

**MINUTES
CRA MEETING
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2021
7:30 PM
CITY HALL**

At 8:05 p.m., **Mayor Daley** called to order the Community Redevelopment Agency Meeting.

Roll Call: City Clerk Linda Bourgeois

Board Members in attendance: Chairman Nancy Daley, Vice-Chair Jack Dearmin, Board Member Brent Eden, Board Member Mac Fuller, and Board Member Albertus Maultsby.

Jack Blankenship of Retail Strategies presented an update to the City Commission via Zoom.

Presentation Overview

- Their process is to conduct a market analysis, create a strategic plan, and to be proactive in retail recruitment to achieve results.
- 1 in 4 jobs are in the retail industry
- Average wages for full-time non-retail workers (25-54 years old) is \$34,368 compared to full-time retail workers (25-54 years old) of \$35,376.
- 78% of consumers prefer to shop in-store, and 73% of consumers want to try-on before they buy.
- State of Florida Population 21.48M, and the City of Lake Alfred's Population is 6,675
- Within a three-mile radius of Lake Alfred there are 9,671 homes with a projected 7.70% annual growth rate within five years.
- The current average age of this area is 47 with a median household income of \$42,834 (2019).

He continued and spoke about the Customized Trade Area (CTA) and said each retailer has a specific set of site selection criteria they use to determine if they will have a profitable store. Municipal boundaries, radius rings and drive times are a start to evaluating the information sought by these decision makers. He went on to say a customized trade area is the next step to analyzing a market. A trade area defines a core customer base of consumers highly likely to shop and eat in the market at least once a month. He said our trade area has been created by combining the mobile tracking data with drive times, geographic boundaries, and proximity to neighboring shopping destinations. Each retailer will analyze their own trade area based on their existing stores, their competition, and site selection criteria.

- The identified Customized Trade Area had an estimated 81,780 population according to the 2020 data with a projected 9.9% growth rate by 2025.
- The current year estimated population by race is 65% White, 18% Black, 14% Latino, 1% Asian, and 2% other.
- The median household income in the CTA is \$46,370 with approximately 38,797 households.

He spoke about the GAP Analysis and said the difference between demand and supply represents the opportunity gap or surplus available for each merchandise line in the specified reporting geography. When the demand is greater than (less than) the supply, there is an opportunity gap (leakage) for that merchandise line. For example, a positive value signifies an opportunity gap, while a negative value signifies a surplus.

He continued and spoke about the total market supply and demand and then the opportunity gap of \$539,642,844. He said this means more people purchase items outside of the defined Lake Alfred trade area than in the Lake Alfred defined trade area for their consumer goods and services. Finding the specific categories where they are leaving the market is the key. This is where our focus will be to place new retailers and restaurants. He reviewed the customized retail categories of the GAP Analysis. The top four were:

- Food and Beverage Stores
- General Merchandise Stores
- Foodservice and Drinking Places
- Health & Personal Care Stores

He went on and reviewed the peer analysis and said they were putting boots on the ground. He said they identify and record the primary real estate opportunities within the market and reviewed the types of information they collected. He said the retail timeline was a long process, spoke about the recruitment tools, and the marketing guide. The top categories for recruitment for Lake Alfred were restaurants, pharmacy & health, grocery, and miscellaneous retail. He shared their partnership results.

- 114 - Retail prospects identified
- 47 - Retail prospects contacted
- 32 - Properties catalogued
- 2 - Developers working on sites
- 8 - Retailers interested in the market

He concluded his presentation by saying they were continuously improving efforts to maximize the retail potential and was appropriately positioning our community. He stood for questions.

Chair Daley asked if they were only soliciting national companies or regional companies as well?

Mr. Blankenship said their company mainly researched national companies and they were open to suggestions. She suggested the grocery chain named “Sprouts”.

Board Member Eden asked what the outlook was for a grocery store and the possibility of that happening in Lake Alfred.

Mr. Blankenship said the companies were struggling with the current density of Lake Alfred and commented on the current residential growth. He said the companies like to have people travel only five to seven minutes to get to a store and spoke about the existing surrounding locations.

A brief discussion ensued regarding not having a grocery store as the number one reason people drive out of the city, the 2020 census numbers were lower than believed, and the companies were not wanting to cannibalize their current stores by putting them within too close of a proximity to each other.

Board Member Maultsby asked if there were any current inquires for Lake Alfred and Mr. Blankenship said there were eight that have expressed interest. He shared the categories and said they were in the fitness, automotive, and healthcare sectors.

Board Member Fuller asked if they worked with or were familiar with the International Franchise Association. He said like small businesses owning their store but as a part of a national franchise operation.

Mr. Blankenship said he was familiar with them but does not work with them. He said as a whole they work with a lot of franchisees, but they don't typically target the larger franchise organizations.

Chair Daley asked if bringing in a larger store would it hurt the smaller ones in the area.

Mr. Blankenship said the larger store would bring people into the area thus increasing the business of the smaller stores.

The Community Redevelopment Agency Board thanked him for his presentation.

Chair Daley introduced the consent agenda for consideration of approval.

Consent Agenda:

- 1.) Community Redevelopment Meeting Minutes for September 9, 2021

Vice-Chair Dearmin made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 9, 2021, CRA Meeting. **Board Member Fuller** seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Chair Daley introduced the CRA Resolution 03-21 for consideration.

- 1.) Resolution 03-21: CRA Residential Façade Grant Improvement Program

Assistant City Attorney Claytor read the Resolution title into the record.

City Manager Leavengood read the analysis into the record. On June 21, 2021, the Community Redevelopment Agency Board discussed the potential to establish a residential façade improvement grant program. Community Redevelopment Agencies are given tools above and beyond what is normally afforded to local governments to address blight within the community.

The proposed residential façade improvement program was drafted in part based on provisions from the existing downtown commercial façade grant as well as from other CRA residential façade programs from various cities around the state.

Primary elements of the program include:

- Up to \$15,000 per single-family residential home for a wide array of exterior home improvements including roofs, fencing, porches, windows, gutters, and paint among others.
 - Multi-unit residential properties (i.e. townhomes, apartments) may receive the greater of \$15,000 or \$5,000 per unit.
- The city will hire a contractor to perform the work, hopefully achieving cost reductions through a larger-scale project.
- Each property may receive grant funding once per seven years.
- Grant applications can be customized each year to provide flexibility with the program to target specific areas within the CRA or types of improvements to help achieve greater economies of scale (i.e. painting, roofs).

Approximately \$75,000 has been set aside in the current FY 21/22 Budget for façade grants. The commercial façade grant program is currently accepting applications through the end of the calendar year. The residential program will begin accepting applications in January.

Staff Recommendation: Approve Resolution 03-21.

A board discussion ensued about the commercial versus the residential grant programs, the residential program is 100% funding without a match required, the potential to target specific projects such as roofing or painting, and the grant applicant was based upon the property and not what types of occupancy. Further discussion surrounded the program being limited to one grant application every seven years, the city would pay the contractors so the homeowner would not receive the money, and the potential to use economies of scale with targeted projects.

Board Member Fuller asked for clarification on the ownership of a property and wanted to know if an apartment complex would be eligible to apply.

City Manager Leavengood explained the commercial versus the residential grant allocations and said it would be determined by the land use category of the property. He said they would be able to apply and the CRA Board was responsible for the ranking and approval of the applications.

A brief discussion ensued about a local apartment complex and the ongoing concerns.

Chair Daley asked if a CRA Board Member had property in the CRA, would it be a conflict of interest?

Assistant City Attorney Claytor said yes, the board member would have to abstain from voting, and they would have to fill out the correct form. He said it may not be a conflict of interest for them to apply but he would like to perform additional research.

Chair Daley opened the floor to public comments.

Sharon Garrett of Carl Boozer Road east of Haines City spoke about the apartment complex. She suggested using quality paint on the CRA projects and commented on her experience with similar CRA projects in downtown Haines City. She continued and said if the apartment complex is owned by who she thinks it is owned by, that they should have plenty of money to fix it up. She reviewed the apartment complexes they owned and the locations. She said she did not think they should be able to get money to make it look right. She concluded by saying Lake Alfred would be better served by serving individuals.

Chair Daley said she would like to see the program touch those with the greatest need.

City Manager Leavengood explained that is where the vetting of the applications and discernment from staff and the board comes into play. He said the apartment complex was currently ineligible due to an outstanding city utility debt and spoke about how the residential program may be able to help with code compliance. He concluded by saying we may want to focus on those single homes in need before we try an approach to larger projects such as apartment complexes.

Chair Daley wanted to know how we would get the word out.

City Manager Leavengood said the residential area of the CRA was fairly limited to Echo Terrace, Fruitland, and smaller pockets within the transitional zones. The benefit of being a smaller city is we could do door hangers or mailers or even target specific areas for improvements rather than do it all over the CRA. He concluded by saying he thought the bones of the program were solid.

A brief discussion ensued about the vetting and ranking process, and the potential to have the economies of scale dictate special projects such as fencing, or painting based upon the applications.

Board Member Maultsby asked about Habitat for Humanity and City Manager Leavengood explained the city had to potential to donate acquired properties to them for the construction of new homes.

Brenda Arnold of 635 W. Pierce Street thanked the City Commission and said she would like to have them focus more on the residential single-family home aspect of the program versus an apartment complex. She said the apartment complexes collect rent money for them to fix their own properties.

Chair Daley closed the floor to public comments.

Vice-Chair Dearmin commented that there were still blue tarps in the city for more than two years.

Chair Daley asked where the city would draw the line in determining if a property was commercial versus residential.

Assistant City Attorney Claytor said that would occur through the ranking process based upon the land usage and not the ownership of the entity.

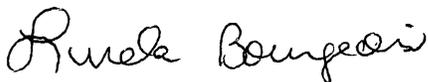
Board Member Fuller asked if this program was only for external repairs of the properties.

City Manager Leavengood stated yes, it was for external projects only and not for any new construction only upgrades.

Vice-Chair Dearmin made a motion to approve Resolution 03-21 for the CRA Residential Façade Grant Improvement Program. The motion was seconded by **Board Member Fuller**. The motion was unanimously approved.

At 9:17 p.m., Chair Daley adjourned the Community Redevelopment Agency Meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,



Linda Bourgeois, BAS, MMC,
City Clerk