

**Minutes of City Council Workshop
2015 Downtown Action Plan
Monday, May 4, 2015 – 5:15 P.M.
City Council Chambers**

Mayor Latham called the workshop to order at 5:17 PM.

The following City Council members were in attendance:

Mayor: Charlie Latham

Council Members: Lee Buck Keith Doherty Chris Hoffman
Bruce Thomason Phil Vogelsang Jeanell Wilson (*late*)

Also present were City Manager George Forbes, Deputy City Manager Trish Roberts, Police Chief Pat Dooley, Public Works Director Ty Edwards, Planning and Development Director Bill Mann, Parks and Recreation Director Gary Meadors, Community Redevelopment Specialist Steve Lindorff and City Clerk Laurie Scott.

Purpose of Workshop

The purpose of the Workshop was for City Council to continue discussing the proposed 2015 Downtown Action Plan.

Mayor Latham discussed the 2015 Downtown Action Plan presentation format.

Presentations and Discussions

Mr. Forbes revisited the discussions on the preliminary design by GAI of the parking garage to include a storage building for the police and retail in the front section.

Mr. Forbes introduced Mr. Steve Lindorff to continue the presentation.

Mr. Lindorff reviewed the design concept of the parking garage from the Phase I of the Vision Plan.

Mr. Vogelsang asked about the design and the availability for the parking garage to extend over the retail space.

Mr. Forbes explained the parking garage is only a concept plan.

Mr. Vogelsang recommended making 4th Avenue more pedestrian friendly.

Mr. Thomason asked questions on the design of the parking garage and the effects of obtaining a ticket at the time of parking versus paying at the time.

Mr. Forbes explained it would affect the queuing outside. If you pay at the time, there will be longer lines to get in and it would have to be manned.

Ms. Hoffman asked if the costs reflected in the plan represent actual costs or estimates from 2009.

Mr. Lindorff stated the costs estimates had not changed substantially over the 2009 costs estimates.

Ms. Hoffman commented that she would like to incorporate parking for non-traditional transportation such as bikes and low speed vehicles in the design.

Mr. Doherty commented he would like to see a study completed on the amount of potential revenue that would be generated by this development.

Mr. Doherty inquired about JTA's requirements for their participation.

Mr. Forbes explained that they would use the garage as a park and ride with reserved spots for the bus riders.

Mr. Vogelsang asked for the revenue figures for the monies generated from the Pier parking lot.

Police Chief Pat Dooley recapped the plan proposals for managing the nighttime economy.

Mr. Forbes discussed economic development incentives such as remodeling/tenant/facade improvement loans or grants, short-term rental assistance, grease trap, etc. for retail, food service or office-based businesses.

Mayor Latham discussed the Retail Strategies and how they operate.

Mayor Latham discussed continuing working with the Retail Strategies consultants, the business community, and property owners to identify and recruit a mix of restaurants and retail establishments that provide service for a variety of age groups.

Mr. Vogelsang questioned the use of the data collected by the consultants in soliciting specific business types to the City. In addition, he asked about the rules in offering incentives to businesses for Downtown Jacksonville Beach.

Mr. Forbes replied by stating Council Members set the rules.

Mayor Latham explained part of the Downtown Action Plan is to attract visitors during the off-peak seasons through events such as the Celtic Festival, Deck the Chairs, Red Bull Surf Expo, Art Walk, Car Cruise, and two-day festivals.

Ms. Hoffman asked if we could offer business incentives from Community Redevelopment Agency funding.

Mr. Forbes responded that we can if we place incentives in the Downtown Redevelopment Plan.

Mr. Doherty stated he would like to see more restaurants serving food as opposed to alcohol.

Mr. Vogelsang recommended changing the ordinance for restaurants becoming nightclubs.

Mr. Forbes discussed Commercial Spaces, Downtown Branding and Marketing, such as implementing a new way finding sign program using the surfboard theme to rebrand and market downtown and exploring a visitor center concept possibly to be located at the Beaches Historical Park.

Mr. Forbes discussed Public Welfare and Safety to assist the homeless population by working with the HOPE team, Mission House, etc., reviewing outdoor bar and restaurant space and parking requirements, consider allowing outdoor acoustic entertainment in the Jacksonville Beach Land Development Code, review the off-street parking requirement for restaurants and consider a 50% reduction to encourage restaurant (as opposed to bar) development.

Mayor Latham stated that reviewing the off-street parking requirement for restaurants and consider a 50% reduction to encourage restaurant (as opposed to bar) development should be a high priority.

Ms. Hoffman stated she would like to see businesses have the opportunity to be able to provide background music at their establishments.

Mr. Vogelsang and Chief Pat Dooley discussed the use of decibel meters for loud noise and the interference caused by ambient sounds and the difficulty in measuring the noise levels.

Mr. Vogelsang stated that City's ordinance for parking requirements is not favorable to businesses.

Mr. Forbes discussed scheduling more city events in non-peak season, encouraging more alcohol-free events that attract persons of all ages, such as farmer's market, car shows, art walks, Celtic Festival, Deck the Chairs, food truck rallies, add more outdoor movies, and add at least one more concert to the jazz series in the fall.

Mr. Forbes discussed quality of life issues, such as pressure washing pavers in the Downtown streets, the SeaWalk, and dumpster areas to remove gum, oil stains, etc., developing a program for property and business owners to assist in keeping Downtown clean by picking up trash, cigarette butts, on a daily basis, reviewing the beach clean-up contract to improve its effectiveness and enhance service between Beach Blvd and 6th Avenue North on weekends and holidays.

Mr. Edwards stated the City is looking at pieces of equipment and chemicals to remove gum residues.

Mr. Buck stated he would like to see the doggie bag program continue to be visible.

Ms. Hoffman recommended adding more trash and recycle receptacles during peak times.

Ms. Wilson would like to see more trash cans at streetend parking and 1st Street South.

Mr. Forbes discussed the projects carried over from the 2007 Vision Plan for Downtown:

- Continue implementation of Phase III of the Downtown Vision Plan Infrastructure Improvement Program east of South 3rd Street from Beach Boulevard to 13th Avenue South
- Construct surface or structured parking facility on CRA-owned land on North 2nd Street between 3rd and 4th Avenue North
- North 2nd Street reconstruction per the Downtown Vision Streetscape Master Plan
- Continue monitoring and evaluating existing regulatory measures; and recommending revisions as needed to promote business retention and development; and the preservation of residential areas.

Mr. Forbes discussed long-term potential for public-private partnerships such as:

- New Pablo Avenue Mixed Use Commercial Development: Consider constructing a new roadway on the south side of Latham Plaza and, in cooperation with a private developer, build a mixed use project including a boutique hotel, retail commercial space, and parking structure on the Latham Plaza parking lot site
- Pier Parking Lot Restaurant and Retail Development: In conjunction with or following the construction of a new public off-street parking facility, consider developing a restaurant and/or retail project on a portion of the Fishing Pier parking lot.

Speakers:

Thad Mosley, 3701 Duval Drive, Jacksonville Beach, recommends creating variable and comprehensive pricing for the parking.

Ken Marsh, 2027 Gale Avenue, Jacksonville Beach, would like to see the Council move quickly on the Plan. He addressed the vacant lot on the corner 3rd Street and Beach Boulevard.

Kurtis Loftus, 2015 St. Maartins Court, Jacksonville Beach, suggested conducting specialized testing to see what type of music would be conducive to Latham Plaza and get feedback from citizens.

Cory Nichols, 1107 1st Street South, Unit C, Jacksonville Beach, recommends building a family friendly hotel instead of ocean front parking. He expressed his concerns about the appearance of the many police officers stationed downtown.

Ms. Hoffman suggested the possibility of playing background music in the public spaces of downtown.

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The Workshop adjourned at 6:40 P.M.

Submitted by: Laurie D. Scott
City Clerk

Approved:

/s/ William C Latham

William C. Latham, MAYOR

Date: May 18, 2015