



MEETING MINUTES

Lealman Community Redevelopment Area Advisory Committee Meeting Wednesday, September 27, 2023, 6 PM

Committee Members Present In-person: Steve Cleveland, Jeremy Heath, Jennifer Post, Kim Blessinger, Oscar Seguban, Charles Flynt,

Committee Members Absent: Marsha McCoy, Dominic Howarth

Pinellas County Staff Present: Tom Almonte, Felix Nunez, Tanya Kurtin, Derrill McAteer (Virtual)

I. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chair Steve Cleveland

II. Introductions

Each Committee member and County Staff member present made introductions.

III. Citizens' Input

There was no citizen input this evening.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Jen Post motioned for minutes to be approved. Charles Flynt Seconded the motion. Minutes for July 26, 2023, were unanimously approved by the board.

V. Raymond H. Neri Park Master Plan Presentation

Dan Glaser from Pinellas County Public Works provided an overview of the Neri Park Master Plan. The presentation showed plans to preserve existing vegetation, treat stormwater runoff, centrally located restrooms, new seating areas, comfort stations, and ADA-accessible areas. Some amenities include paved parking for 98 spaces, including 10 ADA-accessible spots. There will be ten covered pavilions and a maintenance building for park staff to maintain the park. The project cost is 6.8 million, with funding coming from various funding sources. Other amenities include playgrounds and fitness areas. Design completion is contingent upon BDRS completing its ongoing review. The project is in final design, which should be completed in October, and the advertisement in November. It should be awarded, and a Notice to proceed should be granted within a six-month period. The construction is expected to be completed by mid-2026. Construction activity to be aware of is that the entire site will be closed during construction.

Steve Cleveland clarified where the maintenance building would be located. Jeremy Heath asked about security and securing access to the homeless through an unsecured fence. Mr. Glaser is aware of the spot and advised there would be a larger, more secure fence around the entire perimeter to avoid that.



Charles Flynt verified that sufficient bathrooms will be added to the park and a security measure for the restrooms.

Jennifer Post asked about what part of the park would be closed and recommended that the park closure be well advertised and that there would be a full closure of the park due to community resident uproar.

The potential uses of the proposed soccer field were discussed. The size is 165 feet by 82 feet wide and will be Bermuda grass. It is not most likely going to be used for the official games. There are no plans to manage the space, and no lighting is expected to be installed.

VI. Lealman CRA Updates

Form-Based Code (FBC) - Scott Swearengen gave FBC updates. In mid-July, we went in front of BOCC and asked for authorization to transmit amendments to the form-based code to the state for them to review and respond. The state provided comments early in September, and we will move forward in adopting those amendments in November. In late August, we submitted amendments to forward Pinellas. They accepted all those amendments, and all were accepted. On October 2nd, we go before an approving authority, and by October 11th, we should be approved at the greater county level. November 14th, the actual Lealman FBC and Zoning map amendments that correspond to the code will be presented, and then in December, we go for an adoption hearing.

Joe's Creek Master Plan – FY24 Work plan has been approved. The TIELS study was completed; we can now update our rules and regulations using the new guidelines. We will put out an RFP for moving forward with Joe's Creek. Tom Almonte suggested a Joe's Creek business owner and a CRA advisory committee member should be a part of the RFP selection committee. The anticipated RFP process should be completed by April 2024.

The committee discussed who should be its representative on the committee. After a brief discussion, Kim Blessinger nominated Charles Flynt to be the representative to the RFP committee and Jeremy Heath Seconded it. The committee unanimously approved. Charles Flynt will be the advisory committee representative to the RFP committee.

FY24 Board Work Plan - Tom Almonte addressed two updates to the approved FY 24 work plan. Item 10 for Lealman Park they added a lighting system which the park needs, and Item 12, The Joe's Creek Master Plan.

VII. Advisory Committee Member comments

Jennifer Post suggested bringing a swimming program to Lealman through the Lealman Exchange. Tom Almonte thought it was an excellent idea and thinks we can get something



started by partnering with local partners. Many suggestions were given for local programs, including the Pinellas County Lifeguards.

Charles Flynt asked about the lighting in Lealman Park, the ownership of the Pond, and how it affects the lighting. He also mentioned Duke Energy giving him a notice about tree removal and how it will affect the removal of the homeless population.

Jeremy Heath mentioned lifeguard training and mentioned the problem was transportation. Jennifer Post suggested the local groups have their own transportation, so perhaps they can set up transportation (PAL, Lealman Asian, etc.). Tom Almonte suggested we work on this with Amy Cianci and the collective Impact group.

VIII. Adjourn

Kim Blessinger motioned to end the meeting, and Jennifer Post seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 PM