

MERRITT ISLAND REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
MINUTES OF JANUARY 22, 2004

Members Present: Duane Watson, Chairman  
Sandee Natowich, Vice Chairman  
Mike Selig  
Bob Barranco  
Ralph Perrone

Members Absent: Dr. Rodney Kring  
Bert Francis, II

Agency Staff: Doug Robertson, MIRA Consultant  
Tina Anderson, MIRA Executive Secretary

County Staff: Scott Knox, County Attorney

Guest: Barry Cabaniss, Bussen-Mayer Engineering Group, Inc.  
Robin Sobrino, Brevard County Planning & Zoning  
Angela Phillips, Tricon Real Estate  
A. J. Heirs, Boniface Hiers  
Carol K. Hayes  
Beth Kring  
Barbara Carta  
Steve Carberry

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 19, 2004, 3:00 P.M. MERRITT ISLAND GOVERNMENT CENTER, 2575 N. COURTENAY PARKWAY, ROOM 205, MERRITT ISLAND.**

Chairman Watson called the meeting to order at 2:20 P.M. All were present except those indicated above.

The minutes of the December 18, 2003 MIRA Board Meeting was reviewed and several corrections were made.

**MOTION MADE BY SANDEE NATOWICH, SECONDED BY BOB BARRANCO, APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 18, 2003 MIRA BOARD MEETING, AS CORRECTED. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Agenda Item No. 1 – Request for Rezoning from BU-1 (Commercial) to BU-2 (Heavy Commercial for B & H Auto Body.**

Mr. Watson introduced A. J. Hiers, owner of Boniface Hiers Auto Dealership, and Robin Sobrino from Brevard County Planning & Zoning. Ms. Sobrino indicated that the request for rezoning was announced to surrounding property owners with no one objecting. Ms.

Sobrino indicated the paint and body shop does not have to be next to the dealership to be allowed the BU-1 zoning. Mr. Hiers detailed the reason for requesting the rezoning from BU-1 to BU-2. Mr. Hiers opined that rezoning at the present time would prevent any problems down the road. Mr. Watson brought up the concern that the property might be sold and the use may be changed. Mr. Hiers stated to the MIRA Board that Boniface-Hiers owns the property and has no intention to change the use. Mrs. Natowich stated that the potential change of use was also her concern.

As background, Bernard R. Boniface and A.J. Hiers would like to change the zoning on their property located at 135 Palmetto Avenue and has submitted an application. The building is an automotive body repair shop named B & H Auto Body, which is now freestanding and is not conforming to zoning. There was confusion expressed in the difference between commercial and heavy commercial. A freestanding auto repair shop requires RU-2 zoning.

**MOTION MADE BY MIKE SELIG, SECONDED BY RALPH PERRONE, WITH RECOMMENDATIONS OF APPROVAL FOR B & H AUTO BODY TO OPERATE AS A BODY SHOP ONLY WITH THE SAME HOURS NOTED OF MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY 8:00 A.M. UNTIL 5:00 P.M. AND SATURDAY, 8:00 A.M. UNTIL 12:00 NOON. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Agenda Item No. 2: Approval of MIRA Commercial Façade Improvement Application for the Holiday Office Plaza, Inc.**

Vice-Chairman Natowich gave a brief overview of the Façade Improvement Application for Holiday Office Plaza located at 262 E. Merritt Island Causeway (on the north side of 520) by A. G. Edwards leading into the Clarion Hotel directly across from Big Lots Shopping Plaza. The Beautification Committee felt that the proposed improvement is significant in scope and is just what the Beautification Committee is looking for. The Beautification Committee recommended approval without hesitation.

Mr. Robertson introduced Angela Phillips of Tricon Real Estate and the applicant for Holiday Office Plaza. Ms. Phillips explained the drawings and plans that she brought with her to the meeting of the Holiday Office Plaza that was built in the early 1970's. The plans are to do a complete two-story façade upgrade.

As background, the scope of the project will include a total revamping of the building façade with improvements costs totaling \$229,300.00.

Mr. Selig brought up the question concerning ownership. Maurice Kodsi is the property owner. There appears to be two different trusts and one corporation with no deed for the current owner.

**MOTION MADE BY BOB BARRANCO, SECONDED BY SANDEE NATOWICH FOR APPROVAL PENDING THE RESOLUTION OF THE OWNERSHIP ISSUE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **Agenda Item No. 3 – Presentation of Regional Storm Water Facilities Study**

Mr. Robertson recommended postponing Agenda Item No. 3 until the next MIRA meeting so that the Storm Water Director would be able to attend.

**MOTION MADE BY MIKE SELIG TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM NO. 3, SECONDED BY SANDEE NATOWICH UNTIL THE NEXT SCHEDULED MIRA BOARD MEETING. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **Agenda Item 4: Presentation of Merritt Avenue Sanitary Sewer Final Design**

Mr. Watson introduced Barry Cabaniss of Bussen-Mayer Engineering Group. Mr. Cabaniss explained that the goal was to provide sanitary sewer along Merritt Avenue to service the south side of the road. Mr. Watson stated that the goal of MIRA Board is to provide sewer to all properties within the Redevelopment Area. The City of Cocoa announced the need to replace their water lines and have indicated that if MIRA is going to open the road in that area they would like to work with MIRA so that they could piggyback and replace the line. Mr. Selig suggested considering Merritt Avenue for 4 lanes at least down the road. Mr. Robertson discussed meeting with John Dennighoff of Brevard County to inquire as to their capital improvement programs and availability of resources.

**MOTION MADE BY SANDEE NATOWICH, SECONDED BY MIKE SELIG TO RECOMMEND THAT BUSSEN-MAYER SUBMIT TO STUDY THE POTENTIAL FOR WIDENING MERRITT AVENUE TO 3 OR 4 LANE, PLUS SIDEWALKS AND CURBS FOR MERRITT AVENUE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Mr. Robertson suggested discussing Agenda Item No. 6, before going back to Agenda Item No. 5.**

### **Agenda Item No. 6 – Discussion of MIRA Goals and Objectives for 2004**

Mr. Robertson presented a list of MIRA Goals and Objectives for the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency.

#### **1. Regional Storm water Projects**

Mr. Watson discussed properties on S.R. 520 and other areas appropriate for regional storm water facilities to help with off-site retention. Discussion included the Merritt Avenue sewer extension, which will be a major project for MIRA.

Mr. Perrone met with Mr. Pelosi, owner of strip center where Auto Electric is located, who expressed interest in the facade program. Mrs. Natowich indicated there would be a need for more dollars for the Façade Program to be successful.

## **2. Merritt Avenue Sewer Extension**

Mr. Robertson discussed the study with the County concerning the sewer extension south of State Road 520. Mr. Watson opined the need to provide sewer to all properties within MIRA. Mr. Robertson discussed having a meeting with Dick Martin, Brevard County Water Resources Department, to revisit the concerns regarding the sewer extension.

## **3. Merritt Park Place Parking Study**

The need for centralized parking spaces in Merritt Park Place was discussed. Mr. Perrone expressed the goal to open up back yards of the commercial businesses for extra parking spaces. The necessary requirements to convert the back yards for parking were discussed. There was a discussion concerning Dr. Wilkins and a real estate office having clients driving over the sidewalks. Mrs. Natowich expressed the need for centralized parking, as there is no parking permitted on County property. Mr. Perrone suggested an incentive program to put parking in the back yards. Mr. Robertson expressed the goal to open up the back yards for parking and using gravel for the surfaces. Mr. Perrone discussed the parking problem presently on Parnell. Mr. Robertson said he would check with Environmental Health concerning incentives to hook up property owners to sewers. Mr. Watson suggested doing a drawing and present it to the Brevard County Land Development Department to check for compliance with regulations.

## **4. Road 520 Bench Upgrades**

Mr. Robertson discussed his conversation with Commissioner Pritchard concerning the benches on State Road 520. Commissioner Pritchard commended MIRA for getting rid of non-permitted benches and suggested that the County break the contract that they have with the present vendor and plan to provide benches and shelters at bus stops that are more attractive.

## **5. Zoning Review and Changes Where Necessary**

Mr. Watson discussed the BU-1 zoning using as example that an automotive repair cannot be located in a BU-1 zoning area. Mr. Watson emphasized that the board would not want to have a body repair in Merritt Park Place next to a restaurant. Mr. Watson expressed his concern to the height restrictions in Merritt Park Place. Mr. Watson explained that under current regulations a commercial building could be built up to 200 feet in height, using the example, that Whitley Bay is 127 feet high. Mr. Watson explained within the Merritt Island Redevelopment area the heights of the structure might not make sense. Mr. Watson inquired as to the Security Cremation located on S.R. 520, as to the type of business that was provided at the location. Mr. Robertson suggested reviewing the codes at the next meeting.

## **6. Redevelopment Area Boundary Extension**

Mr. Robertson discussed with Commissioner Pritchard whether to expand the MIRA boundary to the north and whether the tax increment should be captured by the MIRA. Commissioner Pritchard feels that the increment should not be captured by MIRA. Commissioner Pritchard would like to use existing MIRA funds for landscaping and façade improvements on S.R. 3. Mr. Watson suggested that his item not be MIRA's top priority considering how many other projects are in progress.

## **7. MIRA Signage**

Mr. Robertson is meeting with Jack West, Florida Department of Transportation, on site to discuss location of the signs. Mr. Robertson informed the Board that they have an approved budget and concept approval for the project.

## **8. Strip Center Concept Plans**

Mr. Watson suggested a token dollar amount be discussed to have engineers work on potential concept plans for older strip center sites. This will help to determine what can and cannot be done with the site. Storm water retention projects could also help make these plans more feasible. Mr. Watson opined that when a picture is seen it would be easier to visualize the projects. It was suggested to make a list of targeted buildings.

## **Agenda Item No. 5 – Discussion of Modification to the MIRA Commercial Façade Improvement Application**

Mrs. Natowich thanked Mr. Perrone for his input in the Commercial Façade Improvement application form. Mrs. Natowich stated that there would still be a design consultant for any applicant.

Mrs. Natowich detailed the following revisions to the MIRA Commercial Façade Improvement Application:

- Page one (1), Item #3 of the application; changing the number of photographs to five 3 x 5" or larger color photographs for all views to be considered.
- Page two (2), bottom paragraph, the change would be: **"IF THE APPLICATION IS NOT APPROVED BY THE MIRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS, THE APPLICANT UNDERSTANDS THE GRANT OR PORTIONS OF THE GRANT MAY NOT BE AWARDED."**
- Page three 3, item #3. "Any improvements made prior to Redevelopment Board approval may not be eligible for funding."
- Page 4, Eligible Expenses, item #1 "All improvements must be visible from the road. Item #2 "Demolition required to facilitate approved façade improvements. Item # 3 "Architectural and security lighting as part of other project improvements. Item #5 "Landscape Improvements (irrigation must be available).

Item #7 “New exterior doors, windows and awnings. Item #9 “Painting, new stucco and stucco bands. Item #12 “Roof, must be pitched roof and visible from front road, (No flat roofs) new roof must be Metal or Dimensional architectural type shingle, or tile and Must be a part of more extensive project improvements. Item #13 “Improvements that enhance access, Handicap ramps, sidewalk, railings, etc. as part of other project improvements” Item #14 “Fences must be decorative or for safety”

- Changes on Ineligible Expenses, Item #4 “Fill Dirt” Item #6 “delete”

**MOTION MADE BY SANDEE NATOWICH, SECONDED BY RALPH PERRONE, TO APPROVE THE CORRECTIONS TO THE MIRA COMMERCIAL FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT APPLICATION. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **Agenda Item No. 7 – Beautification Committee Report**

Mrs. Natowich announced that there would be two Beautification Nomination Awards for the month of February. The first award would be given to the Community Bank of the South. Mr. Barranco announced that he would like to nominate El Tucan for the second award. Mr. Barranco indicated he would give Tina the necessary paperwork for the El Tucan nomination. Mrs. Natowich stressed that she would like to ratify the new application to have a broader area of acceptance and get the applications out to the most recent applicants who are just now working through the process to give them other areas of success.

Mr. Robertson informed the board that the trimming of the Washingtonian palm trees at Waterway Park was targeted for Sunday, February 1, 2004.

Mrs. Natowich stressed the need to retrieve the two beautification award signs so they would be available for presentation to the two awardees in February.

**MOTION MADE BY BOB BARRANCO, SECONDED BY SANDEE NATOWICH, TO APPROVE EL TUCAN AND COMMUNITY BANK OF THE SOUTH FOR FEBRUARY BEAUTIFICATION AWARDS. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **Agenda Item No. 8 – Staff Report**

Mr. Robertson discussed the BU-1 Zoning overlay in Merritt Park Place. This reduced building setbacks from 25’ to 15’ in order to move buildings closer to the road, which would open up the rear for parking. Mr. Robertson opined the need to add BU-1A to the same overlay.

**Agenda Item No. 9 – Other Business**

Mr. Robertson suggested changing the date of the regular meeting to Thursday, March 4, 2004 when Chairman Watson would be available to attend.

**MOTION MADE BY SANDEE NATOWICH, SECONDED BY RALPH PERRONE TO ADJOURN. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Meeting adjourned at 4:30.