

MAYOR/COMMISSION WORK SESSION

March 31, 2008

Commission Chambers – 11:05 a.m.

Present: Mayor Frankel, Commissioners Douglas, Moss, Muoio and Robinson Jr., Deputy City Administrator Miller, City Attorney McKenna and City Clerk Kauthen.

1.	<u>Tree Planting at Clear Lake – Planner Stelly</u> [a] spoke on the urban forest tree planting project on Australian Avenue; [b] stated that the Solid Waste Authority is proposing to plant half of the site; [c] stated that Florida Power and Light (FPL) would like to contribute to the urban forest; and [d] introduced Mr. Kozlowski from FPL. Mr. Kozlowski stated that FPL would like to plant Bald Cypress trees as part of their Community Volunteer Core Program on Earth Day, April 22, 2008.
2.	<u>Hotel Development in Downtown by Jorge Pesquera, President and CEO, Palm Beach County Convention and Visitors Bureau</u> – President and CEO of the Palm Beach County Convention and Visitors Bureau Jorge Pesquera [a] spoke about his concerns over the lack of hotel rooms near the Convention Center; [b] stated that lucrative deals have been lost due to the lack of rooms in the downtown area; [c] expressed his opinion that the City needs one thousand hotel rooms; [d] expressed his opinion that a study is needed to determine the demand factor and the range of products needed; [e] stated that the convention center is willing to work with the City on this issue; [f] noted that the occupancy rate has dropped in Palm Beach County; and [g] stated that there are currently 342 rooms available in the downtown area. Commissioner Muoio [a] expressed her opinion that the number of hotels should be managed to ensure there is not a surplus of hotels; and [b] inquired into the amount of hotel rooms currently available in the downtown area. The Mayor [a] stated that the Planning Department is currently looking at an incentive program aimed at promoting hotels in the downtown area; [b] stated there is currently five hotel projects being

	<p>reviewed by the Planning Department; [c] suggested that Mr. Pesquera should speak to the County in order to speed up the process of having the convention center hotel built. Commissioner Moss [a] iterated the importance of having a plan to show hotel developers the need for hotels in the downtown area; [b] suggested the CRA work on this issue; and [c] spoke of the importance of having other hotels opening up at the same time as the new convention center hotel opens. Redevelopment Manager Briesemeister stated that the CRA would be a good department to work on this issue. Commissioner Robinson suggested speaking with the City of Tampa regarding the development of the Embassy Suites Hotel. Commissioner Douglas [a] expressed her opinion that a study was not needed; and [b] stated that the City should be focusing on current applications in the Planning Department.</p>
3.	<p><u>Water Pressure in the Western Communities</u> – Commissioner Muoio [a] stated that she has received feedback from the Western Communities regarding the water pressure; [b] recommended plotting the complaints on a map to see if there is a pattern; and [c] asked that she be updated on this issue. Assistant City Administrator Balbis [a] stated that a pressure meter has been installed at the master meter in Saratoga Bay; [b] stated they are running a seven day analysis of the master meter in Saratoga Bay; [c] stated the initial reading in Saratoga Bay seemed to be in normal range; and [d] stated that dramatic changes in pressure are being seen at peak usage times due to the water restrictions. The Mayor inquired into the pump installation on the Okeechobee corridor. Commissioner Moss stated that the water district has mandated a reduction in water pressure for all systems.</p>
4.	<p><u>Extension of Site Plan Approvals</u> – Planning Director Wu stated that [a] a resolution is going to be brought forward giving extensions to projects in the downtown area that are soon to expire; and [b] the Planning Department has replied to Mr. Jacobson’s correspondence. Mr. Jacobson [a] inquired into the</p>

	<p>projects that are to get an extension; [b] inquired if the extension would include the TDRs that projects may have; and [c] stated that the City has not responded to his correspondence regarding the Datura and Olive project. City Urban Designer Aponte [a] named the projects that are to be extended; and [b] stated that the extensions will include the TDRs. Commissioner Douglas [a] expressed concern that more money will have to be spent renewing projects that have expired; and [b] suggested Mr. Jacobson contact her regarding the correspondence issue. The Mayor [a] directed the Planning Department to compile a list of all the expired projects from March 17, 2007 to March 17, 2008; [b] stated that projects should not be extended indefinitely so as to allow developers to sit on projects and then flip them; and [c] read into the record Ms. Levine's comments.</p>
5.	<p><u>Amend City Charter</u> – This item was not discussed.</p>
6.	<p><u>Water Issues</u> – The Mayor stated that the Commissioners will receive a memo from Finance Director Sherman regarding an increase in water rates.</p>
7.	<p><u>Mayor's Matters</u> – This item was not discussed.</p>
8.	<p><u>Other</u> – Commissioner Moss [a] stated that the Police Department sent out a memo on November 29, 2007 regarding items being stolen from homes and being sold to pawn stores; and [b] asked if there was an ordinance that addressed this issue. City Attorney McKenna stated she will update the Commissioners on this issue at the next Mayor/Commission Work Session.</p> <p>Commissioner Moss inquired as to when the Corporate Way overlay will be brought forward for the Commission to consider. Planning Director Wu stated that this issue will be brought forward in May 2008.</p>

	<p>Commissioner Moss [a] inquired if the City will be working on solving the Pineapple Park flooding problem. The Mayor stated that the City has worked hard to try to rectify the problem. Assistant City Administrator Balbis stated he will update the Commissioners on this issue at the next Mayor/Commission Work Session.</p> <p>Commissioner Robinson inquired into the possibility of having red mulch replace the dying plants on the Tamarind Corridor. The Mayor directed Deputy City Administrator Miller to look into the issue.</p> <p>Commissioner Moss stated there is a tree missing on Narcissus Avenue that needs to be replaced. The Mayor stated that the tree will be replaced.</p>
9.	<u>Adjournment</u> – 12:09 p.m.