



MERRITT ISLAND REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE

August 17, 2006

MEMBERS PRESENT

Marcus Herman, Chair
Alice Bubeck
Fran Quattrocchi
Betsy Keenan

MEMBERS ABSENT

Ozella Bowles
Dick Van Epp
Susan Hall

AGENCY STAFF

Greg Lugar, MIRA Executive Director
Lisa Nicholas, MIRA Special Projects Coordinator

GUESTS

Trudi Onek
Linda Molica

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Herman called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m. Staff noted that a quorum was present and that the meeting would be conducted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Committee members reviewed the minutes of the July 20, 2006, meeting.

MOTION MADE BY MRS. BUBECK, SECONDED BY MRS. KEENAN, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 20, 2006, MIRA BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE MEETING AS AMENDED. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

I. Presentation by Loren Rapport, County Landscape Manager

Mr. Rapport was to address the Committee on the SR 3 Landscaping Project, as well as possible ways to enhance the landscaping on various portions of SR 520. Mr. Rapport was unable to attend; therefore, discussion of the items was postponed.

II. Presentation by Representatives of Junior League, 240 Parnell Street

Trudi Onek of the Junior League addressed the Committee in order to obtain input and guidance on the improvements that the Junior League wants to undertake for the property located at 240 Parnell Street in Merritt Park Place. The organization is seeking a CFIP grant to assist with the cost of these improvements.

Ms. Onek explained that the Junior League, a 501-C nonprofit corporation, would be constructing a foster-care home in central Brevard County, and the site on Parnell Street would serve as the League's administrative office.

A question arose as to how the property was zoned, and Ms. Onek responded that she was not sure but that it had been used previously as a residential property. Mr. Lugar suggested that Ms. Onek check on the zoning because, if it is not zoned commercial, the CFIP program could not be used.

Mr. Herman noted that the proposed fountain and mailbox would probably not qualify for funding under the program, but that most other improvements should be eligible if they are visible from the street.

Mrs. Bubeck suggested that the landscape plan should be reviewed by Susan Hall and noted that the League could save money by cutting the amount of plants in half. Ms. Onek indicated that Ms. Sally Scalera, Horticulture Agent, recommended that the two trees in front needed to be removed. Mr. Herman added that a permit would more than likely be required prior to removal of the trees.

Ms. Onek asked if an underground irrigation system was required or if a soaker-hose system would be acceptable, and Mr. Herman replied that he felt soaker hoses would be sufficient and that having access to water was the most important aspect. Mrs. Keenan stated that the new plants would need to be watered for several weeks or months until they became established.

Mrs. Quattrocchi indicated that the County has certain requirements with regard to landscaping and conveyed her personal experience with the County's landscaping specifications. The County required Mrs. Quattrocchi to install more plants than she wanted to have. Mrs. Quattrocchi also mentioned that the County had a policy in place that required individuals to put money up in advance, and, if after one year the plants still look healthy, the money is returned. Mrs. Quattrocchi did indicate that her situation involved a property that had to undergo a change-of-use. Mr. Lugar stated that he would research the issue because he had not heard of such a stipulation.

Mr. Herman noted that, aside from some tweaking that would need to be done, the project looked good.

Mrs. Quattrocchi inquired as to whether the landscape lighting was cosmetic or if helped to improve safety, and Ms. Onek responded that the lights would be placed along the walkway to increase visibility and, ultimately, enhance safety. Ms. Onek then asked if the Committee would approve funding for the use decorative safety bars to be placed over the windows. Mrs. Keenan responded that, although no applicant had ever asked about that before, safety bars would be helpful in improving security and should therefore be covered by the program. There was consensus among Committee members that installing safety bars would actually be a good idea.

Mr. Herman indicated that the next steps for the Junior League would be to obtain new quotes on the landscaping, gather information on permitting for the removal of the trees, check into the zoning of the property, and revise their application so that it can be submitted to and reviewed by the Committee.

Mrs. Quattrocchi inquired as to whether the Junior League would be able to start working, and Mr. Herman responded that it would not be permissible to allow them to begin working without officially having been awarded the grant and that it was

actually a legal issue. Mr. Lugar then noted that the CFIP did not have a standardized policy in writing and that this would be very important to draft in the near future.

III. Nomination for Beautification Award - Piece of Paradise, 224 Parnell Street (Carol Skagseth / Christine Black)

Ms. Nicholas reported that Carol Skagseth and Christine Black, owners of Piece of Paradise, have made significant improvements to their property located at 224 Parnell Street. With the assistance of a Commercial Façade Improvement Program grant, a stylish three-dimensional urethane sign was designed and constructed, landscaping was greatly enhanced, and pavers were installed for the parking area in the front of the property. These improvements resulted in an original and distinctive look, and, with two commercial properties for sale in the immediate vicinity, the modifications will perhaps entice similar businesses to relocate to Parnell Street. The property is therefore being nominated by the Beautification Committee for a Beautification Award.

MOTION MADE BY MRS. BUBECK, SECONDED BY MRS. QUATTROCCHI, TO GRANT A BEAUTIFICATION AWARD TO CAROL SKAGSETH AND CHRISTINE BLACK FOR THEIR WORK AT PIECE OF PARADISE, 224 PARNELL STREET. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOTION MADE BY MRS. QUATTROCCHI, SECONDED BY MRS. BUBECK, TO ALSO PRESENT THE OWNERS OF PIECE OF PARADISE WITH A COMMERCIAL FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT AWARD AT THE SAME TIME AS THE BEAUTIFICATION AWARD. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

IV. Report on Information To Be Provided to Businesses in Expansion District

Ms. Nicholas stated that, because of the recent MIRA expansion, it will be important to notify the businesses within this area of the Commercial Façade Improvement Program. At the most recent Beautification Committee meeting, members directed staff to design informational materials for the purpose of advertising the program to business owners in the entire redevelopment district.

As such, Ms. Nicholas generated samples of postcards and distributed them to Committee members for review and feedback. Members concurred that it was important to reduce the amount of text contained within the postcards and to include more succinct, bullet-type items. Ms. Nicholas indicated that she would redesign the postcard according to the Committee's input and provide an updated version to members for their review.

V. Commercial Façade Program Status Report

Ms. Nicholas provided a report on the status of the following projects:

Work in Progress:

- **Village Flooring, 127 Tangerine Avenue**
 - Work on the property is still in progress, but the attorney is doing some work with the title. Until the title issues are straightened out, the owners cannot apply for a building permit. The owners are hopeful that the attorney will have the title issue resolved sometime this week and

that a building permit can be obtained. After that, things will be ready to move.

➤ **United Solar, 41 Rose Street**

- Work on this property is nearly complete. The asphalt and signs are essentially finished. The awnings and fence are coming along, but the contractor had to put up the awnings three different times, and the fencing contractor does not appear to be in a huge hurry. The owner remains hopeful that improvements will be completed in 10 days to two weeks.

Grants not submitted:

➤ **Buyers Advantage, 250 North Tropical Trail**

- The owner is still interested in submitting at some point, but business has been very slow, and they are not quite ready right now.

➤ **Landmark Plaza, 400 East Merritt Avenue**

- The owner of this property is interested in submitting a CFIP grant application, but things within his business have been hectic. Also, he is having difficulty getting quotes for work and stated that various companies he has called for quotes have not been responsive. Ms. Nicholas told him to please call her if she could be of assistance with that aspect or anything else regarding the application process.

Other:

➤ **Dollar Tree Plaza, 755 North Courtenay Parkway**

- The owners' application was voted on and unanimously approved at the July Beautification Committee meeting. Unfortunately, the MIRA Board's July meeting was canceled, so the application would be presented for review and approval at the Board's August meeting.

VI. Other Business

Ms. Nicholas presented a rendition of an award plaque for Sandee Natowich to the Committee for review. Members concurred that the design of the plaque was acceptable, and Ms. Nicholas indicated that she would order the plaque and that it could be presented to Mrs. Natowich at the MIRA Board meeting in September.

Mr. Lugar indicated that removal of the Washingtonia palms in the median along the SR 520 Causeway into Cocoa was being discussed. Mr. Herman expressed that he did not know why that action was being considered and that he would like the issue to be explored further.

Mr. Lugar noted that the SR 3 Road Enhancement project bid had been pulled for the second time and that FDOT would be redesigning the project in an attempt to bring the project in under budget.

Mrs. Keenan advised that she recently attended a political forum in which they addressed MIRA. She asked the question if MIRA could be abolished. Mr. Lugar responded that the Agency was scheduled to sunset in 2013 and to abolish it sooner would not be beneficial to the residents of Merritt Island because all tax increment revenue funds would revert to the County and not to Merritt Island.

VII. Public Comments

None.

ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING

Mr. Herman adjourned the meeting of the Beautification Committee at 4:30 p.m. and noted that the next meeting of the MIRA Beautification Committee is scheduled for September 21, 2006, 3:00 p.m., at the Merritt Island Government Center, 2575 North Courtenay Parkway, Room 205, Merritt Island.