

Lealman Community Redevelopment Area Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 3, 2018 ~ 6:00 PM

The special meeting was held on Wednesday October 3, 2018 at the Lealman Community Campus, 5175 45th Street North, St. Petersburg, FL 33714.

1. Call to Order (Steve Cleveland)

Chairman Cleveland called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

Committee Members Present: Steve Cleveland, Gary Grooms, Enoch Nicholson, Cheryl DiCicco, Iris Parish and Brian Ellis

Absent Members: None

County Staff Present: Rachel Booth, Chris Moore, Ryan Brinson, Thomas Scofield

2. Approval of the August 29, 2018 Meeting Minutes:

Member Cheryl DiCicco asked that a typo in the third paragraph of Section 6 be corrected. The Committee then unanimously approved the minutes as amended.

3. Old Business

a. Re-naming of Joe's Creek Greenway Park to Raymond H. Neri Community Park

Chairman Cleveland indicated that at the last Board of County Commissioners (BCC) meeting held on September 13th, Commissioner Justice brought up renaming either the Lealman Community Campus or Joe's Creek Greenway Park after the late Ray Neri and the BCC ultimately asked that the LCRAAC provide input on the decision. Mr. Cleveland pointed out that the renaming of the Park appeared to be the preferred alternative since buildings come and go over time, but the park will always remain. Mr. Cleveland then asked for feedback from the Committee, and all agreed on renaming the park after Mr. Neri. After a brief discussion, Iris Parish made a motion to rename the park the Raymond H. Neri Community Park, which was seconded by Gray Grooms and unanimously approved.

b. Re-naming of Lealman Community Campus

Mr. Cleveland reviewed with the group a few naming suggestions that were prepared by Planning Department staff. Chris Moore provided some context with the discussion and mentioned that at the last Board meeting, Commissioner Justice also brought up the possibility of renaming the Campus due to feedback he had received from the community and subsequent discussions with staff. Mr. Moore further said that the need to finalize the name directly relates to the need to begin branding and marketing of the building as we continue bringing tenants onboard to the facility. The Committee discussed various options presented by staff, and considered options of their own. As the discussion continued, the term Exchange became the preferred option from a branding standpoint as it allows the facility to stand out and represents a place where the community can come together to exchange ideas, cultural experiences, information and various community services and resources. The Committee also reached consensus that they wanted the word Lealman to be included in the naming. Ultimately the Committee unanimously decided to present two options to the BCC: 1) Lealman Community Exchange and 2) Lealman Exchange, with the Committee's first preference being the Lealman Community Exchange. Gary Grooms made the motion, it was seconded by Enoch Nicholson, and approved by all members.

4. Staff Report

- **Residential & Non-Residential Improvement Grant Program Updates**

Mr. Moore presented this item and provided the Committee with a progress report on the residential and non-residential grant program. The vast majority of applicants have had their grant funds escrowed and been provided three-party contracts to execute along with their chosen contractor. Once those are provided back to the County notices to proceed can be issued for work to begin. Staff continues to work with residents who have either not provided all required paperwork or are encountering challenges with locating contractors to perform the work. Staff also presented proposed changes to the grant programs in FY19, including modifications to the residential program to separate the more traditional rehab activities from beautification activities. Doing so would allow the CRA TIF dollars to be leveraged with Community Development grant dollars from the State and HUD. For the nonresidential grant program, staff recommended focusing the eligible areas to be located in highly visible commercial corridors or in the Joe's Creek Industrial District. After a discussion, the Committee supported staff moving forward with these recommendations, with a subsequent update and revised guidelines to be provided at the next meeting.

The committee decided to make a few separate recommendations for the residential and non-residential improvement grant programs. Cheryl DiCicco made the first motion to separate out the Residential Improvement Grant into two separate distinct programs, one for Home Rehabilitation and one for Façade/Beatification, it was seconded by Gary Grooms and approved by all members. The second motion, was made by Cheryl DiCicco recommending that County's Community Development Department to administer the Home Rehabilitation Program and to utilize outside funding sources (other than CRA TIF dollars) whenever possible, it was seconded by Gary Grooms and approved by all members. A third motion was made by Gary Grooms to recommend reviewing the Non-Residential Improvement Program to give consideration to prioritizing specific commercial corridors instead of a CRA districtwide approach, it was seconded by Cheryl DiCicco and approved by all members.

5. Advisory Committee Member Comments

Member Brian Ellis inquired about broader CRA branding initiatives that staff may have underway. Staff indicated that there have been preliminary discussions with a consultant on wayfinding signage. A discussion ensued on whether it was ideal to market the area as a CRA as opposed to Lealman.

Member DiCicco inquired as to the verbiage in the bylaws pertaining to members being required to either be a resident, business and/or property owners or other stakeholders from within the Lealman CRA. A discussion ensued with members asking for additional clarification on how a stakeholder was defined. Staff will seek additional guidance from the County's Attorney's Office.

Chairman Cleveland concluded by reminding Committee members that the application period for new members was still open and to please spread the word to anyone who may be interested in applying.

6. Citizen Input

Jorge Mercado indicated he provided his support for renaming the park after Ray Neri at the September 13 BCC meeting.

7. Next Meeting

- **November 28, 2018 (Proposed for Discussion)**

Given this special meeting occurred, the Committee opted to move its previous regularly scheduled meeting from October 24 to November 28.

8. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned approximately at 8:20 pm.

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