

CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Community Redevelopment Agency Regular Meeting January 27, 2025

The Community Redevelopment Agency met in a formal session Monday, January 27, 2025, at 3:30 P.M. in the Alcazar Room at City Hall. The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Nancy Sikes-Kline, and the following were present:

1. Roll Call: Nancy Sikes-Kline, Chairwoman (arrived at 3:38 p.m.)

Barbara Blonder
Jim Springfield
Cynthia Garris
Jon DePreter

David Birchim, City Manager
Isabelle Lopez, City Attorney
Darlene Galambos, City Clerk
Jaime D. Perkins, Manager, Neighborhood Services and Community
Redevelopment Agency Manager
Meredith Breidenstein, Assistant City Manager
Reuben Franklin, Assistant City Manager
Melissa Wissel, Director, Communications
Jennifer Michaux, Police Chief
Elyse Wiemann, Recording Secretary

2. Administrative Items

**a. Approval of Prior Meeting
Minutes (October 28, 2024)**

MOTION

**3. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT OR
COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS NOT
REQUIRING A SEPARATE COMMENT
PERIOD (3 minutes per individual)**

The Commissioners heard from the following members of the public:

- Arthur Culbert
- Cash McVay
- Gloria Lelaidier
- David Nolan
- Cassandra Johnson
- Madeline Wise (email sent; read into record)

- Regina Gail Philips (email sent; read into record)
- BJ Kalaidi
- Amy Koch
- Karen Semmelman

4. DISCUSSION, PRESENTATIONS, & UPDATES

**a. Dr. Robert B. Hayling Freedom Park
Masterplan Update Jaime D. Perkins,
Neighborhood Services & CRA Manager**

Jaime D. Perkins, Neighborhood Services & CRA Manager, provided an update on the Dr. Robert B. Hayling Freedom Park Masterplan. She said staff were proposing several changes to the masterplan based on recent feedback received from the community. She said the changes were to make a pathway realignment change and remove the marsh overlook. She said

everything in the master plan prior the new proposal was from community engagement. She said she was asking for feedback and directives. She said since the plan was adopted in July 2024 a motion would be required if the changes were approved.

Ms. Blonder asked if the realignment of the pathway could still be considered; however, she agreed to the removal of the overlook.

Ms. Perkins replied in the affirmative.

Mr. Springfield noted on the map shown the light blue section was the proposal but questioned the dark purple section.

Ms. Perkins replied that section (E) had a lot of infill to have those who use the park higher up for a better view. She said this location was an additional walkway. She said this area had received positive feedback and the agency could consider it too. She said the two items that had received the most feedback on were the marsh overlook and the pathway realignment on the north side of the park.

Mr. Springfield stated the section (E) was sort of taking the place of the marsh overlook since this walkway would be elevated for park users.

Ms. Perkins replied that it was a great way of looking at it.

Mr. DePreter said some sort of structure would be installed for the new improvements and asked how this would tie into the new permeable paver resolution considering the material being used.

Ms. Lopez replied that it would, but the construction details would work out and take place further along in the development.

Mr. Birchim said that was correct, and currently this was just the conceptual phase of the project. He said the City had

made a commitment to using permeable pavers.

Ms. Garriss commented that there had been many emails regarding birds and the history of the site, which was formerly a community dump. She said she was impressed when the Commission decided to make the location a park and named it after Dr. Robert B. Hayling for all the things he did for the community. She asked if the pathway that was present stayed, would another pathway be constructed to get to the plaza with Dr. Hayling's statue.

Jeremiah Marquis, Landscape Architect, Marquis, Latimer, and Halback, replied that the arcing pathway to Hayling plaza could be extended into the existing pathway.

Mr. Springfield said he was in favor of modifying the pathway and removing the overlook and picnic tables were appropriate. He said additional trees could be added to the plan.

Ms. Blonder said her profession was a Coastal Ecologist with peer reviewed scientific research publications on Coastal Organism, and in her judgement, the proposed improvements that included the realignment of the pathway, planting more trees, and possibly adding benches would not damage the marsh or the uplands. She said Hayling Park was built on a capped landfill, and this was an environmental justice issue. She said this would be a minor improvement to the habitat, not destruction, and the addition of shade trees would encourage the urban adaptive wildlife to use the passive park as the plans intended. She said she was in favor of removing the marsh overlook and keeping the realignment as approved in the fall.

Mr. DePreter felt any trees that could be planted would be welcome, but it was difficult due to the physical limitations of the site. He agreed to remove the marsh overlook. He said moving the pathway could provide more habitat for the animals.

Ms. Sikes-Kline said since the agency was moving in this direction, she thought it would be best if the Audubon Society were brought in for the documentation. She asked for more surveys on the area. She felt if the pathway were realigned there needed to be a well thought out plan and agreed with the removal of the marsh overlook.

MOTION

Ms. Blonder MOVED to support the staff proposal to remove the marsh overlook and put back in the realignment of the path and move the project forward with the recommendations included. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Springfield.

Mr. Springfield asked if the path that led to the picnic tables should remain or be removed.

Ms. Blonder said she was in support of the removal as they encroached into the habitat.

Ms. Sikes-Kline said the walkway and tables should be removed.

Ms. Blonder modified the motion to include the removal of the walkway that led to the picnic tables and the removal of the tables. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Springfield.

Ms. Garris asked if the restrooms would remain.

Ms. Perkins replied that the restrooms would be located closer to the parking area and not where they were shown in the current design. She said it would be closer to the ADA parking.

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYES: Blonder, Springfield, DePreter, Garris, Sikes-Kline

NAYES: NONE

MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

b. LCRA- Fix-It-Up Critical Repair List Proposal Jaime D. Perkins, Neighborhood Services & CRA Manager

Jaime D. Perkins, Neighborhood Services & CRA Manager, said the memo indicated that staff coordinated with Bill Lazar, Executive Director of the St. Johns Housing Partnership, to help create a list of critical repair items. She said the list would be used to determine the urgency of repairs for applicants.

The agency was in support of the list prepared by staff.

c. LCRA- Twine Park Proposal Jaime D. Perkins, Neighborhood Services & CRA Manager

Jaime D. Perkins, Neighborhood Services & CRA Manager said at the last Lincolnville Community Redevelopment Area (LCRA) meeting there was unanimous support for the development of plans for Twine Park. She said the plans presented were concepts and schematic plans from 2018. She asked for approval to move forward with developing the park.

Mr. Springfield said that when parks were developed, maintenance should be a concern and as little maintenance as possible would be best.

Mr. DePreter asked if the design was being approved or only a concept for the park.

Ms. Perkins replied that Twine Park was already established in Lincolnville; however, the LCRA was asking for additional improvements. She said the designs presented in 2018 and the LCRA were requesting for them to be incorporated in the park.

Mr. DePreter said he thought the design was a little intense for the amount of space. He said for a neighborhood park it seemed very institutional.

Ms. Perkins stated that the designs were conceptual, and they could work with the landscape architect and present other alternatives. She said the new designs would be presented to the LCRA and then to the Agency for final approval.

Ms. Blonder was in support of the design, specifically the 'Freedom Hat Garden and Circular Bench'.

Mr. DePreter agreed that it was a clever idea.

Ms. Sikes-Kline said she was happy that Twine Park was being celebrated. She said Henry Twine was very caring, diligent, and a conscientious commissioner.

**d. WCCRA Draft Plan Status and Update
Jaime D. Perkins, Neighborhood
Services & CRA Manager**

Jaime D. Perkins, Neighborhood Services & CRA Manager stated she provided an updated tax increment funding sheet and noted that the plan was under staff review; however, she wanted to provide it to them prior to the April timeframe when it would be authorized to be presented to the Planning and Zoning Board (PZB). She noted the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) dollars for expected funds and a statement added by the Steering Committee regarding the debt service. She said the concern was that TIF dollars would be used to pay for the debt of the currently proposed project in West City.

Mr. Birchim asked for clarification regarding the debt service statement included in the plan. He said the CRA plan was not to place limitations on what the agency could use the TIF dollars for in the future.

Ms. Perkins agreed, which was why she pointed it out to the agency.

Mr. Birchim recommended not limiting themselves and future agencies from using

TIF dollars in any way they believed was appropriate for the community.

Ms. Sikes-Kline said she believed that statutorily for projects already in progress or projects in the Capital Improvement Plan, not be funded by the CRA.

Ms. Lopez said the idea of the debt service language was that committee members did not want the future parking facility on Broudy's site to use TIF dollars at any point within the 30-year span of the CRA.

Mr. Birchim pointed out the TIF money did not have to be used for debt service regarding the Broudy parking garage; however, that decision should not be made now as it could change for future commissions in the next thirty years.

Ms. Sikes-Kline thanked Ms. Perkins for pointing that out. She said this was only for review now and it would not be approved until April 2025.

Ms. Blonder pointed out Memorial Day was Monday, May 26, 2025, which was listed in the schedule.

Ms. Perkins replied that the schedule would be amended.

Ms. Blonder said she loved the implementation of the elements and the local business assistance program. She felt it was important to keep the people who were there now continuing to own their businesses.

Ms. Sikes-Kline felt the development of spill over parking needed to be addressed to protect the neighborhoods from commuter parking and felt this was an important component, which should be added.

Ms. Blonder commented that there was support for staff's recommendation regarding the debt service and TIF funds.

Mr. Springfield said he thought there would be arguments over what had been approved and the auxiliary cost that came with the parking garage. He said either the language needed to be more specific or should be eliminated altogether. He asked in the future, could the plan be changed by the CRA.

Ms. Lopez replied that it could be changed but it would have to go through a formal amendment process. She said that was why Mr. Birchim highlighted that restricting themselves or preempting themselves was unusual, and typically CRA's were given the ability to use the funds as they saw fit.

Ms. Blonder thanked the West City CRA Steering Committee for all their hard work.

Mr. DePreter asked if the Steering Committee would be dissolved.

Ms. Perkins said the Agency approved a Steering Committee during the process of developing a Community Redevelopment Plan, which would be dissolved after approval of the Plan and that should take place on March 27, 2025.

Ms. Garriss said she came to a West City CRA meeting and thought it was good to address this area and thought it was well thought out. She agreed that how the TIF funds were used should not be established now. She said being able to help more residents and businesses in the community was very important.

**e. CRA 25th Anniversary Proposal
Jaime D. Perkins, Neighborhood
Services & CRA Manager**

Jaime D. Perkins, Neighborhood Services & CRA Manager, said this was a community engagement effort for the CRA to celebrate the achievements throughout the past 25 years. She said the Historic Area Community Redevelopment Agency (HACRA), which was established in 2000, and the first project was building the Visitors Information Center (VIC) and

Parking Garage. She said the CRA was proposing celebrating the success throughout 2025. She said community outreach would take place in the three CRA's on the following days:

- WCCRA- April 16, 2025
- LCRA-July 18, 2025
- HCRA-October 9, 2025

She asked for approval for the celebratory logo and outreach dates.

Ms. Sikes-Kline said she was in support of the ideas and what would take place.

There was an agency consensus to use the celebratory logo and outreach dates.

5. ITEMS BY CITY ATTORNEY

(None)

6. ITEMS BY CITY STAFF

(None)

**7. ITEMS BY BOARD CHAIR AND
BOARD MEMBERS**

(None)

8. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:36 P.M.



Nancy Sikes-Kline, MAYOR



Darlene Galambos, CITY CLERK

