.

Paul Pfister, 8090 Gulf Boulevard, President of North Beach Civic Association, stated that he received several emails from Association members who were concerned about access to their homes and businesses.

Debbie Merango, owner of Allisa's Salon, 7330 Gulf Boulevard, stated that she relies on vehicles passing by her salon for walk-in business and spoke against the proposal.

Nancy Gaenslen, 9525 Blind Pass Road, stated that she and her neighbors object to the plan. She reported that she collected 25 signatures from the St. Pete Beach Yacht and Tennis Club within one hour and in twenty four hours she can have 300 signatures to oppose the plan.

Kathy Hanson, business owner corner of Corey Avenue and Blind Pass, objected to the plan. She agreed with the idea of building stairs over Gulf Boulevard for pedestrian access to the beach.

Helen Maxon, 8580 Gulf Boulevard, stated that she was concerned with major traffic on two streets in the downtown area.

Barb Marquis, owner of Art Expo, Corey Avenue, supported the plan and complimented the City for their efforts to improve the area.

Rick Falkenstein, 6441 - 4th Palm Point, supported the plan and felt that it would improve the area. He believed that this was an opportunity to install parking meters to create revenue.

Anthony Sirvono, 1371 Clay Moore Drive, Palm Harbor, Property Manager 7300 Gulf Boulevard, spoke in opposition of the plan as it relates to the business owners on the west end of Corey Avenue.

Michael Lehman, 535 80th Avenue, stated that he felt businesses will improve with the new plan. He urged everyone to look at the "big picture" of the Comprehensive Plan to envision what the area will look like in the future. Mr. Lehman felt if the residents were shown photos or models of how the area will look when the entire plan is implemented, they may understand it better and will be more likely to agree with the plan.

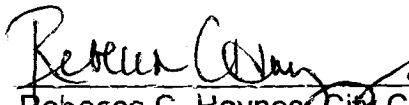
Mayor McFarlin agreed with Mr. Lehman that the vision of the project is the "key" to community acceptance.

Commissioner Parent suggested separating the Future Land Use Plan from the Comprehensive Plan to assist the community in learning what land uses are within the different areas of the City.

Mr. Bonfield stated that the next step will be to put together more details and bring the plan back to the Commission for their consideration at a future meeting. He noted that staff will display a large map after the meeting and will remain available to answer additional questions. Mr. Bonfield mentioned that the beautification project on Corey Avenue will be on the next City Commission agenda for consideration and, once it is approved, the project should be completed by the upcoming tourist season.

2. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 7:39 p.m.



Rebecca C. Haynes, City Clerk



Steve McFarlin, Mayor

Minutes approved on:

10-25-11