

City of DeBary
Economic Development Advisory Committee Meeting
THURSDAY
July 21, 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 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Chairman Tom Smith, Leonard Marks, Neil Coppens, Gretchen Ganas, Tim McLaughlin, Diane Schaefer, and Vice-Chairman Don Kitner

Absent: Donelda Christy

Also Present: City Manager Maryann Courson and Council Member Patrick Fulton

3. Approval of Minutes - Regular Meeting of June 16, 2005

Mr. McLaughlin made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Coppens seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Discussion of Land Development Code, City Manager Maryann Courson

Mrs. Courson asked the Committee if there were particular sections of the Land Development Code that they would like to focus on. She noted that the various sections are in the process of being combined into one document by Municode; that City Planner Anita Gonzalez is working on draft revisions to the compilation; that the merged document is available on a CD; and that she could get a copy of the CD to the Committee in approximately one week.

Chairman Smith stated that he did not want the Committee to get into the technical minutiae of the document, but to try and make development friendlier in the City. Mrs. Courson said she would cut out the technical details for the Committee when she made the copies of the CD. Chairman Smith said he preferred to have his CD complete.

There was a discussion regarding the available property that is being purchased in the surrounding areas, and the available property within the City that has not sold. Ms. Schaefer said that she believed the reason was due to the lack of major stores or restaurants on 17-92 to draw people in to DeBary if they do not live here. Chairman Smith stated it is a lack of infrastructure such as the Saxon extension that will change in the future to make DeBary a destination.

Mr. Coppens asked what the possibility would be for getting more traffic lights installed on 17-92 because they provide more exposure to the businesses as drivers sit at the red lights. Mrs. Courson answered that 17-92 is a FDOT road, and they only install lights after performing studies that show the intersection warrants a light. She said that the City has asked DOT to look at several intersections over the past few years, but DOT has not determined that they warrant a traffic signal.

There was a discussion regarding the removal of the blinking yellow light that was at the intersection of Colomba and 17-92.

5. Sign Grant Program

Mrs. Courson said the City did not receive any applications for the sign grant program. She explained that Council removed the amortization schedule from the sign code in an effort to help the business community, but left no incentive for businesses to replace their existing signs. She said that this seemed to be the reason there were no applications received for the sign grant program.

Ms. Ganas stated that there is a problem with trees blocking the view of the signs. Mrs. Courson said that the trees were trimmed about three months ago, and would be trimmed again in a few months.

Doug Holly addressed the Committee regarding the sign amortization issue. He said that many people do not want to replace their sign because the new signs will be much smaller than the old ones. There was a discussion regarding costs for new signs and how the City and Committee might encourage sign replacement. Chairman Smith suggested that the matching grant offered by the City should be greater than fifty percent, maybe even as high as seventy-five percent. Mrs. Courson said she would check with the City Attorney to ascertain if the City Council would be able to justify that as a public purpose. Council Member Fulton suggested that the Committee bring business owners in on the discussion to get their input. Chairman Smith said he would get with City Planner Anita Gonzalez to try and poll as many business owners as possible to get their feelings on sign replacement prior to the next meeting.

6. Vacant Commercial Property Update

Chairman Smith said he sent out an excel spreadsheet to all the members in an email which was a compilation of data received from the Committee. The Committee discussed how the information would be displayed on the City's website and how the Committee might keep the information updated once it is completed. The Committee also discussed demographic information in relation to DeBary and where a person can obtain the information on the web.

Mr. Coppens said he was about 80 percent complete and could probably finish by the next meeting. Chairman Smith asked the members to come to the next meeting ready to discuss exactly what information they would like included in the file to be placed on the City website. He also asked the members to look at the list compiled by Ms. Ganas and try to trim the list of businesses that the City does not currently have.

7. Other Business

Ms. Ganas noted that she has been working with Mr. Marks on occupational licensing.

Ms. Schaefer said she would like to have another business forum in conjunction with a City event.

Due to the late hour, the Committee decided to speak about these two items of other business at the next meeting.

8. Citizen Comments

Mr. Holly suggested that the government owned property start first with putting in new signs, and then the business owners will follow by example.

9. Adjournment

Chairman Tom Smith announced the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

**APPROVED August 25, 2005
CITY OF DeBARY
Economic Development Advisory Committee**

Tom Smith, Chair