

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY MEETING

A Regular CRA Meeting was held on April 28, 2025 at 5:00 PM in the Council Chambers of City Hall and Via GoToMeeting (646) 749-3122 - Access Code: 855-960-693. Commissioner Steven F. Spina, Ph.D. called the meeting to order at 5:03 PM

Roll call was taken. Present were members Lance Smith, Charles Proctor, Kenneth Burgess, Steve Spina and Mayor Melonie Bahr Monson. City Manager William Poe was also present. Jodi Wilkeson and City Attorney Matthew Maggard were not present.

Staff present: Chief of Police Derek Brewer, Public Works Director Shane LeBlanc, Planning Director Todd Vande Berg, Utilities Director John Bostic III, CRA Director Gail Hamilton, Main Street Zephyrhills Director Antwon Gildon, IT Director Mike Panak, Airport Manager Nathan Coleman, Public Information Officer Kevin Weiss, Principal Planner Rodney Corriveau and City Clerk Ricardo Quinones.

1. CITIZEN COMMENTS NONE

2. BUSINESS ITEMS

2.1 Reorganization of CRA Board

Charles Proctor motioned to nominate Steven Spina as Board Chairperson. Seconded by Lance Smith. Motion Passed, 4-0.

Lance Smith motioned to nominate Jodi Wilkeson as Board Vice Chairperson. Seconded by Kenneth Burgess. Motion Passed, 4-0.

2.2 Residential Ownership Incentive Program for 38533 8th Avenue, Ms. Ayanna Davenport
CRA Director Gail Hamilton presented the applicant and said that it met all requirements and recommended approval.

Lance Smith motioned to Approve the residential Ownership Incentive Program for Ayanna Davenport. Seconded by Charles Proctor. Motion Passed, 4-0.

2.3 Residential Facade Grant for Ms. Amelia Patton 5034 4th Street Zephyrhills FL 33542
CRA Director Gail Hamilton presented the applicant and said that it met all requirements and recommended approval.

Lance Smith motioned to Approve the Residential Facade Grant for Amelia Patton. Seconded by Kenneth Burgess. Motion Passed, 4-0.

2.4 Approval of CRA Meeting Minutes - February 24, 2025

Charles Proctor motioned to approve the February 24, 2025 CRA Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Lance Smith. Motion Passed, 4-0.

2.5 Approval of CRA Workshop Minutes - March 19, 2025

Kenneth Burgess motioned to approve the March 19, 2025 CRA Workshop Minutes. Seconded by Lance Smith. Motion Passed, 4-0.

2.6 Inventory and Evaluation of Trees Within City Parks

CRA Director Gail Hamilton presented findings from a recent arborist report assessing tree health in City parks and planning for future planting. The report highlighted the significant loss of trees during past storms and emphasized the importance of restoring the tree canopy through diverse and sustainable planting strategies. It was noted that the Tree Mitigation Fund should be used to plant trees. Staff will provide an update at the next meeting.

3. CRA DIRECTOR'S REPORT

CRA Director Gail Hamilton presented a detailed update on multiple ongoing projects and initiatives. She explained that some agenda items had been delayed due to unresolved contract issues but confirmed that a contractor had been secured for the cemetery work at Fifth Avenue and First Street. The delay stems from jurisdictional complexities, as the site lies within a county right-of-way currently held by FDOT pending road paving. However, the CRA is coordinating with FDOT and the county to establish an interlocal agreement that would permit them to begin installing benches, trash cans, and signage without disrupting paving plans. While work on Fifth Avenue is pending, the cemetery enhancements, including new columns, will begin.

Ms. Hamilton addressed progress on Clock Plaza, noting that the scope of services is defined, and work is underway to secure a contract. In addition to the current consultants, the CRA is seeking bids from new firms to bring fresh perspectives to the downtown redesign. She aims to have the design phase underway by September, as both design and construction are included in this fiscal year's budget.

Regarding the Master Plan for parks, she reported that a recent workshop helped prioritize equipment purchases and that the planning team is now working with an arborist on a tree program. The final plan is expected within a month, pending internal reviews by staff, the planning department, and public works.

She raised concerns about possible legislative changes that could restrict CRA operations statewide but expressed gratitude to board members for advocating in Tallahassee, emphasizing that the Zephyrhills CRA has strong relationships with County and City departments. She remains hopeful that any adverse legislation will not impact their operations.

The report also covered updates to the CRA's sign standards. Recognizing issues with public interpretation and compliance, the CRA is working to clarify regulations and encourage creative, non-internally-lit signage that functions as public art. Ms. Hamilton emphasized the need to promote unique signage through education and improved visuals, highlighting the lack of applicants for the CRA's sign grant program. She welcomed suggestions, including iconic and artistic signs reminiscent of those in other towns, and acknowledged the need to balance downtown design standards with the visibility needs of standalone businesses along high-traffic roads like US 301.

Lastly, she mentioned that Staff is working on grant applications for Zephyr Park and will keep the board informed of progress. The meeting concluded with a discussion about the structure of the CRA board. Some members expressed a desire to include local business owners or residents, either directly or through an advisory board, to better reflect community interests. While the Director was open to exploring this, others noted the lack of direct engagement from businesses and questioned whether adding them to the board would improve communication and effectiveness.

4. MAIN STREET ACTIVITY REPORT

Main Street Director Antwon Gildon provided an update on several key initiatives. He began by announcing that a contract has been signed with KMF Architects for the theater project, with plans underway to present further details at an upcoming CRA meeting. Mr. Gildon then recapped the success of the recent "Main Street Madness," the season's first Friday night event. The event attracted a few hundred attendees, brought much-desired foot traffic downtown without necessitating Saturday street closures, and featured the area's first wet zone in over three years—with no incidents, thanks to the Zephyrhills Police Department. Mr. Gildon highlighted positive media coverage from ABC Action News, which provided great exposure for local businesses and generated interest from others hoping to participate in future features. Lastly, Mr. Gildon discussed the completion of internship partnerships with St. Leo, Zephyrhills High, and USF, including a final campus appearance at USE's Bulls Market. That effort helped promote the upcoming downtown market and successfully encouraged some students to attend, underscoring the outreach value of such engagements. He concluded by expressing enthusiasm for the future and appreciation for the board's support.

Before Adjourning Ms. Amelia Patton, Residential Facade Grant applicant, thanked the Board.

ADJOURN 5:35 PM

Submitted by Ricardo Quiñones