



MEETING MINUTES
Lealman CRA Advisory Committee
Wednesday, April 22, 2026 6PM

Committee Member Present In-Person: Kim Blessinger, Tyler Payne, Charles Flynt, Jeremy Heath, Jennifer Post, Tahisia Scantling, Dominic Howarth

Committee Members Absent: Kenneth Williams, Tony Coryn

Pinellas County Staff Present: Amy Davis, Cameron Ehmig, Colan Trembl, Jason Ester (Virtual)

I. Call to Order

II. Introductions

III. Citizens Input

Resident David Lee asked about the decision to locate a dry pond in a shady area of Neri Park. He also commented on the sidewalk usage (45 people per day) and the progress made on 46th Ave. N.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Chair Kim Blessinger requested a motion to approve the 3-25-2026 minutes.

Motion by Tyler Payne.

Seconded by Dominic Howarth.

Vote: Approved unanimously with no changes.

V. Lealman CRA Agenda Items

• **Overview of Project Year 3 – LEX**

- Presented by Amy Davis (Pinellas County) and Amy Cianci (St. Petersburg Foundation)
- Extended Project Year 3 to be an 18-month year (April 1 2024-September 30 2025), in order to sync up the financial reporting with Pinellas County's fiscal year
- Provided overview of initiatives in Project Year 3, including the Lealman Voice newsletter, events and classes, and the Lealman Farmer's Market. Newer facility partners include Wounded Warriors, Family Center on Deafness, Public Works Training Institute, and Project Pup. Non-profits are renting out spaces at the Lealman Exchange (LEX) for events. Facility improvements this past year included painting, flooring, access control, and hurricane repairs. Residents are calling the LEX for information and using the resources available at the front desk with Jenn and with the Needs Navigator, Becca.
- Looking forward: Community Tech House provided laptops and LEX will be rolling out basic computer classes. Residents have begun using the Community Tech Connect at LEX, where they can bring their computer or other electronic devices for assistance and questions. Lealman Roots Historical Society will bring together archivists and historic Lealman residents to build database of Lealman history.
- Committee member asked about the possibility of cross-programming between LEX and the Science Center, which St. Petersburg Foundation has recently acquired. Amy responded affirmatively that this is in the works.

• **Direction on Alleyway Improvement Pilot Project**

- Guidance from planning on approach to the alleyway project was to create an origins and



destinations map, and create connections between these points. As part of sidewalk capital improvement project, that project will involve identifying gaps. The origins and destinations will help determine the prioritized sidewalk gaps. Staff was also told to avoid mixing pedestrian and vehicular traffic in alleyways due to safety concerns and visibility. Making improvements to an alleyway as a public space may take away the possibility of rear-access and ADU usage in the future for a property owner.

- Staff asked for suggestions on placemaking and marketing around the connections, brainstorming alternatives to standard signs (i.e., archways, stamps). Committee looked at a map, showing possible connections to be made across the railroad tracks and the Eastern bridge in Neri Park. Discussion ensued about the project's pivot from alleyways to sidewalks.
- Committee member commented that wider sidewalks may be better for integration into a trail system, and that improved lighting on sidewalks could bring interest to a certain stretch of roadway and create a sense of place. Commercial businesses have to be barricaded from alleyways, and would benefit from improved sidewalk connections to increase foot traffic, as well as creative light fixtures such as acorn lights. Staff clarified that the county does not provide street lights, plus anything that requires maintenance would end when the CRA sunsets. Committee member suggested renaming the project "Linking Lealman Sidewalk Improvement Pilot Project", because we have a project for alleyway regrading and a project for sidewalk improvements and the project is pivoting toward sidewalk wayfinding and placemaking.

VI. Additional Lealman CRA and Non-CRA Updates by Amy Davis and Colan Trembl

- BOCC approved updates to the Commercial Grant program, will be working on marketing materials and canvassing. Post card mailed for Residential Grant, portal is temporarily shut down.
- Signal/utility box wraps were completed, except one which will be done after 46th Ave N project is completed. Lealman-themed mural to begin in May.
- Lealman Heights homeowner dedications, invites were emailed. Staff created a welcome packet in conjunction with the local non-profits and partners.
- Pond Beautification: has restarted, replanting native plants.
- Lealman Park Improvement: finalizing scope to get design consultant
- Frontier frontage: appraisal, they are considering selling full frontage on 54th Ave. N.
- Ray Neri Park: dog park, seed didn't take off due to drought, they have now put down sod and it has a grow-in period.
- Fourth of July fireworks: on July 4th, from 6-9p, fireworks at 8:45pm in Ray Neri Park
- 46th Ave. N.: inspection on April 28th, project will come to a close.
- CSX is putting in concrete rail tub structure. Once that is completed, the county is putting in signs and paving a sidewalk to close the sidewalk/connctivity gap on 46th Ave. N. near 37th St. N.
- 25th St. and 62nd Ave. N.: mast arms complete, I-275 project is still in progress.
- 28th St. N. sidewalk is underway.



- The roads at 28th St. N. near 54th Ave. N. is closed off, 49th St. N. and 58th Ave. N. are also closed as they are both undergoing utility work.
- DRC/BOAA cases
 - Zoning change approved by BCC for 5301 55th St. N. from rural residential to 1-2-3 family residential.
 - 5200 62nd Ave. N., just West of hospital. Zoning and land use change to industrial land use.
 - Dream Center: Pulled request for waiver for constructing sidewalk and parking in ROW to be retracted, no plan has been resubmitted.

VII. Advisory Committee Member Comments

- Continued discussion from beginning of meeting regarding dry pond in Ray Neri Park. Committee member commented that the dry pond location is a really good spot for activity. Amy Cianci clarified that the number of ponds doubled between the first and second iterations of the plan after EPA reviewed the plans. Committee members verified that the most recent plans do include a dry pond between the athletic field and the pond.

VIII. Adjourn

Motion by Tyler Payne.

Seconded by Charles Flynt.

Meeting adjourned at 7:39pm.