



**MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF NEW PORT RICHEY**

NEW PORT RICHEY CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

5919 MAIN STREET, NEW PORT RICHEY, FLORIDA

November 5, 2019

6:00 PM

**ORDER OF
BUSINESS**

1 Call to Order - Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Rob Marlowe at 6:00 p.m. Those in attendance were, Deputy Mayor Jeff Starkey, Councilman Chopper Davis, Councilman Peter Altman and Councilman Matt Murphy. Also in attendance were City Manager Debbie Manns, City Attorney Timothy Driscoll, City Clerk Judy Meyers, Economic Development Director Charles Rudd, Public Works Director Robert Rivera, Technology Solutions Director Bryan Weed and Lt. Lauren Letona.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2 Railroad Square Revitalization Discussion – Page 2

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated the purpose of the agenda item was to discuss improvements to the Railroad Square area and develop a design for the improvements. She stated we are introducing it back as a public place as it was originally intended. She then introduced Jason Jensen from Wannemacher Jensen Architects who then made a presentation to Council. Mr. Jensen began his presentation by highlighting the current features of Railroad Square and how the businesses fronted it and access points. The goals would be to reclaim as a public space, bring overhead utilities underground and phase work so each phase looks complete. Mr. Jensen then highlighted proposed changes including limiting access points, shade structure, new benches, new planters and lighting.

Due to time constraints, the work session was adjourned at 6:59 p.m. At the start of the regular meeting, Mayor Marlowe allowed for public comment on this item. The following are the people who spoke regarding this agenda item and the remaining discussion by Council that took place during the regular City Council meeting on November 5, 2019:

Deputy Mayor Starkey stated that there is no shade in Railroad Square. He would like to see

some trees. Councilman Davis stated he would like to see shade over the benches. Councilman Murphy stated he would like to see some color similar to the color of the planters on the bridge. Councilman Davis he talked to people along the west side who would like to be included.

Melissa Smith came forward and stated she likes the idea and that it would be good to look at. She is concerned over parking. She stated there is a flooding issue near Rose's Bistro and Pete's Grand Central.

John Kane came forward and stated that he thought it would be nice to have a canopy by the Verizon building. He hopes that in the future it will be a spot to take pressure off of having vendors in the park. He would like to see the overhead electrical wires be moved underground.

Gerald Kuss came forward and stated that he likes the idea of improving Railroad Square. He stated there is a major parking issue and the lack of disabled parking. He stated that the City needs to think about the parking problem and how to solve it.

Frank Starkey came forward and stated that small groupings of parking in Railroad Square would be fine. He stated the place needs to be thought of a pedestrian zone. Programming needs to include regular maintenance and repair. He liked the suggestion of lowering and moving the planters inward.

Kira Atkinson and Lia Gallegos came forward and stated they hosted three events in Railroad Square. The biggest problems they had were lack of shade, lack of grassy area, the ability to turn off streetlight for movie nights, audio for movies.

Jeff Wright came forward and stated that the plan is great overall and he would like to see it made a one-way. He stated that the need for shade is an issue.

Jeremy Buely came forward and stated it would be great to bring that down the west side.

Bret Cipher came forward and asked about what kind of timeline for the project to be complete. City Manager Manns stated that in short it should be about a year.

Mayor Marlowe closed public comment. He stated he would like to see shade structures. Councilman Davis stated his initial proposal would be triangular roll up/roll down shades. Deputy Mayor Starkey stated he thinks everyone would be excited about this project. He would like shade but also the opportunity to look up and see the stars. He is concerned over the large garbage cans behind the businesses. He suggested looking into the possibility of a city owned dumpster within walking distance. Councilman Altman stated this is the kind of project that the community will get excited to see. Parking is high on the list of things we are trying to address. Promoting walkability is what will bring people downtown. He stated there was the golf cart service during the Chasco Fiesta last year. He stated we need a good Master Plan. Councilman Murphy stated this will make a huge difference to the look of downtown. He would like to see if we could have a multi-use spot on Nebraska. He would like to save as much parking as we can. City Manager Manns stated there are current renovations being planned for the Nebraska parking lot. There are also improvements coming to the Gloria Swanson lot. There will be an addition of forty spaces when the projects are complete. Deputy Mayor Starkey stated he would also like to look at establishing a weekend wet zone. When he visited downtown Tampa they had used artificial turf. Mr. Jensen stated that the wall will be addressed on the street side.

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated the purpose of the agenda item was to discuss the development design in concept for the proposed greenway path for Grand Boulevard. She then introduced Public Works Director Robert Rivera who made a presentation to Council. Mr. Rivera stated this item appeared in the City's Strategic Plan as a quality of life

issue. This trail would tie together the Marine Parkway, Madison Street and Massachusetts Avenue paths. Assistant Public Works Director Barret Doe then made a presentation to Council. He began by highlighting the conceptual drawings that the consultant had provided. Mr. Doe then showed staff's recommendations with a power point presentation. There are two options once the path reaches Delaware The path could be shifted to the middle of the road with raised curbing or continue down the south side of Delaware and connect to Madison. Council then discussed safety concerns with the path running down the middle of Grand and agreed the proposal to go down Delaware would be best.

Mayor Marlowe then opened the floor for public comment. Frank Starkey came forward and stated that the Central Avenue improvements do include a median and 8ft sidewalk on the north side. As far as the trail design goes he encouraged to have the parallel spaces remain. He encouraged to think about who the target users of the trail will be.

Penelope Anderson came forward and suggested Council look at pervious surfaces instead of using concrete. She stated she did not understand why the path was not going down the river instead of Madison as the river is a more scenic ride.

John Kane came forward and stated he has biked the Pinellas Trail many times and going through Dunedin during busy hours was not a problem and was easily negotiable. He likes the idea of bringing the bikes into the downtown.

Rich Melton came forward and stated the bike trail would be an issue during parades. He likes the idea of the path going down Delaware.

Marilynn deChant came forward and stated that traffic calming is important. She stated she did not think the design was attractive at all.

Heather Schneider came forward and stated the walkways are what we need downtown. She has two homes on Central and her main concern is where she is going to park.

4 Communications

None

5 Adjournment

There being no further business to consider, upon proper motion, the meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Approved: _____ (date)

_____ (signed)

Initialed: _____

Judy Meyers, CMC, City Clerk