

**MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
PARKS, RECREATION AND BEACHES ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
100 N. ANDREWS AVENUE
CITY HALL – 1st FLOOR CHAMBERS
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22, 2022 – 6:30 P.M.**

Cumulative Attendance

Board Members	Attendance	Present	Absent
Alex Collazo	P	6	2
Brucie Cummings	P	5	3
Caleb Gunter, Chair	P	8	0
Carey Villeneuve [Arrived 6:35]	P	6	2
Charlie Leikauf	P	8	0
Deborah Rosenbaum, Vice Chair	P	7	1
Greg Martin	P	6	2
Jo Ann Smith	P	6	2
Marianna Seiler	P	7	1
Mary Peloquin	P	6	2
Tangerean Moore	P	7	1
Zillah Tarkoe	P	3	0

Oct 2021 - Sept 2022

As of this date, there are 12 appointed members to the Board, which means 7 would constitute a quorum. A quorum was present.

Staff

Carl Williams, *Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation*

Stephanie McClary, *Senior Administrative Assistant*

Patricia SaintVil-Joseph, *Assistant City Attorney*

Others

Ken Krasnow, *Vice Chairman of Collier's, City's real estate advisor*

Jenni Morejon, *President and CEO for Downtown Development Authority for Fort Lauderdale*

Ellyn Bodgdanoff, *My Park Initiative*

Matthew Schnier, *Downtown Development Authority for Fort Lauderdale*

Alex Saiz, *Downtown Development Authority for Fort Lauderdale*

Ric Buchanan, *President of Coral Ridge Isles Civic Association*

Veronica Maher, *Resident, Edgewood Civic Association Board Member*

Wendy Wills, *Resident*

Peter Partington, *Resident*

Steven Goldstein, *Resident*

Carla Blair, *Recording Secretary, Prototype-Inc.*

Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Gunter led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the April 27, 2022, Meeting Minutes

Vice Chair Rosenbaum noted she was not speaking about a hotel on the aquatic complex property and asked for the minutes to be amended to reflect her comment.

Motion was made by Deborah Rosenbaum and seconded by Alex Collazo, to approve the minutes, as amended. In a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously 12-0.

Approval of the May 25, 2022, Meeting Minutes

Motion was made by Marianna Seiler and seconded by Alex Collazo, to approve the minutes. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously 12-0.

1. Department Update

Carl Williams, Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation, shared details of the 4th of July event. He noted the fireworks would begin at 8:45 P.M. and not 9:00 P.M.

He also reminded the Board they do not meet in person next month.

Mr. Williams stated the department is close to its typical summer camp numbers for the first time in two years.

Chair Gunter asked if Parks and Rec Month will be celebrated in July.

Mr. Williams replied yes, and he will follow up on the proclamation. He confirmed there will be music, vendors, and activities for Parks and Rec Night at Starlight Musicals on July 22.

In response to Mr. Collazo's question, Mr. Williams replied the fireworks were moved up earlier due to police overtime.

Ms. Cummings recommended a few announcements be made about no dogs at Starlight Musicals. Mr. Williams confirmed he will have the park rangers remind attendees.

Ms. Cummings asked about shade in Las Olas Park. Mr. Williams noted the department will be bringing back the large tent on the grass for 4th of July.

Chair Gunter stated that Agenda Item 2 will be moved down in the agenda and asked for the update on Huizenga Park.

3. Huizenga Park Update

Jenni Morejon, President and CEO for Downtown Development Authority for Fort Lauderdale (DDA), introduced herself and her team. She presented the project updates, including renderings and funding.

Mr. Collazo asked about criteria for restaurant lease.

Ms. Morejon said they hired a commercial real estate brokerage firm who specializes in leases who will help identify options. She noted they are not ruling out franchises. They are interested in a restaurant that appeals to a wide audience and offers a reasonable price point. She said the plan is to have the restaurateur selected by Fall 2022.

In response to Mr. Collazo's question, Ms. Morejon confirmed the \$950,000 of State funding is earmarked for construction for this park project.

Mr. Villeneuve asked if the dock was considered for the restaurant location.

Ms. Morejon agreed the dock location is appealing but impractical based on transient dockage.

Ms. Cummings asked about the acreage and trees.

Ms. Morejon stated the DDA independently owns 2.1 acres. She added a complete tree assessment and share analysis was completed and 100 new trees will be added, and 16 trees relocated.

Vice Chair Rosenbaum asked about the history of the park name.

Ms. Morejon replied that the stretch of land along the water's edge is City-owned and referred to as Bubier Park. She noted it is effectively the Riverwalk.

Mr. Martin asked if the plan is to reduce larger events in the park.

Ms. Morejon noted the challenge is that the park is primarily a festival park and often sits un-activated. She said it does not need to be the main downtown park to host large events, with the success of other parks. The goal is for Huizenga Park to be a multiuse park.

In response to Chair Gunter's question, Ms. Morejon confirmed that 100 percent of the land for the restaurant is owned by the DDA. She said the restaurant pad is approximately 5,000 square feet.

2. Park Bond Property Purchase – Coral Ridge Isles

Ken Krasnow, Vice Chairman of Collier's, the City's real estate advisor, introduced himself and presented updates on the park acquisition process and an opportunity with Coral Ridge Isles. He reviewed the district location map, progress and goals to date, and park acquisitions. He noted they continue to attempt to acquire properties in key waterfront areas. He summarized the potential acquisition of Coral Ridge Isles in District 1 for \$7.75 million. He confirmed the property has neighborhood support.

Vice Chair Rosenbaum asked who will fund the park if the acquisition goes through.

Mr. Krasnow replied they are focused on acquiring the sites that meet criteria and the City would determine the budget and park activation.

Chair Gunter asked if there are any sites available for less than \$7.75 million.

Mr. Krasnow responded that they have been scouring the market and made a number of offers on other properties that were not accepted. He reiterated that finding waterfront land in District 1 has been the target since the process began in 2019.

Ms. Cummings expressed concern about the expense.

Mr. Martin stated the acquisition would be generational land and there is a shortage of land in the City.

Mr. Krasnow noted there has been no determination about the site and utilization. He said the building is currently generating income.

Vice Chair Rosenbaum said she is not sure the City wants to become a landlord.

Mr. Martin agreed it is an expensive project but suggested it is a different way to look at land.

In response to Mr. Leikauf's question about Civic Association support, Mr. Krasnow referenced a letter.

Discussion ensued about the cost of the property acquisition.

Ms. Moore asked about compensation for current residents. Mr. Krasnow clarified all tenants are renters and not homeowners.

Assistant City Attorney SaintVil-Joseph clarified the process of notifying tenants and noted the City is in its due diligence phase. She said a letter of intent has not been executed by the City Manager.

Mr. Collazo said the location of the property is not ideal for a park based on potential train track noise and adjacent commercial properties.

Discussion ensued about the price of the building, appraisal, and nearby residential lots.

Assistant City Attorney SaintVil-Joseph noted any recommendation to purchase this property will be subject to completion of due diligence, completion of property appraisal, and contingent upon seller closing and securing title from Oak Tree Avanth Coral Ridge Isles. She noted that what is before the Board is approval of City's purchase of the property.

Mr. Krasnow said there is still a lot of work to be done, including presenting to the City Commission in August.

Mr. Villeneuve said he does not feel comfortable approving without understanding the full financial conditions.

Chair Gunter wants to know who owns the overgrown strip of land across the canal. He was told it might be City-owned. Mr. Krasnow noted when they were investigating one of the industrial sites, they discovered ownership of land across from their property. He does not believe the entire strip of land is City-owned.

Chair Gunter opened public comment.

Peter Partington, resident and member of the Coral Ridge Isles Civic Association, invited their President to speak and provide additional information.

Ric Buchanan, President of the Coral Ridge Isles Civic Association, addressed Board concerns. He noted the significant neighborhood support for the project. He spoke about the challenges the neighborhood currently experiences with the property. He confirmed District 1 Civic Associations were polled about interest in parks and Coral Ridge Isles is the only Civic Association without multiple parks. He mentioned there are currently 85 parking spaces which would permit many visitors to the park. Additionally, he noted how a park, with designated hours, could help the neighborhood maintain a quieter area. He suggested a park creation would increase livability in District 1.

Mr. Partington shared his personal experience living in Coral Ridge Isles and the deterioration of amenities in the neighborhood.

Mr. Villeneuve asked about the process. He continued to express concerns.

Assistant City Attorney SaintVil-Joseph stated the sellers are requesting closing with the City on August 28, 2022. Mr. Krasnow added the closing date may be August 27, 2022.

Motion was made by Greg Martin and seconded by Deborah Rosenbaum, to deny the request.

Ms. Cummings asked how far it is from NE 15th Avenue to the property. Mr. Buchanan said the distance is approximately 600 feet. He further described the main street.

Mr. Buchanan noted Commissioner Moraitis was prepared to attend the meeting but was advised against attending. He noted he is expressing the support he has heard from her regarding the project.

Ms. Seiler asked when the due diligence period would conclude.

Vice Chair Rosenbaum expressed concerns about funding and the number of other Civic Associations located in District 1.

Ms. Peloquin shared that the topic was brought up at a District 1 Commission meeting and at least four or five Civic Associations were in support of a park in that location. She mentioned how busy George English Park is.

Mr. Martin said the Board's charge is to try to identify land.

In response to Ms. Seiler's question, Assistant City Attorney SaintVil-Joseph responded that the due diligence expires on August 24, 2022.

Mr. Collazo wants to hear from Commissioner Moraitis and asked if the item could be tabled until the September meeting.

Assistant City Attorney SaintVil-Joseph clarified that because the City is intending to use park bond money, the item has to be voted on before the City can use those funds to close.

In a roll call vote, the motion passed 11-1. Mary Peloquin voted nay.

4. Pickleball Proposal at Snyder Park

Ellyn Bodgdanoff, from My Park Initiative, explained the P3 process, which included community outreach, negotiating a comprehensive agreement, and the development process. She presented the pickleball proposal for Snyder Park, including the public need, public private partnership, and planned amenities.

Ms. Peloquin asked about the performance stage.

Ms. Bodgdanoff explained the stage would be for small music shows but it is only conceptual at this point. She said they completed decibel testing.

Ms. Cummings asked about creating swimmable water.

Ms. Bodgdanoff said they will hire professionals to conduct testing to ensure it is safe and the Department of Health will approve.

In response to Mr. Collazo's question, Ms. Bodgdanoff replied that the project would be funded privately. She said they would look at membership models, including free access hours and day passes for the general community.

Mr. Leikauf asked if the City would receive revenue from the facility.

Ms. Bodgdanoff said there is an opportunity for park expansion based on this project.

Chair Gunter asked the length of the lease. Ms. Bodganoff said a standard is a 50-year lease, but nothing has been decided yet.

Chair Gunter opened public comment.

Veronica Maher, resident and Edgewood Civic Association Board Member, stated she strongly opposes this development in Snyder Park. She said the Edgewood Civic Association was not aware how the P3 process worked. She spoke about the park as a natural oasis and community engagement. She noted six pickleball courts would be reasonable but not 40 courts.

Wendy Willis, resident and President of the Edgewood Civic Association, said she likes the idea of pickleball courts, but the proposed amounts are too many. She spoke about the traffic on 4th Avenue and Perimeter Road. She noted they don't need an entertainment center.

Steven Goldstein, resident, spoke on challenges with flooding in the area and pavement will increase those issues. Additionally, he expressed concerns about the number of proposed courts, the restaurant, and destruction of trees. He acknowledged it does span a diversity of all ages.

Ms. Seiler said many of the comments are due to the fact input was not yet received from the local HOAs.

Ms. Leikauf noted there was a unanimous vote by the City Commission to move forward with discussions and solicit community input.

5. Holiday Park – Update

Mr. Williams stated he was bringing back the updated design version that was seen by the HOA.

Mr. Villeneuve commented on the updated design. He asked for the square footage of the play area and splash pad. Mr. Williams replied he does not currently have that square footage. Mr. Villeneuve said he like the eight additional pickleball courts. He said increasing the size of the playground is crucial and can incorporate trees into the design. He suggested moving the two t-ball fields. He expressed disappointment in lack of shade provided. He said there is a lack of interesting or innovative features.

Discussion ensued about the gym, the YMCA, and pickleball courts.

Mr. Martin said the P3 process is fantastic, but they need to be careful with it.

Ms. Cummings said they need to be mindful of development and impact on animals.

6. Communications to the Commission

None.

7. Adjournment

Motion was made by Greg Martin and seconded by Deborah Rosenbaum, to adjourn the meeting. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously 12-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 P.M.

[Minutes prepared by TBaclawski, Prototype-Inc.]