

**MAYOR/COMMISSION WORK SESSION**

**October 14, 2008**

**Commission Chambers – 10:05 a.m.**

**Present: Mayor Frankel, Commissioners Douglas, Moss, Mitchell, Muoio and Robinson Jr., City Administrator Mitchell, and City Clerk Kauthen.**

- 1. RFP for Consulting Services for Efficiency Studies – Finance Director Sherman [a] asked whether the Commission would like to focus on specific departments for the studies; [b] stated that funds will be taken from contingency by an F-Resolution; and [c] noted that Budget Manager Brown visited Cape Coral on October 10, 2008 to learn their process in handling a similar situation. Budget Manager Brown [a] noted that she, Director of Public Works Alford and Code Compliance Manager Hiteshew were all in attendance; and [b] provided an overview of Cape Coral’s “Lean Government System”. Commissioner Muoio suggested that the Mayor, Commissioners, City Administrator and Department Directors collectively decide which areas need focusing on; and [b] stated that she is supportive of starting small with this project. Commissioner Robinson [a] expressed his concern regarding the cost of hiring a consultant; and [b] suggested focusing on only one area at first to lower the cost. Commissioner Douglas stated that she supports this project. Internal Auditor Isaacs and City Administrator Mitchell stated that they support this project being implemented in only a few departments. It was the consensus of the Commission to move forward with the RFP, but to not yet include particular areas of focus. City Attorney McKenna stated that language will be put in the RFP that will allow for flexibility in what the City is willing to spend to hire the consultant.**

2.	<p><b><u>Mobile Food Vendors</u></b> – Staff Attorney Koehler [a] reviewed the proceeding events regarding this matter; and [b] provided an update of recent developments. Parking Systems Administrator Olley explained the current situation regarding this issue. City Attorney McKenna [a] iterated that what the Commission must first reach a consensus on is whether mobile food vendors will be allowed downtown; [b] stated that if they decide not to allow mobile food vendors downtown, then they should set up a program to help them find locations elsewhere in the city limits; and [c] noted that the Commission could also decide to allow the two vendors who have been present downtown for several years to be the only food vendors allowed downtown. Commissioner Moss [a] suggested that mobile food vendors be allowed to rent private parking spaces; and [b] suggested that the City regulate mobile food vendors’ ability to take phone orders. Commissioner Douglas stated that she supports free enterprise.</p>
3. & 7.	<p><b><u>Downtown Master Plan and Affordable Housing</u></b> – Commissioner Douglas [a] noted that the current Downtown Master Plan does not mention affordable housing; and [b] stated that Executive Vice President of Development for the Housing Trust Group Shawn Wilson announced at the Downtown Action Committee Meeting on October 8, 2008 that he would like to apply for a State grant to build workforce housing near the train station. Planning Director Wu [a] stated that staff is reviewing the proposal; and [b] explained that Mr. Wilson would like approval of an incentive program. Commissioner Robinson iterated the importance of making housing in the downtown attainable to all social classes. Commissioner Moss stated that historically the most feasible areas for affordable housing were areas leading into downtown, rather than downtown itself. The Mayor expressed her opinion that restoring blighted areas and ensuring affordable housing is available in the City should be of greater importance than focusing on whether it is available downtown. City Attorney</p>

	<p>McKenna [a] explained that affordable housing is permitted anywhere in the City; and [b] stated that the Commission can decide to create incentives for affordable housing in certain areas. It was the consensus of the Commission to allow staff to consider Mr. Wilson's proposal.</p>
4.	<p><u>Strategic Investment Program Funding Allocations</u> – Commissioner Robinson [a] inquired how applicants receive and are reimbursed for Strategic Investment Program (SIP) Grants; [b] asked whether businesses interested in receiving SIP funding can do their renovation projects in phases, so as to only invest in one renovation project at a time; and [c] suggested that the SIP process be explained to applicants in one page of bulleted points. CRA Project Coordinator Vazquez [a] explained the SIP Grant process; [b] responded that dividing renovations into two phases is permitted; and [c] stated that she will follow Commissioner Robinson's suggestion concerning the bullet-pointed sheet.</p>
5.	<p><u>Status of Large, Empty Lots Throughout the City</u> – Commissioner Mitchell [a] stated that she has been impressed with the compliance of most empty lot owners in the City; and [b] expressed her concern regarding two empty lots that are not in compliance with the Ordinance. Code Compliance Manager Hiteshaw [a] clarified that there are a total of three empty lots that are not in compliance; and [b] provided updates on the status of various lots throughout the City. City Attorney McKenna responded to Commission questions regarding lien transfers from property sales and foreclosures. The Mayor asked City Attorney McKenna to report when a particular empty lot will be taken over by a bank. Commissioner Muoio suggested creating an Ordinance to address the cleaning up of vacant buildings, similar to the Ordinance regarding vacant lots. Commissioner Mitchell suggested that staff research what can legally and financially be done to address strategic properties that need to be remediated.</p>

6.	<b><u>Nuisance Abatement Ordinance Revisions</u></b> – Commissioner Moss asked that this matter become a priority. City Attorney McKenna explained the parameters of the Ordinance. The Mayor suggested that the revision simply clarify the nuisance abatement process. It was the consensus of the Commission to allow this matter to become a priority.
8.	<b><u>Update and Game Plan for Florida Department of Transportation’s (FDOT’s) Projects on South Dixie Highway Between Belvedere Road and Southern Boulevard</u></b> – Commissioner Mitchell asked that the impacted neighborhoods be included in discussions regarding this matter. Director of Engineering Services Bramley explained the project and addressed citizens’ concerns with it. The Mayor asked City Administrator Mitchell to ensure that both FDOT and staff provide enough notice of projects to citizens.
9.	<b><u>Brelsford Park</u></b> – This item was not discussed.
10.	<b><u>Mayor’s Matters</u></b> – The Mayor provided an update regarding the revitalization of Coleman Park.
11.	<b><u>Other</u></b> – Planning Director Wu [a] announced that Senior Planner Roach was handing the Commission an update on the phasing of the news-rack vendor schedule; and [b] provided an overview of the schedule.
12.	<b><u>Adjournment</u></b> – 11:39 a.m.