

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
BOCA RATON COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
MONDAY, JUNE 7, 2004  
3:30 P.M.

The regular meeting of the Boca Raton Community Redevelopment Agency was called to order by Chairman Susan Whelchel at approximately 3:30 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG:**

**ROLL CALL:**

Chairman Susan Whelchel  
Vice Chairman Susan Haynie  
Commissioner Steven L. Abrams  
Commissioner Dave Freudenberg  
Commissioner Bill Hager

Also attending the meeting were:

City Manager Leif J. Ahnell  
City Attorney Diana Grub Frieser  
Executive Director Jorge Camejo

**AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA:**

There were no amendments to the agenda.

**MINUTES:**

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 24, 2004

*Motion was made by Commissioner Abrams, seconded by Commissioner Hager, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously on a voice vote; Chairman Whelchel, Vice Chairman Haynie, Commissioners Abrams, Freudenberg and Hager voting yes.*

**REGULAR BUSINESS - PART I - QUASI-JUDICIAL & RELATED PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

There were no items for consideration.

**PUBLIC REQUESTS:**

No one wished to speak.

**REGULAR BUSINESS - PART II - RESOLUTIONS:**

There were no items for consideration.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

1. Proposal for Disposition of the South End of Mizner Park

Chairman Whelchel explained the procedure that would be followed.

The court reporter identified herself as Tambria Drey from Veritext Court Reporting Service and stated she was present at the behest of Tew Cardenes, LLP, the law firm representing the League for Educational Awareness of the Holocaust, Inc. (LEAH).

CRA Executive Director Jorge Camejo referred to his memo with attachments addressed to the CRA, dated June 2, 2004, and advised that the Jewish Museum of Boca Raton, Inc. had withdrawn its proposal related to the building formerly known as the International Museum of Cartoon Art. Mr. Camejo provided opening comments and then gave the floor to representatives of LEAH.

#### The League for Educational Awareness of the Holocaust, Inc. (LEAH)

A PowerPoint presentation was used throughout the LEAH presentation. Connie Packman, President of LEAH, and Deborah S. Golden-Gestner, the planner who worked on this proposal for LEAH, provided extensive information related to the project. In general, the proposal included a restaurant; allocation of space to The Museum of Humanities and the Arts (MHA); an auditorium; office space for LEAH, MHA, and Florida Atlantic University (FAU); and allocation of space for Boca Raton Educational Television (BRET). Additional details including, but not limited to, cultural commitments, funding, parking, compatibility, sustainability, and leasing requirements, were provided, as well as information on the proposed commercial tenant, Epicurean Life.

Joseph Rebak, the attorney representing LEAH, advised that his client had been treated unfairly and then provided comments in support of his statement. He also spoke to The Rouse Company's proposal and opined that it did not meet the criteria as set forth by the City.

Robert Alrod, who is on the Board of Directors for LEAH, spoke in support of the proposal and provided additional details.

Agency Members tendered questions to LEAH representatives related to who would own the building in the future; clarification regarding the owner and the tenants; parking; shopping carts; maintenance of common areas; and whether the \$3 million from the County's cultural bond referendum was figured into the total cost of \$4.1 million. Patty Baloyra, an attorney also representing LEAH, clarified that Epicurean Life was a part of Griffin Holdings.

#### The Rouse Company

Charles Siemon, with the law firm of Siemon and Larsen, and Paul Fickinger, Vice President of the Rouse Company, gave a PowerPoint presentation highlighting their proposal. In general, the proposal included a bookstore; a restaurant; complementary retail space; allocation of space for a cultural entity, possibly the Boca Raton Museum of Natural History, and Boca Raton Educational Television. Additional details including, but not limited to, cultural commitments, funding, compatibility, sustainability, and leasing requirements, were provided. It was noted that cultural space would encompass approximately 49,000 square feet; commercial space would encompass approximately 38,000 square feet.

Russell Etling, of the Russell Etling Company, spoke in support of the Rouse Company's proposal and distributed a spiral-bound booklet to Agency Members, entitled, "Implementation Planning Document for the Boca Raton Museum of Natural History."

Agency Members tendered questions to Rouse Company representatives related to the \$12 million budget; parking; the bookstore; and the design proposed for the side of the building facing Federal Highway and NE 3 Street. Vald Svekis, former owner of Liberties Bookstore, spoke to the bookstore; Architect Derek Vander Ploeg spoke to the design of the proposed addition to the building.

#### Members of the Public

Michael Kotler, the attorney representing Mort and Catherine Walker, urged the CRA to come to a decision quickly on this matter and allow the museum to move forward. Responding to members, he confirmed that two contracts currently exist – one with LEAH and one with the Rouse Company. No preference regarding the proposals or contracts was indicated.

Susanne Shapiro, Ray McAllister, Jacqueline Waldeck, and Robert Dimesky spoke in support of the Rouse Company's proposal. Mr. Dimesky was affiliated with the Boca Raton Museum of Natural History.

Gail Dinnerstein, Nancy Landry, and Charles Sturgell spoke in support of the LEAH proposal; Ms. Dinnerstein and Mr. Sturgell are affiliated with LEAH.

Mr. Fickinger provided closing comments as to why the Rouse Company's proposal was the best option for the south end of Mizner Park. Mr. Rebak also provided closing comments and outlined reasons why the Rouse Company's proposal was not acceptable. Ms. Packman added, for the record, that the Rouse Company had changed its proposal and presented the same package previously suggested by LEAH in March 2004.

The City Attorney outlined the position of the CRA in this matter and the procedure used by the City to produce the most viable redevelopment of the space in question. She proceeded to answer queries raised by members of the public and then stated that the CRA would deliberate on the information presented today and decide whether to move forward. No final action would be taken today, only direction to City staff may be given.

*Motion was made by Commissioner Hager, seconded by Commissioner Abrams, directing the CRA staff to commence discussions and negotiations with The Rouse Company toward the redevelopment of the Cartoon Museum site along the lines of its proposal and bring back to the CRA progress reports or documents necessary to effectuate the redevelopment for consideration by the CRA. Motion carried unanimously; Chairman Whelchel, Vice Chairman Haynie, Commissioners Abrams, Freudenberg and Hager voting yes.*

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

The Director had nothing to report at this time.

**ATTORNEY'S REPORT:**

The City Attorney had nothing to report at this time.

**COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS:**

The Commissioners had nothing to report at this time.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

*Motion was made by Commissioner Hager, seconded by Commissioner Abrams, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously on a voice vote; Chairman Whelchel, Vice Chairman Haynie, Commissioners Abrams, Freudenberg and Hager voting yes.*

The regular meeting of the Boca Raton Community Redevelopment Agency adjourned at approximately 6:05 p.m., Monday, June 7, 2004.

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Susan Whelchel, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Sharma Carannante, City Clerk