

TOWN OF LAUDERDALE-BY-THE-SEA

TOWN COMMISSION

SPECIAL ROUNDTABLE MEETING

MINUTES

Jarvis Hall

4505 Ocean Drive

Friday, November 8, 2012

6:00 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER, MAYOR ROSEANN MINNET

Mayor Roseann Minnet called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Also present were Commissioner Mark Brown, Commissioner Stuart Dodd, Commissioner Chris Vincent, Town Attorney Susan L. Trevarthen, Town Manager Connie Hoffmann and Town Clerk June White. Vice Mayor Scot Sasser was excused.

Mayor Minnet opened the discussion for public comment and closed the public comment portion of the discussion after receiving no input.

2. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

a. Consideration of a Visioning Statement for the Town

Town Manager Hoffmann noted the Town Commission brainstormed ideas and concepts at the last meeting that they wished incorporated into either a mission statement or a vision statement.

Commissioner Brown asked if the visioning statement was a type of window dressing or would it serve as an important guideline for the Town Commission, staff and community as a whole. If it was the latter, then a more in depth review was required.

Town Manager Hoffmann believed the vision statement was significant, as the concepts represented in the vision statement were the roadmap for the focus of Town government, ideally over a ten-year period. Vision statements usually took on a life of their own if they were well done and were representative of the community's desires. She believed the wording of the options reflected ideas the Town staff and the Commission heard from the community at various meetings and while campaigning and speaking to people.

Mayor Minnet preferred the more simple examples of a vision statement, specifically options 2 and 6. She felt a vision statement should have an overall concept rather than being overly specific.

Commissioner Vincent liked option 4, particularly the opening line, "Lauderdale-By-The-Sea accomplished something rare". As a reader, he would be motivated to read further into that statement. The rest of the language in option 4 seemed to stay on point with all the things the Town was and had done, and it was not a lengthy statement. He felt option 4 contained everything the Town looked for since its inception and was continuing to do.

Town Manager Hoffmann mentioned a vision statement should really convey the Town everyone envisioned ten years from the present day. She commented the Commission should be careful not to adopt a vision statement that described the Town as it was today, unless the feeling was that no significant changes were needed in the Town.

Commissioner Vincent thought this was what the options conveyed; the Town continued to give itself a facelift, enhancing the existing character rather than changing it.

Commissioner Brown echoed Mayor Minnet's reasons for liking options 2 and 6, stating both statements had a little more vision and less specificity. Though he liked option 4, the wording seemed to say renovations that had yet to be completed were already done, and he did not believe the Town was at that point. If he selected option 4, some of the wording would have to be changed to be prospective to indicate the Town was making improvements and not that they were complete.

Town Manager Hoffmann said her understanding of a vision statement was that it should be written as if one were looking from a point of ten years from the present, stating what things had been accomplished.

Town Attorney Trevarthen commented it might help to understand where the Commission intended the vision statement to go; on the Town's website, there would be an introduction about how the vision statement should be interpreted. That is, the vision statement was not a description of the current; it was what the Town wanted to be in the future, as people might be misled if they did not understand the spirit in which the statement was written. Her impression was that option 2 was very strongly backward looking and, while she liked it, she was unsure if that was the spirit the Commission wanted for the Town's vision statement. The Commission expressed satisfaction with so much of what was going on in the Town but identified significant things it wanted to happen. She thought option 6 was great and liked option 4, but thought option 4 was like a menu of particulars, and her sense of a visioning statement was the shorter the better in terms of getting it across to people. Town Attorney Trevarthen added it went back to what the Town Commission wished to do with the statement; for example, would every item that came forward be tested against the vision statement, and would the statement be reviewed constantly. How the vision statement was used would guide how long and how detailed it should be.

Commissioner Dodd disliked the length of option 4, and he thought option 2 was good, simply due to being short and precise. He agreed it could be argued that option 2 was

where the Town was at present, so the question was if this was where everyone wanted the Town to be in ten years time with the various improvements; would the Town still want to maintain the low rise, not fight height limits, maintain the quality of life enjoyed by residents and tourists? He questioned if it was bad to be looking at the vision statement and saying the Town was pretty near perfect, hence the reason tourists returned. Option 4 was too wordy, though option 6 was good, but the question was whether it was appropriate to get to that level of specificity.

Commissioner Vincent questioned why anyone would read a mission statement, and where would they find and read it other than on the Town's website.

Town Manager Hoffmann responded the statement would be prominently posted in Town Hall, noting the old mission statement was posted. She would use them regularly in speaking with staff to reinforce why certain actions were taken, or to determine if actions were staying true to the vision statement, and the Commission should have a similar discussion.

Commissioner Vincent felt option 2 was so generic it could pertain to anywhere, and did not describe Lauderdale-By-The-Sea specifically. The other options might be a little lengthy, but anyone stopping to read a mission or vision statement was unlikely to mind reading two or three more sentences.

Commissioner Brown suggested taking the first sentence of option 2 because of its descriptiveness, picking up with first sentence in option 4, and then ending with the last sentence in option 2, as it had very important key words. Thus, a vision statement could be formed combining sentences from options presented, rather than selecting one option.

Commissioner Vincent felt option 4 contained only four sentences that could be tweaked, but they covered everything that was being done in the Town.

Mayor Minnet received a Commission consensus to combine various sentences in options 2 and 4 as follows: she stated in option 2, she would eliminate the second sentence. She received a Commission consensus for the following wording of the vision statement:

Lauderdale-By-The-Sea prides itself as a small-town, oceanfront community with a village-type atmosphere. We have accomplished something rare. We've stayed authentic and perfected our small-town character, while giving the Town the facelift it needed to stay economically competitive and fiscally sound. Residents and visitors love the relaxed, walkable atmosphere, and enjoy the special mix of art, dining, retail offerings and traditional festivals. A beachside plaza and parks are the heart of the community's social life. The hospitality industry has been invigorated, the Town is widely known as an amazing shore-diving destination, and for its distinctive MIMO architecture. We have and will

continue to preserve and enhance the qualities and character which make Lauderdale-By-The-Sea such a unique place to visit or call home, so they can be enjoyed by others for generations to come.

Town Manager Hoffmann indicated Town staff would place the above vision statement on a Commission agenda for approval, at which time public input would be invited.

b. Consideration of a Mission Statement for the Town

Mayor Minnet read into the record the Mission Statement for the Town that the Commission agreed upon:

The mission of the Town of Lauderdale-By-The-Sea is to deliver local government services efficiently, effectively, transparently and with integrity; to be responsible and conservative stewards of the public's money; to provide leadership for the protection and enhancement of the Town's essential character, natural resources and economic vitality; and to encourage public participation in the work of governing this town we love.

c. SWOT Analysis of Existing Conditions in the Town

Town Manager Hoffmann requested Commission's input on the SWOT analysis, dealing first with the Strength category, asking if anyone had any revisions for Strengths.

Commissioner Brown commented number 7 was unnecessary. On number 9, the language mentioned a number of very successful restaurants were good corporate citizens. However, there were other businesses in Town, such as the Windjammer, High Noon that were not restaurants that were also very good corporate citizens that did many things for the Town.

There was a Commission consensus to change the word "restaurants" to "retail businesses".

Commissioner Brown noted in number 10, there was no Friday/Saturday night music in August and September.

There was a Commission consensus to change "... for 52 weeks of the year" to "throughout the year".

Mayor Minnet mentioned a correction in item 13 under Strengths, where the first "ravaged" should be taken out.

Town Manager Hoffmann moved the discussion to the Challenges (Weaknesses) category.

Commissioner Brown referenced number 7. He did not think it was a weakness that the Town held elections and had political changes and turmoil. It was a given that the Town would have elections, so he would take it out.

Mayor Minnet thought, unless something changed in the Charter, there was a majority of the Commission every two years, so she would consider that a challenge.

Town Manager Hoffmann affirmed it was a challenge of continuity.

Commissioner Brown thought it inappropriate as part of an operating statement.

Town Manager Hoffmann suggested just using the words “continuity of elected officials.”

Commissioner Brown stated it could then take into account retirements, term limits, etc. as opposed to the actual election process. He sought clarity as to number 17, questioning what public spaces were being referred to.

Town Manager Hoffmann answered the two plazas, the aim being to keep them active, so they were not just empty spaces.

Commissioner Brown suggested changing the wording to specifically say the two new plazas that would be built, as he was thinking parking spaces when he first read it.

Commissioner Brown mentioned having a few thoughts that should be considered opportunities rather than a weakness. He saw no reference to improving the local businesses on the west end of Commercial Boulevard, though he knew the Town made a big commitment to doing so. By that he meant improving the look and making it a more vibrant retail and pedestrian part of the Town.

Mayor Minnet thought it was a blending of the two, as there were people who might wish to go to the west and not the east end of the Town.

Town Manager Hoffmann thought the challenge was attracting pedestrians and shoppers.

Commissioner Vincent commented not all businesses in the west part of the Town were challenged; for example, Blue Moon and Benihana were extremely successful. He wondered how to articulate not all the businesses in the west part of the Town were challenged.

Mayor Minnet wanted to consider language that conveyed a beginning and an end, and that there was a variety in between.

Commissioner Vincent said the wording could be, “The consistency within the western development area of the Town’s commercial ...”

Commissioner Dodd thought it might be covered under item 5. By removing the words “Commercial Boulevard”, it made same sense to say, “... keeping businesses viable during construction and streetscape improvements townwide.”

Town Manager Hoffmann felt this meant the Town had to do everything possible to keep businesses operational during those times.

Commissioner Dodd said the same applied to both the pavilion and the western ends.

Commissioner Vincent noted challenges were ongoing with the revitalization of the Town’s western businesses, though not all were adversely affected by them. The reason Benihana and Blue Moon were successful was due to their being a vehicular destination, and the other businesses were more walkable destinations, and the Town was not attracting the pedestrian flow they needed to thrive.

Town Manager Hoffmann mentioned adding number 22 which questioned the role of government in improving retail stores and number 23 which dealt with drawing pedestrians and shoppers to that area.

Commissioner Brown hoped when the Town completed the improvements, the owners of the area buildings would want to invest in upgrading their buildings to accomplish what the Town was trying to create. He went to number 6, improving utilization of the A1A parking lot, suggesting adding language about improving parking signage. The Town was making some improvements, but he had yet to see additional signage in the places that needed it.

Mayor Minnet believed it should pertain to parking in general and not any one area.

Commissioner Brown concurred, noting another suggestion he had was to provide more parking in general, and he would make that as a challenge; that is, use the words, “Provide more parking” and get no more specific than that. He went on to discuss the fact that there were still septic tanks in parts of the Town and Sea Ranch Lakes, and this could qualify as being on the weakness list.

Commissioner Vincent did not think this was the challenge of the Town, thinking it was still a mandate of the state.

Mayor Minnet recommended putting the septic tank issue under the threat category and received a Commission consensus to do so.

Commissioner Vincent was unsure of the degree to which septic tanks were problematic, unless they were located close to a waterway.

Attorney Trevarthen suggested inserting the words, “... poorly maintained...”, as this seemed to be where problems arose.

Commissioner Brown commented it was not necessarily the main; when the Town was hit by a big storm and the ocean and the Intercoastal rose and saturated the ground with salt water, the tanks could corrode and the lines might break. It almost approached the natural disaster category.

Mayor Minnet agreed with Commissioner Brown, as she witnessed those occurrences taking place.

Commissioner Vincent believed the tanks were built to withstand such environmental conditions.

Attorney Trevarthen indicated the language could say, "... poorly maintained or flooded septic tanks ..."

Mayor Minnet thought it best to leave the wording at poorly maintained septic tanks.

Town Manager Hoffmann moved the discussion to Opportunities.

Commissioner Brown said he did not care for number 7, thinking if the language singled out elected officials, then the wording should say county, state and federal elected officials.

Commissioner Vincent suggested wording, "... just continue to engage with our County Commission ..."

Town Manager Hoffmann thought the word "relationships" should be included.

Mayor Minnet felt this was a factor of the Town's elected officials, as they were very active in talking to the Town's representative and lobbying on behalf of the Town.

Commissioner Vincent concurred, stating the members of the Town Commission took advantage of that opportunity and it should be continued.

Commissioner Brown agreed members of the Town Commission tried to reach out to all Town representatives and did a good job getting their attention. He mentioned adding three more opportunities at the end of the category: 1) alternative energy use, as the Town began to tap into that industry. The Town was located on the beach and had great potential for innovations, wind power and solar power. He did some research on his own and thought this was an opportunity for the Town to explore the utilization of alternate energy sources.

Commissioner Brown noted the second opportunity related to alternate lighting, as there were many new technologies.

Mayor Minnet preferred not to specify, as it was not only lighting and there were so many other opportunities, suggesting the wording, “energy saving technologies” as more suitable.

Commissioner Brown stated the last item he wished added to the list of opportunities was the Town’s underutilized waterfront; for example, the marina had great potential.

Commissioner Vincent remarked it was privately owned.

Mayor Minnet mentioned it was now for sale.

Commissioner Brown added though the subject document was sort of a wish list, there seemed to be an opportunity there.

Mayor Minnet moved the discussion to the category Threats.

Commissioner Brown noted, in reference to number 3, new hotels were opening in Fort Lauderdale, and in the west in Oakland Park and Wilton Manors.

Mayor Minnet felt it was occurring throughout Broward County.

Commissioner Brown disliked number 4, as the Town was doing a lot better than the overall U.S. economy.

Mayor Minnet thought the statement was a bit strong.

Commissioner Brown believed it was better to remove the whole statement.

Town Manager Hoffmann suggested the inclusion of the wording “national and/or global economic fluctuations.

Commissioner Brown worried about what the Town’s motel industry would look like in ten years, due mainly to many of them being family-owned, and some of the present owners were aging and wished to retire. In some cases, the children did not want to take over the business but were unable to sell it, as the land was worth more than the business. He said there were such severe limitations on what a new owner could do, given the size of the property. This was felt to be the single biggest threat facing the Town, as motel owners were unable to sell the business or redevelop the land, and the only choice the Town allowed was converting to condominiums.

Commissioner Vincent disagreed, one just opened recently, so it proved it could be done.

Town Manager Hoffmann said the number one challenge was keeping the hotel industry healthy.

Mayor Minnet agreed with Commissioner Brown that this was a threat, but it was already stated in the document, unless he wished to make it more detailed.

Commissioner Brown indicated he had not included it on the list, as he was not sure what government could do about it, and it was likely to happen by itself.

Town Manager Hoffmann pointed out number 1 under Threats spoke about the conversion of hotels to residential, and this was the likely scenario.

Commissioner Dodd thought the Town was addressing the issue, looking at how to change the Town's codes to make the Town more economically viable. Property owners in the lodging industry could be discouraged with other regulations that made it harder to convert into residential properties. He agreed the viability of the Town was linked to the success and reinvestment into the Town's hotel/motel industry.

Commissioner Brown mentioned disliking the words "poorly maintained" with regard to septic tanks, questioning if the wording could be changed to "... potential environmental damage from septic tanks."

Attorney Trevarthen suggested alternate wording for number 7 as, "... that overwhelms our drainage system and septic tanks."

There was a Commission consensus to accept the above wording.

Town Manager Hoffmann believed number 7 did not cover all the things that could happen, as it was not just the Town's drainage system that was at risk, as it might wipe out sections of the Town.

Assistant Town Manager Bentley believed, with regard to the suggestion for number 7 where there was a consensus and some documentation of the sea level rising. With regard to climate changes, there was some controversy surrounding that belief. He asked if there could be a consensus that the sea level was rising, and the Town might be able to avoid its effects.

Mayor Minnet thought climate change incorporated more in the verbiage rather than just the rising sea level.

Attorney Trevarthen suggested the wording "climate change and rising sea levels".

It was suggested that the wording be "rising sea levels and more severe weather" in order to avoid the whole climate change controversy.

Attorney Trevarthen thought deleting the word "and" before "may cause" would work.

Commissioner Brown felt the overall document was well done and commended the Town Manager and her staff; it was an unbelievably good first draft.

d. Commission Comments

Town Clerk White asked if Vice Mayor Sasser had been officially excused from the present meeting or if he should be classified as being absent.

Mayor Minnet suggested the Commission take a vote to give Vice Mayor Sasser an excused absence.

Commissioner Vincent made a motion to give Vice Mayor Sasser an excused absence from the meeting. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

3. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Dodd made a motion to adjourn. With no further business before the Commission, Mayor Minnet adjourned the meeting at 8:50 p.m.