

MERRITT ISLAND REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
MINUTES OF March 25, 2004

Members Present: Duane Watson, Chairman
Sandee Natowich, Vice Chairman
Bert Francis, II
Mike Selig
Bob Barranco
Ralph Perrone
Dr. Rodney Kring

Members Absent: Ralph Perrone
Mike Selig

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

County Staff: Scott Knox, County Attorney

Guest: John Denninghoff, Transportation Engineering & Land Acquisition
David Headley, Transportation Engineering & Land Acquisition
Ron Jones, Director Brevard County Regional Stormwater Utility
Robin Sobrino, Brevard County Planning & Zoning
Renee Pfeilsticker

NEXT REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 29, 2004, 2:00 P.M. MERRITT ISLAND GOVERNMENT CENTER, 2575 N. COURTENAY PARKWAY, ROOM 205, MERRITT ISLAND.

Chairman Watson called the meeting to order at 2:00 P.M. All were present except those indicated above.

The minutes of the March 04, 2004 MIRA Board Meeting was reviewed and corrections were made.

MOTION MADE BY SANDEE NATOWICH, SECONDED BY BOB BARRANCO, APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 4, 2004 MIRA BOARD MEETING, AS CORRECTED. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Ralph Perrone and Mike Selig joined the MIRA Board Meeting at 2:10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 – DISCUSSION REGARDING BREVARD COUNTY LAND ACQUISITION POLICY

As background, Mr. Robertson commented that MIRA had identified potential storm water utility location sites with Ron Jones, Director of Brevard County Regional Stormwater Utility. At the last MIRA Board meeting Bussen-Mayer Engineering Group, Inc. gave a summary of their study and identified two sites that would work from a stormwater standpoint and a potential redevelopment standpoint. Mr. Robertson opined that at this point MIRA is ready to approach

property owners to access their interest and potentially start an acquisition process. Mr. Robertson informed the MIRA Board of the new County Acquisition Policy that was adopted last year and that MIRA would need to follow. Mr. Robertson indicated that in addition to the stormwater site MIRA is ready to get serious about a potential public parking site in Merritt Park Place. Mr. Robertson introduced David Headley who heads up the Brevard County Land Acquisition Program. Mr. Headley discussed the changes in the County Land Acquisition Policy from the original policy. Mr. Headley advised that the user agency and the land acquisition staff along with the county attorney's office have more of a role to play together than they did in the past. Mr. Headley discussed how the County receives from Ron Jones, Regional Stormwater Utility and the user agency a list of items that they would have to provide to the Land Acquisition Department, one being the Board approvals to go out and negotiate with property owners. Once the County is able to start the negotiations and work with the property owners, the process would go back and forth between the agency, land acquisition and the county attorney, when everyone comes up with an agreement, the closing would take place and all the departments would sign off.

Mr. Robertson inquired as to the possibility of MIRA knocking on doors to access property owner's interest. Mr. Headley indicated that according to the land acquisition policy, the user agency identifies the site, and then the land acquisition staff with proper authorization from the County Board, would approach the landowners. Mr. Headley commented that the agency can do title work; establish ownership, any type of environmental data, and appraisal work prior to negotiation. Mr. Headley indicated that once an acquisition is established it then has to be approved by the Board to have the land acquisition staff approach the landowner. Mr. Headley commented that typically the appraisal is done up front prior to entering a contract. Mr. Watson inquired as to who would be responsible for the cost of the appraisal? Mr. Denninghoff advised that the cost of the appraisal would be the agency's responsibility. Mr. Denninghoff advised MIRA that the County has appraisers that are used on a rotation basis. Mr. Selig inquired as to whether it was necessary to have five or six appraisals to see what the properties are worth if MIRA is only interested in one or two properties? Mr. Headley indicated that the Land Acquisition staff would do the preliminary work, talk to the property owner on the County's behalf and let the property owner know there is an interest in their property. Mr. Denninghoff suggested that if MIRA were to identify a range of properties, even if MIRA only goes out and pursues one or two pieces of property; MIRA would have the authorization to proceed with acquisition. Mr. Jones commented that Regional Stormwater Utilities has been working jointly with the Land Acquisition department and this has been an advantage for their department. Mr. Jones recommended that MIRA work with land acquisition, as a team, and MIRA would participate in the land acquisition process. Mr. Robertson advised that he would attend the meetings with the landowners but that the county land acquisition staff would take the lead in approaching the owners. Mr. Watson suggested that all the sites that MIRA is interested in acquiring be brought before the next MIRA Board meeting.

Mr. Watson inquired if Mr. Jones had authorized Bussen-Mayer Engineering Group, Inc. to re-draw the retention area making it a rectangle instead of a box, to get more square footage of retail on SR 520. Mr. Watson opined that he would like to see a plan first and then try and sell the plan and give Regional Stormwater Utility permission to start the work. Mr. Jones said he would discuss with Bussen-Mayer Engineering Group, Inc. and have them do a couple of different sketches and bring them to the next MIRA meeting. Mr. Watson suggested that Mr. Jones also look on the east end of Merritt Island south of SR 520. Mr. Watson stated that it was his suggestion that that particular area is going to change in the next few years and Mr. Jones should look at retention areas there. Mr. Headley advised the use of caution in the negotiation process under threat of imminent domain, where the requirement is to disclose the whole series of steps

involved. Mr. Headley commented on the need to decide to go to imminent domain if the property owners will not sell.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 - DISCUSSION REGARDING REDEVELOPMENT AREA ZONING OVERVIEW

As background, Mr. Robertson commented that one of the tasks the MIRA Board elected to take on was to become familiar with and look at an overview of permitted uses with conditions. Mr. Robertson commented that these are the ones least favorable for the MIRA area. Mr. Watson opined that there are three parts of the zoning ordinance that he was concerned with; the first being that auto repairs are a permitted use as long as it is connected to a new or used car dealership. Mr. Watson would prefer not to have this use in the BU-1 zoning in the MIRA area, especially in Merritt Park Place. Mr. Watson commented that the second issue in the zoning policy was the possibility of a crematorium in the MIRA area, which he would not want to see.

Mr. Barranco commented on the zoning policy Section 62-1837.5 where mini warehouses were not permitted in MIRA with frontages on SR 520 and referenced the storage building on SR 520. Mr. Watson advised that a road was placed at the backside of the warehouses with a retention pond; therefore, the warehouse owners were able to skirt the policy of bay doors not facing SR 520. Mr. Watson indicated to Ms. Sobrino that he would like to be able to find a way to eliminate the warehouses in the MIRA area.

Mr. Watson commented that the third zoning issue was the building height designated in the zoning policy. Mr. Watson advised that the building height could be 200 feet within certain sections of MIRA depending on the set backs from residential zoning without a conditional use permit or going before the County Board of Commissioners. Mr. Watson stated it was his suggestion to have the MIRA Board decide a certain height that is compatible with surrounding properties in the MIRA area. Mr. Watson commented that the building heights zoning in MIRA needs to be revisited at the next MIRA Board Meeting.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3: – APPROVAL OF FY 2004-2005 MIRA BUDGET

As background Mr. Robertson commented that the fiscal year budget is through midyear of FY 2003-2004. Mr. Robertson advised that at this time the Brevard County Commission requires that all departments review their adopted budget to take into consideration any unplanned events that might have happened and modify the budget accordingly. The agency then has to do an amended budget and project where the agency might be going in 2004-2005. Mr. Robertson commented that he would have to make a presentation in approximately two weeks before the County Commission and would need the MIRA Board to review and approve the amended and next year's projected budget. Mr. Robertson reviewed MIRA's revenue and the operating expenditures. Mr. Robertson advised that the operating expenses included an increase for the executive secretary and mandatory increases in benefits. Mr. Robertson commented that the operating expenses have included the rent that is being charged by facilities management along with the cost to Parks & Recreation to assist in the maintaining of Waterway Park. Mr. Robertson advised that MIRA was not billed for July, 2003 Parks & Recreation charges and therefore the budget would need to be amended to make current the annual fee.

Mr. Watson inquired if the budget is checked on a regularly basis? Mrs. Anderson advised that the budget is checked on a regular basis to see if funds are available to make payments. Mr. Watson commented that he would like to have a monthly expenditure report given at each MIRA Board meeting. Mr. Robertson advised that MIRA is on schedule to spend the grant money

available for the Commercial Facade Improvement Program. Mr. Watson inquired if there is enough money allocated for the Commercial Facade Improvement Program for the next fiscal year. Mrs. Natowich commented that the Beautification Committee had a discussion to increase the grant money for larger projects. Mrs. Natowich advised that MIRA is starting to see property owners with larger projects, especially on the SR 520 corridor. Mrs. Natowich commented that it would be in the best interest of MIRA to step up the amount for the larger projects. Mr. Watson stated it was his suggestion to increase the grant to \$100,000.00. Mrs. Natowich opined that increasing the grant is a good investment down the road. If they don't abide with the agreement they would have to pay attorneys fees. They do not have to pay back the grant money. Mr. Watson suggested that at the County Budget Workshop presentation MIRA should show where the grant money has been used and the projects that are in the progress. Mrs. Natowich suggested that Mr. Robertson come up with a grant amount for the two different type projects. Mr. Perrone opined that grant money be used for property owners who decide to use their back properties for parking lots.

Mr. Robertson indicated that the other capital improvement projects are listed on a separate page showing a combination for this year and next year. Mr. Robertson advised that there are not final figures for the Capital Improvement Projects and have made estimates for the amount that will be needed to complete the projects in the next two years. Mr. Robertson advised that MIRA is looking to acquire property for parking in Merritt Park Place and to have property owners open up back lots for parking. Mr. Robertson discussed talking to Jim Statlick, Brevard County Permitting and Enforcement with regards to opening up the back lots and Mr. Statlick has agreed to be flexible to a point. Mr. Watson opined that MIRA already has a stormwater problem and if the property owners make the back lots impervious, then MIRA would have more stormwater going into the street. Mrs. Natowich commented that pervious parking would be the only acceptable method to receive the MIRA grant. Mr. Perrone commented on Quattrocchi Real Estate's new pervious back parking and how nice it looks with the brick.

Mr. Robertson discussed the engineer study for the Merritt Avenue corridor and N. Tropical Trail corridor. Mr. Robertson discussed with the MIRA Board the letter he wrote to Bussen-Mayer Engineering Group, Inc. indicating MIRA request to be provided with a completion date for these assessments.

Mr. Watson suggested that Mrs. Natowich's group select the entry sign site before the next MIRA Board Meeting. Mr. Watson suggested that Mr. Perrone get involved in donations to be given to the new entry signs. Mr. Watson commented that he would donate \$1,000.00 towards to the purchase of the new signs. Mr. Watson stated it was his suggestion that four or five sites be chosen for the parking lot in Merritt Park Place. Mr. Perrone stated that he preferred the back lot parking which would be more convenient for the staff that works in Merritt Park Place. Mrs. Natowich opined that if there are back lot parking this encourages employees to park in the back and patrons to park in the front along with the elimination of septic tanks. Mr. Robertson stated that this would be the same problem that the four properties including Wacky Hut are presently having. Mr. Robertson advised that the properties would have to sign an irrevocable agreement to share the parking before permits would be issued. Mr. Selig opined that two parking spaces would be lost on the street to get the entrance in and out and would need to be permitted to county standards. Mr. Watson stated it was his suggestion if there are parties that need additional parking, MIRA would lease the lots, and then do the improvements. Mr. Watson opined that the storeowners would lease the parking back that they would need for their business. Mr. Robertson advised that he had located twelve sites that would be available for parking in Merritt Park Place. Mr. Perrone opined that a grant program would be able to begin faster than trying to acquire the land and building a parking lot.

Mr. Watson advised that on the Merritt Avenue Corridor and N. Tropical Trail Corridor improvements, MIRA would be looking at FDOT to participate in some fashion. Mr. Robertson commented that he discussed with Mr. Dinninghoff who has agreed to meet with Mr. Robertson and Joe Mayer, Bussen-Mayer Engineering Group, Inc. to see what the opportunities were to make that a parallel corridor.

Mr. Watson inquired as to the timeframe for the Capital Improvement Projects? Mr. Robertson advised that the sewer extension would take approximately one year. The MIRA entry signs would take approximately six months. The Regional Stormwater Project would take potentially two to three years to complete. The Merritt Park Place parking could be completed within one year. The N. Tropical Trail Corridor Improvements within one year. The Merritt Avenue Corridor Improvements within two to three years. Mr. Robertson opined that the Commercial Façade Improvement projects would be going on for the next five years. Mr. Watson opined that MIRA should work to accomplish these projects within the next two to three years. Mrs. Natowich opined that she would like to see more beautification, façade improvement, especially with different levels. Mrs. Natowich indicated that she would like to see shopping center improvements and to expand the MIRA boundary. Mr. Watson stated it was his suggestion to see the projects committed and completed, especially the northeast corner of Courtenay and SR 520 where there is still a lot of blight. Mr. Robertson would like to get Joe Mayer to lay out a parking plan for those six units at Parnell and Grove when he gets the approval from the Board of County Commissioners.

MOTION MADE BY MIKE SELIG, SECONDED BY BERT FRANCIS II, TO APPROVE THE FY 2004-2005 BUDGET BY THE MIRA BOARD AS SET WITH THE EXCEPTION OF INCREASING THE COMMERCIAL FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT FROM \$50,000 TO \$100,000. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

AGENDA ITEM 4: BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Mrs. Natowich commented on the MIRA shirts and urged all Board Members to purchase the MIRA shirts to wear for special presentation. Mrs. Natowich informed the Board that the shirts would be a personal expense.

Mrs. Natowich advised that the next MIRA Beautification Awards for April would be held on March 29, 2004. Mrs. Natowich commented that the first award would be given to Dr. Don Wilkins' office at 12:00 noon and the second award to the Fusion Bistro at 12:30 pm. Mrs. Natowich commented on the Beautification Award that was on the commissioner's page of the Florida Today.

Mrs. Natowich inquired as to the status on trash pick up in Merritt Park Place? Mr. Perrone recommended that MIRA contact Jim Tuggle with Waste Management and discuss changing the day or time of trash pick up.

Mrs. Natowich informed the MIRA Board that the banner for the Beautification Award has been ordered along with two more signs for the Beautification Awards. Mrs. Natowich urged the MIRA Board to nominate individual properties in the MIRA area that should be awarded a Beautification Award. Mrs. Natowich advised the Board to either email or mail the information to Mrs. Anderson and she will take the pictures to go with the application.

Mrs. Natowich advised that Keep Brevard Beautiful is having their annual walking tour through Brevard County, which is including a condominium backyard for the first time. Mrs. Natowich commented that her condominium backyard is being featured and has been certified as a Backyard Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation. Mrs. Natowich advised that the MIRA Beautification Committee is looking for volunteers to help at the MILA Elementary Workday on April 3, 2004 from 9am through 12noon.

AGENDA ITEM 5: STAFF REPORT

Mr. Robertson informed the MIRA board that the Waterway Tree Trimming has been scheduled for April 18, 2004. Mr. Watson inquired as to the west end of SR 520 to see if we can have the contractor give a price to trim the trees. Mr. Robertson commented that MIRA would discuss the problem with the County Roadways and Landscaping and ask Lindemann's Tree Service to give a quote.

Mr. Watson opined that the trailers that are not tagged and tires that need to be removed should be written a letter by MIRA requesting action.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 – OTHER BUSINESS

None

MOTION MADE BY SANDEE NATOWICH, SECONDED BERT FRANCIS II TO ADJOURN. NEXT SCHEDULED MIRA BOARD MEETING TO BE HELD ON THURSDAY, APRIL 29, 2004. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MEETING ADJORNED AT 4:25