

City of DeBary
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
SPECIAL MEETING
Saturday, March 2, 2002
9:45 AM
Florence K. Little Town Hall
12 Colomba Road

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Lawrence

Members Present: Chair Lawrence, Tom Donohoe, Betty Gigantino, Tracy Good, Vice Chair Donald Kitner, Dick Tosh, Don Woodruff, and Jane Wright

Also Present: City Manager Richard Diamond, Council Member Coleman, Mayor Rosamonda, and Assistant City Manager Maryann Yaskanich.

2. **Approval of Minutes:** None

3. **Marketing Strategy Report RFP Presentations**

It was stated that, in addition to the presentations of the three groups present at this meeting, that Andersen & Associates and KTM.biz Corporation should also be heard. It was suggested to table this discussion until after today's presentations of the three groups.

(1.) **Presentation by Florida Planning Group, Inc.:** By Stephen Kelly, Project Manager

Mr. Kelly, using Seminole County as a comparison, stated that Florida Planning Group has worked with Seminole County since 1986; that Seminole County is nearing full capacity and that within the next 5-10 years they are going to run out of residential land. He stated that next in line is DeBary as far as long-time growth in Florida; that office parks began to move north out of Orlando; that the first big company to come into Seminole County was AAA; that the reason for their coming was that Seminole County was the first county in Florida that bought all of its open space, and also the fact that Seminole County was making major investments in their school system. Seminole County also started doing community self-investment. He pointed out that parallel loop roads were also important and that one of the key things companies are looking for is good employees. Some of the advantages are: a.) International Airport, b.) University of Central Florida, c.) competitive taxes, labor and building costs, d.) good telecommunications industry, and e.) good economic development commission. Some of the disadvantages are: a.) low educational attainment, b.) bad highway network, c.) public transportation, and d.) high transfer acceptance. Economic advantages are the things to build on.

Mr. Kelly suggested to get started by not only helping existing small business startups, but by expansion and retention of small business. The target businesses give a lot of benefits by stabilizing the economy, paying higher wages, low pollution, paying taxes, and are high value-

added employers. He stated that a rapid response team is needed, to handle any new business coming to town, and a stream-lined permitting process; that redevelopment on Highway 17-92 is needed; that these programs raise property values for the average homeowner; and that the quality of life benefits should be better schools, better roads, and extensive natural resources, which are community self-investment actions.

Mr. Kelly presented an outline of DeBary's Work Program. The first point being the initial strategy on what the focus should be. It was mentioned that the Target Market Industry Study, that the power company paid, for is a nice base from which to start. The second point is to prepare the community profile, which is the information that National Site Selectors want concerning the City. A City Website was mentioned. The third point is the organizational assessment. It was suggested to advertise the community in the Wall Street Journal, which is the paper most business executives read. The fourth point is to do an economic analysis, which is how outside companies look at the City.

The floor was opened for questions. It was suggested that DeBary needs an office complex/business park and that green areas are very important to a community. There was discussion on a sewer and water system and whether Federal help was available. There was discussion on the Volusia County School System and its weaknesses. It was stated that Mr. Kelly, if chosen by the Committee, would be the one working with the City during this program. Mr. Kelly stated that Florida Planning Group has been in business since 1989, and has never had a lawsuit against them, never had a problem with any of their clients, and never had anybody who has not been willing to recommend them. It was suggested that at least one member from the Chamber of Commerce should be included in the program. There was some discussion on public transportation.

(2.) Presentation by Real Estate Research Consultants: By Bill Owen, President

Mr. Owen stated that Real Estate Consultants was founded in 1986 in Orlando. The firm provides economic and real estate advisory services. Mr. Owen presented his company's background, his associates and their credentials, and the services offered by the company. Mr. Owen stated that his company had been retained by several different counties to do an economic base study for the whole region. Some examples of the Real Estate Research Consultants' work from the Osceola County Jobs 2000 Initiative was distributed to the Committee, which included: economic projections for the County, competitive assessments of the County for economic development; identified target industries that should be pursued by the County; and went into planning and regulatory issues that needed to be resolved or needed to be implemented in order to achieve the County's economic development strategy. He stated that his company was instrumental in the redevelopment planning of the Orlando Naval Training Center, which is now called Baldwin Park. Mr. Owen presented some of the local projects that his company was involved with over the last few years.

Mr. Owen presented the approach his company would take in DeBary. He stated that there would be four phases in response to the RFP: 1.) an analysis of historic trends and issues (how DeBary got to where it is now), 2.) the alternative futures analysis (what could be changed), 3.): evaluation and modification of policies (what can be done to alter the City's future), and 4.) development of an economic action agenda (a road map that sets forth goals, objectives, tasks, desired results and some type of monitoring and accountability procedures).

Mr. Owen went on to elaborate on each phase. Mr. Owen stated that his company has a long track record of doing projects similar to what DeBary wants to do and that his company has local information, knowledge, and resources that are unequaled by any other company. He also stated that his company likes long-term relationships with their clients; that they like to see things happen; and that they like to see practical results.

The floor was opened for questions. Committee member Tracy Good asked about green space issues, parks, and quality of life. Mr. Owen stated that these issues were something that the Committee would have to define, because everyone has a different meaning for the quality of life; and then that meaning would have to be incorporated into the plan. Mr. Owen also mentioned education and how it is perceived. The Volusia County School System was discussed again and the need for a high school that would help to bring people here to stay. Mr. Owen stated that DeBary may have been overlooked or skipped over and thinks that there is great opportunity for DeBary. Mr. Owen stated that he thought the biggest negative for this area might be the context of this area right now within the region; that it does not have a clear identity; that DeBary needs to establish itself; and needs to gain its own competitive identity. He gave an explanation of standard industry classifications and the North American Industrial Class System. Mr. Owen also stated that DeBary definitely needs a plan.

(3.) Presentation by Urbanomics, Inc.: By Kenneth H. Creveling, President

Mr. Creveling stated that Urbanomics has been in business since 1991 and is teamed with the Leak-Goforth Company LLC, a site location consulting firm. Urbanomics is primarily working for communities and real estate projects. Leak-Goforth Company looks at communities from an industries' point of view, that being a good combination of skills and resources. Urbanomics, along with Leak-Goforth Company, is currently working with Progress Energy, at the DeBary plant site, looking for options for what they can do with their land. It was stated that the County's future is the I-4 corridor; that the County is looking at an area north of Saxon Blvd. near the 53B & C Interchange as potential industrial development; and that DeBary is in the path of expansion for office and industrial development. It was stated that about 40,000 Volusians commute to other counties to go to work and that this can be used as a marketing tool. It was also mentioned that it is important to take advantage of the marketing clout that Volusia County is going to have.

Mr. Creveling stated that the first thing to do is to identify those realistic targets and opportunities that DeBary can compete for that are compatible with DeBary's residential environment and also to take advantage of DeBary's interchanges and land resources that are not committed to residential use. Some of the needs are small office parks and light industrial parks. DeBary's strategic planning approach would be: 1) What can the City realistically compete for in the marketplace? 2) What kind of product does the City need to successfully compete with for that kind of activity? 3) How can these be marketed?

The floor was opened for questions. It was stated that whatever Progress Energy would do, which would most likely be light technology, would have to meet with the City's approval. The possibility of forming a partnership between Progress Energy, the City of DeBary, and the County was discussed. It was stated that the extension of Saxon Blvd. is important. The availability of land and its uses was discussed. There was some discussion about the benefits of clustering. It was mentioned that an analysis of strengths and weaknesses should be done, i.e., what is the business

climate, what is the political climate, can things get done here, what are the services, are they adequate, and what needs to bring them up to speed to be competitive. Water and sewer was brought up as a negative, along with restricted site opportunities. Mr. Creveling stated that Urbanomics could begin work April 1, 2002. The political atmosphere between East and West Volusia was mentioned. The quality of life in DeBary was discussed and whether it could remain as it is if light industry and office parks were brought in. Chair Lawrence asked if Urbanomics has any source for any Community Development Block Grant money. Mr. Creveling stated that Urbanomics does not do that and that there are firms that help with those efforts. It was mentioned again by Mr. Creveling, that Urbanomics does community revitalization; that they would be available as needed; and that this need would be determined by the Committee. There was a discussion on rental units and apartments and the need for them.

The Committee decided that all three applicants were consistent and close in presentation. It was the Committee's consensus not to hear the other two applicants. The Committee then ranked the applicants in order of choice.

Committee Member Woodruff: 1.) Florida Planning Group - they discussed strategy and partnership, 2.) Urbanomics - a major concern being a conflict of interest, and 3.) Real Estate Research.

Vice Chair Kitner: 1.) Florida Planning Group, 2.) Urbanomics, and 3.) Real Estate Research.

Committee Member Good: 1.) Florida Planning Group - with reservations. There needs to be some oversight done. However, they are familiar with Community Block Grants. 2.) Urbanomics - possible conflict of interest, and 3.) Real Estate Research - probably the most professional of the group, with money being a concern.

Committee Member Gigantino: 1.) Florida Planning Group - as long as DeBary could control and have some oversight in packaging, 2.) Real Estate Research - very dynamic, but pricey, and 3.) Urbanomics - conflict of interest.

Committee Member Donohoe: 1.) Florida Planning Group, 2.) Urbanomics - would probably be a plus for DeBary, but, if Mr. Creveling got sick, DeBary would have to deal with someone out of state, and 3.) Real Estate Research - too well qualified for DeBary at this stage of growth.

Committee Member Tosh: 1.) Florida Planning Group, 2.) Urbanomics, and 3.) Real Estate Research.

Chair Lawrence: 1.) Florida Planning Group - has done more studies on Florida communities - very comfortable with this recommendation, 2.) Urbanomics - excellent qualifications, but a one-person shop, and 3.) Real Estate Research - their scope of service might be overkill for DeBary, more than what the City needs.

Committee Member Tosh: 1.) Florida Planning Group - their work in Seminole County was of the most interest, because Seminole County has been successful, 2.) Urbanomics, and 3.) Real Estate Research.

City Manager stated that the reference checks were all glowing. He was asked if he had a preference and said that he agreed with the Committee. One of the concerns voiced was how could Florida Planning Group charge only \$17,000 when the others charged \$30,000 and \$40,000.

Chair Lawrence asked for a motion to recommend Florida Planning Group to the City Council as their choice to do the Market Strategy Report. A motion was made and seconded. There was no further discussion. The vote was unanimous.

4. **Other Business:** None
5. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM.

**Approved May 30, 2002
City of DeBary
Economic Development Advisory Committee**

Carol Lawrence, Chair