

# MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

## REGULAR MEETING

NOVEMBER 16, 2010

### MINUTES

Chairperson Paul Novak called to order the regular meeting of the Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC) on Tuesday, November 16, 2010, at 7:00 p.m., Jarvis Hall, 4505 Ocean Drive, Lauderdale-By-The-Sea, Florida.

II. Upon call of the roll, the following Committee members were present:

Chairperson Paul Novak  
Co-Chairperson Edmund Malkoon  
Sandra Booth  
Robert Eckblad  
Marjorie Evans  
Ken Kugler  
John Panitsas  
James Rogers  
Helene Wetherington (late)

III. Approval of Minutes

#### Minutes of October 19, 2010

Co-Chairperson Malkoon made a motion to approve the minutes of October 19, 2010, seconded by Member Eckblad; the vote carried unanimously.

IV. Public/Member Comments

Chairperson Novak invited and received no comments from either the public or Committee members.

V. Old Business

- a) Update to the Master Plan - continued discussion with Town Manager Connie Hoffmann.

Town Manager Connie Hoffman gave a brief review of the contents covered in the previous meeting, stating her purpose was to help facilitate the decision-making process of MPSC. At the previous meeting, she indicated her intention of inviting speakers with knowledge and experience in the field of urban planning, and she alerted the Town Commission to her intention of doing so. The Commission asked her to delay inviting the speakers until January 2011 after the holiday season, as they felt the community should be invited to participate in such forums. Thus, residents, business owners, the Town Commission, the Planning & Zoning Board, Town staff and the Committee should be present. She mentioned the speakers that would be making presentations, including David Sucher, author of City Comforts. He built on a lot of work done in the concept of new urbanism, which was taking classic concepts of design that worked through time and applying them to the modern cityscape. The theme of Mr. Sucher's work was how to build an urban village within a city, which made the Town of Lauderdale-By-The-Sea perfect, as it was already a small urban village. She received a Committee consensus for Mr. Sucher to make his presentation on Friday afternoon, January 7, and on Saturday, January 8 he would lead a guided walk through the Town and give feedback on issues related directly to what he spoke about. Ms. Hoffman went on to state Member Booth contacted Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, the Dean of the School of Architecture at the University of Miami and a partner of Duany Plater-Zyberk (DPZ), an urban planning and design firm that won numerous awards for their work.

Member Booth remarked Ms. Plater-Zyberk had addressed the Town previously, though the turn out and response at the meeting was not very good; she was willing to return and speak at a Town meeting, though February would be a better time for her. She was willing to dedicate two dates for her presentation to the Town and Ms. Booth would get back to the Committee with some possible dates in February.

Town Manager Hoffman resumed her presentation, asking Committee members to describe a place in the Town they particularly liked and were comfortable, one they felt represented what was good in the Town. Members were asked to describe the physical aspects of the place they were thinking of that made it so appealing. She noted some of the physical qualities members seem to find most appealing about the place they liked were: openness, peacefulness, social activity, friendly interaction, a sense of community, and the design. These characteristics were some of the elements the Committee needed to keep in mind as it went through the Master Plan process and its implementation; they should be emphasized and protected in the designs selected. She referred to the Master Plan contained in the backup, noting, the document now contained markings based on the issues the Committee reached a consensus on. The Committee had yet to go into the details of the bullet items, as the decision was made to work at a higher level and come to an agreement on the bigger issues before getting into the smaller details.

Member Eckblad pointed out there was no mention of the Basin Drive marina, which he thought was an important asset of the Town.

Member Evans thought the area between Commercial Blvd. and A1A and the bridge was very unattractive, and there seemed to be no ability for people to get outside in the restaurant areas. She thought it was not conducive to people participating in the stores along that street front.

Member Eckblad envisioned the Town acquiring a number of properties between Basin Drive and Commercial Blvd. to open up the area and create a type of promenade, where people could gather and water taxis could bring people into the business area.

Member Evans concurred.

Town Manager Hoffman acknowledged Members Evans and Eckblad wished both locations mentioned as focal points in the planning process. She received Committee consensus to add them to the Plan. She discussed establishing a trademark feature, which The Master Plan stated should be fountains; she understood from resident feedback this was not received well due to concerns about water conservation. From a Town standpoint, fountains were extremely costly and difficult to maintain. She asked the Committee for input as to fountains being the trademark feature or comment on what should be the focus of the trademark feature.

Member Kugler recalled discussions that a trademark feature should be evident upon approach to the Town coming over the bridge, like an arch welcoming visitors with designs synonymous with the amenities of the Town, such as its beaches. On A1A going north and south, smaller versions of the same trademark feature could be placed.

Member Evans thought the Town logo should be incorporated in the trademark feature.

Town Manager Hoffman commented there should be some particular feature that appeared repeatedly around the Town at significant places, and the feature should be consistent; another suggestion had been pelicans.

Chairperson Novak thought pineapples could be a part of the feature, as they were said to convey a message of welcome.

Town Manager Hoffman sought and received a consensus from the Committee that whatever Town trademarks currently existed were inadequate and did not represent a signature gateway. She continued reviewing the recommendations, such as a maritime character being a primary theme.

Member Kugler felt maritime suggested boating, and he did not think of the Town as a boating community; rather, it was more of a seaside village.

Town Manager Hoffman wondered if the fact that the Town was located in the subtropics made it a different kind of seaside village than, for example, in Virginia.

Chairperson Novak recalled the Town's Chamber conducted a study some years prior and did some branding, and they came up with a beach village.

Town Manager Hoffman affirmed the Chamber's shirts said "Florida's Beach Village." With Basin Drive, the emphasis was more on the fact that it was waterfront, being one of the few places in the Town the public could gather and see a waterfront other than the Oceanside. She sought feedback on creating a third waterfront destination.

Member Eckblad commented, with its current arrangement with the fences, people were unable to use that location to watch the boats, reiterating there were prior discussions about acquiring land in the area and opening it up into a type of promenade.

Co-Chairperson Malkoon asked about the Intercoastal.

Town Manager Hoffman responded the Intercoastal was not really mentioned in the Master Plan, with the exception of creating a form of water taxi dock.

Chairperson Novak pointed out one could not access the Intercoastal, as all the property there was private.

Town Manager Hoffman questioned if it should be a goal of the Town to create some public access to the Intercoastal. Staff was in the process of investigating if the Town already had access that was being used by someone else, and there was always the option of purchasing private property, whether it's built on or vacant and turn it into a public park. She received a Committee consensus for this possibility to be explored.

Member Evans said there was one spot in Bel-air where people gathered to watch the boats.

There was discussion on the issue of having access by boat to Lauderdale-By-The-Sea and whether boaters would use the amenity to dock their boats and visit the Town's businesses; some Committee members thought they might not. There was a consensus to explore the possibility of providing day dockage at Basin Drive.

Town Manager Hoffman went on to discuss the Barrier Island Interpretive Center, the idea being, with the offshore reef and seaside quality of the village, to create a tourist destination that contained a history of the seafront, exhibits about the reef, etc.

Co-Chairperson Malkoon was in favor of this suggestion, as it would be a type of one-stop-shop where visitors could learn about the community and spend time walking around with interesting things to do and see.

Member Booth concurred, noting the Center would bring groups of people, such as local and foreign students, and many tourists were very interested in Florida reefs. The Town had yet to truly highlight this feature.

Town Manager Hoffman acknowledged a consensus for the development of the Center. The next issue was diver access areas, highlighting the reef as one of the great resources of the Town. The Town's Chamber emphasized the reefs in their promotional media but, when actually visiting the beach, it was difficult to locate the reef. She said the suggestion was to create a specific area by which to access the reef, possibly via the pier, but it might be simpler to install diver access signage rather than creating an area. The underwater park was the next topic of discussion, where there could be no fishing of any type, as it would be protected; the Committee did not oppose this suggestion.

Co-Chairperson Malkoon recalled there were prior suggestions for a marine park, but could not remember how the matter unfolded.

Town Manager Hoffman believed there was once some discussion about getting the Town's artificial reef project up and running, then there would be more rationale to establish an underwater park. She reviewed the recommendation for a waterfront access park in the Bel-air neighborhood in 15<sup>th</sup> Street and the canal, providing transient dockage at the location.

Co-Chairperson Malkoon indicated this was located at the curve on 15<sup>th</sup> Street, and the nearby residents firmly communicated their opposition to the idea.

Town Manager Hoffman received a Committee consensus to eliminate the recommendation for a waterfront access park in the neighborhood of Bel-air on 15<sup>th</sup> Street and the canal. She went on to mention building a waterway promenade along the Intercoastal waterway.

Member Kugler liked the concept but was unsure where the Town could acquire property along the Intercoastal to do such development.

Town Manager Hoffman said a promenade implied the feature would run horizontally along the Intercoastal; the Committee agreed it was unfeasible and should be removed. She then mentioned the suggestion to build an intermodal transportation center at the foot of the Commercial Blvd. bridge, including a multistory parking garage, but received no Committee support for the idea and removed it. Next there was the recommendation for a water taxi stop along the Intercoastal, which the Committee agreed was a good thing for the Town.

Member Panitsas stated he was aware the land space by the bridge belonged to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) but wondered if they would allow the Town to install some steps and a bench for those waiting on the water taxi.

Town Manager Hoffman next mentioned the creation of light standards of a maritime style along El Mar Drive and Commercial Blvd. east of A1A, further illustrated in the backup.

Member Eckblad could support this suggestion with the concept of a beachfront village, and it should have beachfront type lighting and other elements consistent with that design. Thus, the lighting would have some seaside themes.

Town Manager Hoffman wondered if banners would be a good substitute for the lighting standards.

Member Eckblad disagreed; he preferred consistent light standards that set the Town apart.

There was a Committee consensus to install light standards, etc.

Town Manager Hoffman reviewed item C: Economic Development and Revitalization, urging the Committee members to acquire and read the Goodkin Report done in 2004 before discussing item C. The Report would provide some sobering input on the matter.

Member Evans believed it was important to be realistic about the visitors the Town would attract, stating Lauderdale-By-The-Sea was more of a family-oriented venue. "High-end" was not the character of the Town.

Chairperson Novak concurred, noting the Town had an attractive layout and the development should happen from the bridge all the way down Commercial Blvd.

Member Kugler thought the Town should aim to attract a visitor population that was upscale/casual.

Member Evans pointed out many visitors came to the Town because it was cheap to do so. If there were a desire to raise the level of visitors, certain aesthetic changes would have to take place, such as on El Mar Drive where the appearance was not attractive. She said the same situation applied to Commercial Blvd. Some of the California communities she visited had that feel, where they had very nice shops and dining areas.

Chairperson Novak believed Carmel was a good example, where the accommodations were expensive but the buildings were quaint, and this was what the Town had as well.

Member Eckblad was in favor of upscale but not too high; there were some areas along the beach in Vero Beach that had attractive stores that invited patrons.

Chairperson Novak thought the process had to begin with property owners cleaning up their buildings inside and out.

Town Manager Hoffman suggested deferring further discussion on the topic and allow members to think on the matter further and provide their feedback at a future meeting. She went on to discuss the development of Basin Drive as a secondary waterfront retail destination. The question was whether to focus retail development in the subject area, and the Committee members expressed support for further exploration.

Member Whetherington asked if there was a reason why it was not possible to rent boats, kayaks, sailboats, etc. on the Town's beaches, wondering if there was some law preventing it.

Town Manager Hoffman responded there was a law against such activity, but the issue of recreational uses on the beach was coming up. She would include the suggestion as an implementation point to investigate the possibility of incorporating not just signage, but access to the tools to use the reef. The Town applied for a grant to create signage that spoke about the reef, its resources, how the artificial reef project was designed and operated.

Member Evan felt historic landmark signs should be included.

Town Manager Hoffman noted this was something that could be placed under community identity, as it was part of the Town's history. The landmarks should be conserved/preserved, highlighted and protected. She moved onto the section dealing with incorporating and promoting the unique characteristics that defined the community, nothing the Town Commission voted at its recent meeting to create a branding plan as a top priority for the remainder of 2010. Item Seven in the Plan dealt with three satellite parking nodes.

Member Evans thought the Town needed to properly organize its parking, examine the land being used for parking; presently, it appeared very spread out and disorganized.

Member Panitsas questioned if it was possible to change the municipal parking lot on A1A into a multilevel parking lot.

Town Manager Hoffman said the issue was how efficient such a structure would be, as the larger the parcel the more efficient the garage due to the space required for ramping. She did not think the feasibility had ever been analyzed.

Member Eckblad commented in his report he suggested block 30 where the Chamber of Commerce was located could be rezoned to business, as both properties were on the market for sale. A developer could be encouraged to build a structure that might have parking on the first level, retail uses on the second level, etc., without the Town getting involved in the development.

Member Whetherington observed the Town had no large venues to hold a wedding. She then spoke about a parking garage in Deerfield that was attractive and not easily

recognized as a parking garage, stating the Town should get back to the “mixed use everything”, as it was a better fit for the personality of the Town.

There was Committee discussion on the existing parking, improving the efficiency of the present parking system, and exploring possible locations for a parking garage. There was a consensus that three parking areas were unnecessary.

Town Manager Hoffman went on to discuss keeping the hospitality industry focused on El Mar Drive; she received a Committee consensus to move forward with that recommendation.

Chairperson Novak acknowledged the presence of Diane Bouton and invited her to give her perspective on what the Town should be, as she was a longtime resident.

Diane Bouton thought the Committee and staff were already focusing on some of the most important issues, as it was vital to remain conscious of who the target market would be. One thing she had not heard discussed was the five timeshares in the Town that brought people year round. Because of the nature of the Town, the reality was 35 to 40 percent of the residents was a “snowbird” population, and the Committee needed to be aware of what would happen for the rest of the year. She urged the Committee to keep in mind January through May was a dry time; May through October was a wet time, and how these affected the visitor populations. The target population for the Town would vary based on the time of year and most likely be middle class, consisting of retirees, families and international visitors. She believed the Town would eventually have to buy into the intermodal transportation, as it was a plan for Broward County, and the municipalities would have to engage in community transport, more bicycles and add more shops. She encouraged the Committee to identify: where in the Town the residential population was unlikely to grow further, what they envisioned for commercial uses, and the type of amenities hotels should offer. The Town was not necessarily a “Marriott” community nor was it a “HoJo” community, it was somewhere in between those price ranges with the beach access and more things to do.

Town Manager Hoffman went on to review the category on protecting and enjoying the environmental treasures in the Town. Additional vistas to the waterfront could be created using the development regulations in a manner similar to what took place at Oriana where the Town forced the buildings to separate to allow a clear vista to the sea. She asked the Committee if they considered it important to mark secondary gateways to the beach through specialty paving and streetscape on A1A to announce the beach access road.

There was a Committee discussion in which various issues were raised, such as difficulty accessing the beach and insufficient parking,

Town Manager Hoffman stated the fifth item pertained to developing a beach promenade that called for a wooden boardwalk; she spoke with various people about

the Master Plan and was told this was a dead issue. The Oriana gave the Town the easement but the promenade had to be built within the next year.

There was a Committee discussion on boardwalk designs suitable for the promenade, difficulty maintaining the boardwalk, the potential for invading the privacy of the nearby residents facing the beach and riparian rights. There were four Committee members in favor of the promenade and five against it.

Town Manager Hoffman indicated she would report the Committee's feedback to the Town Commission. She went on to discuss dune restoration and shoreline preservation, stating much of this work already took place since the Master Plan was adopted. The eighth item advocated putting interpretative stations along the beach; that is, signs and kiosks providing historical information about the Town.

Co-Chairperson Malkoon wondered if the signs would be in more than one language, including Spanish and French.

Town Manager Hoffman pointed out it was first necessary to identify if the Committee thought the signs should be put in place at all and, if they did, how frequently. She surmised from the Committee they thought signs for diving could be put in place though not all along the beach.

b) Member Robert Eckblad's Vision.

Member Eckblad stated his intent was to get other members of the Committee to think of their own vision and engage the public in the visioning process as well; that is, get them to voice what they considered important as a vision for the Town. His focus was on the business district to improve their revenues and this, in turn, would help pay for other improvements throughout the Town.

Chairperson Novak observed such activity was not far from the present discussions, and many of the things contained in the backup information Mr. Eckblad provided were topics discussed earlier with Town Manager Hoffman.

VI. New Business

None

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

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Paul Novak, Chairman

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

