



Cocoanut Grove Village Council

Monthly Meeting Minutes

Marcelo Fernandes, Chairman
Linda Williams, Vice Chair
S. Larissa Ozols, Treasurer
Zachary Elliott, Secretary
Thaddeus *Scott*, Sergeant at Arms
Johannah Brown
Rachel Cardello
Steven Dloogoff
Hank Sanchez-Resnik

Every Third Friday
3500 Pan American Drive
Miami, FL 33133
www.CoconutGroveVillageCouncil.com

Friday February 16, 2018

6:30 PM

Miami City Hall

1. Call to Order at 6:35 PM
2. Roll Call
 - a. Present
 - i. Marcelo Fernandes, Chairman
 - ii. Linda Williams, Vice Chair
 - iii. S. Larissa Ozols, Treasurer
 - iv. Thaddeus Scott, Sergeant at Arms
 - v. Johannah Brown
 - vi. Rachel Cardello
 - vii. Hank Sanchez-Resnik
 - b. Absent:
 - i. Zachary Elliott, Secretary (prepared advanced written proxy for votes)
 - ii. Steven Dloogoff
 - c. Quorum Present
3. Pledge of Allegiance
 - a. The Pledge was recited by all those in attendance.
4. Discussion Expansion of OMNI CRA to Village West (attached)
5. Public Comment (follows attached item 4. Discussion)
6. New Business
 - a. RESOLUTION OF THE COCONUT GROVE VILLAGE COUNCIL ON THE COCONUT GROVE PLAYHOUSE
 - i. Sponsored by Culture, Retail and Parks Board Committee
 - ii. Deferred in light of new information given to Village Council
 - b. FIRST READING RESOLUTION AMENDING ARTICLE VI OF THE BYLAWS STRIKING COMMITTEE LIST
 - i. Sponsored by Bylaws Subcommittee
 - c. FIRST READING RESOLUTION AMENDING ARTICLE III(5) OF THE BYLAWS STRIKING MINUTES APPROVAL
 - i. Sponsored by Bylaws Subcommittee

7. Housekeeping
 - a. Motion to approve minutes of January
 - i. Passed unanimously.
 - b. Opportunity for Members to add agenda items
 - i. Transportation Committee introduced Quickbuild resolution
 1. Passed unanimously by all members present
 - ii. Rachel Cardello proposed New Item
 1. Designate Charlie Cinnamon ROW as "Play Street" (congregate green space for our community) by way of letter to City Manager and resolution by Council.
8. Meeting Adjourned at approximately 8:50 PM

Discussion: Expansion of OMNI CRA to Village West
Guest Speaker, CRA Expert, Frank Schnidman

OMNI Community Redevelopment Agency created in 1986 to improve slum and blight downtown. Global agreement extended boundaries to Watson Island (POMT) and Marlin's park to help fund large projects.

West Grove is a potential CRA candidate. First time where CRA boundary will include taxable property to collect funds. No City resources to assist with eviction and deterioration housing stock, and canopy. West Grove's best hope is the CRA

Grand jury report findings noted OMNI CRA did not allocate enough funding for affordable housing. Budget now has 100M allocated and currently and 700K allocated in conjunction with "rebuild together" program for improvements to owner occupied single homes and multifamily homes.

CRA basics: funded by Tax Increment Trust Fund (TITF). County taxes are frozen for a bounded location at the base year of its creation. Next 30 years, County gets the same fixed amount of taxes; the whole increment goes to CRA TITF (less a 5% county admin fee).

Also, CRA funded by property it owns and rents as well as increment tax base.

CRA can bond, finance, grant and loan CRA funds. Funds must be spent in the boundary as a project within the defined Redevelopment plan. If a project is not in the plan it will not get funded.

Redevelopment plan can be amended and the process to get the recommended amendments approved is multi step government approval process between county and city commissions and sub committees

Individuals and private investors can get money to create projects defined in the plan. Typical for them to put the upfront development financing and then the County has a mechanism in place to rebate taxes back to the redeveloped parcel via the CRA TITF. (Present value)

Questions from Council Members:

Mr. Scott: How can long tem stakeholder's best leverage CRA apparatus, it seems like developer have the upper hand?

Mr. Schnidman: Residents as stakeholder's best be in the form of a 7 person advisory board to decide on the projects best for West Grove. They work with consultant who prepares the redevelopment plan. If it is not in the plan, it can't be done. The consultant then recommends to CRA board for approval.

Projects can be commercial, Single family and multifamily. Zoning is done by city, not CRA therefore plan could only recommend zoning changes not execute them. Types of potential projects: grants for gut/rehab, grants for historic properties in the Grove; shot gun homes "moved and clustered" to preserve the feel and history of West Grove (recommends getting national trust involved).

Ms. Brown: When does CRA sunset?

Mr. Schnidman: State statute allows CRA to be no more than 60 years. Currently OMNI CRA sunsets 2045.

Ms. Brown: Current OMNI plan has done how many projects to ensure maximum conditions for residents to stay?

Mr. Schnidman: Former administration of OMNI CRA did not see provision of affordable housing as key to CRA mission, Arsht Center, Marlin's Park and Tunnel were a priority. Now affordable housing represents 10% of budget. Commitment is there CRA borrowed 25M to go towards affordable housing which means with debt servicing 2.5M/ year. CRA subject to political will, this means D2 commissioner during his current tenure needs to amend the rehabilitation plan.

Ms. Cardello: CRA Mission to rid slum and blight by improving conditions and therefore property values which seems to go hand in hand with gentrification.

Mr. Schnidman: Key factor is there is already a threshold of revenue 7 M in TITF, 14M in global agreement to subsidize Marlin's park, and 35% increment for debt service of Arsht Center. These funds exist to meet objective of CRA's affordable housing goal. West Grove the new addition to tax increment allocation is well timed. CRA has **LESS** pressure to do mixed use, high dollar projects. No need for catalytic projects to bump tax base.

Ms. Cardello: How many units of affordable housing have been built in OMNI CRA?

Mr. Schnidman: Zero. In overtown there has been 1M in gut/rehab.

Ms. Cardello: How does the advisory board get put together?

Mr. Schnidman: Community identifies the 7 person advisory board. It is an Official city board so the 7 must file application with Clerk; CRA decides who the 7 are. If you are on the advisory board you cannot be on the CRA board.

Ms. Cardello: Are there other advisory boards in other CRA districts?

Mr. Schnidman: No, West Grove would be the only advisory board.

Ms. Cardello: What evidence has gentrification slowed as a result of the OMNI CRA?

Mr. Schnidman: Housing was a low priority because OMNI CRA parcels were mostly vacant/commercial Advisory board important for West Grove, 2005 study has many of the West Grove priorities good read is the book Reimagining West coconut Grove, a study was funded and no money to fulfill the finding of the study. Current political will instructed city manager to do a finding of necessity (FON) and it passed. Next there is a multi-step review between city and county will hopefully result in the OMNI redevelopment plan being amended to include West Grove.

Mr. Schnidman: The Key is to have community "quarterbacks" pushing this plan along at each of the committees, subcommittees and making sure plan keeps moving because as soon as county commission

approves plan funds become accessible.

Ms. Cardello: Has there been a CRA expansion area that has shrunk?

Mr. Schnidman: No. However, Miami Beach had terminated their CRA on South beach early to re-district around the convention center.

Ms. Williams: Asked D2 commissioner if he leaves will the next commissioner continue with the same passion to adopt CRA redevelopment plan? Commissioner said there would be language adopted which is vague.

Mr. Schnidman: Implementations based on budget priorities 5 commissioners also on CRA board should not defer because West Grove is not in their district. Their position on CRA board is to oversee what is within CRA boundaries.

Ms. Williams: West Grove entities like HOATA want to ensure there is a pre-amble so residents are the beneficiaries of the OMNI CRA expansion with language like number of units, small business allocations... Want to ensure longtime residents are given priority.

Mr. Schnidman: FON statutory requirements establish boundary area that meets definition of slum and blight. Once FON is approved it goes back to the preparation of the redevelopment plan. It is at that stage that specifics like those are set. Since the 7 member advisory board is not in place, NOW is the time to identify what needs to go into the plan. 7 people need to agree to what is in the West Grove plan.

Ms. Williams: What can the community do for residents of West Grove, like reach out to County commission?

Mr. Schnidman: County is favorable to CRA expansion and extension of life of CRA. Look at Miami Gardens where they extended life and boundary. County Commission's initial view is positive. The key is to agree reasons as to why the County should forego tax revenue increment in West Grove in favor of CRA. Let County know that you want them to give up tax increment portion to actively support historic black community in West Grove. Have the community be present and tell Commission, sub committees at County and city level that CRA is not about 200K dog parks but fairness and equity. Hundreds of thousands of dollars spent in 2005 to study the issue in Reimagining West coconut Grove but zero to implement. Community has to be galvanized and tell the county/city at committee, subcommittee and full commission levels they are focused and serious about CRA expansion.

Ms. Ozols: Are all OMNI provisions applied to all boundaries, including the expansion boundary of West Grove? In particular, zoning exceptions like the serving of alcohol until 5AM is *by right* in the OMNI boundary.

Mr. Schnidman: No. 5AM by right is a regulation set forth by city ordinance. The 5AM ordinance only

applies to the **current** OMNI Zone; West Grove may or may not include that ordinance. That would be something 7-person advisory board would need to establish if West Grove wants that 5AM alcohol ordinance to apply to West Grove boundary.

Ms. Ozols: Is there a mechanism in place to make West Grove advisory board exempt from being the beneficiary of CRA funds?

Mr. Schnidman: Yes, conflict of interest for a board member of West Grove or CRA to benefit from CRA funds.

Ms. Ozols: Where can I get a copy of the book?

Mr. Schnidman: You can get [Reimagining West coconut Grove](#) on Amazon

Mr. Sanchez-Resnick: Is there a road map to identify the steps in the amendment of the redevelopment plan?

Mr. Schnidman: County has to approve the FON in the meanwhile, garner support for the expansion. Choose the 7 person board, vet them well to represent West Grove and identify the “Quarterback.” Identify them now and get to work, the board does not have to be official to get to work because now they can speak freely and prioritize issues. Once Sunshine Laws take effect board can speak only in public forum about topics related to CRA. Need opinion from City Attorney if Village Council member want to be on the 7- person advisory board member. Yes there is a road map. Request from CRA staff.

Public Comment:

Speakers are more favorable to notion of the CRA now that there is an Advisory Board concept that would help prioritize project specific to the needs of West Grove. Speakers wanted to know who appoints the CRA board members and CRA Chair and if ethics training was put into place after the Grand Jury findings of OMNI CRA. Speakers addressed concern over CRA putting existing Grove residents first and desire to be part of the process of prioritizing projects CRA would fund. Chair Fernandes encouraged public to be part of the process as many voices will let County and City commissions hear that CRA boundaries should be expanded so West Grove can access CRA funding. Speakers voiced concerns over West Grove infrastructure being ignored and hopes CRA funding will help. Speakers addressed the central issue of demolishing traditional home sites in favor of new developments that are not affordable; preservation of existing home stock is central to the CRA extending its boundaries to West Grove. Councilwoman Williams ended the public comment by reminding us all to “Reach one bring one” as a successful strategy to get County and City Commissioners to expand CRA boundaries to include West Grove.