



City Commission Work Session Minutes

October 14, 2019 at 2:30 p.m.

City Hall, Commissioner Chambers
401 S. Park Avenue | Winter Park, Florida

Present

Mayor Steve Leary (arrived late)
Commissioner Greg Seidel
Commissioner Sarah Sprinkel
Commissioner Carolyn Cooper
Commissioner Todd Weaver

City Manager Randy Knight
City Attorney Kurt Ardaman
Sr. Staff Assistant Kim Breland

Meeting called to order

Vice-Mayor Greg Seidel called the work session of the Winter Park City Commission to order at 2:31 p.m.

Discussion on Post Office Property

Commissioner Cooper provided the background on the city's interest and actions toward the purchase of the post office property for the expansion of Central Park. She hopes that this Commission will take the next steps in this process to purchase the property using CRA funds and without increased taxes or bond issue. She spoke on the community support and prior Commission's efforts to purchase this property. She explained the attempts by the city and state representatives beginning in 2011 to gain right of first refusal to purchase the property. In 2013, discussions began on the feasibility of splitting the retail and distribution functions. At that time, the purchase price, terms and lack of available funding facilities caused the city to discontinue negotiations.

Commissioner Cooper presented the strategic objectives to align with the Comprehensive Plan, CRA Plan, Central Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, and Vision Winter Park. She showed potential sites in the downtown area for relocation of the retail function and reviewed city-led and developer-led options and risks of doing nothing. She explained that tax increment funding cannot not be used for projects outside the CRA or for City Hall. She said it now is the time to pursue the purchase of the property, expand Central Park and stimulate redevelopment of the New York Avenue corridor.

Commissioner Seidel asked for clarification on the costs. Commissioner Cooper provided the estimated cost for land acquisition and construction of new retail and distribution facilities. Mr. Knight explained the terms of the previous deal were that the city would build the new retail and distribution facilities in exchange for the post office property; however, the Post Office would only agree if the value it received in the new facilities was equal to the value of its current property.

Commissioner Sprinkel stressed the importance of maintaining the retail function in the downtown area, looking at the overall cost, and negotiating a deal that would be supported by the residents. She questioned whether this would require the approval of the voters. Commissioner Cooper said voter approval is not required but public input is needed.

Commissioner Seidel pointed out that CRA Advisory Board and CRA Agency approval will be required to allocate funding.

Commissioner Weaver expressed his support of pursuing the purchase and using CRA funds.

Members of the Commission expressed their appreciation for Commissioner Cooper's work on this issue. Mayor Leary spoke in favor of pursuing the purchase with the use of CRA funds. He suggested a holistic review of redevelopment and value as it relates to the north side of the park, City Hall and the old library.

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Commissioner Cooper urged the importance of moving forward and developing a timeline, especially with the CRA ending in eight years. She stated that the proposed resolution will show the city's commitment toward the purchase of the property. Discussion followed on the use of CRA funds and redevelopment projects.

Commissioner Weaver suggested this presentation be made to the CRA Advisory Board.

The work session adjourned at 3:26 p.m.

Rene S. Cranis

City Clerk Rene S. Cranis, CMC