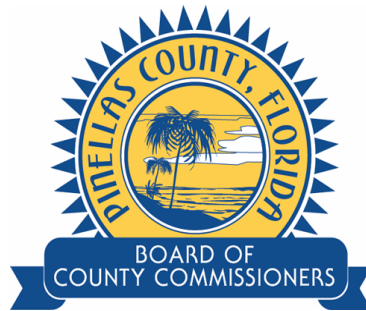


Pinellas County

*315 Court Street, 5th Floor Assembly Room
Clearwater, Florida 33756*



Minutes - Final

Thursday, February 2, 2017

9:30 AM

BCC Assembly Room

Board of County Commissioners - Work Session

*Janet C. Long, Chairman
Kenneth T. Welch, Vice-Chairman
Dave Eggers
Pat Gerard
Charlie Justice
John Morroni
Karen Williams Seel*

ROLL CALL - 9:33 A.M.

Members Present: Chairman Janet C. Long, Vice-Chairman Kenneth T. Welch, Dave Eggers, Pat Gerard, Charlie Justice, and Karen Williams Seel

Not Present: John Morroni

Others Present: James L. Bennett, County Attorney; Mark S. Woodard, County Administrator; and Christopher Bartlett and Tony Fabrizio, Board Reporters, Deputy Clerks. (Minutes by Helen Groves and Tony Fabrizio.)

1. Partner Presentation:
Jeffrey Vinik

Chairman Long introduced Tampa Bay Lightning owner and investor/developer Jeffrey Vinik, who discussed his major development plans for downtown Tampa and shared his views about innovation, transportation, and master planning for the region. He expressed his appreciation for the quality of life and people of the Tampa Bay region and related the following:

- The Tampa Bay region is still “under-potentialed,” but most of central Florida is experiencing a two percent population growth, and there is no reason why it cannot be the fastest growing area in the country over the next 10 to 20 years.
- There is great opportunity within the region to improve the quality and “quantity” of people’s lives with more high-paying jobs and enhancements in cultural institutions, amenities, and experiences. If the economic potential is realized, the “rising tide lifts all boats” concept can be achieved for the region.
- Citing the trend of cities experiencing a migration back to the core and noting that he has purchased 53 acres in downtown Tampa in the last seven years, he foresees his project as a vibrant urban district in which people live, work, play, and have access to numerous restaurants, water features, public art, and museums.
- Through his partnership with Microsoft’s Bill Gates, their combined company, Strategic Property Partners, will spend \$3 billion over nine years to develop nine million square feet of space, doubling the square footage of space in downtown Tampa, and will do so with an emphasis on walkability and wellness.
- Entrepreneurship and innovation are two of his passions, and he envisions using his contacts to establish a venture capital fund that invests in attracting young people with great ideas who will start innovative companies. Public funding could be involved as well. The region should strive to create an “ecosystem” through which innovative companies can thrive, using business incubators and other strategies.

- He is co-chairing the Tampa Bay Partnership's Transportation Working Group, which is awaiting the results of a Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) study and will focus on four policy areas: (1) rideshare legislation, (2) Tampa Bay Express (TBX), (3) consolidation of the regional (Pasco, Pinellas, and Hillsborough) Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), and (4) consolidation of the region's major transit agencies. Consolidation of the MPOs and the transit authorities might not be absolutely necessary, but developing one metropolis and speaking as one voice would facilitate transportation and other improvements.

Meredith Wheeler, Tampa, an associate who is working on the transportation portion of the Vinik plan, described the route she took to get from her home in Tampa to the Pinellas County Courthouse using public transportation and Lyft, relating that it took her 1 1/2 hours.

The members thanked Mr. Vinik for his presentation and praised him for his enthusiastic leadership and willingness to reach across the bay; whereupon, Mr. Vinik responded to the Commissioners' comments and queries as follows:

- Commissioner Welch indicated that one of the issues that became apparent when the merging of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) and the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART) was being considered is that both agencies are underfunded and combining them would only create one large underfunded agency, and asked how Mr. Vinik is planning to fund the new agency.

Acknowledging the underfunding and pointing out that he only represents the business community, Mr. Vinik indicated that more sensible bus routes connecting inter-county cities could be created, noting that PSTA's partnership with Uber to get bus riders the first mile/last mile of their trip for one dollar is the kind of solution that can make public transportation more viable; whereupon, he pointed out that the definition of *bus* may change.

- Relating that Pinellas County is helping to fund the Cross-Bay Ferry, Commissioner Welch asked whether it has resulted in more Pinellas County residents attending Lightning games.

Mr. Vinik indicated that the ferry is doing well on weekends, but commuting during the week is challenging due to the difficulty of getting to the end destination. He said that in its current configuration, it is more of an experience and novelty than functional public transit, although it could eventually thrive when the density increases on both sides of the bay.

- In response to queries by Commissioner Welch, Mr. Vinik related that Hillsborough County and the City of Tampa have been highly supportive of his development, working to streamline approvals and permitting, and providing \$100 million in Community Redevelopment Area funding for infrastructure improvements.

- Commissioner Seel thanked Mr. Vinik for his involvement with the Tampa Bay Partnership and stated that she and Hillsborough County Commissioner Sandy Murman have worked together for several years to regionalize the MPOs through the Transportation Management Area (TMA) Leadership Group. She related that in order to address both land use and transportation, Pinellas County has merged its MPO and Planning Council to form a new entity called Forward Pinellas, and she would like the concept to be included in whatever plan evolves.

Agreeing that public transit can incentivize development, Mr. Vinik related that he has had several conversations recently about land use planning, and referenced the FDOT study now underway.

- In response to query by Commissioner Justice, Mr. Vinik indicated that his group hopes to release a name for the downtown project this spring, pointing out that branding is important for the region, as well, and should go beyond reflecting tourism and the beaches by also emphasizing business opportunities.
- Commenting that the Pinellas and Hillsborough Boards of County Commissioners do not talk to each other as a group, Commissioner Eggers discussed the importance of inclusiveness and getting the citizens to become involved and excited about new ideas being explored. Referring to Mr. Vinik's comment about raising the bar for everyone in terms of economic activity and quality of jobs, he queried how areas such as Palm Harbor can become part of the discussion. Referencing economic development, he related that the Commission is considering using part of its Penny for Pinellas money to assemble a land bank, as Pinellas County is built out and does not have enough land to enable businesses to grow or to attract new ones.

Mr. Vinik suggested that Pinellas County can overcome its dearth of land available for new development by increasing density and building vertical, but it should only do so if it has a transportation plan to accommodate the accompanying increase in traffic. He related that citizens must be encouraged to support transportation proposals, as it will benefit them even if they do not have a light rail stop nearby.

- Commissioner Gerard invited Mr. Vinik to come to Pinellas County for his next project. She suggested that Visit St. Petersburg/Clearwater and Visit Tampa Bay work together to market the area, and Mr. Vinik commented that he tries to promote the idea that this is a region, not just three separate counties; whereupon, Commissioner Gerard expressed her support for moving ahead with transportation and economic development, recognizing that many people in the region do not support such progress.
- Chairman Long noted that Mr. Vinik and the members are passionate about the same issues, and cited the County's motto, *With Partners We Can Do More*.

2. Fostering Continual Economic Growth and Vitality

Chairman Long requested that the order of the presentation be adjusted to begin with the Airco Golf Course item in order to accommodate Mr. Vinik's schedule.

Mr. Woodard related that the presentation will reveal a new policy framework that staff has been working on for years that takes a four-prong approach to foster economic growth: policy, procedure, technology, and resources.

AIRCO GOLF COURSE SITE

Assistant County Administrator Jake Stowers conducted a PowerPoint presentation titled *Doing Things! Foster Continual Economic Growth and Vitality - Creating Jobs and Bringing Higher Wages to Our Community*, which has been made a part of the record. He provided historical background information regarding the Airco site, relating that the County closed the golf course and rezoned the property some years ago and has since sought to redevelop it; that it is controlled by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) because of its immediate proximity to St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport; and that a 49-acre portion of the 126 total acres is restricted to aviation-related businesses.

Referring to a photograph and a conceptual site plan, he indicated that Duke Energy has selected the Airco property for its 2016 Site Readiness Program, which identifies promising industrial sites in its service area and works with County leaders and economic development professionals to develop a strategy to provide water, sewer, natural gas, and electricity to the property; and that a planning agency from Tampa assisted in the evaluation of the site and developed a Duke Energy concept plan for the property, pointing out that the plan is only conceptual and could change.

Mr. Stowers related that the plan splits the property into 49.1 acres/345,000 square feet for industry that will support aviation development, 67.2 acres/665,900 square feet for office/light industrial/manufacturing, and 9.5 acres/19,000 square feet for hotel/retail; that the site is in the Gateway employment district; that the County's investment to prepare the site would be approximately \$10 million; that the County would need to coordinate with the City of Largo to ensure sewer capacity; and that a Master Plan is required before the project can become part of the Comprehensive Plan; whereupon, he discussed what the County would need to do to prepare the property, pointing out that, basically, the Commission would need to act as the developer.

Responding to queries by the members, Mr. Stowers, with input by Mr. Woodard, indicated that the \$10 million projected site preparation cost is only an estimate; that funding could come from the Young-Rainey STAR Center sale proceeds and Penny for Pinellas revenue; that a nine-story parking garage shown in the conceptual site plan would not violate FAA height restrictions because of its side-angle relationship to the runway; that the government granted the land to the County after World War II, with restrictions, one of which is that it cannot sell the land, but can enter into long-term land leases; and that while the FAA would receive any lease revenue, the County would garner the benefits that come with job creation; whereupon, at the request of

Commissioner Gerard, Mr. Stowers agreed to provide a map showing the entire airport property.

STAR CENTER SALE PROCEEDS

Mr. Stowers provided historical background information about the STAR Center, stating that General Funds were never spent there; and that it generated \$750,000 annually in taxes after it was transferred back to the County from the Department of Energy. He indicated that the Center has sold for \$10.1 million and the sale should close sometime this month; whereupon, he recommended that the Board consider investing \$4 million of the proceeds in the business incubator in downtown St. Petersburg, which is in the Legislative Delegation's appropriation package.

Discussion ensued during which Commissioner Eggers expressed support for investing in infrastructure improvements to attract private investment and cited the importance of bringing in professionals to market the property. Commissioner Seel concurred, added historical context, and thanked FDOT for making significant investments in the county.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Mr. Stowers provided historical background information about the County's approach to fostering economic growth and vitality, discussing the *Pinellas by Design* plan completed in 2005, the *Economic Innovation and Leadership Symposium* in 2014, and the recommendations of consultant Bill Fruth, POLICOM Corporation, relating that he had indicated that a \$50 million "jump start" may be needed to move County-initiated redevelopment forward.

Citing the need to change the concept of the county from suburban to urban, Mr. Stowers indicated that staff will bring recommendations to the Board in the following areas in the coming months, pointing out that everyone must work together to make the transition:

- A phased approach to the Elements of redevelopment in the Comprehensive Plan:
 - Phase 1 Interim policy guidance to support current redevelopment opportunities, veering away from the concurrency regulations which dictate that services must be available before development can begin.
 - Phase 2 A new *Vision Element* that will lay the foundation for future policies for the County as a redevelopment community. The *Vision Element* will read like a story, be user friendly, do away with such things as goals and policies, and have a re-analyze process so a policy can be easily changed should it fail to work out as expected.
 - Phase 3 A complete update to the Comprehensive Plan guided by the policy framework of the new *Vision Element*. The updated Plan will not be based on regulations.

- A rewrite of the *Planning to Stay* Element of the Comprehensive Plan that will be redevelopment-centric and address the County being largely built-out.
- Land use and building code changes that are more flexible and incentivize redevelopment and repurposing to meet Code.
- Zoning changes that allow higher densities and mixed use centers, when appropriate, and mother-in-law or rental apartments in single-family districts.
- A streamlining of the review process and changes to the quasi-judicial procedures, including renaming the Board of Adjustment to the Community Development Board (CDB) with revised duties and responsibilities and adding a new Development Review Committee (DRC) that will hold public hearings and have minutes. Staff and the DRC will be authorized to approve waivers and administrative adjustments; the CDB will approve variances and special exceptions and hear floodplain and site plan appeals; and the BCC will continue to approve conditional uses, development agreements, zoning and land use changes, and plats.
- Technology will be used more extensively and websites revamped to make information more easily available. Site plans will be submitted and reviewed on line.
- Habitat permitting will be addressed. An urban community may have to give up trees. Changes will be made to the tree replacement requirements that are development friendly, perhaps instituting tree banks.
- A mobile home park redevelopment ordinance for Community Redevelopment Areas (CRAs) that permits the density allowance to stay with the site and removes the disincentive for replacing dilapidated trailer parks with affordable living units such as tiny homes or townhomes.

DISCUSSION

Responding to queries and comments by the members about the mobile home park redevelopment ordinance, Mr. Stowers indicated that the Lealman CRA has 16 mobile home parks, probably 10 of which are dilapidated; and that the change would apply only to CRAs, although it could possibly be extended to the entire Pinellas County unincorporated area at a later date. In response to query by Commissioner Eggers, Mr. Stowers confirmed that the new zoning code would only apply to parks that are active, and the owners would be required to do any relocation of the tenants. Discussion ensued, with Commissioner Seel and Chairman Long supporting looking into extending the policy to mobile home parks throughout the unincorporated county; whereupon, Mr. Stowers stated that early site plans for the mobile home parks are on file, and history matters.

In response to query by Commissioner Eggers, Mr. Stowers confirmed that the development community is providing input on the proposed changes; and that should a development have a significant public impact, it will continue to be reviewed by the BCC.

Thereupon, Mr. Woodard stated that the proposals outlined by Mr. Stowers will come before the Board at a later date; and that the changes are designed and intended to make the process more efficient, effective, and timely while maintaining the regulations and regulatory framework that serve the public good.

REGIONAL STORMWATER/JOE'S CREEK INDUSTRIAL PARK

Mr. Stowers discussed regional stormwater systems, indicating that they would be strategically placed to provide the required water quality treatment so a redeveloping parcel will not have to do so and will be able to use the maximum area available on the site for redevelopment.

In response to query by Commissioner Justice, Mr. Stowers indicated that an inventory of redevelopment parcels with price tags is not available; whereupon, he discussed the funds available for redevelopment.

ADJOURNMENT - 11:35 A.M.