



**City of West Palm Beach  
City Commission Workshop**

**AGENDA**

**December 3, 2007  
1:45 P.M.**

**IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA), PERSONS IN NEED OF A SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS PROCEEDING SHALL, WITHIN THREE DAYS PRIOR TO ANY PROCEEDING, CONTACT THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE, 200 SECOND STREET, WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA 33401, {(561) 822-1210}**

**MAYOR**

LOIS J. FRANKEL

**CITY COMMISSION**

PRESIDENT WILLIAM MOSS  
 COMMISSIONER KIMBERLY MITCHELL                       COMMISSIONER ISAAC ROBINSON, JR.  
 COMMISSIONER GERALDINE MUOIO                       COMMISSIONER MOLLY DOUGLAS

**ADMINISTRATION**

CITY ADMINISTRATOR EDWARD MITCHELL  
 CITY ATTORNEY CLAUDIA M. MC KENNA  
 CITY CLERK BLANE KAUTHEN

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

## **PRESENTATION:**

### **2. Presentation of Economic Development activities. Agenda Cover Memorandum No.: W-425**

#### **Staff Recommended Motion:**

Presentation for discussion purposes.

#### **Background:**

In October 2006 the City of West Palm Beach filled the position of Economic Development Manager with the objective of developing an Economic Development Plan including programs to be initiated under that plan and identifying funding sources to implement the programs.

The current budget does not identify any dedicated funding source for economic development activity however, as the plan is further developed; funding sources will be sought for specific programs. These sources will likely be from various state and federal programs, as well as potential private sector funding sources.

Several small specific Economic Development projects have been approved by the Commission, including a \$22,500 Brownfield's Redevelopment Bonus Refund as part of a State DEP initiative that is tied to job creation for a new Hawthorn Suites hotel south of Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.; Economic Set-aside grants for relocation of the Boysaw law firm (\$80,000; 4 new jobs) and a computer controlled machining center for Hartman Windows and Doors (\$100,000; 10-12 new jobs); and Round 11, Development Regions Grants, in which three City of West Palm Beach firms in the CRA ( Absolute Plumbing, LLC; Gardenhouse, LLC; and 2915 East Tamarind, LLC ) were ranked #1, 3, and 4 of the 20 deals recommended by Palm Beach County ECD to the County Commissioners.

For the purposes of this initial presentation, the Economic Development function is currently focused on three key initiatives: acting as a liaison for business attraction, retention and development activity; identifying project and site specific economic development initiatives; and establishing a Brownfield Redevelopment Program incorporating some of these identified projects.

#### **I. LIAISON ACTIVITY**

##### **Objectives:**

To act as a point of contact for businesses; corporations; community groups; municipalities; Federal, State and regional agencies; associations; chambers of commerce; and other entities regarding economic development for the City of West Palm Beach.

To form alliances with key public and private sector leaders in the field of economic development.

- Staff participated in Resolution No. 121-07, Evaluation and Appraisal Report ("EAR) for the City's Comprehensive Plan. To ensure the city is positioned to address economic development activity, amendments to the city's comprehensive plan needed new information added related to the economic development function. Working with the Planning Department, sections were drafted that pertain to future economic development activity.

- Staff has been in contact with Marriott International, Hawthorne Suites Corporate, and Goldman Sachs regarding their interest in City economic development issues, as well as information on future proposed and planned hotels downtown.
- Staff is working closely with management/founders of Live IT Academy, a downtown startup provider of information technology and telecom technology training, education and certification. Staff has assisted and continues to assist with development and implementation of marketing and business strategies, and networking the company to and meeting with Workforce Alliance and Palm Beach Community College to pursue business and training opportunities.
- Staff is working with representatives of the Downtown Development Authority and Chamber of Commerce of the Palm Beaches on development of plans and strategies to accelerate the attraction and retention of corporate and/or regional headquarters to the City of West Palm Beach.
- A series of monthly "Small Business" meetings have been scheduled, with specific developed agendas, to discuss economic development activities, problems and opportunities at the small business level. These meetings include the Mayor, City's Small Business Division, members of various Black and Hispanic chambers of commerce, representatives from the Business Development Board, Palm Beach County economic development officials, as well as invited outside experts.

## II. PROJECT OR SITE SPECIFIC INITIATIVES

### Objectives:

To identify specific projects with development potential in the City of West Palm Beach

To act as the City's representative to facilitate, support and assist in the development of identified projects.

### FPU site

- Staff has met with and remains in contact with Palm Beach County officials, FL DEP and US EPA officials regarding situation analysis of potential Brownfield Redevelopment sites; specifically the Florida Public Utilities "gas plant" site north of Banyan.

FPU entered into a consent agreement with FL DEP in 1979 to remediate the site, and FPU has to date not proceeded with any remediation. FPU has delivered a series of remediation plans to FL DEP, all of which have been rejected as inadequate. FPU and FL DEP are far apart on actions to be taken and costs to be incurred. FPU recently purchased a property in Lake Park, and will relocate the Southern Division, now housed at the City of West Palm Beach site. That relocation will finally trigger the remedial actions according to FL DEP. It is in the interest of the City of West Palm Beach to work with the parties to optimize the final condition and use of the potentially valuable site for economic development purposes.

An application is in preparation and will be made to the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council for funding of a grant under their US EPA funding for a Phase I/Phase II assessment of City of West Palm

Beach owned property adjacent to the FPU site. The purpose of the assessment is to determine if the contamination at the FPU site has migrated to the City site, as well as the degree of contamination, if any.

#### Public Market

- The County has hired a consultant to determine if a Public market is viable, and staff is working with that consultant as well as developing plans and strategies for moving the project forward and creating the needed management and funding structures to accomplish the project. After approaching the city, various locations were preliminarily reviewed as potential sites including the western edge of the downtown in the TOD. The emphasis of a potential site has now shifted to the Quadrille corridor, in an existing suitable building.

A Public Market would provide a platform for entrepreneurs, farmers, and craftspeople to sell a variety of fresh and prepared foods, and specialty items, along the lines of a “green market”, (not a “flea market”), but in an organized, indoor, air-conditioned, 365 day per year venue, as opposed to a seasonal, one day a week, outdoor or tented activity. A number of sites are under consideration with an eye toward parking and public transportation. The creation of a Public Development Authority, co-managed by the City and County, which would raise the funds for construction or acquisition from public and private sources, utilize tax credits, and then transition to manage the property as both landlord and marketer/promoter is a possible development path. The alternative would be to create or designate a non-profit corporation for the same purpose. These options are under review and will be presented to the City when specific details are available.

#### MacArthur Parcel Solar Park

- Staff is meeting and working with Palm Beach County Economic Development officials, and members of County’s Alternative Energy Task Force on possible proposal to utilize the approximately 0.9 square mile “MacArthur Parcel” for a very large scale solar power park. The MacArthur Parcel is in the City of West Palm Beach, but owned by the County. It is undeveloped with the exception of a drainage canal bisecting the property East West, and a second canal bisecting the top half of the property North South. The Parcel is bounded on the West by the FL Turnpike, ( across the highway from the County landfill) on the North by Dyer Park ( a former county landfill), to the east by Haverhill Road, and to the South by SWA facilities and a residential community. Major FPL transmission lines run across the Southern boundary of the property. The property would be an ideal location for a very large solar energy facility. The property has almost no “neighbors”, is slated to be at best a “passive park” in the future, and may not require any power distribution infrastructure beyond what already exists. The City, County, and State as well as FPL are all interested in alternative energy, but a more outlying location requires substantial distribution facility investment, and likely high land costs.

### III. BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT

#### Objectives:

To take advantage of available State (FL DEP) and Federal (HUD,EPA, EDA) funding programs to

leverage the redevelopment of potentially contaminated as well as designated Brownfield areas and sites in the City of West Palm Beach.

A Comprehensive Brownfields Redevelopment Strategy, with specific projects identified, and with State, Federal and private sector funding sources to be pursued, is already getting underway. In addition to the FPU site discussed above, one of the specific programs being pursued is the preparation of a grant application to the US EPA for the establishment of a \$1,000,000 Revolving Loan Fund for the City of West Palm Beach. This would allow the City to assist property owners or developers in remediation projects where funding may be problematic or protracted, in order to better pursue Brownfield redevelopment opportunities in the designated Brownfield areas.

Future Programs:

Additional Economic Development programs, initiatives, structures, and external public and private funding sources are in the formative/discussion stage and will be forthcoming.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:**

**COMMENTS BY THE CITY COMMISSION:**

**COMMENTS BY THE MAYOR:**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**NOTICE: IF ANY PERSON DECIDES TO APPEAL ANY DECISION OF THE CITY COMMISSION AT THIS MEETING, THAT PERSON WILL NEED A RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS AND FOR THAT PURPOSE MAY NEED TO ENSURE THAT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS IS MADE, WHICH RECORD INCLUDES THE TESTIMONY AND EVIDENCE UPON WHICH THE APPEAL IS TO BE BASED. THE CITY OF WEST PALM BEACH DOES NOT PREPARE OR PROVIDE SUCH A RECORD.**