



MINUTES

Lealman Community Redevelopment Area Advisory Committee

Meeting Wednesday, March 24th, 2021, 6pm

Lealman Exchange, 5175 45th St. N., Building A, Lealman, FL 33714

Committee Members Present In-person: Gary Grooms, Rick Orr, Jeremy Heath, Oscar Seguban, Marsha McCoy

Committee Members Present Virtually: Father Viet, Teresa N Van Alstine, Steve Cleveland

Committee Members Absent: Brian Ellis

Pinellas County Staff Present: David Sadowsky, Chris Moore, Ryan Brinson, Carol Stricklin

I. Call to Order: 6:00pm

II. Introductions:

Advisory Committee members and staff introduced themselves.

III. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the February 24, 2021 meeting were approved unanimously.

IV. Draft Lealman Exchange Strategic Plan Presentation & Discussion:

Amy Cianci with the St. Petersburg Group presented the item and shared how the strategic plan for the Lealman Exchange was created with the help of their community partners. Ms. Cianci then presented on the 4 phases of the strategic planning process. The Advisory Committee feedback was generally positive with a primary comment focused on the need to identify solutions to the transportation challenges faced by many low-income residents as it relates to accessibility to programs offered at the facility.

V. CRA Annual Statutory Reporting:

Staff presented the FY19/20 Annual Report, which was completed to meet the CRA statutory reporting requirements and in accordance with the Advisory Committee's by-laws. After a brief discussion about TIF and non-TIF spending within the CRA, the report was recommended for receipt and file by a unanimous vote.

VI. FY20-21 Lealman Workplan Updates & Discussion:

Staff presented and provided an update on the following projects:

- **58th Ave. N. Sidewalk (Northside):** The committee was informed that the project was rejected by the County's CIP Coordinating Committee, mainly due to the private investment anticipated with the future development along the corridor along with the current depletion of the transportation trust fund to provide anticipated maintenance. In the alternative, the CIP committee has proposed a short-term option to create a safe crossing on each end at the school to connect to the existing sidewalk that runs along the south side of the street.

- **Lealman Gateway, Wayfinding, Landscaping, Engineering, Design and Construction Services:** Staff mentioned that a draft scope of work has been completed and is now ready for fee negotiations. The first phase of the scope would essentially be the community engagement phase to produce graphic design renderings of what the signs would look like (shape, material, fonts, colors, etc.) but also for additional improvements to the sites themselves such as landscaping and streetscaping elements. A second phase would produce the actual construction site plan documents for each site selected. Staff further mentioned that coupled with the Forward Pinellas Wayfinding study and the Linking Lealman Plan, locations have been already identified and that the consultant would focus mainly on public outreach relating to signage design and the complementary improvements at the previously identified sites.

- **Lealman CRA Housing Services RFP:** Staff mentioned that this initiative was briefly discussed at the last meeting and seeks to capitalize and serve as a tool in the toolbox on a series of ordinances and resolutions recently adopted by the Board of County Commissioners to address code enforcement lien properties and condemned hazardous buildings and structures. The CRA is taking a two-pronged approach to addressing these nuisance properties and is issuing an RFP seeking housing service providers to administer the programs. The first prong will be for housing rehabilitation assistance for qualified low-income residents that need assistance with home repairs. The second prong would be for new home construction for the development of new affordable and/or market rate single family homes for properties experiencing code lien and condemnable related challenges. Staff concluded by mentioning that an advisory committee member would be selected to sit on the RFP review panel as suggested by the committee at the last meeting.

- **Work Session update:** Staff mentioned that at the next Board of County Commissioners work session on April 22, 2021, staff will be briefing the Commission on the progress made in the Lealman community.

VII. **Advisory Committee Member Comments:**

Chairman Grooms gauged interest for the Committee's desire to allow for members to participate and vote virtually. Ultimately there was no support for the encouraging the virtual participation of members attending virtually and a motion was made by Mr. Grooms to not allow for virtual member participation, with Member Orr making a second, with the motion carrying unanimously.

Chairman Grooms commented he felt the meeting consisted of too many informational items and felt staff needed to bring more voting items to the Committee. Mr. Grooms also expressed concerns over low-quality redevelopment that could perpetuate blight such as short-term rentals, group homes and vape shops.

Vice Chair Heath asked if staff could look into the possibility of taking down the northside fence at Lealman Park, he understands the safety concerns with the fence on the southside but feels the northside would be a nice improvement and would make the park more inviting.

VIII. **Citizen Input:**

Lealman resident Ryan Carter asked if he could get some assistance from CRA staff with obtaining from Code Enforcement the status on the list of properties he filed complaints on relating to a neighborhood sweep that occurred sometime roughly last year. Mr. Carter also suggested that all Advisory Committee meetings recording and videos (past/future) be posted on the website.

Lealman resident David Lee provided a handout commenting on positive progress in the community, including wildlife activity and at Neri Park drawing interest from groups such as Audubon Society, as well as several new single family homes being built in the CRA, which the CRA's investments should further encourage.

Robin Liska (attending virtually) with AmSkills, shared that they would be hosting a one-day workshop on April 17th and a two-week Bootcamp from April 26th- May 7th at the Lealman Exchange.

IX. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 7:41pm.