

**LAUDERDALE-BY-THE-SEA
TOWN COMMISSION
SPECIAL WORKSHOP
Jarvis Hall
4505 Ocean Drive
Wednesday, April 16, 2014
7:00 P.M.**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Scot Sasser called the workshop to order at 7:00 p.m. Also present were Vice Mayor Chris Vincent, Commissioner Mark Brown, Commissioner Stuart Dodd, Commissioner Elliot Sokolow, Town Manager Connie Hoffmann, Town Planner Linda Connors, Town Attorney Susan L. Trevarthen, and Deputy Town Clerk Tedra Smith.

2. DISCUSSION ITEM

a. El Mar Drive Project

Commissioner Brown explained that both the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), to which he is the Town's designated representative, and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) have expressed their willingness to help fund projects in Lauderdale-By-The-Sea, but have requested confirmation that any such projects have community support. Tonight's workshop will discuss the possible designation and design of El Mar Drive as the greenway through LBTS, and is expected to be the first of many community dialogues regarding potential projects.

DeWayne Carver, State Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator for FDOT, provided a presentation on Complete Streets, which is a concept intended to promote destination and recreational walkability in a variety of communities. Complete Streets accommodate multiple modes of traffic, including pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and vehicular traffic, both in and outside existing rights-of-way. Some of the necessary conditions for Complete Streets include:

- Narrower traffic lanes and/or streets
- Street trees
- Low traffic volume
- Sidewalks
- Interconnected streets
- On-street parking
- Mixed land uses
- Buildings up to the street
- Small block size

Mr. Carver emphasized the importance of controlling vehicular speed in encouraging pedestrian activity, which decreases as traffic speed increases. This can be achieved through appropriate land use and matching road design. He showed examples of

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Complete Streets in several different cities, noting that there are different transportation needs and conditions in these communities.

One option available to Lauderdale-By-The-Sea is a road diet, in which traffic lanes are removed and used for other purposes, such as bike lanes. Other options include raised intersections, traffic operation systems and signalization, reverse-angle parking, and improved street lighting. Mr. Carver noted that when bike lanes are installed, there are conflicts that must be mitigated. These can be addressed through shared lane markings (called a sharrow), bicycle boulevards, or bicycle paths and greenways.

Jeff Weidner, Strategic Development Manager for FDOT District 4, shared information regarding greenways, which are separated from vehicular traffic to encourage biking and pedestrian activity. He reviewed some of the greenway areas within neighboring cities, particularly along the beach side of A1A. Mr. Weidner concluded that if the LBTS community can agree on a particular concept, funding will be more easily attainable from the Broward MPO and FDOT can provide technical support. He cited the Galt community in Fort Lauderdale as an example, noting that the community agreed upon a greenway with significant landscaping which is now in the design phase.

The opportunity in Lauderdale-By-The-Sea for a greenway on A1A, has real challenges including right-of-way issues, high traffic volume, and intersections that can be difficult to cross. More opportunity is available on El Mar Drive, which has more flexible space, a lower traffic volume, and is a more scenic route. Mr. Weidner also noted that the special events, for which parking is allowed on El Mar Drive, present a challenge as well. He concluded that tonight's meeting is intended to seek input to determine what changes the Town would like to see.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Sasser opened the meeting to public comment.

Sharon Romano, private citizen, requested that the ocean view on El Mar Drive be preserved if any changes are put into effect. She felt making El Mar Drive a greenway would place a burden on property owners and hotel guests if not carefully implemented, and requested that any such plans consider the daily lives of residents.

Mr. Weidner advised that no technical analysis of El Mar Drive has been performed thus far, and explained that further analysis would be necessary to determine alternatives for the roadway. Commissioner Brown noted that the reason behind this and upcoming workshops is to develop a concept and design that would be key to securing funding for a final alternative.

Ellen Zavell, Chair of the Lauderdale-By-The-Sea Lodging Association, observed that most of the Town's hoteliers have owned and/or lived in their hotels for several years and are familiar with the Town's major resources. She asserted that the hoteliers would

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like to see El Mar Drive made into a greenway through the Town. Ms. Zavell pointed out that drainage and flooding problems would need to be addressed, and recommended improving signage, retaining two traffic lanes moving north and south, as well as the existing median .

In response to Commissioner's Brown request for clarification of her proposal, Ms. Zavell stated there is the possibility of a pedestrian area in the median of El Mar Drive as well as shared space on the existing 8 ft. sidewalk. It was noted that there should be landscaping and lighting options as well as drainage improvements along the length of El Mar Drive.

Linda Collins, resident, noted that additional crosswalks on A1A and El Mar Drive would also be an improvement, as pedestrians on these roadways have a tendency to jaywalk.

Chuck Curtis, resident, liked the idea of underground tunnels, which could also be used to feature public art as shown in the earlier presentation, as a pedestrian solution.

Dorothy Seibert, resident of El Mar Drive, pointed out that there are a variety of pedestrians on this roadway who travel at different paces. She recommended providing sufficient space to separate these types of pedestrians for safety. She also spoke in favor of providing a buffer between pedestrians and backout parking.

Joe Stieglitz, resident of El Mar Drive, requested that overhead utilities be placed underground if at all possible. He also requested clarification of cyclists' rules with regard to stop signs and other regulations. Mr. Carver replied that although cyclists are required to stop at stop signs, this does not always occur.

Commissioner Brown pointed out that while the Commission does not plan to reach a decision at tonight's workshop, they will be asked to determine whether they would prefer to see a project on El Mar Drive or on A1A so alternatives for these roadways could be designed. He recommended making this a future Agenda Item, noting that the comments at tonight's meeting focused on El Mar Drive.

Commissioner Dodd cautioned against any design that might reduce El Mar Drive from two lanes to one, as this was unlikely to have community support. He also noted that the Town would need to retain sufficient parking to accommodate special events, and recommended that the design team review previous plans made for El Mar Drive several years ago, as these had included some positive ideas.

Tom Machek, resident, asked if paths must meet certain specifications to qualify as greenways, such as specific widths. He also asked if a greenway could be separated in a manner to route bicycles onto A1A and allow pedestrians to use the sidewalks. Mr. Weidner said greenways are separated from roadways and feature landscaping. He explained that the designers would need to look closely at the roadways before he could make a determination on the use of the path.

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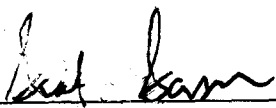
Cristie Furth, of Blue Seas Courtyard, stated that the key attraction of El Mar Drive, particularly to tourists, is the ocean view between buildings. She emphasized the need to retain this view, along with the medians on El Mar Drive, and recommended the development of a family-friendly space there as well.

Town Manager Connie Hoffmann requested clarification from FDOT on when a decision should be reached. Mr. Weidner stated that there is no set schedule, and encouraged the Town to proceed when the community has reached consensus on what they would like to see.

Commissioner Brown concluded that the Town has a unique opportunity to secure more funding than they had believed would be available in order to develop a special project along El Mar Drive. He stated that he hoped the dialogue and momentum with residents would continue, and pointed out that the requirements for the creation of a greenway are very flexible. Mayor Sasser agreed, and encouraged the participants in tonight's meeting to maintain their enthusiasm for the project.

4. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Commission, the workshop was adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

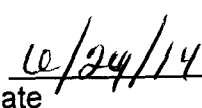


Mayor Scot Sasser

ATTEST:



Town Clerk Tedra Smith



Date