

**City of DeBary**  
**Economic Development Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**TUESDAY**  
**April 19, 2005**  
**7:00 PM**

Florence K. Little Town Hall  
12 Colomba Road DeBary, Florida 32713

MINUTES

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Tom Smith called the meeting to order at 7:03 P.M.

**2. Roll Call**

Present: Chairman Tom Smith, Leonard Marks, Neil Coppens, Diane Schaefer, Tim McLaughlin and Gretchen Ganas.

Absent: Vice- Chairman Don Kitner and Donelda Christy.

Also Present: City Planner Anita Gonzalez, City Manager Maryann Courson.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

- a. Regular Meeting of March 17, 2005

Board Member Tim McLaughlin made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Board Member Leonard Marks seconded the motion. All members voted to approve the adoption of the minutes as submitted.

**4. Old Business**

- a. Discussion of the Economic Development Strategy and creation of a plan to attract businesses.

Chairman Tom Smith stated he wants to be sure all members have a copy of this study. He asked what was the cost of the study. City Manager Maryann Courson responded \$20,000. Chairman Smith commented there needs to be a focus to grow this community and this document will help. He called attention to target industries. The consultant said on page 5 of the Business Recruitment Target section which industries should be targeted. The most recent business relocations are coming here from other nearby communities. The three most recent came from Sanford. We need to identify what

businesses we want here and have a proactive strategy to bring these businesses here. We need to get a tax base and avoid the big box retailers. There is quite a bit of real estate along 17-92 that is available to be developed. City Planner Anita Gonzalez commented that the City website is being redone and there will be space to have properties listed or viewed that are available for development. However, the properties to be listed need to be identified.

Chairman Tom Smith recalled that Board member Neil Coppens had suggested an Ace Hardware store as a possible business to be recruited but he has had no luck identifying a contact person to pursue this. Board member Neil Coppens suggested the owner of the Ace Hardware in Sanford would be a good person to contact for information. An audience member off microphone stated that's Mr. Purcell. Board member Neil Coppens suggested a small independent pharmacy as there is one in Deltona that the prices are significantly less and DeBary residents are going there to shop. Chairman Tom Smith commented that he recently saw a statistic that over 50% of DeBary residents have to go to Seminole and Orange Counties to both work and shop.

Board member Leonard Marks suggested Comp USA or Staples. He continued: "a lot of people in this City are not interested in growth. They want to come home to a quiet area and in a long run that will be advantageous." Chairman Tom Smith stated he understood this. However, we all need to realize that if either one of the power companies' change their business plans and move the power plants we have no tax base and will have a skyrocketing tax millage rate. He continued we don't need Comp USA or Staples here. We don't need any big box industries. Ace Hardware would be a smaller business. He doesn't think he has ever seen one bigger than 10,000 square feet in size. There are a number of places along 17-92 that would accommodate a business that size.

Board member Neil Coppens noted there are some buildings along 17-92 that are empty and need to be used. Chairman Tom Smith identified a particular empty building that does not meet current codes and would have to be demolished.

Chairman Smith noted that a particular problem noted on page 5 of the Study was the impact of the expediency of permits on development. He stated it is much easier to get permits from Orange City than to go through the County by ten fold. The City Council needs to address this.

Board Member Diane Schaeffer commented, "Considering the information Richard Michaels presented at the last meeting we need to look at the highest and best land use and our future goals. What constantly seems to be a problem, as recently presented to the City Council by the School Board, is that we have too many kids in our schools. My concern is before we start bringing in small companies we need to look at the whole plan and see the large picture. We need to pinpoint these properties to know where we are heading with this. This is a 20 to 30 year look into the future. We need the "Plan" first." Chairman Tom Smith noted it is probably a better idea to look at it from a strategic plan.

Chairman Tom Smith said that the Council recently talked about the project of interest for the coming years as the extension of Saxon Boulevard. The County is pursuing this goal and Congressman John Mica is supportive of this project. Board member Diane Schaeffer stated she read in the newspaper this is years away. City Manager Maryann Courson agreed and said it's her best guess it is about 10 years away due to acquiring property and easements. However, she noted Congressman Mica was able to speed up the St. John's bridge project. And it was built 10 years ahead of schedule. Board member Diane Schaeffer asked where do we get the information regarding the property available for the Saxon extension. Chairman Tom Smith stated he had a lot of information on that and will share it with her.

Chairman Tom Smith responded a Department of Transportation bill is waiting to be signed by President Bush. It may cost \$2.9 million for the extension of Saxon Blvd. Congressman Mica worked on the Commuter Rail Station. Once the Saxon extension connects to Donald Smith Blvd it will be a route to the school. The bottleneck there eventually will require Highbanks to become a 4-lane road. That area in the west will be the new area for commercial development.

Chairman Tom Smith stated the Council just voted 4 to 1 to approve the inter-local agreement for the Convention Center. The goal is to have West Volusia as a destination area. Chairman Tom Smith opined the combination of the extension; the rail and the Convention Center will be a tremendous benefit to the City.

Chairman Tom Smith stated he wouldn't want to approach business owners saying their property is not the "best use" for the City but does think it is a good idea to identify raw land that is available for development. Board member Diane Schaeffer noted there is not a lot of raw land, but we do need to look to the future for development and growth.

City Planner Anita Gonzalez referred the Board Members to the City's website (DeBary.org) to download the Future Land Use Map and the Zoning Map. Chairman Tom Smith asked board members to review it before the next meeting. He further commented it is best to focus on the 17-92 corridor. Board member Dianne Schaeffer expressed concern that businesses locating here would not bring good paying jobs. Chairman Tom Smith stated our commercial land in DeBary is lower priced per acre than in Orange City. If we take our target businesses, once we know the properties available we can approach the businesses we want.

Board member Neil Coppens commented DeBary has no area to expand. The land is pretty much already in use with the exception of the power company land. If someone provides a service outside the City a local business should have the advantage. People would rather spend their money in DeBary. To bring jobs in you need larger companies. Chairman Tom Smith asked why does Blackstone's Grill open and close 3 times. Board member Leonard Marks notes there is nothing here, no businesses to shop in.

Board member Dianne Schaeffer brought the discussion back to the large plan of future development. Chairman Tom Smith accepted the task of compiling the details of the

Saxon extension and the light rail to bring to the Committee. He asked them to go to the website to review the Future Land Use Plan. City Manager Maryann Courson responded she had a database on developed and vacant land from a solid waste assessment study. Chairman Tom Smith asked if the list also contains properties one lot off of 17-92 and go from Saxon to the River along 17-92.

There was a discussion of the Saxon extension, the route of the road and the location of the light rail station. Chairman Tom Smith speculated that Orange City might annex the area that is in un-incorporated Volusia County if those property owners approach the City. Also, Orange City hasn't turned down an annexation request in 5 or 10 years. The area for the Saxon Extension is in DeBary to the South, Orange City to the North and there are parts that are in un-incorporated Volusia County.

Board member Leonard Marks asked if the Dirksen corridor would be commercial. City Manager Maryann Courson stated it is mostly a residential area. Board member Leonard Marks stated he noticed there are only 5 houses toward the Burger King to Gemini Springs and that area could be developed. Board member Neil Coppens opined "it won't become commercial in that area until Dirksen Road becomes a 4 lane road."

b. Review of Millennium Coaches

City Manager Maryann Courson reported she spoke to John Wannamaker last week, he is the developer, and the project is on hold. They are looking for another piece of property in their price range. The worse case scenario is that it will be developed as warehouses. What we need to do is take them to the other business for a tour to show them it will not be detrimental to them. The gentleman from the block plant suggested this at the Council meeting but it has not occurred. Mr. Figaro was willing to go, but has not been contacted by anyone from the block plant. We need to negotiate the visit between the two businesses. Chairman Tom Smith volunteered to negotiate the meeting of the business owners for the tour of the block plant.

c. Status of GC Contracting LLC opportunity fund application

City Manager Maryann Courson reported this item was approved by the City Council. All the Council member agreed a good facility on south 17-92 would act as a catalyst for development. GC contracting will close on the property on the 20<sup>th</sup> of this month. Chairman Tom Smith commented it would be nice if we could do something when they open. City Manager Maryann Courson suggested that there could be a photo opportunity for a grand opening as well as for a presentation of the opportunity fund check.

**5. New Business**

Chairman Tom Smith asked if there has been any feedback on the upcoming meeting Thursday night at 7 P.M. at the Civic Center. Board member Gretchen Ganas stated many people told her they were not going to attend. Board member Leonard Marks

suggested the people are still angry with the CRA. Board member Gretchen Ganas reported that some folks didn't receive the letter, and in fact her letter was sent to a 5 year old address. City Planner Anita Gonzalez stated the letters were mailed to the addresses listed on the occupational licenses. Chairman Tom Smith asked Board member Neil Coppens would you walk the streets. City Planner Anita Gonzalez stated she could get copies of the letter to be used as a flyer for the businesses along 17-92 and have it available tomorrow morning. City Manager Maryann Courson opined it was not a Sunshine Law violation to meet to pick up the letter to hand out to the businesses independently.

Chairman Tom Smith asked the Board members to work on items for an agenda in the event the meeting is very quiet. City Planner Anita Gonzalez suggests discussing the sign ordinance. Chairman Tom Smith suggested asking the Chamber of Commerce to promote the event with mass faxing or phone calls to their members.

#### **4. Other Business by Board, Staff or the Public**

Mac McShea, 71 Alano Road, commented he spoke to the DeLand Beacon about the fact they are no longer covering the DeBary meetings. He was told there is nothing happening there. He stated his belief there should be a main street business association to do block advertising in local newspapers. This will help development.

George Coleman, 286 DeLeon Road, said there is a communication problem distinguishing between economic and service businesses. He then offered to meet the group and hand out the letters encouraging business owners to attend the forum meeting at the Civic Center.

City Planner Anita Gonzalez reported she completed a photographic sign inventory of all the signs in the City. "Also, I want to update you on possible developments and redevelopments in the City. The Shell station located at Highbanks and 17-92 is coming to the end of their lease and there are two drug store companies interested in that site. Two different developers expressed interest in the 25 acres on the southeast corner of Saxon and 17-92. They are interested in mixed-use development for retail and townhouses. Also, there is a perspective buyer for the 30 acres on the west side of Dirksen across from Mr. Costa's project, south of Florida Public Utilities. Initially he wanted multi-family but we suggested industrial use for this property. We have also spoken to the 4<sup>th</sup> contract purchaser for the Murphy and Egan properties located south and west of Lake Konomac. It has a total of 260 acres. This developer is interested in building high-end homes. They are currently working in Seminole County. That should spur other development in that area once there is an extension of the sewer and water lines and the road is paved. Also, Blackstone Grill has a for sale sign now. And there is roof work being done on the building formerly housing the DeBary Furniture store. There are only 4 to 6 parcels of land that are more than 5 acres left to be developed in the City. All the other properties are very small. That will restrict how the properties can be developed.

**7. Adjournment**

Chairman Tom Smith announced the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 P.M.

**APPROVED May 19, 2005  
CITY OF DeBARY  
Economic Development Advisory Committee**

**Tom Smith, Chair**